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Social capital,economic performance and political engagement: A case study of Congolese Immigrants in Central Johannesburg

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2007-02-16T13:22:43Z
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/2040

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Do Congolese immigrants' social interactions enhance individuals' economic progress and political engagement? This question stands at the core of the research which, under the concept of "social capital", explores Congolese immigrants' access to social networks and to resources available within such structures. Whether conceived as a "public good" (Putnam, 1993:170) or as an "individual asset" (Bourdieu), the concept points to social structures such as associations and informal networks. It also refers to norms of reciprocity and values such as social trust, political trust which are thought to emanate from social structures. Intensively refined within the very lively social capital debate, the concept sheds light on organizational power and social fabric of communities. Discussed in the context of immigration for people originating from a politically unstable country, "social capital" becomes an entry point into understanding strategies of survival and dynamics of community safeguarding away from home.

Persisting contestation of the link between social capital and economic performance or political engagement has called for more empirical analysis so as to determine conditions of social capital productivity and enlighten mechanisms through which this happens. The case study of Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg shows that the dominant hypothesis which insists on social capital fecundity, though to a large extent confirmed, needs contextual specifications. Type of associations, features of networks, and macro-structures matter in predicting whether or not access to social networks leads to economic gains and political engagement. Besides, voluntary associations may not be the most important repository of social capital for low-income immigrant communities. Family members and friends, in the case of Congolese immigrants, are the most crucial providers of capital. They constitute the kind of social networks that are easier to turn into effective capital. In this context, measuring individuals' social capital solely on the basis of their involvement in associations as Putnam often does may be missing the point. It also emerges that political engagement may have little to do with associations' attendance or the scope of informal networks. Empathy still haunts joiners of associations or socially connected people especially when frequented structures lack resources that increase interest in politics.

Investigation into Congolese immigrants' social capital has combined quantitative and qualitative methods. Based on a survey that has targeted one hundred adult Congolese immigrants, the variable-oriented research has relied a lot on statistical analysis. But questionnaire design has included questions of qualitative orientation. Observation and informal interviews have also brought materials which help to provide meaningful account of statistical trends.

This study's relevance is both theoretical and empirical. By providing another opportunity of putting social capital theory to test, the research will contribute to the strengthening or the revision of this very popular theory. Social capital theory will be re-examined in a singular context, that of immigrants coming from a politically troubled country. Confronting our theories to contexts differing from those in which they were produced may also help grasp their limits and constraints. In addition, the findings will be of great contribution to the understanding of the Congolese Diaspora civil society. The Congolese Diaspora has been influential to Congolese politics. On the 30th June 2005, Pretoria and Cape Town experienced peaceful marching of Congolese protesting against the delay of elections. Congolese in other parts of the world organized similar actions. I know of no recent academic work that accounts on how Congolese civil society, throughout the world, organizes to survive and handle the current crisis in their country.

This thesis comprises six chapters. The first one is an attempt to summarize the current debate on social capital and outline this study's approach to the concept. The second chapter presents the logic that has guided the design, the implementation and the analysis of the field-work on which the remaining chapters have drawn. Throughout the third chapter, I report on Congolese immigrants' demographic characteristics, economic performance and political engagement. The central account on participants' access to social capital constitutes the main focus of chapter four. Finally, the hypothesis of social capital's positive influence on Congolese immigrants' economic performance and political engagement is discussed in the fifth chapter. Chapter six provides a conclusion that emphasizes the study's major findings and the possibility for generalization.

CHAPTER 1. THE SOCIAL CAPITAL DEBATE

INTRODUCTION

The social capital debate connects to both the old debate on "political culture" and to sociologists' networks analysis. Intensively revived by Putnam, along the Tocqueville footsteps, this scholarship has engendered a great deal of divergence and unanswered questions. In its attempt to explain the definition of "social capital", adopted in this research, this chapter first discusses criticism to Putnam socio-psychological understanding of social capital. This context-free approach to social capital is then contrasted with Bourdieu's and Coleman's earlier socio-structural theorization. At a last stage, I elaborate on the generally presumed link between social capital and its various externalities such as economic advancement and political engagement which constitute the object of my investigation in the specific context of Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg.

CONTESTATION OVER PUTNAM'S FORMULATION

In recent social science discussion, few concepts have experienced at once incredible success and persisting obscurity as it has been the case for "social capital". The undeniable enthusiasm over the concept rests on its explanatory promises. Presented as a key factor in explaining institutional success, economic development, and democratic consolidation, "social capital" theory has been intensely discussed in academic circles, and enthusiastically embraced by policy-makers who have sought to base social changes on community networks, norms of reciprocity and interpersonal trust.

Over the last decade, research on social capital has displayed more disagreement than agreement to the extent of reaching an "impasse" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:18). The very definition of the concept is haunted by "a persisting lack of clarity" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:18). While some philosophers have preferred "social capacity" to the too market-related "social capital", economists have been reluctant to caution the analogy with financial, and physical capital on the ground that the so-called "social capital" is presented as an unintended consequence of individual actions, whose measurement is affected by severe methodological problems, and whose link to its presumed products goes without "specification of intermediate mechanisms" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:23).

Critics have complained that social capital has been mostly defined by its functions at the cost of confusing causes with effects (Prakash/Selle, 2004:18).

In general, "social-psychological" articulation of "social capital" championed by the very influential Putnam differs with the "social-structural" definition initiated by Bourdieu and Coleman. According to Putnam, "social capital refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, which can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (Putnam, 1993:167). Its key components are networks of every kind, trust, and values such as philanthropy, volunteerism, reciprocity etc. Putnam argues that voluntary horizontal associations breed social trust and produce community and political engagement. Cross-cutting membership in secondary associations fosters bridging social capital which is crucial in sustaining an active and progressive civil society. Social capital engenders even more beneficial outcomes such as better education for children, safe and productive neighborhoods, economic development, good health and happiness (Putnam, 2000:307-349). In most of his scholarship, Putnam uses survey-data which capture the level of trust, the rate of associational membership on regional, national, or transnational scale.

Despite the recognition of his incontestably influential theorization and empirical contribution on social capital, Putnam has been contested on various grounds. Using different techniques on a study of associational membership in Lombardy, Northern Italy, Diani has come up with results which have raised "compelling questions about previous studies of this supposedly 'high social capital' region'' (Prakash/Selle, 2004:18). Putnam has been accused of neglecting the dark-side of social capital, and the influence of the political structure on social capital patterns. Against Putnam's view that " higher levels of interpersonal trust in the individuals who make up a polity will naturally be associated with higher levels of civic engagement and trust in government" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:149), Newton claims that "not only are levels of social trust, political trust and their variation over time significantly different even among developed Western nations, but there is no reliable correlation between levels of social trust and trust in government across nations" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:150). Putnam's understanding of voluntary associations is said to be built "on Tocqueville assumptions that seem particularly limited and narrow when transferred to countries and contexts other than the USA"

(Prakash/Selle, 2004:19). In this regard, Prakash and Selle have asked why "voluntary associations are the primary basis for the development of social networks and civic trust in comparison to other associational forms like extended families, neighborhood groups, traditional caste associations, class factions, common-property managing organizations, social movements and so on" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:19).

While Putnam argues that " the experience of extended face-to-face interaction between citizens in associations leads to the development of 'generalized trust' and civil society" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:21), other researchers contest the hypothesis, finding little evidence that trust can be 'generalized' evenly or symmetrically across society" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:21). Putnam's preference for face-to-face interactions at the cost of under-estimating passive membership, mail-based organizations, and check-book participation has been criticized as framed by "traditional perspectives on civil society" (Tranvik, in Prakash/Selle, 2004:282). Concerning associational life impact on civil society, researchers such as Rudolphe have emphasized the fact that "we need criteria of distinction…Not all associations are the same; not all have the capacity to generate mutuality and cooperation" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:21). Different types of associations would lead to different consequences as Simone Baglione also found in his research on social capital in Switzerland (Baglione, 2004).

The portability of social capital from one social context to another has been questioned as insufficiently demonstrated. "What are, Rudolphe asks, the conditions and mechanisms that translate the social capital generated by associational life from inside to outside and that make social capital available for strengthening the pursuit of the public good?" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:21). Putnam's minimization of large scale economic and political changes impact on civic engagement in America (Prakash/Selle, 2004:32) has been seen as problematic. The causal relationship between social trust and economic development is said to have not been established. The opposite causal sequence –"that the institutional environment that underlies economic development based on markets and enterprise, including reliable enforcement of contract, better policing and access to formal legal institutions provides for higher levels of mutual trust among individuals and corporate actors" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:22-23) –has also been favored by social scientists. That the direction of causality is the other way around is still disputed.

Let us sum up major criticism raised against Putnam conceptualization of social capital: less emphasis on contextual characteristics of social capital due to over-reliance on statistical large-scale measures of social capital; poor or unconvincing elaboration on intermediate mechanisms between social capital and its outcomes; and under-estimation of macro-structural influence on local trends. These constitute the main objections against Putnam's treatment of social capital. Some critics have preferred the "social-structural" approach to Putnam's conception which in their view unproductively resuscitates the old civic culture argument under the guise of "social capital" (Edwards and Foley, 1999: 163).

"SOCIAL STRUCTURAL" FORMULATION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Bourdieu and Coleman's formulation of social capital is seen by Edwards and Foley as more promising. For the French sociologist Bourdieu, social capital is "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition –or in other words, to membership in a group- which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a "credential" which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word" (Bourdieu,1986:248-249). Bourdieu's sociology rests on the view that "differential access to capital, not individual utility maximizing behavior, shapes both economic and social worlds" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:143). What produces and reproduces access to social capital is not self-regulating markets, but networks of connections operating as the "product of an endless effort at institution" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:143). Bourdieu's indications on how to measure and weigh social capital "has a clarity and coherence not found in Coleman and Putnam" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:143). For him, social capital has to be captured as "the volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent… depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected" (Bourdieu, 1986:249).

Coleman's definition of social capital also insists on relational and social structural elements. He defines social capital as "a variety of entities having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspect of a social structure, and they

facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure…Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among persons. It is lodged neither in individuals nor in physical implements of production" (Coleman 1990:302). Coleman provides a list of forms of social capital which include "obligations and expectation", "information potential", "norms and effective sanctions", "authority relations", "appropriable social organization", and "intentional organization" understood as "direct investment in social capital" (Coleman 1990: 306-313). Critics have denounced the incoherence of this list, and Coleman's instrumental conception of social capital. Coleman tends to describe components of social capital as "elements in the rational calculations of self-interested agents, and not, as in Bourdieu, constitutive of individual identities and strategies" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:144). As Charles Tilly remarks, Coleman's verbal accounts mentioned many agents, monitors, and authorities who influenced individual actions; but "his mathematical formulations tellingly portrayed a single actor's computations rather than interactions among persons" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:144). Nevertheless, like Bourdieu, Coleman has highlighted the way in which "concrete social relationships can give individuals access to crucial resources not otherwise available despite ample endowments of human or financial capital" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:144). While insisting that subjective attributes as trust, expectations and norms are endogenous to specific social relations, he shows awareness of the fact that " a given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless or even harmful for others" (Coleman, 1990:144). The emphasis on the specificity of contexts in which social capital is produced distinguishes his approach from Putnam's. His account on trust has nothing to do with "generalized trust" dealt with by the political science literature. For him, trust is "a feature of the specific context in which specified individuals or classes of individuals can be trusted" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:144).

Edwards and Foley together with network analysts, sociologists and applied social scientists proclaim their preference for the social structural approach initiated by Bourdieu. Against Putnam's "context-free" account on social capital, they place emphasis on social capital "context-dependence". "Generalized trust", "average associational membership" and other statistical measures of social capital components seem too abstract to provide an understanding of how specific social relations facilitate individual

and collective actions. Focusing on "trust", Edwards and Foley convincingly demonstrate that " high levels of 'generalized social trust,' in the absence of information about who has access to such trust under what conditions, can tell us little about a polity or a community. Context counts…and counts crucially" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:151). For a norm such as "unattended children will be looked after by adults in the vicinity" to become a social capital for someone, other contextual factors such as people's adherence to the norm, the extent to which people are out on the streets, the external reputation of the area, or a dramatic incident 'demonstrating' the trustworthiness of neighbors have to be known. Any credible conception of social capital has to recognize "the dependence of its 'use value' and liquidity on the specific social contexts in which it is found" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:146). That is why "neither resources in general, attitudes and norms such as trust and reciprocity, nor social infrastructures such as networks and associations can be understood as social capital by themselves" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:146).

The distinction between social resources and social networks is very crucial. Access to social resources is neither brokered equitably nor distributed evenly. The context-dependent conception of social capital holds that " the access required to convert social resources (the 'raw materials' of social capital) into social capital has two distinct, but necessary, components -the perception that a specific resource exists and some form of social relationship that brokers individual or group access to those particular social resources" (Edwards and Foley, 1999: 146). Social infrastructures that broker such access may be dyads, informal networks, voluntary associations, religious institutions, communities, cities, national or transnational movements. Social capital liquidity and "use value" thus strongly depends on specific social contexts, which also shape "the means by which access to specific social resources is distributed and managed" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:146).

Social structuralists push for an understanding of social capital as comprising both social networks and resources. None of these by itself deserves to be called "social capital". It is essential to note that not all networks are of equal importance in brokering access to resources, and not all networks have resources. Individuals also do not perceive the availability of resources in the same way. Such uneven distribution of resources and variety of networks is only accounted for by a context-dependent conception of social

capital. To measure an individual's social capital, one has to look not only at resources available through his or her social networks, but also at the features of such networks and one's social position in the network. The more ties, the more diverse ties an individual has, the more likely the person is to get access to resources of various kinds. As resources are accessed one tie at a time, one tie can just be sufficient to gain access to a crucial resource. That is why "neither networks (as micro-structures), nor network attributes of network members alone equal social capital… Social capital is best conceived as access (networks) plus resources" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:166). The "use value" of an individual's network position or ties depends on the structure of the network, the individual's position within it, and the social location of the entire network within the broader socio-economic context which "shapes the ways that specific networks can and cannot link their members to resources" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:165). Macro-structures have great influence in shaping access to resources at micro levels. Edwards and Foley have observed that "an individual may have extensive access to resources in a specific network, but the network as a whole be embedded in a declining sector or an oppressed constituency" (Edwards and Foley, 1999: 166). Such marginalized networks may need linkages or social bridges in order to gain access to a greater array of resources.

As social capital corresponds to networks access plus resources, measures of access as well as measures of resources can only stand as "indirect indicators of social capital". But measures of access are said to be "better indicators of one's potential social capital than would be some indication of the resources generally present in a given context" (Edwards and Foley, 1999: 168). Availability of resources and their accessibility say nothing either on actual use, or on the quality of use (good or bad) as Edwards and Foley explain: "one can be said to have social capital and not use it at a particular time for a variety of reasons, or not use it well"(Edwards and Foley, 1999:168). Actual use of social capital depends on agency to be considered as a variable "influenced by a range of factors, rather than implicitly presumed to be constant" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:168).

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Putnam observes that "a growing body of research suggests that where trust and social networks flourish; individuals, firms, neighborhoods, and even nations prosper" (Putnam, 2000:319). Elsewhere, he says that "economists have recently discovered that

trusting communities, other things being equal, have a measurable economic advantage" (Putnam, 1993:135). The positive correlation between social capital and economic performance has been argued on various commonly accepted grounds.

Social ties influence who gets a job, a bonus, a promotion, and other employment benefits. It is also known that social networks provide people with advice, job leads, strategic information, and letters of recommendation. Lack of social ties can maintain unemployment or low wages as has been suggested by a study of Los Angeles county: "neighborhood poverty kept workers' wages down not because they lacked transportation to well-paying jobs, but because these workers lacked access to networks of people who could tell them about job opportunities in the first place" (Putnam, 2000:322). Where social networks exist, unemployed people use them for good ends. This particularly happens in ethnic immigrants communities "where employers rely on their employees to recruit and train new workers" (Putnam, 2000:320). Connection to unexpected opportunities is often provided by weak ties rather than strong ties, bridging social capital rather than bonding social capital for the simple reason that my closest friends "are likely to know the same people and hear of the same opportunities I do" (Putnam, 2000:320). This clearly supports the idea that not all networks are of equal value. An Atlanta study found that "networks tend to be more lucrative for whites than for members of minority groups. Blacks who gain job information from their neighbors tend to earn less than blacks who obtain their jobs through contacts outside the neighborhood" (Putnam, 2000: 322). Such finding confirm that "among the disadvantaged, 'bridging' social capital may be the most lucrative form" (Putnam, 2000: 322).

Not only do social networks constitute privileged avenues to job opportunities, they often represent assets what our employer hires us for. Well-connected people are sought after by employers who intend to use their connection to further their business. The search for such type of employees would not happen if it was not true that "social networks have undeniable monetary value" (Putnam, 2000: 321). Besides, economic gains may be more secured when transactions take place within social networks characterized by trust. It is true that "in buying and selling, especially for major purchases or risky transactions, we prefer to deal with people we know" (Putnam, 2000: 321). As a matter of fact, researchers have found that "people who transact with friends and relatives

report greater satisfaction with the results than do people who transact with strangers" (Putnam, 2000:321). Trust is particularly crucial for economic development as it is impossible to base all beneficial transactions on formal contracting or explicit policing. For Torsvik, a dense network of horizontal associations will facilitate economic development by reducing opportunism, and free-riding (Torsvik, in Prakash/Selle, 2004). This is more likely to happen in a social context where social interactions are continuous, and participants care about their reputation. In such environment, deviance may be detrimental to future opportunities. By having incentives to abide by the rules, all members benefit from social cooperation. Social trust provides solution to dilemmas of collective action and to the tragedy of the common.

Students of urban life have demonstrated that residents of extreme poverty areas have not only less social ties, but also social ties of less social worth. And this plays a key role in maintaining the statu quo. Poverty also undermines the development of positive social capital as confirmed by Putnam's illustration: "a study of the impoverished and socially isolated Red Hook section of Brooklyn, for example, has documented the deterioration of neighborhood associations and church activities. Their decline has inhibited the growth of social networks just as employers were making most of their hires through "word of mouth"" (Putnam, 2000: 322). When social capital does not exist, "people in economically disadvantaged areas appear to suffer doubly. They lack the material resources to get ahead, and they lack the social resources that might enable them to amass these material resources" (Putnam, 2000: 322).

