

## FACTORS INFLUENCING VOTER TURNOUT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN UGANDA

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### ABSTRACT

*The study aimed at identifying factors influencing voter turnout in local government council elections in Uganda clustering by region and residence. Assessment was done using a mixed effects logistic regression model and secondary data from the Uganda National Governance Baseline Survey (2013) consisting of 4743 participants selected countrywide.*

*Voter turnout was significantly affected by age, education level, belonging to a political party, having political party offices, employment status, voting rights knowledge and bribery.*

*The study recommended that government, civil society organizations and other stakeholders should carry out campaigns targeting eligible voters especially in rural areas aimed at sensitizing them about the importance of participating in elections and the introduction of compulsory voting by government. Political parties should engage in grass root mobilization of supporters through engaging women and youth in political party activities and finally rules governing electoral practices should be revisited to provide serious penalties for election malpractices.*

**Keywords:** Voter, turnout, government, elections

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Voter turnout can simply refer to the percentage of eligible voters who cast a ballot in an election (Agaigbe, 2015). The number of electorates who turn out to vote for their government is important in understanding people's political participation. Emphasizing on the importance of voter turnout in a democracy, Kuenzi& Lambright(2007) argue that because democracy in its most fundamental sense is "rule by the people", the proportion of the citizenry expressing its preferences through voting is of interest. While high voter turnout is a desirable indicator of participatory democracy and legitimacy of a current system, low voter turnout is an expression of

dissatisfaction on the part of the voting public with the status quo or an indication of political apathy (Chinsinga, 2006; Agaigbe, 2015).

Voting is one of the most fundamental aspects of civic engagement. Many political scientists link voting with the health of the democratic process and argue that declining voting rates may be symptomatic of a “democratic deficit” (Pammett and LeDuc 2003; Nakhaie 2006). Because political participation can also influence public policy, there are concerns that lower participation could result in policies that are not necessarily representative of key constituencies, like those who tend to vote less (Archer 2003). As a result, the voter turnout rate is used as one indicator of civic engagement (Uppal & LaRochelle-Côté, 2012). Political participation is the involvement of citizens in political and especially, electoral processes, which is a fundamental requirement for representative democracy. Powell, (1982) sees electoral participation as one of the three main indicators of democratic performance. Unfortunately, there has been a trend of declining electoral turnout and generally, a low level of political participation in most democracies (Agaigbe, 2015).

There have been studies on voter participation carried out in several countries such as Canada (Uppal & LaRochelle-Côté, 2012), United States of America (Gerber, Green & Larimer, 2008; Arbour & Hayes, 2005) and others cross national such as (Blais, 2006; Blais, Massicotte, Dobrzynska, 2003). Majority of the studies have focused on specific factors influencing voter turnout including political communication systems (Baek, 2009); social pressure (Gerber, Green & Larimer, 2008); education (Tenn, 2007); disability (Schur & Adya, 2012); voter apathy (Agaigbe, 2015); age, political knowledge, political context (Snyder, 2011); unemployment (Incantalupo, 2010); campaign and contextual features (Hogan, 1999). In Africa, few studies have been conducted regarding voter turnout though focusing on general elections including Blaydes (2006) in Egypt, Kappia (2012) in Tanzania and (Kuenzi & Lambright, 2007) in sub-Saharan Africa’s multiparty regimes. Regarding local government council elections in Africa, studies conducted include (Yeboah-Assiamah, Asamoah & Osei-Kojo, 2014) in Ghana on effect of administrative responsibility of district assemblies on citizen participation, (Asante, 2011) in Asante Akim South district, Ghana.

For the case of Uganda, there have not been any studies pertaining to voter turnout during local government elections. The Local Government Act, 1997 legalized the decentralization policy which established district level (LCV), municipality level (LCIV) and sub county level (LCIII) councils as corporate bodies of local governments. The general objectives of decentralization within the wider context were to; bring political power closer to local communities, respond to local needs, build local capacity and improve accountability. Specifically for the health sector, improvement was expected in the form of increased utilization of health services, better access to health services, more coverage of the population with basic services, better quality of health care and, ultimately, a decline in the rate of illness and death (Jeppsson and Okuonzi, 2000).