There are ways in which social capital may be economically counterproductive. In some instances, "tight bonds of trust and solidarity might restrict growth and mobility" (Putnam, 2000:322). Successful entrepreneurs can be dragged down by excessive demands for jobs, money, and other favors from struggling family members, neighbors or co-members of the same association. Doing business by relying on tight networks for recruitment and sales can be viewed as "anathema to the tacit norms of reciprocity and altruism that govern good social relations" (Putnam, 2000: 322). Apart from those few inconveniences, researchers agree that "social capital does help individuals to prosper" (Putnam, 2000: 322). As a consequence, "it also can help neighborhood, and even entire nations, to create wealth" (Putnam, 2000: 322). Community development in Tupelo

(Mississippi), as Putnam reports, was triggered by uniting "Tupelo's business and civic leaders around the idea that the town and surrounding Lee County would never develop economically until they had developed as a community" (Putnam, 2000: 323). Besides, the economic miracle in California's Silicon Valley has been explained by evoking the horizontal networks of informal and formal cooperation through which "nominally competitors… shared information, problem-solving techniques, and, perhaps just as important, beers after work" (Putnam, 2000:324). Those are illustrations that "under certain conditions, cooperation among economic actors might be better engine of growth than free-market competition" (Putnam, 2000:323). Stressing the importance of trust in economic development, Francis Fukuyama has argued that "economies whose citizens have high levels of social trust – high social capital - will dominate the twenty-first century" (Putnam, 2000:325). In the absence of trust to employers and other market players, "we end up squandering our wealth on surveillance equipment, compliance structures, insurance, legal services, and enforcement of government regulations" (Putnam, 2000:325). The World Bank has shown a great deal of expectations to the concept of social capital, considering it as 'the missing link' in theories of economic development (Grootaert, 1998). On the correlation between social capital and economic development, there are still some unanswered questions. Nevertheless, it is merely sure that social networks come with economic benefits, at least for individuals. Whether we all gain if we all have richer social capital is not entirely clear. How does social capital relate to political engagement?

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Though measures of involvement in politics stand as components of social capital especially in Putnam's "bowling alone" and "making democracy work", the social capital literature has outlined the impact of associational life and social trust in fostering political engagement. It is such internal link between associations' attendance and political engagement that I intend to discuss in the following lines.

Tocqueville has outlined two main effects of voluntary associations: " an effect on the inner moral life of those who participate, enhancing their sympathies and understanding for fellow humans, and they have an external effect, nurturing their engagement with a wider community of purposes and making common purposes more

effective" (Tocqueville 1969:514-15). Putnam has confirmed such hypothesis in finding that Northern regions in Italy, where associational life proved to be more vibrant, displayed patterns of high political engagement as measured by voting turnout, the quality of political choices, newspaper readership and interactions with officials. Since political participation is a key ingredient of democracy, associational dynamism and social trust that it breeds are "making democracy work". When documenting decline in all forms of social capital in America, Putnam provides a long list of acts of political participation including voting, contracting local and national officials, working for political parties and other organizations, discussing politics with neighbors, attending public meetings, joining in election campaigns, signing petitions, speaking out on talk radio, attending a political rally or speech, writing to congressman or senator, running for political office, writing an article for a magazine or newspaper. All these acts fall under the category of either "collaborative forms of political involvement" or "expressive" forms. The former is productive of more social capital as it engages "broader public interests, whereas expressive forms are more individualistic and correspond to more narrowly defined interests" (Putnam, 2000:45). Whatever form of political engagement one considers, there is a positive correlation between associational attendance and political involvement.

Mechanisms through which association attendance fosters political engagement have been broadly described. Beside "external" and "internal" effects of associations mentioned by Tocqueville, it is right to see associations as "deliberative" forums where participants are given opportunities to engage not only with their specific issues but also with wider social concerns. Civic skills like delivering a speech, organizing meeting, lobbying for an idea, monitoring discussion, reaching compromise are acquired in actual involvement in an association. Associations also provide occasions for learning civic virtues such as trust, reciprocity, tolerance etc. Bridging networks and cross-cutting ties are particularly crucial in opening associations to broader political issues and in building the so-called "civil society". So, every kind of association, be it a bird-watching club or a bowling league, is either a school or a platform for political engagement. The distinction between political and non-political associations, while still meaningful with regard to stated objectives, may in some circumstances be misleading. Whereas Habermas'

differentiation between the public sphere and the private sphere would consider most of non-political associations as belonging to the private sphere and thus not participating to the continuous deliberative communication, Tocqueville, Putnam and Max Weber have emphasized on the political consequences of even non-political associations(Rudolph in Prakash/Selle, 2004: 76).

Saying that associations foster political engagement tells us nothing about the quality of such involvement. As a matter of fact, social commentators have demonstrated that voluntary associations may breed a kind of political participation that is detrimental to democracy. Beside the existence of anti-democratic groups or exclusivist bonding ties, " constant and conflicting pleas of ever more specialized lobbies have paralyzed even well-intentioned public officials and stifled efforts to cut or improve ineffective programs" (Putnam, 2000:340). In addition, associations mostly benefit best equipped members, thus undermining the egalitarian project of any democracy. It has also been argued that associations nurture ideological extremism. This is supported by evidence from the Roper Social and Political Trends archives which suggest that "ideological extremism and civic participation are correlated" (Putnam, 2000: 340). It is true that associational vibrancy does not always work hand in hand with constructive political engagement because as Putnam puts it "the moral uses of associational life by members are indeterminate" (Putnam, 2000:341). But without such social structures, citizens "have a very limited ability to be heard by many other people or to influence the political process, unless we happen to be rich or famous" (Putnam, 2000:338).

THIS STUDY'S APPROACH TO SOCIAL CAPITAL

Socio-psychological and socio-structural approaches are not fundamentally contradictory. Socio-structuralists deny any heuristic value to the political scientists' drive to defining social capital as values. They nevertheless recognize the latter as available resources within social networks. The uneven distribution of such resources and differential access to them are important contextual dynamics of social capital which the political science broad statistical argument is criticized not to account for. In reality, researchers such as Putnam have been aware of scarcity and inefficiency of social resources in "disadvantaged communities". That they have totally ignored inequalities

and inequities that affect the production and distribution of social capital is an accusation that would be hard to sustain.

The present research conceptualization of social capital rests on the idea that both traditions are rather complementary. Social capital refers both to social structures and values that emanate from them. Voluntary associations and informal networks are instances of social structures. Interpersonal trust and political trust are reflections of those values. In measuring social capital, statistical abstraction is of undeniable value but not sufficient. This research uses statistical tools to compare individuals in terms of their associations membership, association attendance, and scope of informal networks. Comparison of individuals' adherence to social values can only be done in rating them on a common basis. Thus, it is possible to know who tends to be more or less trusting in general or in particular circumstances.

In including social values and political values in the measurement of social capital, this research goes beyond socio-structuralist precepts. Exploring the availability and distribution of such important social values within social structures may be of great intellectual contribution. Edwards and Foley's warning that social capital means not merely social structures and resources, but social structures, resources plus access has led to shaping the research in order to include some measures of access. In doing so, this research's approach goes beyond Putnam's conceptualization. Measures of access in the present research have displayed an understanding of actual use value of social structures and social resources.

CONCLUSION

Despite the indisputable success of the social capital theory, the debate that has risen from it has mostly been inconclusive. While reviving the old argument on "political culture" and Tocqueville's appraisal of secondary associations, Putnam's theorization of beneficial externalities from repeated social interactions has been criticized over the neglect of contextual circumstances, the under-estimation of macro political structures, the over-reliance on abstract statistical tools, poor theorization on intermediate mechanisms between social capital and its presumed products. Political scientists have mostly embraced Putnam's socio-psychological and broad-scale approach. Sociologists, economists and networks analysts have rather preferred focusing on local structures with

special attention to how different networks generate various resources on which individuals have differential access. They tend to limit the use of the term “social capital” to the actual benefit. Both traditions nevertheless agree that social networks, whether associations or informal networks, broker access to resources such as trust, reciprocity, economic advancement, political engagement etc. How effectively this is achieved depends upon the broader social context, the location and the features of the network, the quality of resources within the network, their accessibility, as well as individuals’ agency. The present research has included social values namely social trust and political trust as indicators of social capital, thus going beyond the socio-structural limitation to social organizations. Measures of access to social structures and to resources have also been captured. Such approach takes further Putnam’s broad statistical accounts. In one word, this research’s conceptualization of social capital depicts it as both social structures and social values with an emphasis on its actual “use value” and accessibility. In general, interpersonal trust and intensive flow of information between members of social networks are said to enhance individual economic interests, the commitment for public goods, and the development of an engaged civil society. Data on Congolese immigrants living in central Johannesburg will help discuss the validity of such claims.

CHAPTER 2. FIELD WORK: DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Researching the existence or non-existence of any meaningful correlation between Congolese immigrants' social capital and their economic performance or/and their political engagement heavily relies on primary data. A survey is the most appropriate way to gather the needed information. This chapter discusses the design, the implementation, and the coding of the field-work in three parts followed by a conclusion.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Rebuilding home away from home

Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg have constituted the target population for this study. By Central Johannesburg this research has precisely referred to the following residence or work locations: Yeoville, Berea, Hillbrow, Braamfontein, and Parktown. Such geographical limitation has been imposed by time and financial constraints. However, this specific area comprises more Congolese immigrants than any other part of Johannesburg. Yeoville and Berea particularly, are home to thousands of Congolese immigrants and the entry residential area for most Congolese, especially when they have less financial resources. House rental is cheaper. Sharing a room or a flat with a fellow Congolese is easier to negotiate. Community interactions may provide information on job opportunities, or simply moral support to handle daily hardships.

At the center of Yeoville is found an African market called "Gambela", reminiscent of a Kinshasa market of the same name. One will find in the market a lot of products coming freshly from Congo: palm oil, salted fish, fried fish, cassava leaves, cassava bread, etc., are sold by Congolese. In addition to having their residence in the area, Congolese immigrants have developed a wide range of commercial, religious, cultural, and recreational activities. Some of those activities such as money and parcel transfer agencies, international calls shops, Congolese music and video warehouses, Congolese restaurants and dancing-clubs constitute very important meeting places for Congolese immigrants. As for religious activities, Congolese have created a plethora of churches whose number, ever increasing, approximates one hundred. Reflective of the

same religious segmentation as in home country, those groups are mainly attended , at a frequency of three services per week, and have their services in Congolese local languages, with preaching sometimes simultaneously translated into English. The account of Congolese associational life will provide further insights into the complex dynamics of the numerous churches that Congolese immigrants still continue to create. Cultural and recreational activities include sport, music concerts, TV watching, open discussions at Reference(Time-square Yeoville), Kin-Malebo(Time-Squire Yeoville), or other gathering places. It is right to assert that a lot of Congolese immigrants have built their home in this part of Johannesburg. What category of Congolese has our survey targeted?

A predominantly young population

A sample of 100 Congolese immigrants has been designed so as to capture key characteristics of the entire population. While one would find in Central Johannesburg Congolese of all walks of life, young people whose age ranges from 20 to 40 constitute the largest portion of the population. “Oyo ezali mboka ya bana na bana” (“We are here in Johannesburg just between us little boys”, or “there are no “fathers” around us, the fathers are left at home”) a saying of young Congolese to express the fact that Congolese immigrants are mainly young people whose parents have been left in Congo. Females form a tiny minority within the group of young people. In every group of 4 young people, one is likely to count only one female. Immigration to Johannesburg is associated with a sense of adventure and uncertainty which young male are more likely to afford. That the “Congolese Diaspora in South Africa is among the youngest compared to Congolese Diaspora in Belgium, France, USA, etc” has been acknowledged by one interviewee, a Baptist church pastor. The existence of apartheid discouraged people to migrate to South Africa. The few migrants who arrived in South Africa during Apartheid were directed to other countries as asylum residence. Besides, it was hard to get legal residence for those who were willing to settle in South Africa. “It was not easy to have any legal residence. On the contrary, it was easier to have your visa stamped a “must leave” statement. Once you get the “must leave”, there was no further hearing, no negotiation”, stated one interviewee who has been in South Africa since 1991. It is after 1994 that Congolese immigration to Johannesburg has become a serious alternative in the eyes of those considering leaving Congo. The war (from 1995 to 2002) with its subsequent threat to

human lives and adverse impacts on socio-economic prospects intensified the fleeing from the "burning spot". As a matter of fact, most Congolese immigrants in Johannesburg left Congo after 1995. It has been easier for young people to migrate given their lack of marital responsibility, their readiness to embrace uncertainty, and their flexibility. The fact that this population is mainly single, very mobile, and more active in the informal sector goes without saying.

Since people may need time to integrate into social networks, the survey has targeted Congolese immigrants who have lived in Johannesburg for the past two years. The questionnaire started with a question to determine the arrival of the immigrant in Johannesburg. Only immigrants who have lived in South Africa since July 2003 have been interviewed.

Age and gender stood as the only meaningful criteria shaping the structure of the 100 Congolese immigrants' sample. How people were selected and how many for each age and gender? Early interviews made me realize the large number of people whose age varies from 30 to 39. People aged from 20 to 29 seem to be the second largest group of adult Congolese in Central Johannesburg. The smallest group is made of people over 40. After careful observation, one may appreciate the female adult Congolese immigrants' population as a quarter of the actual population. Based on such demographical estimations, the sample of 100 included 70 male and 30 female respondents. Gender and age representativity has been achieved in the way outlined by the following table (see table 2.1).

To gather the relevant information for this study, a set of questions was designed and it is added in the annex. It is nevertheless important to explain the logic behind each question

The logic behind the questionnaire

The questionnaire was made of thirty seven different questions. The nature of the research and the kind of research question has required such extensive data collection. Key variables such as social capital, economic performance and political engagement have multiple components.

Table 2.1 Gender and age representation

Age (years)	Male	Female	***total***
20 – 29	14	11	25
30 – 39	38	14	52
40+	18	5	23
			100

They cannot be convincingly measured unless segmented into multiple sub-variables which are separately investigated. Besides, the qualitative pieces of information needed to enlighten the quantitative computation on correlation between the three major variables required additional questions. The following lines will elaborate on how each question has been used in the measurement of key variables, in the study of correlation between them, and in the discussion of the hypothesis of social capital causality towards economic performance and political engagement.

The thirty-seven questions have inquired into five major aspects. From questions 1 to 5, the aim is to capture demographical characteristics. Questions 6-12, 35, 36 capture information on individuals' economic performance. Individuals' social capital has been measured through questions 13-22. Political engagement has been investigated by questions 23-28. Finally, questions 29-34 serve to study factors enabling socio-economic success. They can be called "correlational questions" in the sense that they help to discuss the hypothesis of social capital influence on economic success. How each set of questions contribute in the making of the key variables, namely social capital, economic performance, and political engagement?

Demographical characteristics include date of arrival in Johannesburg, gender, age, education, ethnicity, and church attendance. Ethnicity is said to be an important factor in explaining social behaviors in Africa. And church attendance has been used by social scientists as a key factor in explaining Congolese society (See Leon de Saint Moulin, Congo-Afrique**,** No 375:292). The date of arrival in Johannesburg is important because only Congolese were considered for this study which have lived in Johannesburg for more than two years.

To get a sense of individuals' economic performance, this research has taken into account the employment experience, the legal residence experience, and the income variation. I have examined such experience at two different moments namely at arrival from Congo and at the time of the survey. Respondents were asked to report about both points in time. As for the employment experience, participants were asked to tick among these 8 options: (1) unemployed, (2) working part-time in informal sector, (3) working full-time in formal sector, (4) working part-time in informal sector, (5) working full-time in informal sector, (6) self-employed student, (7) student, (8) housewife/homemaker. Consideration of an individual's responses at both points in time allows describing his experience as either (1) a progress, either (2) a decline, either (3) constant or as (4) unclear[1].

Regarding legal residence experience, participants have reported on whether they hold one of these South African residence permits: (1) refugee status, (2) study visa, (3) job visa, (4) permanent residence, (5) SA citizenship, (6) other. Asylum seeker status has been assimilated to refugee status. Visit visa has not been one of the options since the research focused on the kind of legal document granted once an initial visitor decides to stay in South Africa not as a visitor, but permanently. Most Congolese would come with a visit visa, but then would acquire another legal residence status to stay longer. The kind of legal residence they get is what we have captured as legal residence at arrival from Congo. Differential access to socio-economic and political rights is attached to each legal residence status. It can be argued that the refugee status or asylum seeker status is the most vulnerable, and the South African citizenship the most securing. Shift from one status to another can then be depicted either as (1) progress, either as (2) decline, or as (4) unclear[2]. The lack of variation is considered as (3) constant.

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[1] Regarding employment experience, progress (1) has been inferred in the following cases: 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 1-6, and 1-7. Decline (2) has been inferred in cases: 4-1, 3-1. There have been few constant (3) cases: 4-6, 5-3, 1-1, 2-2, 3-3, 4-4, 5-5, 6-6, 7-7, and 8-8. Some employment trajectories are not easy to categorize (4): 7-4, 3-2, 7-1, 5-7, 7-8, 3-7, and 5-8. Each couple indicates the type of occupation at arrival from Congo and at the time of the survey. Only cases where progress or decline is clear have been characterized as such. Such approach has some limitations: there may be progress or decline even within the same category of employment situation. Capturing such details would have required further inquiry.

[2] Regarding legal residence experience, progress(1) has been inferred in the following cases: 1-4, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 5-3, 2-5, 2-3, 2-4, 6-3, 6-1, 6-4. There have been no instances to describe as decline (2). Constant (3) cases are most common: 1-1, 6-6. Some legal residence trajectories are not easy to categorize (4): 2-1, 1-6. Shifting from other(6) to any other category has been described as 'progress' since it has generally meant that the person did not have any legal residence permit.

The most crucial measure of economic performance is provided by reports on approximate income per month. Options have included the following ranges: up to R200, R201 to R1000, R1001 to R3000, R3001 to R9000, R9001 to R20000, R20001+. What is investigated under the concept of "income" is the total amount of money that an individual has at its disposal on a monthly basis. Not restricted to monthly salary – most of our interviewees are not employed in the formal sector-, monthly income includes donations, loans, and occasional funds. All interviewees are independent adults who have to take charge of themselves in Johannesburg by any available means. Inquiring on individuals' monthly expenditures would have been an alternative device. But it would have hidden the amount of money that is not spent, at least for a few of those whose income is higher than expenditures.

Range income has been preferred to questions on precise income for obvious reasons. Few people, especially those without a formal salary, would recall the precise amount of money earned per month. Besides, even if participants were aware of the exact income per month, the majority would be uncomfortable to tell the exact amount to an unknown researcher. By opting for a range system, I avoid discomforting respondents without undermining the goal of being able to distinguish between (1,2)low income earners, (3,4) average income earners and relatively (5,6) high income earners. Here again, comparison between income earning at both points in time unequivocally allows to describe individuals' experience as (1) progress, (2) decline, (3) constant. Such classification is backed by respondents own assessment of their economic performance as given by their answers to questions 35 and 36. How is social capital operationalized?

Social capital is multifaceted. In this research, it has been approached as both "social networks" and "trust". While accepting Diani claim that "there is no social capital per se, only social ties, which in relation to certain purposes, may operate as social capital" (Prakash/Selle, 2004:141), and Edwards and Foley observation that, without any indication on actual access, networks and resources can only be indirect measures of social capital, the use of the concept "social capital" does not imply any actual capitalization, but mostly the existence of intensive social ties and social resources. Whether individuals actually do turn such social assets into real capital is not implied by the concept "social capital". "Social capital" has more to do with social capacity rather

than social effectiveness. Four components have been included as reflection of individuals' social capital stock: (1) associational life, (2) number of non-Congolese friends, (3) interpersonal trust and (4) political trust.

Participants' associational life is dealt with through questions 13-16. What is captured by the questionnaire is the name of the association, its category, its size, the frequency of its gatherings, the respondent's attendance, and its inclusive or exclusive character. What really matters to the quantitative analysis is the number of associations joined by an individual, the number of meetings weekly or monthly attended. This allows the discrimination between joiners and non-joiners as well as between occasional and committed joiners. The friendship question (17) has aimed at finding out the extent to which Congolese immigrants open their social networks to other nationalities. Having large network of non-Congolese friends is a sign of social integration which is crucial in the constitution of one's social capital stock. The subsequent question on respondents' identification with "Congolese community" checks whether participants perceive themselves in solidarity with other Congolese in Johannesburg. Trust stands as one of the most important reflections of social capital since the social capital literature has largely demonstrated that repeated social interactions build social trust. Two types of trust are investigated: interpersonal trust and political trust. Interpersonal trust is both generalized and specific. Trust towards fellow Congolese, South Africans, members of one's ethnic group, other foreigners, one's house mates, and neighbors is either (1) existent, (3) inexistent, or (2) unclear. Political trust is reflected by readiness to notify the police of a serious crime one would know being committed. Readiness to report a personally experienced robbery to the police also indicates the same variable. So, on questions 21 and 22, respondents who have answered "yes" will naturally be labeled trusting towards the police. Let us turn to the way political engagement has been measured through questions 23-28.

Political engagement is segmented into numerous sub-variables on which questions are formulated. Interest in politics, awareness on political current affairs, propensity to involve in a public action, and past political engagement records stand as different aspects whose combination help determine who tends to be politically engaged or disengaged. Questions 23 and 24 determine who reads local newspaper, and who

listens to radio or TV news. The two following questions (25, 26) go further in measuring participants' knowledge of political current affairs. Ten statements on Congolese and South African politics require validation or invalidation from participants. At the end, each respondent scores on a scale of 20 points. Each set of questions on current politics in Congo and South Africa is made of very common topics accessible to the average respondent. Questions on whether it is true or false that "there is no fight anymore in the Eastern Congo", "there was no demonstration in Kinshasa on the 30 June 2005", "voter enrolment process is underway in Congo", "Zuma is the current deputy president in South Africa", "South Africa's democracy is now eleven years old", "some Congolese demonstrated in Pretoria and Cape Town in relation to the extension of the transition period on 30th June 2005" are accessible to an average politically knowledgeable participant. In each set, only one or two questions require deeper familiarity with political life. When I ask whether it is true or false that "Congolese transition constitution allows to extend the transition period for six months once", "the Congolese 3rd Republic Constitution sets the age for president candidate at 40 years", "Cosatu has not organized any demonstration since July 2005", "Thabo Mbeki can still run for the next presidency according to South African constitution", these questions have targeted participants with deeper knowledge on Politics. Participants' scores authorize a rating in terms of respondents with (20/20, 18/20) excellent, (16/20, 14/20) very good, (12/20, 10/20) good, (8/20, 6/20) low, and (4/20, 2/20, 0/20) very low knowledge on current political affairs.

A third set of questions captures participants' readiness to engage in public political action. A participant's level of adherence to five different statements tells us whether he or she holds positive (engaging) or negative (disengaging) view on political affairs (do you agree or not that "reading or watching news on Congolese politics is a waste of time?"), whether he or she perceives himself/herself as capable or incapable of any political action (do you agree or not that " pressure coming from people can make Congolese leaders improve their policies" and that "there is no way you can contribute to the improvement of Congolese Politics from South Africa"), whether or not he or she cares about Congolese politics(do you agree or not that Politics in Congo is none of your business?), and ultimately whether or not he or she is ready to put his hands into the game in joining a peaceful demonstration to support free and fair elections in the Democratic

Republic of Congo. A combination of these four aspects of political engagement has been used to categorize individuals between very politically oriented, politically oriented, politically disengaged, and unclear[3]. A final reflection of political and civic engagement is given by question 28 which asks respondents to tick some past community or politics oriented achievements such as signing a petition, participating in a demonstration, joining a political party, volunteering in a community service, debating on Congolese politics, attending a political public meeting, organizing a party for friends, serving as an officer of some club or organization, subscribing to a political newspaper, browsing on an Internet site on Congolese politics. Marked from 0 to 10 points, participants are then rated as very high (10-9), high (8-7), medium (6-5), low (4-3), very low(2-0) achievers. Finally, distinct measures for interest in politics, for knowledge about politics, for readiness to engage in political action, and for past socio-political involvement are worked out. A unique measure of political engagement emerges from the combination of those four sub-variables (cf. Chapter 3). The ultimate goal being the analysis of correlation between social capital, economic performance and political engagement, a few questions have aimed at gathering some relevant relational information.

Questions 29 to 34 investigate factors which have played an important role in overcoming a financial problem (29), in migrating to Johannesburg (30), in finding an accommodation at arrival from Congo (31), in solving legal residence problems (32), in getting a job (33). Finally, participants are asked: “when you look at your living in Johannesburg, who would you consider to have helped you the most?” (34). Participants’ answers are put in a list of options for a better treatment with Excel and SPSS.

Research’s internal and external validity

Were participants able to provide reliable information? I personally administered the questionnaire to the large majority of interviewees. A few questionnaires were filled in without any assistance. My own involvement in data collection made it possible to translate questions into French or Lingala for those who had difficulty in understanding English. A French version of the question was produced to ensure consistency. Random selection of respondents would have been the ideal way to constitute the sample.

[3] How the attribute has been worked out is explained in chapter 3.

Unfortunately, Congolese immigrants are not found in a single and continuous geographical area. To select respondents, I would go to places where it is likely to find Congolese immigrants and I would randomly choose participants. Neither the language used during the interviews, neither the places where the conversation took place, neither the mode of selection of interviewees, neither the moral disposition of the participants could raise serious concerns on the reliability of their responses and the viability of the research in general. That is why I am in a position to argue that conditions of internal and external validity have been met as I shall show in the following lines.

Internal validity refers to "the extent to which the structure of a research design enable us to draw unambiguous conclusions from our results" (D. de Vaus, 2001:28). It requires precise definition of the research question, anticipation of alternative hypothesis, adequate operationalization of key concepts, ensuring a basis for comparison of differing groups. In the context of this research, such logical prescriptions have been complied with. The research aims at finding out the extent to which Congolese immigrants have access to social capital and the way it impacts on their economic performance and political engagement. The theoretical assumption, coming from the large literature on social capital, expects that Congolese immigrants with higher social capital will be economically well performing and politically engaged. As one can see, social capital is used as an independent variable which is supposed to explain two dependent variables namely "economic performance" and "political engagement". Alternative explanations of these variables are included in the design of the questionnaire as the study has inquired into participants' education level, ethnicity, and professional situation prior to their immigration. It will be possible to investigate then whether "economic performance" and "political engagement" are more correlated with education, ethnicity, and previous professional status than with social capital. As for the crucial issue of adequately operationalizing core concepts such as economic performance, political engagement and social capital, the study has built on the way other scholars have defined and measured those concepts. The merit of this research measurement lies on its multidimensionality. Does the research design comply with criteria of external validity?

What is expressed under the requirement of external validity is the possibility of generalization from sample findings. The representative character of the sample as well

as its random selection is recognized as core foundations of statistical generalization. In the context of this research, a rigorous representative sample could not be worked out due to the unavailability of information on precise number and demographical characteristics of the Congolese immigrants' population in Central Johannesburg. To compensate for that deficiency, a relatively representative and statistically valid sample has been worked out. One hundred respondents is a statistically valid basis for generalization because the size is broad enough to capture relevant characteristics of the population. Besides, the sample reflects the age and gender composition that one would experience in everyday interactions in Congolese immigrants' meeting places. Independent research conducted within the same area in 2003 by the department of forced migration of the University of the Witwatersrand displays similar demographic characteristics. Out of 106 Congolese participants, 74,6% were male, and 25,5% female. The following age composition was found: 18-25(30.8%), 26-30(33.7%), 31-35(17.3%), 36-40(11.5%, 41-45(3.8%), 46-50(2.9%), 51+(0.0%)(Human displacement, survival, and the politics of space. Final survey results, 19 June 2003, p.2). Concerning the requirement for random selection of participants, this prescription could not be applied radically since it presupposes continuous geographical space occupied by the targeted population. That is why random selection was only applied after being directed to places where it was more likely to find Congolese immigrants. It can then be said that the research design has achieved a relative representativity and a limited randomness of the sample. Can this stand as a basis for generalization of the findings? The answer is negative if generalisability is conceived as a reproduction of sample findings into the context of the entire population. It is rather positive if by generalisability we are more interested in anticipating similar trends as those observed in the sample. Indeed, the value of this research lies less in its rigorous generalisability than in the way it engages the social capital theory and reveals the dynamics of the Congolese immigrants' community in central Johannesburg.

CONCLUSION

This study is concerned with Congolese immigrants' access to social networks in Central Johannesburg. Engaging in the on going social capital debate, it seeks to point out the dynamics of correlation between social capital on the one hand and economic performance and political engagement on the other. The field-work has been designed as an intensive survey of 100 Congolese immigrants located in Yeoville, Berea, Hillbrow, Parktown, and Braamfontein. For some practical constraints, the sample could only achieve relative representativity, be constituted through random selection of participants in pre-defined areas. But careful age and gender representativity and randomness in the selection of participants are strong basis that guarantees the research external validity. As for the internal validity, it has been secured by the adequacy of concepts operationalization, by consistency and reliability of measurement relating to social capital, economic performance and political engagement. With a mix of quantitative and qualitative paradigm in the research design, the stage has been set for the exploration of Congolese immigrants' associational life and its impact on their economic and political experience. The next chapter starts reporting the findings.

CHAPTER 3: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

A portrait of Congolese immigrants' population living in Central Johannesburg is painted through the following lines. It is indeed enlightening to capture relevant traits of the population whose social capital dynamics constitute the main concern of the study. Such description has used survey findings in relation to respondents' background demographic characteristics, economic performance and political engagement. The chapter is made up of three parts in accordance with the latter three key aspects. First, what is the demographic profile of the Congolese immigrants' population?

BACKGROUND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Age and gender

The survey has reached one hundred Congolese immigrants, 70% of them being male, and 30% female. There was a determined repartition in terms of age range: 25 people whose age ranges from 20 to 29; 52 participants whose age falls between 30 and 39; and 23 respondents were over 40 years old. Each age category has a specific gender representation. Out of 25 whose age goes from 20 to 29, 14 are male and 11 female. Among the 52 whose age ranges from 30 to 39, 38 are male and 14 female. In the over 40 group, there are 18 men and 5 female. The Congolese immigrant population in Central Johannesburg turns out to be significantly male and young for reasons outlined in the first chapter (pp.21-23).

Education

All the participants have had secondary school education, and 70 % have reached tertiary education. The level of education in the Congolese immigrant community can be said to be high as 30 respondents have had secondary education, 45 have entered an undergraduate program, and 22 have studied at masters' level and 3 persons in a doctoral program. Men tend to be more educated than women, especially at the highest level of education. Some 86,4% of masters' graduates, and 100% of PhD candidates are male.

Such imbalance decreases at lower levels of education. Considering the level of education in each age range can be illuminating.

Some facts are worth noting. First, in all age groups, the number of people who have just stopped at secondary education is very significant (See table 3.1). Masters' graduates are few in the age range (20-29) where one would expect them the most. They rather appear in the 30-39 and over 40 groups. What does it tell us about Congolese immigrants' education? Stopping at secondary education characterizes a large part of the population even if getting to undergraduate or masters' program is more common. Going up to a PhD program is exceptional. People who enter graduate programs tend to do so in their thirties, that is later than expected in normal circumstances. One would like to know why Congolese immigrants belonging to the age group 20-29 tend to be undereducated, why people tend to join masters' program at late age.

The under-education has to do with the fact that most immigrants of that age range come to South Africa after their secondary education or unsuccessful beginnings in a Congolese tertiary institution. Once in South Africa, they experience a variety of obstacles that prevent them from joining a tertiary institution: financial limitations, low intellectual profile, and immediate survival urgency, initial conception of one's stay in South Africa as a transit to Europe or America. Entering graduate programs at a later age reflects to the crisis of the Congolese education system, and also reflects difficulties in joining the South African education system. The dysfunction of Congolese education system expressed itself in the past in terms of "années blanches"[4] and longer academic years. As a result, students graduated 3 to 6 years later than they would in normal circumstances. When such graduates migrate to South Africa, very few of them can directly proceed to a PhD program. According the SAQUA (South African Qualifications Authority), they can only be registered at honours or in exceptional cases at masters' level. This is like taking them one or two years back again. When one adds to that one or more years that immigrants spend in getting English proficiency, and finding financial support, it is understandable that those immigrants who join graduate programs tend to do so later than South Africans or other English speaking foreigners. How did participants name their ethnicity?

[4] In French 'années blanches' refer to years during which schools or universities did not open for one reason or another.

Table 3.1 Education and age

Crosstab

			AGE			
			20-29	30-39	40+	Total
EDUCATIO	secondary school	Count	13	13	4	30
		% within EDUCATIO	43.3%	43.3%	13.3%	100.0%
		% within AGE	52.0%	25.0%	17.4%	30.0%
		% of Total	13.0%	13.0%	4.0%	30.0%
	Undergraduate	Count	11	24	10	45
		% within EDUCATIO	24.4%	53.3%	22.2%	100.0%
		% within AGE	44.0%	46.2%	43.5%	45.0%
		% of Total	11.0%	24.0%	10.0%	45.0%
	masters	Count	1	13	8	22
		% within EDUCATIO	4.5%	59.1%	36.4%	100.0%
		% within AGE	4.0%	25.0%	34.8%	22.0%
		% of Total	1.0%	13.0%	8.0%	22.0%
	doctorate	Count		2	1	3
		% within EDUCATIO		66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within AGE		3.8%	4.3%	3.0%
		% of Total		2.0%	1.0%	3.0%
Total		Count	25	52	23	100
		% within EDUCATIO	25.0%	52.0%	23.0%	100.0%
		% within AGE	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	25.0%	52.0%	23.0%	100.0%

Ethnicity: an ambiguous referent

Answers to the inquiry on participants' ethnicity display the obscurity of the concept at least from the stand-point of the common person. Though the research had avoided starting with a standard definition of ethnicity, its aim by asking the question was to assess the dynamics of ethnic self-definition, and the characteristics of ethnic consciousness. Literature on Congolese identity does not establish a clear-cut distinction between tribe and ethnic group. It does not either sufficiently deal with the difference between ethnic group and ethnic consciousness as not all members of a specific ethnic group would attach significant meaning to that "administrative" membership. Besides, how ethnicity overlaps with tribalism, with linguistic unity, and with administrative units (as provinces) has not been convincingly elucidated. Such confusion is reflected in the way participants have responded to the open-handed question on ethnicity.

Ninety-two respondents have mentioned in all 26 different ethnicities. Eight left the space blank either for not understanding what ethnicity means or for being uncomfortable with any ethnic identification. The twenty-six ethnicities refer to divergent

entities such as colonial ethnic groups[5], linguistic units, tribes(9%), and administrative units ranging from provincial units(5%) to continental units(1%) through national(1%) and race units(2%). A few people identify their ethnicity as African, as Bantu, as Congolese, or as their provincial origin. The majority of participants (75%) describe their ethnicity in terms of colonial ethnic classification or linguistic units. These respondents, while originating from the same geographical region, would describe themselves as Mongo or Mungwandi in accordance with colonial categorization. The very same people would say their ethnicity is Mungala, naming a language they have in common. Reference to colonial categorization or to a common language identity mounts to two totally different identities. They sometimes converge as in the case of "Mukongo" which is both a colonial ethnic category and a linguistic unit without being identical. Table 3.2 presents participants' ethnic identification.

What does it tell us about ethnicity? Clearly a social construct, ethnicity does not evoke an unambiguous referent. Colonial ethnic categorization seems the most internalized. Defining ethnicity in reference to linguistic units is also appealing to many. The will to escape narrow identities is also evidenced by the move to understanding ethnicity in the most inclusive way possible.

Religiosity among Congolese immigrants

Congolese are very religious and overwhelmingly Christian people. Only 5% of my sample said that they do not belong to any church. One percent claims going to more than one church. And only 2% practice Islam. Some 92% go to Christian churches, with a quarter (25%) going to Roman Catholic Church. The remaining 67% are scattered in 25 different churches. A plethora of Christian churches are being established by Congolese immigrants in Johannesburg. In central Johannesburg, the number of these churches, always increasing, is approximating one hundred.

[5] Colonial sociology defined an ethnic group as a group of different tribes with common origin or very close commonalities. Tribes were characterized by their tribal dialect and common origin. Some major ethnic groups conform to such definition.

Table 3. 2 Participants' ethnic self-definition

Ethnicity	Province	No of individuals	Ethnicity	Province	No of Individuals
01. African		1	14. Mukongo	Bandundu&Bas-Congo	30
02. Bandundu	Bandundu	1	15. Muluba kasai	Kasai	3
03. Bantu		2	16. Muluba	Kasai, Katanga	21
04. Basengele		2	17. Mungala	Equateur	8
05. Bashi	Kivu	1	18. Mungwandi	Equateur	2
06. Congolese		1	19. Mubunda	Bandundu	2
07. Ekonda	Equateur	1	20. Mumbala	Bandundu	2
08. Kasai	Kasai	1	21. Musonge	Kasai	1
09. Kasai oriental	Kasai oriental	1	22. Muswahili	Kivu, Katanga,	1
10. Lokele	Equateur	1	23. Muyansi	Bandundu	1
11. Lulua	Kasai	1	24. Nande	Kivu	1
12. Lunda	Katanga	1	25. Pende	Bandundu	1
13. Mongo	Equateur	1	26. Tetela	Kasai	3
			27. Vuliru	Nord Kivu	1

Congolese religious segmentation (see table 3.3) in Central Johannesburg is the transplantation of the kind of religious proliferation that has taken place in Congo since late 1980s. Most of those churches gather from 2 to more than 100 believers per service. A few of them draw a large number of Congolese ranging from 150 to 1000 per service. A detailed research on that phenomenon may classify those churches in terms of small size, medium size and large size churches. What they have in common is the use of Congolese languages in their services, as well as other characteristics one would find in almost all Pentecostal churches. The centralization of the church structure is displayed by the centrality of the main pastors some of whom have used their names to identify the church. While most of the churches share the same doctrinal body, and the same rituals, how does one explain such over-segmentation?