At the local levels, formal powers over implementation of health services lies with the political bodies in the district and management boards for the hospitals appointed by elected local councils (Bashaasha, Mangheni&Nkonya, 2008). Though there are various forms of citizen participation in governance and development processes, elections happen to be the most manifest way of popular participation yet it appears that citizens are gradually losing interest in Local Government Elections which remains a blow to the concept of decentralization (Yeboah-Assiamah, Asamoah&Osei-Kojo, 2014) and quality service delivery since its through voting that people are able to elect in local government offices individuals that are competent with regards to formulating policies and decisions to achieve decentralization objectives among which include improving access to and quality of health services delivered. It is therefore important to study and understand the motives behind peoples' decision to not take part in local government elections and come up with solutions to address this trend by focusing on the factors that influence one's decision to either report or not report to polling station on voting day to cast their vote to elect their political leaders.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Voting is at the heart of democratic political systems. It is a way to choose political leaders and express public opinion and it serves as a valuable opportunity for the public to learn about major political issues (Baek, 2009). Voter turnout is one of the indicators that can be used to scientifically measure the extent of democracy in a country (Kappia, 2013). Although low voter

turnout in national elections has gathered considerable attention and concern, much lower turnout in local government council elections has often been largely ignored. For instance, in Uganda, the voter turnout for the 2005/2006 Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government Council Elections was 69.2%, 67.8%, and 46.3%, respectively (Electoral Commission, 2006).

Among the consequences of low voter turnout include; the voice of the people in municipal elections is likely to be severely distorted; since the actions of local government can affect citizens in profound ways (for example, in public safety, infrastructure, and land-use decisions), there is a very real possibility that elected officials and the policies they enact will tend to serve only a small segment of the population (Hajnal and Hills 2002); citizens lose out on a relatively easy opportunity to learn about and become engaged in democracy yet given the proximity of local governments and their relatively small size, it is in many ways easier for citizens to acquire crucial democratic skills and become familiar with the public realm at the local level (Hajnal & Lewis, 2003) and may also be a contributing factor to the decreasing levels of trust in government, political efficacy, and sense of civic duty (Bennett & Resnick 1990; Lipset & Schneider 1983). This downward trend brings to light an ongoing crisis in Uganda's democracy raising concerns which need to be addressed since elections are at the core of modern democracy and low voter turnout rates might indicate that people do not see elections as central to political life (Kuenzi & Lambright, 2007)

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of the study is to identify factors influencing voter turnout in local government council elections.

#### **1.3.1 Specific objectives**

1. Ascertain the effect of demographic factors on voter turnout.
2. Determine the effect of socio economic factors on voter turnout.
3. Establish the effect of information factors on voter turnout.

### **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

At present, there exist gaps in research and understanding of factors affecting voter turnout specifically during local government elections with the exception of a few studies including

(Hajnal& Lewis, 2003; Yeboah-Assiamah, Asamoah&Osei-Kojo, 2014; Asante, 2010) but which are limited to small geographical areas including provinces, districts, municipalities from which generalizations can't be made to the entire country. The main contribution of this study to studies of voter turnout is that, firstly the sample size is nationally representative obtained using standard statistical sampling procedures hence estimates obtained as close to national estimates and secondly random effects are introduced at regional and residence levels to take into consideration similarities between people in respective geographical areas as well as differences between people in different geographical areas. This helps to incorporate into the analysis the diversity existent in the population of Uganda due to the different tribes, cultures and ethnic groups and these do influence voting choices and patterns in Uganda.