According to the literature on new religious movements, such phenomenon has to do with the marketization of the spiritual which has increased incentives for mostly self-proclaimed pastors to manage each one his own spiritual enterprise whose profitability prospects have been significantly heightened by clients' social uncertainties. Such mushrooming of churches goes with creating jobs for pastors and other church leaders,

decentralizes control over human and financial capital, and brings the church care closer to believers. But spiritual leaders are the most driving and winning forces of the whole process as most churches seem to be "serving their initiators who benefit from the money raised in the name of the religion"(de Saint Moulin, in L'economie des Eglises de reveil et le developpement durable en R.D.C, 2003:16). The very multiplication of churches is attributed to the leaders' search for privileged access to the group's assets. Social researchers have highlighted the fact that "Deputy pastors or Deacons sometimes become eternal pretendants to the position of Pastors, as time goes on, they end up revolting against the all mighty Pastors and founding their own shop-church, in order to have full control and manage financial expenses and income" (Prof. Mukendi Ngindu, in L'economie des Eglises de reveil et le developpement durable en R.D.C, 2003:101)

Table 3. 3 Churches' names

Names	**No of individuals**	**Names**	**No of individuals**
01. Catholic church	25	14. Church of the Living God	1
02. CEAC	1	15. Jehovah Witness	1
03. Heirs of promises sanctuary(Pastor Veyi)	15	16. Baptist church	3
04. Word of life	9	17. AFM(Parktown	1
05. Word of faith	9	18. Christ the King	1
06. Christian church	1	19. National Pentecostal church	2
07. Lutheran church	1	20. Combat spiritual(Maman Olangi)	2
08. Christian family church	1	21. Nouvelle Jerusalem(Holy Ghost ministry)	3
09. Foi et victoire(Faith and victory- Pastor Mike)	1	22. Rhema church	2
10. The way	1	23. Yahwe Shamah Assembly	2
11. Amen Tabernacle	3	24. Nzambe Malamu (God is good)	1
12. Christian Assembly of Johannesburg	2	25. True Spirit of Jesus	1
13. Gospel ministry Jesus the Lord	2	26. Islam	2

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Five key variables capture Congolese immigrants' economic performance: employment experience, legal residence experience, income variation, being better off or not, sending money home or not. In describing participants' own trajectories with regard to employment, legal residence status, and income, attributes such as "progress", "decline", "statu quo", "unclear" are used as participants' initial status is compared with the current (at the time of the survey) one. Assigning one of the four attributes to someone's experience obeys to a logic that was outlined earlier (p. 26, note 1,2). Participants' own assessment of their economic performance, provided by answers on whether one sends money home, and on whether one sees himself/herself as better off now than at arrival from Congo, adds some degree of reliability to more external measures of economic performance. Let us start with reporting about employment experience.

Escaping unemployment by all means

Looking at current employment status, respondents are classifiable in the following way: unemployed (14%), working part-time in formal sector (4%), working full-time in formal sector (33%), working part-time in informal sector (4%), working full-time in informal sector (23%), self-employed students (10%), Student (10%), Housewife or homemaker (2%). Only half of my sample (56%) sees itself as working full-time. Such workforce is almost equally distributed in formal and informal sector. This outlines the importance of the informal sector which comprises 37% of interviewees, if the fact that self-employed students mostly operate in the informal sector is taken into account. Self-reported unemployed constitute 14 %, but most of those working in informal sector would like to leave that sector for a job in the formal sector. The informal sector is masking unemployment. Given the fact that the informal sector offers no social security provisions and no guaranteed income, at least half of respondents can be said to be living under permanent conditions of social insecurity. A third of the sample belongs to the formal sector, but most of them occupy low profile jobs. To such sector is attached more

predictability as the salary is regular. But other social security provisions do not follow necessarily. Besides, some of those jobs are casual, risky, and exhausting. Most Congolese immigrants are working not because they have found jobs that they like, but because they want to escape unemployment by all means. The fact that most earn a very low income confirms such interpretation. Most jobs leave them as vulnerable as before. Despite such a precarious situation, most people would report a kind of employment progress when they compare their initial status to their current one.

For half of participants (56%), there has been a progress with the employment trajectory, a shift from one position to a more advantageous one. Some 34% of them have remained at the same employment status. Only 2% can report a decline as a shift from an employment position to a worse one. For 8% of the cases, it is not clear whether it is one of the above categories. Though employment conditions are, in general, disenfranchising, most Congolese immigrants would concede that there has been relative progress with regard to employment experience.

Resorting to asylum seeker permit

Whether one stays in South Africa with a refugee permit, a study visa, a work visa, a permanent residence visa, or a South African citizenship does impact on one's economic opportunities. My one hundred participants hold the following legal residence status: refugee permit (71%), study visa (2%), job visa (6%), permanent residence visa (5%), South African citizenship (5%), other (11%).

There is a little room for moving from one status to another as it is confirmed by their initial status some years back at their arrival from Congo: refugee (69%), study visa (10%), job visa (3%), permanent residence visa (1%), other (17%). But, only 14% can be said to have moved to a more advantageous legal residence status. For 9% of the sample, it is unclear whether the move has been advantageous or not. A large majority (77%) has remained under the same legal residence status. Refugees are the most dominant (64 individuals, 90,1%) in that "statu quo" group. It is worth noting that 7 individuals joined this late group to make the current 71%. The most important move is the shift from other status to refugee status because this seems currently the less costly, at least for Congolese immigrants who come from a recently war-torn country. Some 3 out of 4 Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg are either refugees or asylum seekers. The

predominance of refugees among Congolese immigrants only reflects the precarious life of many since no refugees' service is really concerned about the socio-economic life of refugees in South Africa. A lot of participants have complained about this abandonment which condemns "officially recognized" refugees or asylum seekers to the inescapable ordeal of "fending for oneself" in a foreign land. Congolese immigrants' economic performance is best reflected by individuals' monthly income.

Progress within precariousness

Some 8% of participants have declared an income ranging from 0 to R200. 33 % fall in the second (R201 to R1000) or the third category (R1001 to R3000). 18 % have access to an income varying from R3001 to R9000; 5 % to the range between R9001 and R20000. Consideration of participants' income in their first months in Johannesburg shows a degree of variation in income. The most striking fact is that the lowest income range, which is now occupied by 8%, has been the starting condition for 30% of the participants. A picture of income variation is given by the table 3.4.

In general, 56 % of respondents have shifted from lower income range to a higher income range. 42 % of them have their situation unchanged. And 2% have experienced a decline. What does transpire through such income distribution?

The majority (66%) does not achieve more than R3001 per month. More than half in this group does not even reach R1001. If the whole group is condemned to survival expenditures, the members of the later sub-group have it even harder to lead an independent life. Only a few (26%) can live autonomously as their income ranges from R3001 upward. Again, a tiny minority in this group (8%), having an over R9001 income, can be regarded as being in economic conditions to respond to most basic needs. Though an overwhelming majority would be unable to meet ordinary expenditures for an autonomous living, progress in income is observable for a little more than half of the cases. Some "statu quo" cases seem on positive economic track as 22 of them accepted that they sometimes send money home. Declining is very marginal. Maybe that is the main reason why a great majority (75%) estimates to be better off now than at arrival from Congo.

Table 3.4 Income trajectory

Crosstab

			STARTINC						
			up to R200	R201 to R1000	R1001 to R3000	R3001 to 9000	9001 to 20000	R20000+	Total
NOWINCOM	up to R200	Count	8						8
		% within NOWINCOM	100.0%						100.0%
		% within STARTINC	26.7%						8.0%
		% of Total	8.0%						8.0%
	R201 to R1000	Count	12	21					33
		% within NOWINCOM	36.4%	63.6%					100.0%
		% within STARTINC	40.0%	56.8%					33.0%
		% of Total	12.0%	21.0%					33.0%
	R1001 to R3000	Count	6	13	12	1	1		33
		% within NOWINCOM	18.2%	39.4%	36.4%	3.0%	3.0%		100.0%
		% within STARTINC	20.0%	35.1%	48.0%	25.0%	50.0%		33.0%
		% of Total	6.0%	13.0%	12.0%	1.0%	1.0%		33.0%
	R3001 to 9000	Count	3	2	12	1			18
		% within NOWINCOM	16.7%	11.1%	66.7%	5.6%			100.0%
		% within STARTINC	10.0%	5.4%	48.0%	25.0%			18.0%
		% of Total	3.0%	2.0%	12.0%	1.0%			18.0%
	9001 to 20000	Count	1	1		2	1		5
		% within NOWINCOM	20.0%	20.0%		40.0%	20.0%		100.0%
		% within STARTINC	3.3%	2.7%		50.0%	50.0%		5.0%
		% of Total	1.0%	1.0%		2.0%	1.0%		5.0%
	R20000+	Count			1			2	3
		% within NOWINCOM			33.3%			66.7%	100.0%
		% within STARTINC			4.0%			100.0%	3.0%
		% of Total			1.0%			2.0%	3.0%
Total		Count	30	37	25	4	2	2	100
		% within NOWINCOM	30.0%	37.0%	25.0%	4.0%	2.0%	2.0%	100.0%
		% within STARTINC	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	30.0%	37.0%	25.0%	4.0%	2.0%	2.0%	100.0%

What does explain economic performance? Is it education, employment, or social networks? This question is central to our research, and will be investigated at a later stage. Let us now consider another core variable namely "political engagement".

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

To capture many of its faces, political engagement has been measured through four sub-variables namely interest in current political affairs, knowledge about current political affairs, propensity to get involved in a public political action, and past socio-political involvement. A report is presented on each aspect individually before constructing an index of a single variable of political engagement.

High Media consumption but poor assimilation

Reading newspapers and watching TV news is an indicator of interest in community or political affairs. On whether they read newspapers, listen to radio news and watch TV news, an overwhelming majority of participants answered yes. Some 83 % read newspapers, and 97% listen to radios or watch TV news. Out of 17 individuals who do not read newspapers, 15 compensate such deficiency by being able to listen to radio or watch TV news. In general, such community-oriented activities as reading newspapers, listening to radio news, and watching TV news are strongly correlated.

Does participants' knowledge about current politics match with such high exposure to mass Media? Participants displayed an average knowledge about Congolese politics. Questions put to them touched on the political transition underway in Congo. Yet, a large number of respondents are ignorant of some important facts(see table 3.5).

Table 3.5 Participants' awareness of Congolese Current Politics

What do you think of the following statements?	**True**	**False**	**Do not know**	***Right answer***
There is no fight anymore in the Eastern Congo	7%	65%	28%	*False*
Transition constitution allows to extend the transition for six months once	41%	17%	42%	*False*
In 30 June 2005, there was no demonstration in Kinshasa	24%	52%	24%	*False*
Voter enrollment process is underway in Congo	70%	6%	24%	*True*
The 3rd Republic Constitution sets the age for presidential candidate at 40 years	23%	31%	46%	*False*

Regarding knowledge on Congolese politics, the mean score of the group is low (4.64) in a scale of 10 points as 56% displayed mediocre, very low or low knowledge, and 44% score good, very good or excellent knowledge. Among the 44 successful individuals, only 21 can really be congratulated as their score ranges from very good to excellent. So, as a group, Congolese immigrants keep connected to their home country politics. But there are more individuals who are either ignorant or not sure of how political affairs evolve. Only a tiny minority, 2 out of every ten individuals, keep up very well with home country political developments. Reasons for such lack of knowledge has to do with virtually non-existent coverage of Congolese politics by South African media,

limited access to Internet-based Congolese news, lack of Congolese newspapers provision in Johannesburg, people's consumption of rumor. Congolese immigrants' poor knowledge about home country politics does not reflect a widespread political disinterest, but rather scarcity and inaccessibility of available information. Such explanation is confirmed when one looks at how the same group proves to be very knowledgeable about South African current political affairs (see table 3.6).

Table 3.6 Participants' awareness of South African Current Politics

What do you think of the following statements?	**True**	**False**	**Do not know**	***Right answer***
Zuma is the current deputy president in South Africa	10%	69%	21%	*False*
Cosatu has not organized any demonstration since July 2005	6%	35%	59%	*False*
Thabo Mbeki can still run for the next presidency according to SA constitution	15%	67%	18%	*False*
South African Democracy is now eleven years old	76%	10%	14%	*True*
On the 30th June 2005, some Congolese demonstrated in Pretoria and Cape Town in relation with the extension of the transition period	81%	0%	19%	*True*

In fact, 68% have been rated good, very good or excellent. The rest has scored mediocre, very low, and low. One third still shows poor knowledge about South African politics. How does one explain such a large portion of uninformed people? To reasons evoked in explanation of low knowledge on Congolese politics, one has to add poor understanding of English which makes South African Media inaccessible to a great number of Congolese immigrants. Combined with data on newspaper readership, and TV watching, the latter results show that a large portion of Congolese immigrants come across newspapers, watch news but do not necessarily understand them.

It is worth noting that Congolese immigrants tend to be more knowledgeable about South African current politics than they are about Congolese current affairs. On Congolese politics, the assessment has revealed 9 mediocre (scoring 0/10) whereas only 2 scored 0/10 on South African politics. Whereas there is only 1 individual displaying excellent knowledge on Congolese politics, 23 individuals have scored "excellent" with regard to South African politics. The number of 'distinctions' on South African politics

(over 8/10), which reaches 57%, is more than twice the one on Congolese politics. Further evidence on such comparison is provided by the table 3.7. Differences on mean, mode, median reveal Congolese immigrants' better knowledge of South African politics.

Table 3.7 Comparison between knowledge on Congo and South African Politics

Statistics

		CONGO	S.AFRICA
N	Valid	100	100
	Missing	0	0
Mean		4.64	6.56
Std. Error of Mean		.25	.29
Median		4.00	8.00
Mode		4	8
Std. Deviation		2.49	2.94
Variance		6.21	8.65
Minimum		0	0
Maximum		10	10

Combining both aspects under a single variable of "knowledge about current politics" reveals a more balanced picture as the mean for the group reaches 11.20/20. Some 67% fall under the good, very good, excellent category, and 33% are rated low, very low and mediocre. Few people are depicted as displaying mediocre or very low political knowledge (9%). Almost a quarter of the sample (23%) gets 'distinction' (very good, and excellent). These figures mean that Congolese immigrants keep up with current politics, but more with South African politics than with Congolese politics. Lack of knowledge about political developments both in Congo and in South Africa seems at the same time very high as a third of the sample displays low, very low or mediocre political knowledge.

Between empathy and engagement

Being knowledgeable about political affairs is not in itself a sufficient indication of someone' political engagement. Engagement evokes not merely a cognitive status, but also willingness to translate knowledge into concrete political actions. Investigation on participants' willingness to engage in political actions such as a peaceful demonstration takes further the measurement of political engagement. A set of five questions have captured participants' perception on the possibility or impossibility of an efficient political action and their readiness to partake to a peaceful demonstration in support of

free and fair elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo. How respondents reacted to the five questions has been crucial in classifying them as “very politically oriented”, “politically oriented”, “politically disinterested”, and “unclear”. The adherence or the rejection of the two statements “Politics in the Congo is none of my business” and “ I would personally join any peaceful demonstration to support free and fair elections in the DRC” has been decisive in labeling participants either as “very politically oriented” or “politically disinterested”. Agreement with the first one shows disinterest whereas adherence to the second statement reflects readiness to involve in an actual political action. How do Congolese immigrants confront the possibility of political actions? Here is how participants have reacted to the set of questions inquiring on readiness to engage in politics.

Table 3.8 Participants’ readiness to engage in a political action

What is your view point on the following statements?	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree
Politics in Congo is none of my business	35%	69%	3%
I would personally join any peaceful demonstration to support free and fair elections in DRC	64%	29%	7%
Pressure coming from people can make Congolese leaders improve their policies	79%	16%	5%
There is no way I can contribute to the improvement of Congolese Politics from South Africa	42%	49%	9%
Reading or watching news on Congolese Politics is a waste of time	17%	77%	6%

Combining the five sub-variables into a single variable of propensity to involve in a political action leads to dividing participants into four following categories: very politically oriented (52%), politically oriented (16%), politically disinterested (20%), and unclear (12%). What does such picture tell us?

Despite significant political empathy and growing sense of political powerlessness, the majority still thinks that Congolese politics matter for them to such an extent that they are ready to engage in some public actions aiming at influencing government policies. The disengagement trend is also important since more and more people voice empathetic, pessimistic, and demobilizing views on the prospects of politics in Congo. A lot of Congolese feel fed up with the perpetuation of the political crisis in

Congo. “We have done all we could to help the country go forward, but all our efforts have been in vain”, declared few interviewees who used to be very politically active in Congo. “It causes headache to keep concerned about Congolese politics. At the end of the day, nothing gets improved. What upsets you even more” stated a Congolese trader emphasizing that I must give up with my concern about Congolese politics if I wish to live longer. “It is better not to care about Congolese politics to avoid being fed with hopes that will never materialize. One is even worse when what he was hoping for has failed to realize” the same interviewee continued. “Politics in Congo is just about stealing public income. If that is the kind of politics you want to involve in, then you can become politician. But if that is not the case, then Congolese politics is not the right place for you” explained another respondent.

Since such politics is made of lies and unreliable promises, some people agreed that “reading or watching news on Congolese politics is a waste of time”. Some 35% agreed that “politics in Congo is none of their business”. While a few are disengaged on religious grounds, most people espouse such attitudes as a result of continuing alienation. Such views seem to emanate from the belief that when one is unable to change the external world, he or she can at least resort to change himself or herself. In this regard, a great number of Congolese who have repeatedly experienced the impossibility to effect improvements on domestic politics have changed themselves from active citizens to passive spectators. For some, this has psychological benefits. With such disengaging attitudes, it is easy to understand why almost half of the sample (42%) avows that “there is nothing I can do to contribute to the improvement of Congolese politics from South Africa”. “I am here in a foreign country. I could do something if I was in Congo. But from here, there is nothing I can do” repeated one participant. “In migrating to South Africa, we have run away from the battlefield. All we have to do is enjoy eating South African chickens and drinking. Those who are concerned about changing politics must go back home and struggle there” declared one of the respondents, with a great sense of humor.

While sharing such disappointment, the majority of Congolese immigrants do not push pessimism to cynicism. “After all, it is my country. I will always have to care” admitted one participant. “Reading or watching news on Congolese politics is not a waste

of time. I need to know what is going on, regardless of lack of good news", said another. "There is a way I can contribute to the improvement of politics in Congo from South Africa", contest half of the participants. Ways to do so range, on participants' point of view, from praying to launching an armed liberation movement with a wide range of peaceful political actions in between. It has to be emphasized that while some Congolese immigrants mentioned prayers as the only current possible contribution, a number of unemployed young are open to enroll either in a progressive political party or in an armed liberation movement as a way of influencing change in the DRC. Some Congolese immigrants refer to their late involvement in the 30th June 2005 demonstration (in Pretoria and Cape Town) in contestation of the extension of the transition period as a significant political contribution. As a matter of fact, 64% still maintain their readiness to respond to similar calls in the future. Nevertheless, some complained that South African broadcasting Media and newspapers refuse to give voice to Congolese immigrants, or to provide visibility to organized events such as demonstrations.

More social than political involvement

Political engagement certainly goes beyond simple declaration of intentions. Who did really get involved in political activities of any kind? The fourth aspect of political engagement measured in this research reveals participants' real political engagement level. Respondents are rated from 0 to 10 depending on which of the ten socio-political activities they accomplished in the past. Such set of activities include having signed a petition, participated in a demonstration, joined a political party, volunteered to a community service, debated on Congolese politics, attended a political public meeting, organized a party for friends, served as an officer of a club or an organization, subscribed to a political newspaper, and browsed on an Congolese politics Internet site. With a mean of 5.18/10, a median of 5 and 7 as mode, the group stands as a good socio-political achiever.

Most accomplished activities are social in their nature as opposed to being political (see table 3.9). Besides, they tend to be informal and spontaneous. The overtly political and formalized activities stand as the least accomplished as it is the case for subscribing to a political newspaper (16%), signing a petition (25%), joining a political party (34%), participating in a demonstration (45%), and browsing on an Internet site on

Congolese politics (46%). Congolese immigrants have been less involved in activities where participatory citizenship is made possible, where there are open avenues of engaging formally Congolese politics and designing strategies of impacting on government policies.

Table 3.9 Past social and political involvement

	Have you ever done this	Percentage
1	Signed a petition	25%
2	Participated in a demonstration	45%
3	Joined a political party	34%
4	Volunteered to a community service	72%
5	Debated on Congolese Politics	75%
6	Attended a political public meeting	57%
7	Organized a party for friends	81%
8	Served as an officer of some club or organization	68%
9	Subscribed to a political newspaper	16%
10	Browsed on an Internet site on Congolese Politics	46%

A politically engaged population

How does one create a single political engagement index out of the four main indicators? For individuals' ranking, there is no better device than assigning a specific score for each indicator. In this research, each of the four main indicators contributes 5 points to the overall measure of political engagement. Individuals' score per indicator ranges from 0 to 5 depending on their responses. Knowledge about politics and past socio-political engagement are already numeric values. They respectively stand as scores in a scale of 20 and 10 points. In respectively dividing by 4 and 2, we obtain the appropriate value that is used to build the single political engagement variable. As the two other variables are not numeric values, a conventional device attributes particular amount of points to values. Concerning individuals' propensity to engage in political actions, values such as "very politically oriented", "political oriented", "unclear", and "politically disinterested" are respectively assigned five, three, one, zero points out of five. As for individuals' interest in written and audio-visual news, the score assigning mechanism is designed as followed: use of both Media is assigned 5 points; use of only one of the Media gets half the points(2,5) and disinterest to both Media gets attributed zero(0) point. Combining the four numeric values leads to a single value of political

engagement. To ease the comparison and the study of correlations, individuals get rated in terms of high level (20-15 points), average level (14-10), low level(9-5) and very low level(4-0) of political engagement. The following table summarizes the process of building a single political engagement index.

Table 3.10 constructing a political engagement index

	POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT		**20 POINTS**
01	**Knowledge on Politics**	**20/20**	***5 points***
02	**Past political actions**	**10/10**	***5 points***
03	**Readiness to engage**		***5 points***
	Very politically oriented	5/5	
	Politically oriented	3/5	
	Unclear	1/5	
	Politically disinterested	0/5	
04	**Use of public Media**		***5 points***
	Newspaper and TV	5/5	
	Only one	2,5/5	
	None	0/5	

What does the overall measure of Congolese immigrants political engagement tell us ?

Table 3.11 Congolese immigrants' political engagement distribution

POL.ENG

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	high	39	39.0	39.0	39.0
	average	40	40.0	40.0	79.0
	low	20	20.0	20.0	99.0
	very low	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

In general, Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg are politically engaged. Background characteristics such as gender, age, duration in Johannesburg, ethnicity, church attendance, employment experience, legal residence experience, and income status do not make any significant difference in explaining political engagement. Education does make a difference as 13 out of 21 individuals (61,9%) with low or very low level of political engagement have only achieved secondary school. Seven out of 21 have been to undergraduate studies. Only one masters' graduate falls under this disengaged group, and no PhD graduate belongs to the group.

CONCLUSION

The Congolese immigrants' population in Central Johannesburg is dominantly male and young. It is generally well educated however a large portion of younger adults does not exceed secondary school. Congolese' ethnicity is inconsistently shaped by colonial categories, by linguistic units, by administrative segmentation, thus displaying the ambiguity and the ideological content of the term. Nevertheless, "Bakongo", "Baluba" and "Bangala" are respectively the most numerous groups in Central Johannesburg. Congolese immigrants' high religiosity is reflected in the plethora of Pentecostal churches which serve for more than just spiritual purposes. Participants belonged to at least 26 different religious denominations. On the economic arena, most Congolese immigrants would describe themselves as working full-time in formal and informal sector, but still a large number of them are unemployed. In reality, very few have a well paid job. As a result, the overwhelming majority earn less than R3000 per month. With such a low income, a financially independent life is beyond reach for most Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg. Part of the explanation for the poor economic status relates to the fact that most of them hold the most precarious legal residence status in South Africa namely the refugee or asylum seeker. In contrast to such an objectively negative picture, most people have experienced progress with regard to the income variation, have sometimes sent money home, and feel better off now than at their arrival from Congo. Concerning Congolese immigrants' political engagement profile, the overall measure shows them as a politically involved group. We are now left with the task of exploring trends in Congolese immigrants' social capital. This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4. SOCIAL CAPITAL

INTRODUCTION

Effort has been made to do justice both to socio-psychological and socio-structural approach to the concept of social capital. Both structures and values have found their place in the measurement of Congolese immigrants' social capital. Attention to local contexts has not always been easy to translate into research questions. Nevertheless the social capital "use value" has been captured through the so called "correlational questions". As individuals' social capital transpires through associational life, friends' networks, community identification, interpersonal trust, and political trust, I shall report on each aspect in turn.

ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE

By association, the social capital literature refers to a formal grouping of individuals with the aim of advancing a common interest. In normal circumstances, associations would have a management body, a regular membership, and organized communication between members. Though modern associational life has seen the emergence of e-mail based associations, check-book membership, etc…, associations have always connected people, and have remained one of the best producers of social capital. In providing opportunities for individuals to broaden their ties, to connect to other people, associations facilitate the achievement of common goals. They also constitute available networks that individuals can mobilize for personal gains.

Associations may be categorized on the basis of their objectives, the pattern of internal relationships, or the type of social capital they produce. With regard to the variety of objectives, one can distinguish between political, religious, civic associations. In his study of associational life in Switzerland, Simone Baglione uses a functional categorization to discriminate between 'service-oriented associations' and 'advocacy-oriented associations'. 'Service-oriented associations' provide their members with useful services (social assistance, health, education, housing, youth, family, religion, professional networks), whereas 'advocacy-oriented associations' (civic or human rights promotion) stand as mediator between the members in one side and the government in the

other. Both types are further divided into associations demanding deep commitment, and associations less demanding. ‘Advocacy-oriented associations’, for instance, may still be classified in distinguishing associations that demand deep commitment from members(mobilization) -the success of the association lies on everyone’s effective participation- and associations that are less demanding(representation) whose members are most of the time represented. On Baglione’s point of view, this functional classification allows a very detailed study on the impact of participation on democracy. It is made clear that associations that demand deep commitment from its members are more likely to play an essential role in a democratic system (Baglione, 2004).

Looking at the pattern of internal relationships, one distinguishes between vertical and horizontal networks, hierarchical and flat associations. The difference between voluntary and non-voluntary associations also flows from this perspective as the participants’ freedom or lack of freedom to join or leave the association is often crucial in directing either towards hierarchical or flat relationships. Susanne Rudolph has added the category of “intentional associations” for those ascribed identities which, though non-voluntary have been appropriated by members. Ethnic, tribal or national groups are often non-voluntary or ascribed associations. They constitute what Anderson called “imagined communities”. Once such identities are individually appropriated, they are no longer non-voluntary, but rather ‘intentional’. Considering the type of social capital that is produced in various associations, the difference between bridging social capital and bonding social capital emerges as a useful categorization. While both types can be present in one association, they are seen as effective in achieving different goals. Let us now look at the way associational life takes place among the Congolese immigrants in central Johannesburg.

What kind of associations has the survey come across? On a functional basis, one classifies those associations in the following categories: churches, ethnic associations, provincial associations, alumni associations, political parties, rotating credit systems, traders associations, music groups, sport groups, friends groups, NGOs, mutuality. Table 4.1. presents all the associations that respondents have mentioned.

Table 4.1 Participants' associations and meeting frequency

TYPE OF ASSOCIATION	NAME OF ASSOCIATION	DESCRIPTION	MEETING FREQUENCY
1. Churches	Cf. Table. 5		1 to 7 times per week
2. Ethnic associations			
	Nsalasani	Association of people from Kongo ethnicity	1 per trimester
	Bafulero	Association of people from Fulero ethnicity	Meetings only in Durban
	Murbaz	Association of people from Bandundu(one of DRC provinces)	1 per trimester
	Abako	Association of people from Kongo ethnicity(politically oriented)	
	Aliba	Association of people from Bangala ethnicity	1 per semester
3. Regional associations			
	FCE:Federation des congolais de l'Etranger	Federation of Congolese Diaspora	1 per month
	Umoja wa Kivu	Association of people from Kivu (East of Congo)	1 per month
	Mukubaz		1 per month
	Bana Tshangu	Association of people from Nd'jili(one of Kinshasa communes)	1per week
4. Alumni associations			
	GCP:Generation congolaise pour le progress	Congolese generation for progress	1 per semester
	Les anciens de l'ISC	Former students from ISC(Superior institute of Commerce – in Kinshasa)	1 per month
	Unilu Diaspora	Former students from University of Lubumbashi	1 per month
5. Political parties			
	UDPS(Union democratique pour le progres social)	Democratic union for social progress	No regular meeting
	UCR(the universal christocratic regeneration)		No regular meeting
	ABAKO(Alliance des Bakongo)	Bakongo alliance	No regular meeting
	MLC(Mouvement pour la liberation du Congo)	Movement for the liberation of Congo	No regular meeting
	PPRD(Parti populaire pour le renouveau democratique)	Popular party for democratic renewal	No regular meeting
	CNC(Congolese National Congress)		No regular meeting
6. Rotating credit clubs			

	Likelemba 1		Informal meeting
	Likelemba 2		Informal meeting
	Likelemba 3		Informal meeting
	Likelemba 4		Informal meeting
	Likelemba Vivi		Informal meeting
7. Traders' associations			
	Davita-trading		1 per month
	Business forum(Heritiers des promesses)		1 per month
	Traders' association 3		Informal meeting
	AFITO	African federation of informal traders organizations	Informal meeting
8. Music Groups			
	Work of Faith choir		3 per week
	Zamar		2 per week
	Praise and worship team (Heirs of promises sanctuary)		2 per week
9. Sport Groups			
	Gym & Karate club		4 per week
	Allez-y-les Simbas	Support group for national soccer team	1 per semester
	Groupe de Sport		1 per week
	Wits Judo Club		3 per week
	Bana membre(fanclub Lelo Mbele)	Support group for a Congolese Pirate player named Lelo Mbele	1 per week
	Omnisports Tresor		Informal
10. Friends Clubs			
	Les AS		Informal
11. NGOs			
	C.K.M(Celestin-Kantumuko-Melchi)		
	Charity ONG		
	Familia		
12. Scholarly associations			
	AMA: African Mind Association		1 per semester
	SAICHE(South African Institute for chemical engineers		1 per year
	CATSA: Cathalisis in South Africa		1 per year

With regard to the pattern of internal relationships, churches and political parties tend to be hierarchical and other associations are more horizontal. As for the type of social capital, most associations tend to be more bonding than bridging. Churches bring together Congolese of all provinces and every ethnicity. But they attract less non-Congolese. As a matter of fact, churches do not offer opportunities of mixing with other nationalities or other "races". Ethnic associations and provincial associations are openly restricted to in-group members. Though some of them welcome out-group members, their exclusive nature seems consequent to the kind of in-group solidarity and cultural promotion most of them intend to pursue. Alumni groups create solidarity circles among former students of the same tertiary institution. Such groups are small, and comprise only Congolese immigrants. Music groups emanate from churches, and just bring together some church-goers who are mostly Congolese. Rotating credit systems, frequent among informal traders, also tend to work in circles of Congolese. There are few associations where Congolese get to interact with other nationalities or "races". Some scholarly associations, sport groups and traders associations constitute such exception. Individuals involved in such networks form a tiny minority.

But not all associations display similar vibrancy. Churches are by far the most vibrant organizations as shown by the number of their members, the frequency of the meetings, and the members' regular attendance. Churches membership ranges from 100 to 1000 members. Most of them hold from 3 to 6 meetings per week, and the least committed attends the church service at least once per week. Music groups and sport groups hold many weekly meetings. Such groups tend to be small except for church choirs which can include up to 50 members. Ethnic and provincial associations hold meetings monthly or every 2 or 3 months. Some of them (Nsalasani, Murbas) are attended by an average of 50 members. Alumni associations and political parties sometimes spend months without any meeting. But one or two meetings happen to be organized annually. Scholarly associations also hold annual meetings. Other associations such as rotating credit systems, traders associations, NGOs, mutuality rely on informal meetings. What are the trends in association attendance?

Congolese immigrants tend to join associations, mostly religious groups which display hierarchical and bonding (inter-Congolese) social capital. One third of the sample

attends at least two different associations. 95% of participants are members of a religious group. This is a confirmation of the fact that churches are the type of association most joined. The average immigrant Congolese belongs to one association which he attends twice per week (see tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4). This is an indication of vibrant associational life. But the assessment of its real value has to take into account the nature of the association, the pattern of internal relationship in the association, and the type of social capital it is likely to generate. This will be the focus of the next chapter.

Table 4.2 Associations membership

MEMBSHIP

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	8	8.0	8.0	8.0
	1	60	60.0	60.0	68.0
	2	16	16.0	16.0	84.0
	3	10	10.0	10.0	94.0
	4	6	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.3 Weekly association attendance

PERWEEK

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	11	11.0	11.0	11.0
	1	31	31.0	31.0	42.0
	2	16	16.0	16.0	58.0
	3	30	30.0	30.0	88.0
	4	3	3.0	3.0	91.0
	5	4	4.0	4.0	95.0
	6	3	3.0	3.0	98.0
	7	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
	9	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4 Monthly association attendance

PERMONTH

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	10	10.0	10.0	10.0
	1	1	1.0	1.0	11.0
	4	29	29.0	29.0	40.0
	5	1	1.0	1.0	41.0
	6	1	1.0	1.0	42.0
	8	15	15.0	15.0	57.0
	9	1	1.0	1.0	58.0
	12	30	30.0	30.0	88.0
	13	1	1.0	1.0	89.0
	16	2	2.0	2.0	91.0
	20	4	4.0	4.0	95.0
	21	1	1.0	1.0	96.0
	24	2	2.0	2.0	98.0
	25	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
	38	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

IDENTIFICATION WITH CONGOLESE COMMUNITY

Intensive interactions within social networks produce connectedness, and build a sense of belonging to a particular community. Such communities vary in scope and in nature just as we experience various types of social interactions. For Putnam, what is at stake in the decrease of social capital in America is the very collapse of "American community" (Putnam, 2000).

Do Congolese immigrants imagine themselves as forming a "Congolese community"? To the question "do you think of yourself as belonging to Congolese community?", 73% responded by "yes", and 27% by "no".

Gender, age, education do not make any difference in identifying or not with Congolese community. The only striking finding is that two out of three PhD graduates do not identify with Congolese community. Legal residence status, employment status and income do not make any difference either. Congolese immigrants who refused any identification with Congolese community affirmed that there is no such thing as "Congolese community" in central Johannesburg. While some justified such dismissal by the existence of lots of division between Congolese, others pointed to the lack of formal organization of Congolese immigrants in Johannesburg. "Even Ethiopians are better organized than Congolese immigrants" commented one interviewee. "We always fight

against each other at the home affairs offices. Where is that "community"?" complained another participant. "It is sad to hear Katangese (inhabitants of Katanga province) labeling themselves as "true Congolese", and dismissing Kinois (inhabitants of Kinshasa) as "Zairois" (full of corruption and other evils attached to the Mobutu regime), and some of them vowing that they would never do business with Kinois", a respondent reported . Those who responded positively explained their answer by saying "After all, I am Congolese". Some elaborated in this way: "Though there is no association bringing together all Congolese living in Johannesburg. Though I do not attend any Congolese association, I enjoy being with other Congolese".

In fact, identification or non-identification with "Congolese community" does correlate with variables such as trust towards other Congolese, finding Congolese companionship helpful, careless about Congolese politics, and even knowledge about Congolese politics. Participants identifying with Congolese community tend to be more trusting towards other Congolese.

NON-CONGOLESE FRIENDSHIP

The number of non-Congolese friends has been conceived as an indicator of participants' integration into bridging networks. Being able to move out of one's national bonds may be very critical in providing avenues through which important socio-economic benefits are distributed. English proficiency, awareness of political affairs, and information on job opportunities, recommendation to an employee, are social gains that are more available in bridging social capital networks. The large scope of one's non-Congolese friends can translate into better social integration, better economic status, and greater awareness of the host country. Since very few associations provide opportunities of Congolese mixing with other nationalities, most non-Congolese are likely to have been met outside any organized structure. Such informal encounters can build rich stock of social capital. They often happen in a wide range of activities including going out with friends for diner, movies, sports event, live concert, theatre, visiting relatives, sending greeting cards, playing cards, playing pool, entertaining friends at home, giving or attending dinner party, getting together for drinks, having friends over to watch TV, sharing a barbecue picnic on a hot summer evening, even simply nodding to another regular jogger on the same daily route. Putnam sees all these informal encounters as "a

tiny investment in social capital" (Putnam, 2000:93). Informal connections cannot provide for certain benefits that people get only from formal organizations. But their social importance is undeniable. Putnam puts it clearly: "to be sure, informal connections generally do not build civic skills in the ways that involvement in a club, a political group, a union, or a church can, but informal connections are very important in sustaining social networks" (Putnam, 2000:95).

In the context of Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg, friendship with non-Congolese mainly develops through such informal connections. More than half of the Congolese (54%) reported to have more than ten non-Congolese friends(see table 4.5). Cross-tabulation with other variables demonstrates that "having more than ten non-Congolese friends" is often associated with other benefits. Most successful Congolese immigrants belong to the latter group. Such group provided 69,7% of people working in formal sector, 52,2% of those working full-time in informal sector, 70% of self-employed students, 83,3% of people earning from R3001 to R9000, and 100% of people earning from R9001 to R20.000, 66,7% of people earning more than R20000. That group also comprises the majority of people who have experienced progress in their job status (57,1%), in their legal residence status(85,7%), and in the income variation(62,5%). The group also includes 56,3% of those who send money home, and 56% of people who said they are better off now. Whether number of friends can be singled out as an important factor of economic success will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Table 4.5 Scope of non-Congolese friendship

FRIENDS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
	0	10	10.0	10.0	11.0
	1-3	20	20.0	20.0	31.0
	4-7	11	11.0	11.0	42.0
	7-10	4	4.0	4.0	46.0
	10+	54	54.0	54.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

TRUST

Trust is an important component of social capital since the quality of social interactions depends heavily on participants' readiness to rely on the honesty, the law-abidingness of their partners. The importance of trust has been highlighted by dilemmas of collective action (Putnam, 1993:163). The tragedy of the commons and the prisoners' dilemma also outline the need for cooperation that is facilitated in context of interpersonal trust. In the absence of credible mutual commitment, accurate information and reliable enforcement, " each finds cooperation irrational, and all end up with an outcome no one wants- unharvested corn, overgrazed commons, deadlocked government" (Putnam, 1993:164). Neither Hobbes's third party enforcement nor the establishment of an impartial lawgiver constitute viable solution to dilemmas of collective action. Solutions based on community and trust prove to be "soft" and more efficient as Putnam puts it: " success in overcoming dilemmas of collective action and the self-defeating opportunism that they spawn depends on the broader social context within which any particular game is played. Voluntary cooperation is easier in a community that has inherited a substantial stock of social capital, in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement" (Putnam, 1993:167). To lower transactions' cost and reduce frictions between social partners, social trust shows to be a necessary ingredient. It "lubricates cooperation" (Putnam, 1993:171). As "trust may be increased by an expectation of repeated interaction in the future" (Alesina, La Ferrara, 2002:207-234), the very continuation of cooperation "breeds trust" (Putnam, 1993:171).