## **1.5 DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

### **1.5.1 Data sources and description of model variables**

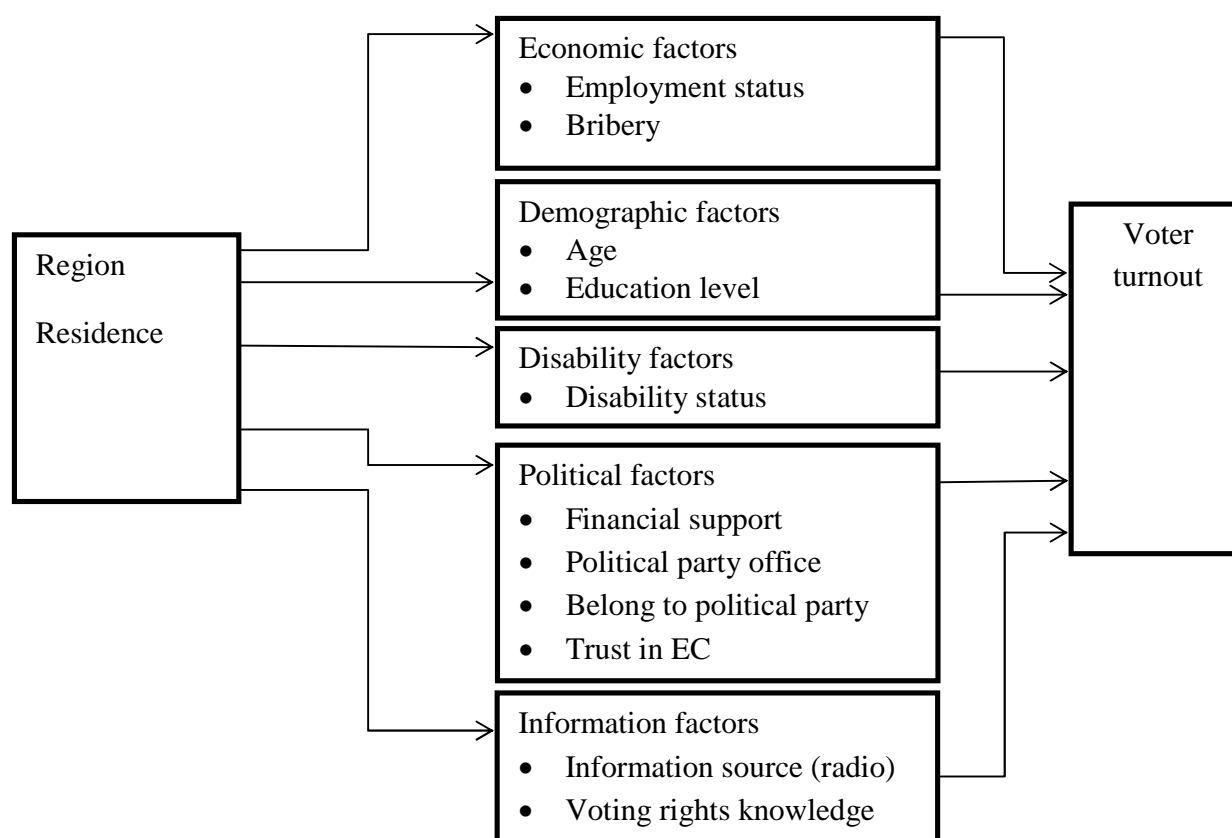
The data used in this study was obtained from the Uganda National Governance Baseline Survey (UNGBS) conducted by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with Makerere University, School of Statistics and Planning. A national sample of 4776 households was used to collect information on the different themes of governance including Political Representation and Participation as well as Democracy and Decentralization among others. Table 1 provides a description of the variables chosen for the study where, turnout was the dependent variable and the rest independent variables.

**Table 1: Description of model variables**

No	Variable	Description
1	turnout	Voted in last Local Government Council election
2	stratum3	Region
3	residence	Rural or urban residence
4	agegroup	Age of respondent
5	educ	education level
6	trust	Level of trust in the electoral commission
7	voteright	Knowledge of right to vote
8	finance	Contributed financially to candidate
9	ppoffice	Have political party office in sub county
10	ppbelong	Belong to political party
11	radio	Main source of information is radio
12	work	employment status
13	bribery	Paid a bribe
14	rating	quality of services
15	disabled	Disability status

## **1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The dependent variable consisted of two categories (yes, no) that measured participation in previous Local Government Council elections. A household member's demographic, economic, information, political and institutional factors constituted the independent variables. In principle, assessment of the level of democratic governance in any country is best done by the individuals within households in the country. Conversely, the best model that assesses democratic governance should have, as a data source, households which should, at the same time be a unit of analysis, for a more reliable assessment.