Pollsters have sought to capture social trust in asking various questions. Interpersonal trust has been tapped into by questions such as : "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?" (Putnam, 2000:137); " If you drop your wallet in your neighborhood, would you expect people to give it back to you?" , " Most of people are basically honest. Do you agree or disagree?" (Lodge, 2002:220). On the other hand, trust to social and political institutions has been measured using questions such as :" If you have experienced robbery, would you report to the police?" , " Most people in positions of power try to exploit you, do you agree or disagree ?", "The people who run the country

are not really concerned with what happens to you. Do you agree or disagree?" (Putnam, 1993:110). While recognizing the inherent possibility that surveys' questions fail to tap into the aimed variable, researchers have argued that responses to such questions are drawn from social experiences and reflect actual behaviors (Alesina, La Ferrara, 2002: 213; Putnam, 2000:137-138).

Congolese immigrants were asked about their level of trust towards five different groups of people namely: "Congolese living in Johannesburg", "South Africans", "Members of my ethnic group"; "Other foreigners"; "one's housemates". Another question has targeted trust towards neighbors: "If you drop your wallet in your neighborhood, do you expect people to give it back to you?" The following table presents participants' responses:

Table 4.6 Congolese immigrants' interpersonal trust

'Do you agree or not that (generally), most X are trustworthy?'

Options	Congolese	South-Africans	Ethnic group	Other foreigners	Housemates	Wallet question
Agree	43%	32%	47%	24%	70%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	23%	27%	27%	17%	17%
Disagree	38%	45%	26%	49%	13%	61%

Of all six questions on interpersonal trust, three tap into generalized trust even if they aim at specific groups. Questions targeting Congolese, South Africans, or other foreigners, still evoke the general other in the specific group. What is investigated is trust toward an unknown Congolese, South African, or foreigner. Three other questions mention relatively known individuals such as members of same ethnic group, housemates, and neighbors. What can be said about trends in interpersonal trust?

The number of undecided respondents is important. Almost one quarter of the sample does not want to commit either in the trusting side or in the distrusting side. Some felt the questions to be abstract and would have wished more contextual elements. Others just found it difficult to balance between good and bad experiences in order to engage in one or the other side. A few could not put a precise content into the concept "trust". In

any case, such attitude falls under the category of people who, though not openly distrusting, do not trust either. With such a notable portion of undecided people, trust is surely a scarce commodity among Congolese immigrants in Johannesburg. The only trustworthy people are one's housemates. But even in one's house, trust disappears in three cases out of ten. The group of trusting people broadens as one goes from remote to close relationships. People tend to be even less likely to trust when their material interests are at stake, and are asked to rely on others' honesty. In comparison to all other questions, the one on the wallet is more specific. It generated less undecided people. At the same time, it brought to the fore the high stock of distrust that characterizes Central Johannesburg neighborhoods. Only 2 out of 10 Congolese would trust their neighbors. Such high level of distrust towards neighbors has to do with the heterogeneity, the anonymity of inhabitants, their mobility, and the crime history of neighborhoods such as Yeoville, Berea, and Hillbrow. With such pathological distrust, one expects high rate of social friction, poor coordination of common activities, multiplication of dilemmas of collective actions, and great individual losses.

A single value of interpersonal trust emerges from the six trust questions. Five to six agreements allow labeling individuals as "very trusting". Three to four agreements simply characterize respondents as "trusting". By way of contrast, five to six disagreements make individuals "very distrusting" whereas three to four disagreements allow labeling them as "distrusting". Any other combination confines individuals under the category "neither trusting nor distrusting". Table 4.7 summarizes the construction of the interpersonal trust index.

Table 4.7 constructing an interpersonal trust index

	DRC	SA	Ethnic	Other	House	Wallet	Labels
1	5 to 6 agreements						Very trusting
2	3 to 4 agreements						Trusting
3	5 to 6 disagreements						Very distrusting
4	3 to 6 disagreements						Distrusting
5	Any other combination						Neither trusting neither distrusting

Such is the table that combines all six questions under the interpersonal trust variable.

Table 4.8 social trust

SOC.TRUS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very trusting	13	13.0	13.0	13.0
	trusting	25	25.0	25.0	38.0
	Neither trusting nor distrusting	33	33.0	33.0	71.0
	distrusting	18	18.0	18.0	89.0
	very distrusting	11	11.0	11.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The final table confirms previous observations. Indeed, Central Johannesburg is poor in interpersonal trust. In such insecure environment, inhabitants rely heavily on State-lead enforcement mechanisms regarding their safety and the enforcement of social contracts. Trust towards State institutions such as the police is very high as shown in the following table.

Table 4.9 trust towards the police

Options	**If you have knowledge of a crime, would you report it to the police?**	**If you have experienced robbery, would you report it to the police?**
Yes	80%	77%
No	20%	23%

Both indicators are combined under a single value of political trust. Yes to both questions leads to labeling the respondent as “very trusting”. Those who have responded “No” to both questions are said “very distrusting”, and the ‘yes and no’ responses allow labeling respondents as simply “trusting”(see table 4.10). Such categorization helps assigning specific scores when constructing the final single value of social capital.

Table 4.10 political trust

POL.TRUS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very trusting	69	69.0	69.0	69.0
	trusting	19	19.0	19.0	88.0
	distrusting	12	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Where interpersonal trust is low, people tend to have high trust in the police keeping order. Such findings are consistent with Putnam's discovery that Southern Italy inhabitants, who lacked horizontal bonds of collective reciprocity, insisted on the need for "the forces of order". Even in Central Johannesburg, it is true that "in the absence of solidarity and self-discipline, hierarchy and force provide the only alternative to anarchy" (Putnam, 1993:112). Since interpersonal trust and political efficiency are mutually enforcing, the absence of the former undermines the latter, paving the way to a vicious circle which Putnam describes by indicating that "in the less civic regions even a heavy-handed government –the agent for law enforcement- is itself enfeebled by the uncivil social context" (Putnam, 1993:113).

CONSTRUCTING A SINGLE SOCIAL CAPITAL INDEX

After such an account of the specific components of social capital, there is a need to construct a single social capital index. Combining all the indicators in a single variable that will be called "social capital" remains as challenging as contentious an enterprise. First, this research design has left aside other equally important indicators of social capital. Secondly, indicators such as associational life, identification with Congolese community, number of non-Congolese friends, interpersonal trust and political trust call for values which are not necessarily to be viewed in a hierarchical order. As people have unique reasons to why they differ, it would be simplistic to build a value hierarchy out of participants' answers. This does not deny the necessity of a final classification based on the operationalization of social capital. Such relative categorization does not define stable intrinsic characteristics. It is just an attempt to capture participants' responses in the terms provided by the social capital theoretical framework. Thus, social capital is conceived as a final value to which four indicators contribute a maximum of 5 points. Values of the four indicators namely: association life; number of non-Congolese friends; interpersonal trust; and political trust, are given a numeric expression depending on how the value approximates the ideal of a civic community. The following table outlines the logic of assigning score to values.

Table 4.11 Aggregating sub-variables into a single variable

1. Associational life	
Weekly attendance	**Score out of 5**
7-9	5
6	4,5
5	4
4	3,5
3	3
2	2,5
1	2
0	0
2. Scope of non-Congolese friendship	
Number of non-Congolese friends	**Score out of 5**
10+	5
7-10	3,5
4-7	2,5
1-3	1,5
0	0
3. Interpersonal trust	
Values	**Score out of 5**
Very trusting	5
Trusting	3,5
Neither trusting nor distrusting	2,5
Distrusting	1,5
Very distrusting	0
4. Political trust	
Values	**Score out of 5**
Very trusting	5
Trusting	2,5
Very Distrusting	0
Total	Out of 20

What is the configuration of Congolese immigrants' stock of social capital? Some 79% of participants have displayed at least average level of social capital (>10 points). More than a quarter of the sample (26%) has qualified for high level of social capital (15-20 points). Only 21% are poor in social capital, with 3% at the lowest level of social capital (4-0 points). With more than three-quarter of the participants enjoying significant stock of social capital, Congolese immigrants are generally good social capitalists.

Table 4.12 Congolese immigrants' social capital distribution

SOC.CAP

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	high	26	26.0	26.0	26.0
	average	53	53.0	53.0	79.0
	low	18	18.0	18.0	97.0
	very low	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

CONCLUSION

Great vibrancy characterizes associational life whether one considers the density of voluntary associations, membership, or attendance. One expects the emergence of Congolese identity out of the multiple interactions that happen in those associations which unfortunately hardly open up to other nationalities. While three quarter of the interviewed population identifies with Congolese community, a quarter does not share such identification for some internal tensions or other personal reasons. Self-perception as member of the "Congolese community" does make a little difference in trusting one's compatriots, in finding their companionship helpful, and in having interest in political developments in the DRC. Analysis of Congolese friends' networks reveals that a lot of them have non-Congolese friends.

Questions on interpersonal trust have betrayed the scarcity of social trust in Central Johannesburg. Trust decreases as one moves from close relationships to remote ones. Generalized trust is very low, if not inexistent. On the contrary, trust towards the police proves to be high. Putnam would see in such trend an over-reliance on forces of order where social trust deficit is likely to generate social frictions. In the end, a unique social capital measure, processed in combining all relevant components, confirms the high level of social capital among Congolese immigrants. Congolese social capital is more embedded in informal networks, and in religious associations. Whether such type of associational life translates into economic and political gains will be investigated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: SOCIAL CAPITAL, ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Social capital has been claimed to be responsible for economic development and political engagement. Two major components of social capital namely social networks and trust are particularly crucial in connecting to unexpected opportunities and lowering transaction cost. The same assets cultivate in individuals willingness and skills to engage in undertakings of common interest. It is the aim of this chapter to examine whether these two hypotheses hold in the context of Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg. The enquiry basically explores to which extent social capital explains Congolese immigrants' economic performance and political engagement.

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Is there any meaningful correlation between Congolese immigrants' stock of social capital and their economic performance? Cross-tabulation between social capital and economic variables reveals that high or average social capital mostly goes together with good economic performance. It is worth reporting on cross-tabulation between social capital and the following economic status indicators: income variation, current income value, job experience, current job status, legal residence experience, and subjective self-assessment.

Out of 21 participants whose social capital has been rated as low or very low, only 5 (23,8%)have experienced income progress. No one with very low social capital is reported to have reached a state of high income. It shows that income progress hardly goes together with poor social capital in the experience of Congolese immigrants in central Johannesburg. On the other hand, out of 79 participants whose social capital is considered as average or high, 51 (64,5%) have experienced income progress. Income progress seems more associated with high or average stock of social capital. The correlation between social capital and income experience proves statistically significant

as the Pearson chi-square[6] is inferior to 0.05 (see table 5.1). Such covariance is not a random phenomenon.

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 show that no participant of low or very low social capital earns more than R9000. No one of very low social capital earns more than R1000. Only two people of low social capital happen to earn between R1000 and R3000. From the table, it is clear that high or average income is more associated with high or average social capital. This is particularly true for people earning more that R3000. It remains to explain why a great number of participants with high or average social capital still get low income. This shows that social capital may be an important factor in increasing people's income, but not the only important one.

Multivariate regression analysis (see table 5.3)[7] indicates that income experience is well explained by a model that has included four social capital components, education and time spent in South Africa. The model significantly accounts for 20% variation in income. The most important predictors are identification with Congolese community, time spent in South Africa and political trust. Social capital is thus part of the explanation of Congolese immigrants' income experience.

Table 5.1 social capital and current income (1)

Income value	Average and high social capital	Low and very low social capital
R20000+	3	
R9001-R20000	5	
R3001-R9000	16	2
R1001-R3000	25	8
R200-R1000	24	9

Table 5.2 social capital and income experience (2)

[6] The Pearson Chi-Square test examines whether an association between two variables is due to chance (which would mean there is no relationship between the independent and dependent variables), when taking sampling errors into account. This assumption is called null hypothesis. In case the probability value of the test (Asymp.Sig.) is inferior to .05, the null hypothesis is to be rejected (http://www.georgetown.edu/departments/psychology/researchmethods/statistics/inferential/chisquareone.htm)

[7] The interpretation of regression analysis tables has been facilitated by sources such as the following online Statistics course : http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/PA765/regressa.htm

Crosstab

			INCOMEXP			
			progress	decline	constant	Total
SOC.CAP	high	Count	20		6	26
		% within SOC.CAP	76.9%		23.1%	100.0%
		% within INCOMEXP	35.7%		14.3%	26.0%
		% of Total	20.0%		6.0%	26.0%
	average	Count	31	2	20	53
		% within SOC.CAP	58.5%	3.8%	37.7%	100.0%
		% within INCOMEXP	55.4%	100.0%	47.6%	53.0%
		% of Total	31.0%	2.0%	20.0%	53.0%
	low	Count	5		13	18
		% within SOC.CAP	27.8%		72.2%	100.0%
		% within INCOMEXP	8.9%		31.0%	18.0%
		% of Total	5.0%		13.0%	18.0%
	very low	Count			3	3
		% within SOC.CAP			100.0%	100.0%
		% within INCOMEXP			7.1%	3.0%
		% of Total			3.0%	3.0%
Total		Count	56	2	42	100
		% within SOC.CAP	56.0%	2.0%	42.0%	100.0%
		% within INCOMEXP	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	56.0%	2.0%	42.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.868[a]	6	.010
Likelihood Ratio	18.755	6	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	14.154	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

a. 6 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

Table 5.3 Multivariate regression analysis: explaining variation in income experience

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.506[a]	.256	.208	.88	.256	5.327	6	93	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), SOC.TRUS, HOWLONG, MEMBSHIP, DRCCMTY, EDUCATIO, POLTRUST

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.259	.489		2.576	.012		
	EDUCATIO	-.106	.113	-.087	-.940	.349	.941	1.063
	HOWLONG	-7.41E-02	.024	-.283	-3.070	.003	.939	1.065
	DRCCMTY	.407	.201	.184	2.025	.046	.967	1.034
	POLTRUST	.430	.130	.305	3.309	.001	.939	1.065
	MEMBSHIP	3.585E-02	.090	.036	.397	.692	.974	1.026
	SOC.TRUS	5.157E-02	.078	.062	.661	.510	.917	1.091

a. Dependent Variable: INCOMEXP

Let us consider the relationship between social capital and employment experience.

Of 56 persons with progressive employment experience, 44 (78,5%) happen to be of average or high social capital and 12 (21, 4%) display a low or very low level of social capital. Only two people in the sample have experienced decline in their employment situation. Surprisingly, they have both scored average social capital, what prevents any association of decline with low or very low social capital. Those whose experience is characterized as constant (34) constitute a group made of 28 average or high social capital agents and 6 low or very low social capital individuals. Unclear employment experience does not constitute relevant cases for analysis. The association between social capital and employment is not statistically meaningful as the Pearson chi-square is superior to 0,05 (see table 5.4).

It is indeed not clear whether social capital plays a key and consistent role in shifting from one employment situation to a better one. Average or high social capital does not always bring progress of that kind. Even multivariate regression analysis does not reach any explanatory model for employment experience. Variation in employment status is not accounted for by the data. This calls for explanation: why is it that Congolese immigrants of average or high social capital do not necessarily experience positive employment trajectory? This question will be dealt with at the end of this section.

Social capital does not make any difference for people working part-time, or those serving as housewife or homemaker (see table 5.5). But for all other types of occupation, good levels of social capital are associated with full-time occupation, being student or self-employed student. It may be the case that such kind of occupation is more likely to be accessible to people of wide social networks and of sufficient stock of interpersonal trust. But the fact that an important number of average or high social capital individuals still experience unemployment or poor jobs casts doubt on the general use value of social capital, and prevents looking at 'social capital' as the key.

How does social capital correlate with legal residence experience? Moving from one legal residence type to a more advantageous may turn into economic gains. Congolese immigrants' experience in Central Johannesburg shows the possibility of such move. Of 71 % who currently hold a refugee permit or an asylum seeker permit, 63% had born that status from the arrival in South Africa. 8% of participants had a different legal residence status at their arrival from Congo, but finally resorted to joining the group of refugees. The sample presents five participants who currently have South African citizenship whereas no participant has said that he or she has had such legal residence type from his or her arrival in South Africa. It is also important to note the presence of five Congolese with permanent residence whereas only one reports to have had it from the beginning. Of six Congolese with a job visa, half did not have it from the start. There is a room for moving to better legal residence permit. But such possibility is very slim as 63% have been stuck on a refugee or asylum seeker permit. The latter legal residence type seems also the one that is easy to join. As a matter of fact, the most important move goes towards such status rather than other most advantageous legal residence types.

Table 5.4 Social capital and employment experience

Crosstab

			JOBEXP				
			progress	decline	constant	unclear	Total
SOC.CAP	high	Count	12		11	3	26
		% within SOC.CAP	46.2%		42.3%	11.5%	100.0%
		% within JOBEXP	21.4%		32.4%	37.5%	26.0%
		% of Total	12.0%		11.0%	3.0%	26.0%
	average	Count	32	2	17	2	53
		% within SOC.CAP	60.4%	3.8%	32.1%	3.8%	100.0%
		% within JOBEXP	57.1%	100.0%	50.0%	25.0%	53.0%
		% of Total	32.0%	2.0%	17.0%	2.0%	53.0%
	low	Count	11		4	3	18
		% within SOC.CAP	61.1%		22.2%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within JOBEXP	19.6%		11.8%	37.5%	18.0%
		% of Total	11.0%		4.0%	3.0%	18.0%
	very low	Count	1		2		3
		% within SOC.CAP	33.3%		66.7%		100.0%
		% within JOBEXP	1.8%		5.9%		3.0%
		% of Total	1.0%		2.0%		3.0%
Total		Count	56	2	34	8	100
		% within SOC.CAP	56.0%	2.0%	34.0%	8.0%	100.0%
		% within JOBEXP	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	56.0%	2.0%	34.0%	8.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.546[a]	9	.480
Likelihood Ratio	9.314	9	.409
Linear-by-Linear Association	.247	1	.619
N of Valid Cases	100		

a. 10 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

Table 5.5 employment and social capital level

Employment situation	Average/high social capital	Low/ very low social capital
Unemployed	11	3
Part-time in formal	2	2
Full-time in formal	28	5
Part-time in informal	2	2
Full-time in informal	19	4
Self-employed student	9	1
Student	7	3
Housewife or homemaker	1	1

When looking at the few cases of shift from less advantageous to more advantageous legal status, level of social capital makes a difference. Out of 14 progress cases, 12(85,7%) also display average or high social capital and the remaining 2(14,3%) have low social capital. No individual of low or very low social capital has been able to move towards acquiring permanent residence, South African citizenship, or study visa. Ten participants have made it, and they are all endowed with average or high social capital. Two participants of low social capital have got a job visa, but four other holders of such legal residence permit belong to the class of average or high social capital people. Despite such trend, social capital correlation to legal residence experience is not statistically significant as some 61 participants characterized by average or high social capital have not experienced any positive move with 57(93,4%) of them still keeping the refugee or asylum seeker status. In getting a better legal residence status, social capital does not constitute an important factor. Multivariate regression results (see table 5.7), while showing the validity of the model that has included social capital components, point to the time spent in South Africa (Howlong) as the best predictor of variation in legal residence status. Only 19% of variation in legal residence can be explained by the model.

Institutional constraints set limitations on what one's social capital can offer. I shall elaborate on such powerlessness of one's social capital when addressing the question as to why social capital does not always facilitate individual progress for Congolese immigrants living in Central Johannesburg.

Table 5.6 Multivariate regression analysis: explaining variation in legal residence status

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.476[a]	.227	.186	.71	.227	5.519	5	94	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), POLTRUST, DRCCMTY, PERWEEK, HOWLONG, SOC.TRUS

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.384	.313		10.796	.000	2.761	4.006		
	HOWLONG	-9.38E-02	.019	-.449	-4.911	.000	-.132	-.056	.985	1.015
	PERWEEK	-4.53E-03	.043	-.010	-.104	.917	-.091	.082	.988	1.012
	DRCCMTY	-9.39E-02	.162	-.053	-.579	.564	-.416	.228	.973	1.028
	SOC.TRUS	-2.72E-02	.063	-.041	-.433	.666	-.152	.098	.924	1.082
	POLTRUST	.111	.105	.099	1.059	.292	-.097	.319	.948	1.055

a. Dependent Variable: IDEXP

What can be said on the correlation between social capital and subjective self-assessment? It is worth noting that 75% of respondents feel better off now than at their arrival from Congo. What remains striking is the finding that those who do not perceive themselves as better off are mainly people with average or high social capital. In fact, 18 out of 25 (72%) belong to the average and high social capital group whereas 7 out 25 (28%) are of low or very low social capital. On the other side, 61 out 75 positive respondents (82,4%) have average or high social capital. The remaining 14 (18,7%) are of low social capital. Assessing positively one's experience in Johannesburg is associated with a good level of social capital. The same happens with negative assessment. Social capital may be accompanied with feelings of progress. But it also makes individuals so ambitious that achievements which could satisfy others no longer sound as progress that one has to be content with. Though most(17/25) of those who say they are not better off earn low income mainly less than R1000 per month, eight of them belong to the average or high income group. Negative self-assessment is not meaningfully correlated with low

income. A possible reason for the predominance of average and high social capital individuals in the negative self-assessment group is lack of satisfaction that comes with potential opportunities that social networks allow. The feeling that "I am not yet there" may be more common among good social 'capitalists' than socially detached people. Nevertheless the Pearson chi-square between social capital and being better off is significant (see Table 5.9). Putnam also reports that level of social capital and feelings of self-satisfaction were significantly correlated in America.

Table 5.7 social capital and being better off

Crosstab

			BETTEROF		
			yes	no	Total
SOC.CAP	high	Count	20	6	26
		% within SOC.CAP	76.9%	23.1%	100.0%
		% within BETTEROF	26.7%	24.0%	26.0%
		% of Total	20.0%	6.0%	26.0%
	average	Count	41	12	53
		% within SOC.CAP	77.4%	22.6%	100.0%
		% within BETTEROF	54.7%	48.0%	53.0%
		% of Total	41.0%	12.0%	53.0%
	low	Count	14	4	18
		% within SOC.CAP	77.8%	22.2%	100.0%
		% within BETTEROF	18.7%	16.0%	18.0%
		% of Total	14.0%	4.0%	18.0%
	very low	Count		3	3
		% within SOC.CAP		100.0%	100.0%
		% within BETTEROF		12.0%	3.0%
		% of Total		3.0%	3.0%
Total		Count	75	25	100
		% within SOC.CAP	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
		% within BETTEROF	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.283[a]	3	.026
Likelihood Ratio	8.607	3	.035
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.911	1	.167
N of Valid Cases	100		

a. 3 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .75.

Sending money home also seems more common among average or high social capital individuals. Some 51 out of 64(79,7%) are both money senders and good social

capitalists. The remaining 13(20,3%) send money home but enjoy low or very low social capital. On the other side of the pole, the picture seems similar: of 36 who do not send money home, 28(77,8%) also belong to the average or high social capital class and 8(22,2%) display low or very low social capital. Social capital is associated both with sending money home or not doing so. Such ambivalent correlation is understandable in the Central Johannesburg context where social capital may accumulate without increasing economic opportunities. On such opportunities depends mostly the likelihood of repatriating some funds. The correlation between level of social capital and sending money home is not significant as the Pearson Chi-Square is superior to 0,05.

Data analysis has singled out some important associations between one's level of social capital and income experience, job experience and legal residence status. Earning average(1000-3000) or high income(+3001), working full-time in formal or informal sector, being student or self-employed student, holding permanent residence visa, study visa, and South African citizenship are all economic benefits which have proved to be more associated with substantial level of social capital. Income experience as well as positive self assessment is significantly correlated with social capital. Models including social capital components are significantly explanatory of income experience, legal residence experience. Identification to Congolese community and political trust has proved better predictors of income experience. Social capital makes a difference in Congolese immigrants' economic performance, but its explanatory power is small. It operates even more efficiently through family and fellow Congolese networks which have not been captured in the measurement of individuals' stock of social capital.

Since the mere fact of coming to Johannesburg is perceived as an important economic opportunity, contributors in inspiring or organizing such immigration are seen as benefactors constituting one's stock of social capital. Asked about what influenced them the most to come to Johannesburg, respondents have mentioned the following factors: my own (36%), a family member (29%), a friend (13%), my work (1%), and other reasons (12%). Participants' own assessment of poor socio-economic prospects at home prompted them to make an immigration decision. Networks of friends and family members contribute a lot in encouraging the initiative and providing resources. The family seems more involved than the circle of friends in supporting an immigration decision. Few have

recently immigrated as a requirement of one's work, business or studies. "Other reasons" actually include coming to Johannesburg as an easier transit towards Europe or America, marriage, and studies.

On the question "who did provide you with accommodation at your first days in Johannesburg?", responses still display the importance of the family and network of friends: family(41%), Friend (39%), myself (13%), travel agency (2%), church (4%). On who helped to deal with legal residence issues with home affairs, again the role of the family and friends is the most important: family (30%), friend (30%), myself (27%), travel agency (1%), university (1%), my work (4%), church (3%). Getting a job, for the few lucky ones, has been facilitated by: friend (35%), family (15%), myself (10%), consultant (2%), university (3%), God (2%), church (2%), not applicable (28%). Friends' networks prove more effective than family bonds in helping to get a job. This conforms to Putnam observation that bridging social capital links to unexpected opportunities, and echoes Granovetter's emphasis on the "strength of weak ties".

Congolese immigrants' social insurance is not institutional but family and friend based. In extreme financial problem, Congolese immigrants rely on: family (38%), friend (31%), no one (11%), God (6%), church (5%), bank (2%), work (2%), Jesuit Refugee service (1%). An important portion of the population would not find any human face to rely on for help (17%). Though 71% of them are refugee or asylum seekers, only one believes he can be helped by a refugee service. Modern structures of social security, insurance or loans are nearly absent. As a matter of fact, looking at their past days in Johannesburg to find out who have helped them the most, participants pointed to the following actors: friend(42%), family(33%), no one(10%), God(6%), my church(4%). While Congolese immigrants would rely more on family, friends prove to be more effective in stretching a helping hand in bad times. Aggregating the percentage attached to each factor through all those questions allows one to outline the general importance of those social structures: friend (32%), family(31%), myself(22%), no one(11%), God(6%), church(3%), bank(2%), Work(2%), University(2%), consultant(1%). This shows clearly that Congolese immigrants do not rely on institutional mechanisms to manage their lives in Central Johannesburg. It may mean that those institutions have little to offer them. Most of those institutions favor people who already have good financial status, and most

of Congolese immigrants do not meet such requirements. As a result, an overwhelming majority resort to pre-modern structures of social solidarity: family and friends. Needless to say that such structures are characterized by their informal and unpredictable nature. An important segment of that population has the feeling that "I am on my own". Some of them desperately avow to have no one they can rely on, others fill the gap by referring to God, and some others still refer to themselves even though they are conscious of lack of resources.

What emerges from this account is the reliance of Congolese immigrants on networks of friends and family members. Congolese's effective social capital hardly flows from Tocqueville or Putnam's type of voluntary associations. Social structures that matter to their lives are not as structured as such. They depend more often on more informal networks. I can argue that social capital makes a difference in Congolese immigrants' economic lives, but social capital of a special type, the one based on family and informal networks of friends. Such a brand of social capital operates in an unpredictable way. This helps to understand why a lot of Congolese immigrants enjoy high levels of social capital without benefiting economically.

Edwards and Foley's theorization on social capital sheds more light on why high levels of social capital fail to yield economic fruits among Congolese immigrants in central Johannesburg. Based on the scope of their friends' networks, the vibrancy of their associations, and the level of social and political trust, most Congolese immigrants prove to be endowed of an important stock of social capital. But, the fact that economic and social benefits do not follow means that such social capital is of very little "use value". The "use value" of one's social networks depends on the broader social context, on the features of those networks, on individuals' position in the network, on resources available within the network, on the accessibility of resources, and individual agency. Congolese immigrants' social networks generally experience constraints which impede their effective capitalization.

The broader social context that shapes Congolese immigrants' lot in South Africa is made of legislations, institutions, and norms which were never meant to facilitate immigrants' integration. Macro-institutional structures impose constraints at various points of social integration. Immigration regulations are designed in a way that not so

many prospective immigrants get a legal permit. In some cases, an important amount of money is to be paid as a deposit called “repatriation fees” or otherwise, in addition to other payments such as South African medical insurance, etc. At the end of the day, only rich people can afford migrating legally, what is a very problematic economic discrimination. Since other types of legal residence are unaffordable from the start, most Congolese immigrants resort to applying for a refugee status. They are instead given an asylum seeker permit which gives no entitlement to substantial rights other than the right to move freely within South African territory, to study, and eventually be employed. Such attestation is valid for one month, and binds the holder to consult monthly with the home affairs office for its extension for one month each time. Entry into tertiary education is often made difficult as the South African system has had few contacts with the French education system. Not only do some education institutions find it hard to interpret adequately individuals’ previous education background, they would require prospective students to pay the entire fees for a whole year before registration, which constitutes another area of economic discrimination.

Moreover, employment regulations favor nationals. Given South Africa’s high rate of unemployment, foreigners have slim chance to join the South African workplace. There are other constraints that limit the fecundity of social networks which have to play under the rules set at a macro institutional level. It is unrealistic to expect from a local network beyond what the country is ready to offer. To improve immigrants’ prospects, change at such broad level may be crucial. The South African social context is also marked by high levels of criminality, by xenophobia, racism, racial segmentation, and several other social variables to which immigrants’ networks react or adapt. Such social dynamics may be important to fully understand some of the Congolese networks features.

It has been shown that most Congolese associations are religious. Besides, family and informal networks of friends are the kind of social networks they most rely upon. Religious associational life -as it is organized in the plethora of Congolese Pentecostal churches- hardly fosters socio-economic uplifting. Recent studies on those new churches labeled in French “Eglises de reveil” have been very pessimistic on their capacity to economically empower their members. Leon de Saint Moulin, a social scientist with several publications on Congolese society, has observed that “the support that can be

provided by such brotherly communities is limited. To address bigger problems to advance development and the reconstruction of the country, investments and commitments that supersede small communities' capabilities are required"(L'economie des Eglises de reveil et le developpement durable en R.D.C, Facultes Catholiques de Kinshasa, 2003:16). Jean-Louis Mukendi has expressed even more pessimistic assessment: " all those churches called " awakening churches" are actually not conducive to living conditions improvements neither for the believers nor for the Congolese nation as a whole. Instead, social destruction, commercial marketing through preaching shows stand as their specific characteristics" (L'economie des Eglises de reveil et le developpement durable en R.D.C, Facultes Catholiques de Kinshasa, 2003:68). The same dynamics happen in Congolese churches in Central Johannesburg as most of them are duplications or extensions of churches that already exist in the Congo.

Pre-modern structures of family and informal friends can help in urgent need. But they do not offer platforms for planning and organizing common actions for individual and community progress. The fact that Congolese immigrants lack such kind of organizations mean they can only react to basic or urgent needs, but never become proactive or anticipative in improving their long-term socio-economic fate. The predominance of bonding ties over bridging networks also insulates Congolese immigrants from other segments of the South African society where more resources are expected to come from. Congolese immigrants may be involved in various social networks. But, those networks are mostly narrowly defined, informal, and insulated from other people. This explains why an even well connected individual within Congolese community draws few economic benefits from their high level of social capital.

The main problem with religious, informal, and family networks is that they have few available material resources. There are obvious limitations on what they can offer. Besides, their undertakings are not sustainable. Bridging ties, civil associations, organizational support may link to more and better sustained opportunities.

Individuals' position in the network also matters. Acquiring an important position would often depend upon individuals' skills. A lot of Congolese immigrants, especially those under 30, tend to be under-skilled. Ability to adequately speak English may be a crucial key in getting an advantageous position within networks. Many Congolese

immigrants unfortunately lack such an elementary requirement. That is why some highly qualified and well connected individuals fail to place themselves in a better position, which could facilitate the turning of social networks into social capital.

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Large section of the literature on social capital has raised expectations that associations' attendance would result in political engagement. It has been argued that involvement in voluntary associations breeds social trust as well as political trust, which are needed for engagement in activities of public interest. In this research, political engagement has been understood as a multidimensional variable whose constitution has included knowledge about politics, interest in politics through public Media, readiness to involve in a political action, and past political involvement. Thus, correlation between Congolese immigrants' social capital and political engagement is worth analyzing. Doing so helps engage previous theoretical expectations on the matter as well as reveal the specific dynamics of Congolese' social capital and political engagement.

Does social capital explain the political engagement of Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg? Average or high political engagement is associated with average or high social capital for 65 individuals out of 79 (82,2%). On the other hand, high political engagement also goes together with low social capital for 14 individuals out of 79(17,9 %). It implies that political engagement is more associated with high social capital. While one would expect that low political engagement be attached to low social capital, such hypothesis holds only for 7 cases out of 21(33,3%). In 14 cases out 21(66,6%), participants with low political engagement happen to be endowed with high social capital. Those instances cast doubt on the claim that associations' attendance predicts political engagement. Political disengagement seems to flow both from social capital or the lack of it. But political engagement mostly flows from social capital, and only in few cases does exist without the latter. The absence of any statistically meaningful correlation between the two variables means that one has not to expect that high social capital would mostly go with high political engagement, and low social capital with low political engagement. Both variables are not meaningfully correlated as one can infer from the Pearson coefficient of correlation (see table 5.9).

The fact that political disengagement coexists with social capital means that not any kind of social capital is incompatible with political disengagement or fosters political engagement. A lot of associations that Congolese immigrants join would not generate involvement with the wider political community.

Table 5.8 social capital and political engagement

Crosstab

			POL.ENG				
			high	average	low	very low	Total
SOC.CAP	high	Count	12	10	4		26
		% within SOC.CAP	46.2%	38.5%	15.4%		100.0%
		% within POL.ENG	30.8%	25.0%	20.0%		26.0%
		% of Total	12.0%	10.0%	4.0%		26.0%
	average	Count	22	21	9	1	53
		% within SOC.CAP	41.5%	39.6%	17.0%	1.9%	100.0%
		% within POL.ENG	56.4%	52.5%	45.0%	100.0%	53.0%
		% of Total	22.0%	21.0%	9.0%	1.0%	53.0%
	low	Count	5	8	5		18
		% within SOC.CAP	27.8%	44.4%	27.8%		100.0%
		% within POL.ENG	12.8%	20.0%	25.0%		18.0%
		% of Total	5.0%	8.0%	5.0%		18.0%
	very low	Count		1	2		3
		% within SOC.CAP		33.3%	66.7%		100.0%
		% within POL.ENG		2.5%	10.0%		3.0%
		% of Total		1.0%	2.0%		3.0%
Total		Count	39	40	20	1	100
		% within SOC.CAP	39.0%	40.0%	20.0%	1.0%	100.0%
		% within POL.ENG	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	39.0%	40.0%	20.0%	1.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.534[a]	9	.582
Likelihood Ratio	7.858	9	.549
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.001	1	.045
N of Valid Cases	100		

a. 8 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

Cross-tabulation between social capital and other sub-variables of political engagement reveals even more on the dynamics of Congolese immigrants' political engagement.

How does social capital correlate with participants' knowledge about politics? According to Putnam, high social capitalists tend to be more knowledgeable about

politics. In 52 cases out of 77(67,5%), Congolese immigrants with high or average knowledge about politics have also displayed high or average social capital (see table 5.9). But, one is puzzled to observe that poor knowledge about politics also walks hand in hand with high social capital. In 27 cases out of 33(81,8%), people characterized by low political knowledge displayed surprisingly average or high level of social capital. Only for 6 individuals out 33(18,1%) is poor knowledge about politics connected with low level of social capital. On the contrary, high political knowledge goes together with low level of social capital for 15 cases out of 77(19,4%). What these data show is that being knowledgeable about politics does not exclusively correlate with either high or low social capital. Good knowledge about politics can go both with the presence or absence of social capital. It is not confirmed that high social capital makes one more informed about politics as poor political knowledge is also attached to high social capital (81,8%). When one considers only a group of politically less knowledgeable people, eight out of 10 join an association or any kind of social networks. In many instances, social networks or associations do not serve as avenues for political information and mobilization. Multivariate regression analysis does point to weekly association attendance as a significant predictor of knowledge about politics (see table 5.10). The model that includes gender, education, identification to Congolese community, political trust, scope of non-Congolese friendship explains 26,4% of variation in knowledge about Politics. Education and gender stand as the most important predictors within the model. Weekly attendance which is a key component of social capital also makes a difference in participants' knowledge about politics.

Table 5.9 social capital and knowledge about politics

	High or average	**Low or very low**
High or average	52	27
Low or very low	15	6

Table 5.10 Multivariate regression analysis: explaining knowledge about politics

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.555[a]	.309	.264	3.89	.309	6.917	6	93	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), EDUCATIO, DRCCMTY, POLTRUST, PERWEEK, GENDER, FRIENDS

b. Dependent Variable: KNOWLDGE

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	9.520	2.679		3.554	.001	4.200	14.840		
	GENDER	-2.986	.911	-.304	-3.278	.001	-4.795	-1.177	.867	1.154
	PERWEEK	.510	.241	.186	2.121	.037	.033	.988	.962	1.039
	FRIENDS	2.872E-02	.279	.010	.103	.918	-.525	.582	.806	1.241
	DRCCMTY	-1.444	.884	-.142	-1.633	.106	-3.200	.312	.980	1.020
	POLTRUST	.146	.566	.023	.257	.797	-.978	1.269	.973	1.028
	EDUCATIO	2.001	.516	.355	3.877	.000	.976	3.027	.886	1.128

a. Dependent Variable: KNOWLDGE

As for the relationship between TV news watching and social capital, it is striking that the only three who have avowed they do not watch news on TV happen to be of average or high social capital. Of 17 respondents who do not read newspaper, 13(76%) display average or high social capital, and 4(23,5%) are of low social capital. Certain kind of social capital can be disinterested of public affairs. Such behavior may be neither purposeful nor accidental. Poor understanding of English, low level of education and poverty are part of the explanation.

Readiness to involve in political action is also more associated with high or average social capital. Those characterized by propensity to take political action are mostly of average or high social capital (57/67, 83,8%).