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework for factors influencing voter turnout**

## **1.7 FINDINGS**

### **1.7.1 Voter turnout and associated factors**

This section looks at the association between voter turnout and its associated factors summarized in Table 2 below. Generally, apart from offering financial support to electoral candidates and using radio as main source of information, the rest of the independent variables were significantly associated with voter turnout at least either across rural or urban residences.

**Table 2: Factors associated with voter turnout across region and residences**

		Urban			Rural		
Variable		Yes	No	n	Yes	No	n
Age group	18 to 30	51.77	48.23	651	66.38	33.62	1273
	31 to 59	73.88	26.12	536	90.9	9.1	1748
	60+	83.54	16.46	79	86.3	13.7	416
		Chi2(2) =76.8592 Pr = 0.000			Chi2(2) =298.8512 Pr = 0.000		
Education level	None	70	30	90	86	14	857
	Primary	71.23	28.77	438	81.28	18.72	1950
	Secondary	55.51	44.49	472	72.88	27.12	472
	Diploma/certificate	62.99	37.01	127	84.48	15.52	116
	Degree & above	58.99	41.01	139	61.76	38.24	34
		Chi2(4) =26.9768 Pr =0.000			Chi2(4) =43.5914 Pr =0.000		
Trust	High	63.93	36.07	122	85.32	14.68	545
	Moderate	66.29	33.71	350	83.25	16.75	770
	Low	64.39	35.61	424	78.65	21.35	548
	Not applicable	58.08	41.92	365	79.86	20.14	1559
		Chi2(3) = 5.8053 Pr = 0.121			Chi2(3) = 12.3762 Pr = 0.006		
Voting rights	Yes	64.58	35.42	1,231	83.09	16.91	3,288
	No	8.82	91.18	34	32.2	67.8	118
		Chi2(1) = 44.1696 Pr = 0.000			Chi2(1) =194.2357 Pr = 0.000		
Financial support	Yes	77.78	22.22	27	92.11	7.89	38
	No	62.76	37.24	1,238	81.15	18.85	3,390
		Chi2(1) = 2.5581 Pr = 0.110			Chi2(1) = 2.9629 Pr = 0.085		
Political party office	Yes	69.9	30.1	598	87.27	12.73	1,037
	No	63.87	36.13	429	81.85	18.15	1,752
	Don't know	44.83	55.17	232	68.97	31.03	609
		Chi2(2) = 45.3070 Pr = 0.000			Chi2(2) = 85.2165 Pr = 0.000		
Belong to political party	Yes	77.24	22.76	703	87.29	12.71	2,344
	No	45.24	54.76	557	67.52	32.48	1,053
		Chi2(1) =136.6493 Pr = 0.000			Chi2(1) =185.6404 Pr = 0.000		
Radio	Yes	64.5	35.5	1,093	81.3	18.7	2,877
	No	52.94	47.06	34	80.16	19.84	126
		Chi2(1) =1.9162 Pr = 0.166			Chi2(1) =0.1032 Pr = 0.748		
Employment status	Employed	69.14	30.86	862	83.42	16.58	2,430
	Unemployed	49.74	50.26	392	75.64	24.36	977
		Chi2(1) = 43.5297 Pr = 0.000			Chi2(1) = 27.5846 Pr = 0.000		
Bribery	Yes	14.29	85.71	49	30	268	298
	No	37.78	62.22	1,215	19.53	80.47	3,133
		Chi2(1) = 11.1679 Pr = 0.001			Chi2(1) =16.0335 Pr = 0.000		
Rating	Poor	60.66	39.34	211	79.09	20.91	507



Variable		Urban			Rural		
		Yes	No	n	Yes	No	n
	Fair	60.86	39.14	488	80.56	19.44	1,281
	Good	65.78	34.22	491	81.67	18.33	1,364
	Very good	68.49	31.51	73	88.19	11.81	271
		Chi2(3) = 4.0202 Pr = 0.259			Chi2(3) = 10.6956 Pr = 0.013		
Disabled	Yes	77.89	22.11	95	85.89	14.11	638
	No	61.91	38.09	1,171	80.21	19.79	2,799
		Chi2(1) = 9.6406 Pr = 0.002			Chi2(1) = 11.0329 Pr = 0.001		
Region	Kampala	41.86	58.14	805	0	0	
	Central	41.3	58.7	184	25.82	74.18	728
	Eastern	21.1	78.9	109	16.42	83.58	932
	Northern	18.07	81.93	83	18.46	81.54	899
	Western	18.82	81.18	85	15.6	84.4	878
		Chi2(4) = 46.3063 Pr = 0.000			Chi2(3) = 33.0164 Pr = 0.000		