Only in 11 cases out of 68(16%), is readiness to political involvement correlated with low social capital. There are instances where unreadiness to involve in politics goes together with high social capital (14/20, 70%). And the expectation that lack of political orientation would be attached to low social capital proves true only in 6 cases out of 20(30%). Though inclination to political activism is more common among high social

capital people, it happens to wither even among the latter category of people. Once more the link between social capital and propensity to involve in politics is not a straight one. Certain types of social capital, as attendance to religious groups such as Jehovah witnesses, may just be apolitical. Instead of encouraging political engagement, it can even wither the initial positive stance towards engaging in politics. Multivariate regression analysis displays the significance of the explanatory model that includes education, identification to Congolese community, political trust, weekly association attendance, and scope of non-Congolese friendship (see table 5.11). Education is the most important predictor of readiness to involve in politics, but political trust also proves to have significant prediction power. The model explains 18% of variation in the extent to which participants are ready or not to involve in a political action.

Table 5.11 Multivariate regression analysis: explaining readiness to involve in a political action

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.466[a]	.217	.175	1.10	.217	5.205	5	94	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), EDUCATIO, DRCCMTY, POLTRUST, PERWEEK, FRIENDS

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.386	.612		3.897	.000	1.170	3.601		
	PERWEEK	-1.13E-02	.068	-.016	-.167	.867	-.146	.123	.966	1.035
	FRIENDS	.101	.075	.131	1.343	.183	-.048	.251	.875	1.143
	DRCCMTY	.339	.248	.125	1.365	.175	-.154	.832	.988	1.012
	POLTRUST	.415	.159	.241	2.603	.011	.099	.732	.973	1.027
	EDUCATIO	-.590	.144	-.393	-4.103	.000	-.876	-.305	.907	1.103

a. Dependent Variable: READINES

Applying multivariate regression analysis on the variable capturing past political actions shows the significance of the model (see table 5.12). It explains 15% of variation.

Knowledge about politics proves to be the most important predictor, followed by political trust which is a component of social capital.

Table 5.12 Multivariate regression analysis: explaining past political involvement

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.444[a]	.197	.154	2.25	.197	4.605	5	94	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), KNOWLDGE, POLTRUST, DRCCMTY, PERWEEK, FRIENDS

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.951	1.143		3.458	.001	1.683	6.220		
	PERWEEK	-.230	.139	-.155	-1.651	.102	-.506	.047	.965	1.036
	FRIENDS	.203	.152	.130	1.335	.185	-.099	.505	.907	1.103
	DRCCMTY	.216	.516	.039	.419	.676	-.808	1.240	.967	1.035
	POLTRUST	-.799	.327	-.229	-2.441	.017	-1.449	-.149	.974	1.027
	KNOWLDGE	.165	.052	.306	3.168	.002	.062	.269	.917	1.091

a. Dependent Variable: ACTIONS

As a final account on social capital influence on political engagement, it is worth emphasizing that such hypothesis can be sustainable only under two main conditions: not only the large majority of politically engaged agents should also display high social capital, but politically disengaged should also be characterized by low social capital. That would suggest that level of social capital operates as a key variable in explaining variation in level of political engagement. Cross-tabulation between social capital and all measures of political engagement has shown that satisfaction of the first condition is not followed by compliance with the second. As a matter of fact, politically engaged individuals tend to be endowed with high social capital, but politically disengaged do not tend to have low social capital. Most knowledgeable about politics display high social capital, but politically less knowledgeable people do not necessarily reflect low social capital. Individuals more inclined to take political action are more likely to be rated as high or average social capital agents, but the politically disinterested do not tend to be low social capital bearers. What can be concluded from such dynamics?

In this study, social capital cannot be said to be one of the strongest predictors of political engagement. It is though, among the significant explanatory factors. Political engagement is more associated with high or average social capital. Inconsistency in the way both variables correlate has also been observed. Low social capital cannot be predicted from low political engagement, and high social capital is not sufficient for expecting high political engagement.

To ensure that an increase in social capital goes with political engagement, one has to make sure social networks and associations are not a-political (not necessarily non-political), and that joiners have the level of education, the relevant language skills, and few economic means to take advantage of flows of political information and structures of political mobilization that may be available through social networks.

In the light of multivariate regression analysis, one discovers that models that include social capital components are significant in explaining political engagement sub-variables. The low degree of their explanatory power just emphasizes the weakness of the correlation between social capital and political engagement and calls for other explanatory factors. Though education and knowledge about politics are the most important predictors of political engagement as indicated by regression analysis, political trust, and weekly attendance also stand as significant factors. Thus, social capital is part of the explanation for political engagement among Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg, even if its contribution cannot be said the most important.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter has been to investigate the existence of any meaningful correlation between social capital, economic performance, and political engagement among Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg. The hypothetical model expects social capital to be explanatory of economic performance and political engagement. Findings confirm the validity of the model. However, its explanatory power is weak.

Good economic performance is more likely to happen for Congolese of average or high social capital. Average or high income Congolese happen to be mostly of average or high social capital. Working full-time, being a student or self-employed student is more common among average or high social capital people. A shift towards more advantageous legal residence status such as student visa, job visa, permanent residence, and South

African citizenship has mainly occurred for average or highly socially connected participants. On the other side, no one with low or very low social capital has been able to reach a high level of income. Few people with poor social capital have shifted from low to a higher, from less advantageous legal residence status to a more rewarding. The association between social capital and economic performance is meaningful. But it is hard to conclude general causality in the sense that social capital always or often fosters individual economic performance. As a matter of fact, many economic unsuccessful individuals turn out to have a great deal of social capital. Why in those cases, does endowment of social capital fail to deliver economic gains?

Multivariate regression analysis demonstrates that the model including education, time spent in Johannesburg and social capital sub-variables only explains 21% of variation in income experience. Other factors need to be included to better capture what predicts economic performance. The story of the Congolese social capital powerlessness outlines the importance of looking at the broader context in which networks evolve, the contextual features of social networks, individuals' position within networks, and the type of resources available. Congolese associations and networks, while providing moral support to members, lack the strength of economically empowering them. Social capital, as I have measured it, predicts a small portion of economic performance. Similar findings have lead other researchers to distinguish social connectedness with social capital, social capacity with social capitalization. The latter does not always flow from the former. This is particularly clear in this case-study of Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg.

Social capital correlation with political engagement is even more complex. Whereas politically engaged people tend to be of average or high social capital, emphatic individuals also belong to average or high social capital class. There is less evidence that political engagement would be more associated with social capital, and disengagement with its deficit. One confronts the question on why intensive interactions in associations or social networks may fail to generate political engagement. As for economic performance, social capital predicts a very small range of variation in political engagement. Education seems the most important predictor as shown by multivariate regression analysis. However, social capital is not indifferent to political engagement. It makes some difference. Other explanatory factors need to be looked at to understand

Congolese associational life failure to predict larger portion of variation in political engagement. Networks features and individuals' dispositions may undermine any possibility of political mobilization. Predominance of religious associations and Congolese' English language limitations as well as financial constraints do not foster high level of political participation. The existence of associations and social networks is not a sufficient predictor of a vibrant civil society. In some circumstances, such as the one in which religious associations are not only the most dominant, but also narrowly conceived as apolitical, it may even prevent its emergence.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

As suggested by the title, this research has aimed at finding out whether there exists any correlation of any kind between social capital, economic performance and political engagement in the context of Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg. Since the social capital literature has legitimised the hypothesis according to which social networks and social trust foster economic development and political engagement, testing the validity of such claims has been a worthwhile investigation. By unveiling the complex experience of Congolese immigrants in Johannesburg, the relevance of the research findings is of broad interest.

What this research has meant by "social capital" emerges from an attempt to marry socio-psychological and socio-structural approaches to the concept. The first school has based its conceptualisation on broad statistical description of social and political values arising from associational life. In doing so, it has failed to capture values dependence on social structures and contextual dynamics that only reveal inequities and inequalities in the production and distribution of social capital. The second school has precisely emphasised on such local dynamics. But its neglect of axiological treatment of the concept and its underestimation of statistical descriptions fecundity have been found wanting. This research has approached social capital as both values (social trust, political trust, and community identification) and structures (associations and informal networks). They have been statistically measured to allow comparison among individuals and the study of correlation with economic performance and political engagement. But, individuals have been referred to their daily experience in Central Johannesburg to report on the actual socio-economic importance of social values and social structures.

This study has found that most voluntary associations among Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg are religious, hierarchical, and generally disconnected from opportunities of socio-economic emancipation. Very few people count on churches as a last resort. The most attended associations are of very little help to members as the latter tend to rely more on informal networks of friends and family members. Thus, measuring individuals' social capital in terms of membership and attendance in voluntary associations as Putnam does can be misleading. Congolese

immigrants hardly take part in heterogeneous associations. Only in informal networks do they mix with other nationalities. Such kind of spontaneous connectedness bears its fruits, but it would be unrealistic to expect coordinated and long-term socio-economic projects from informal networks. Besides, social trust is a very scarce commodity in Central Johannesburg. Social heterogeneity, high mobility, and the recent history of criminality may explain why individuals and communities tend to distrust each other. Opportunism, free-riding, dilemmas of collective actions, the tragedy of the commons are all likely to flourish in such an environment. Social cooperation and enforcement of contracts may only happen through the "forces of order" which turn out to be highly relied upon.

Social capital correlation with crucial social variables such as economic performance and political engagement has constituted the core question of this investigation. Weak correlation has been found between Congolese immigrants' social capital and their economic experience. A model that includes social capital components proves statistically explanatory of economic performance. However, the model's predictive power as well as social capital components explanatory strength is low. Thus, social capital proves to be part of the explanation, but is not the most determinant of economic performance. That a significant number of average or high social capital individuals still stagnate in poverty is a proof of Congolese immigrants' social capital powerlessness. Congolese associational life failure to trigger substantive economic progress for most of its members can be explained by reference to South Africa institutional constraints to immigrants, disempowering features of Congolese associations, individuals' marginal position within networks, and the general absence of resources in those narrow social structures.

As for the relation between social capital and political engagement, the association between both variables is just one way. Politically engaged agents are mostly individuals of average or high social capital. But disengaged individuals are not mainly people of poor social capital. Many socially connected persons display empathy. With such dynamics, there is no way to coherently assert social capital determinant influence on political engagement. The social capital model explains 26% of knowledge about politics, 18% of readiness to involve in political action, and 19% of variation in past activism. The significance of the model is an indication that social capital does make a

difference in people's political behaviour. The weakness of the explanatory power points towards other equally important factors that might shape Congolese immigrants' level of political engagement. Not all voluntary associations or informal networks encourage political participation. Some associations such as "Jehovah witness" may even lead members to find more reasons in believing that "politics in Congo is none of my business". Dominance of religious associational life, lack of English proficiency and poverty also constrain the possibility that intensive social interactions bring about better engagement with the wider political community.

Are patterns of associational life discovered among Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg also replicable in any other Congolese immigrants' community in South Africa? As far as associational life is concerned, religious, hierarchical, and bonding ties are very likely to predominate in any Congolese immigrants' community for the simple reason that such features are not class-based. In multi-class Congolese immigrants' communities or in areas with predominance of low income individuals such as Central Johannesburg Congolese immigrants community, social capital influence on economic performance and political engagement will tend to be weak, and informal networks as well as family members will tend to be the primary socio-economic support system. Whether such characteristics can be found in wealthy Congolese immigrants' communities such as the Sandton Congolese community will require further research.

Lots of features of Congolese immigrants' associational life would be found in other African immigrants' communities in South Africa: predominance of bonding interactions over bridging social capital, over-reliance on informal networks, friends and family, distrust of out-group members, and weak contribution of social interactions to economic progress. The South Africa context affects African immigrants in similar ways. That is why some consequences of and reactions to South African institutional constraints will be similar across African immigrants' communities. Nevertheless, finding out whether other African communities also display prevalence of religious groupings would be an interesting additional enquiry.

In most immigrants' communities, in-groups interactions tend to be more intensive. This is even reflected by a type of spatial occupation which favours the creation of identity homogeneous neighbourhoods. Lots of commercial opportunities and

job recruitment flow within such bonding ties. Patterns of associational life in the Congolese immigrants' community are only typical when it comes to the excessive multiplication of religious associations and to the little impact of associational life on economic performance and political engagement. The un-productivity of Congolese social capital may be circumstantial given that the Congolese Diaspora in South Africa is still very young. Organisation and social integration comes with time as the history of immigrant communities in America and in South Africa may teach us. Successful immigrant communities such as Jewish, Indians, Chinese etc have taken years to emerge as a viable social force. What can be done to speed up and consolidate such process for Congolese immigrants' community or any other African immigrant community will require additional investigation.

The case study of Congolese immigrants in Central Johannesburg enriches the continuing social capital debate of at least three major discoveries. Firstly, whereas social capital has mainly referred to voluntary associations, individuals in immigrants' communities and low-income societies mostly draw their social capital from informal networks of friends and family members. In such contexts, measuring individuals' social capital by just looking at the number of voluntary associations and individuals' attendance may be misleading. Voluntary associations may be attended only for symbolic purposes and not for any tangible socio-economic gain. When it comes to addressing concrete daily problems, individuals resort to other social structures such as family members or close friends. Distinction between "symbolic" voluntary associations and "effective" family and friends' social support is important when one wants to account for individuals' social capital. Secondly, Congolese immigrants' social capital powerlessness illustrates that social capital is a function not only of social interactions but also of broad institutional context. The most connected individual may stagnate in poverty not because he lacks social networks, but because macro institutional norms impose limitations on what those social networks can deliver. Thirdly, political engagement does not just follow from associations' attendance. An apolitical association such as Jehovah witness church or an association attended mainly by undereducated people may still build organisational skills, but insulate participants from the political community. The case study of Congolese immigrants' religious associational life has raised scepticism on religious

groupings capacity to advance members' economic prospects and enhance high quality engagement with the broader political community. Whether such limitations emerge from structural or contextual features of religious associational life requires further investigation.

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ANNEXE

THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello, my name is Eddy Mazembo Mavungu. I am a student at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting this research for academic purposes and I wonder if I might ask you some questions. Your answers will be confidential. They will be put together with 100 other Congolese immigrants I am interviewing to give an overall picture. It will be impossible to pick you out from what you are saying, so please feel free to tell us what you think.

Are you willing to participate? Yes ☐ No ☐
I yes, then I proceed

When did you arrive in Johannesburg (month and year)?:……
If after July 2003, I don't proceed.
1. 1. Male ☐ 2. Female ☐

2. How old are you?
1. 20-29 2. 30-39 3. 40-49 4. 50-59 5. 60-69

3. Education:
1. Primary school 2. Secondary school 3. undergraduate 4. Masters 5. Doctorate

4. Ethnicity: …….

5. Church attendance: ……

6. What was your status before leaving Congo?
1. unemployed 2. Working part-time in formal sector 3. Working full-time in formal sector 4. Working part-time in informal sector 5. Working full-time in informal sector 6. Self-employed student 7.Student 8. housewife/homemaker

7. What was your status just as you arrived in Johannesburg?
Same options as above

8. What is your current employment situation?
Same options as No 6

9. What was your status at arrival from Congo?
1. Refugee 2. study visa 3. job visa 4. permanent residence 5. SA citizenship 6.Other

10. What is your current status?
Same options as above

11. Approximately, what was your income per month at arrival from Congo (Taxes excluded?)

1. up to R200 2. R201 to R1000 3. R1001 to R3000 4. R3001 to R9000 5. R9001 to R20000 6. R20000+

12. Approximately, what is your current income per month (Taxes excluded)?
Same options as above

13. Which one of the following associations do you join?

Type of association	Yes	No	Name of the association	Number of members
Churches				
Ethnic associations				
Regional associations				
Former students of the same school or University				
Political party				
Rotating credit system				
Traders association				
Music group				
Sport group				

14. How many meetings does your association organize?

Name of the association	Per week	Per month	Per trimester	Per Semester	Per year

15. How many of the scheduled meetings do you personally attend?

Name of the association	Per week	Per month	Per trimester	Per Semester	Per year

16. Tell us about the nature of your association?

Name of the association	Open to any Congolese?		Open to any one?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No

17. How many non-Congolese friends do you have?
1. 0 2. 1-3 3. 4-7 4. 7-10 5.10+

18. Do you think of yourself as belonging to 'Congolese community'?
Yes ☐ *No* ☐

19. What is your view point on the following statements?
1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly

disagree

1	*Most of Congolese in Johannesburg are trustworthy*	
2	*Most of South Africans are trustworthy*	
3	*Most of members of my ethnic group are trustworthy*	
4	*Most of other foreigners are trustworthy*	
5	*Most of my housemates are trustworthy*	

20. If you drop your wallet in your neighbourhood, do you expect people to give it back to you?

1. Surely	*2. strong probability*	*3. Probable*	*4. Low probability*	*5. Certainly not*

21. If you have knowledge of a serious crime, would you notify the police?
Yes *No*

22. If you have experienced robbery, would you report it to the police?

23. Do you read local newspaper?

24. Do you listen to radio news or TV news?

25. What do you think of the following statements?

	True	*False*
There is no fight anymore in the Eastern Congo		
Transition constitution allows to extend the transition for six months once		
In 30 June 2005, there was no demonstration in Kinshasa		
Voter enrolment process is underway in Congo		
The 3rd Republic Constitution divides set the age for president candidate at 40 years		

26.What do you think of the following statements?

	True	False
Zuma is the current deputy president in SA		
Cosatu has not organized any demonstration in July		
Thabo Mbeki can still run for the next presidency according to SA constitution		
SA democracy is now eleven years old		
On the 30th June 2005, some Congolese demonstrated in Pretoria and Cape Town in relation with the extension of the transition period		

27. What is your view point on the following statements?
1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree

1	*Politics in Congo is none of my business*	
2	*I would personally join any pacific demonstration to support free and fair Elections*	

	in DRC	
3	*Pressure coming from people can make Congolese leaders improve their policies*	
4	*There is no way I can contribute to the improvement of Congolese Politics from SA*	
5	*Reading or watching news on Congolese Politics is a waste of time*	

28. Have you ever done this?

		Yes	*No*
1	*Signed a petition*		
2	*Participated in a demonstration*		
3	*Joined a political party*		
4	*Volunteered to a community service*		
5	*Debated on Congolese Politics*		
6	*Attended a political public meeting*		
7	*Organized a party for friends*		
8	*Served as an officer of some club or organization*		
9	*Subscribed to a political newspaper*		
10	*Browsed on an internet site on Congolese Politics*		

29. In extreme financial problem, who would you turn to more naturally as your last resort?

……..(type of relation)

30. What influenced you most to come to Johannesburg?(More than one choice is allowed)

1	*A friend encouraged me to come*	
2	*A family member encouraged me to come*	
3	*I decided by my own*	
4	*My work sent me here*	
5	*other reasons: ……..*	

31. Who provided you with accommodation your first days in Johannesburg?

Type of relationship	Where did you know the person	When did you know the person

32. Who did help you the most to get papers for a legal stay in Johannesburg?

Type of relationship	Where did you know the person	When did you know the person

33. Who did help you the most to get a job?

Type of relationship	Where did you know the person	When did you know the person

34. When you look at your living in Johannesburg, who would you consider to have helped you the most?

Type of relationship	Where did you know the person	When did you know the person

35. Do you sometimes send money home?

36. Are you better off now than when you just came?

Thanks for your time.