### **Demographic factors and voter turnout**

Age and education level had a significant association with voter turnout. Age was significant across both urban ( $\chi^2 = 76.8592$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and rural ( $\chi^2 = 298.8512$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) residences with rural residents having the highest voter turnout in all age groups; 31 to 59 (90.9%), 60 plus (86.3%) and 18 to 30 (66.38%). Likewise, education level was significant across urban ( $\chi^2 = 26.9768$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and rural ( $\chi^2 = 43.5914$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) residences. Generally, voter turnout increased with decrease in education level with the highest being among the uneducated (86%).

### **Political factors and voter turnout**

In urban areas ( $\chi^2 = 5.8053$  Pr = 0.121), voter turnout was highest among respondents who had moderate trust (66.29%) in the electoral commission whereas in rural areas ( $\chi^2 = 12.3762$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ) it was among those with high trust (85.32%) in the electoral commission. Regarding knowledge of ones' right to vote, it was significant in both rural ( $\chi^2 = 194.2357$  Pr = 0.000) and urban ( $\chi^2 = 44.1696$  Pr = 0.000) with the highest voter turnout being among adults who knew their voting rights both in urban (64.58%) and rural (83.09%) areas. As for presence of political party offices in a Sub County was significant both in urban ( $\chi^2 = 45.3070$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and rural ( $\chi^2 = 85.2165$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) areas. Voter turnout was highest in urban (69.9%) and rural (87.27%) areas where political party offices were present. Belonging to a political party was significant

across urban ( $\chi^2 = 136.6493$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and rural ( $\chi^2 = 185.6404$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) areas with the highest voter turnout among adults belonging to political parties in both urban (77.24%) and rural (87.29%) areas. Lastly, user-rating of services was significantly associated with voter turnout only in rural ( $\chi^2 = 10.6956$ ,  $p = 0.013$ ) areas with voter turnout being highest among adults who rated services as very good (88.19%).

### **Economic factors and voter turnout**

Employment status was significantly associated with voter turnout across urban ( $\chi^2 = 43.5297$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and rural ( $\chi^2 = 27.5846$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) areas with the highest voter turnout among both unemployed (75.64%) and employed (83.42%) rural residents. Regarding bribery, it was only significant in rural ( $\chi^2 = 9.3676$ ,  $p = 0.025$ ) residences with the highest voter turnout among adults who often bribed (93.75%) then those who sometimes bribed (87.16%).

### **Disability factors and voter turnout**

Disability status was significant across urban ( $\chi^2 = 9.6406$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) and rural ( $\chi^2 = 11.0329$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) areas. Voter turnout was highest among the disabled both in urban (77.89%) and rural (85.89%) areas.

## **1.7.2 Multilevel mixed effects logistic regression model for factors influencing voter turnout across both regions and residences**

The mixed-effects model for binary and binomial responses was appropriate since the response, voter turnout took on one of only two possible values representing generally the presence or absence of an attribute of interest and containing both fixed effects and random effects for modeling intra-cluster correlation.

So, the logistic regression model is;

$$y_{ij}^* = x_{ij}\beta + z_{ij}u_j + \epsilon_{ij}$$

Where the errors  $\epsilon_{ij}$  are distributed as logistic with mean 0 and variance  $\pi^2/3$  and are independent of  $u_j$ . For  $j = 1 \dots M$  clusters, with cluster  $j$  consisting of  $i = 1 \dots n_j$  observations. The responses are binary-valued  $y_{ij}$ , with  $y_{ij} = 1$  if  $\text{depvar}_{ij} \neq 0$  and treating  $y_{ij} = 0$  otherwise. The

$1 \times p$  row vector  $x_{ij}$  are the covariates for the fixed effects. The  $1 \times q$  vector  $z_{ij}$  are the covariates corresponding to the random effects and can be used to represent both random intercepts and random coefficients. The random effects  $u_j$  are M realizations from a multivariate normal distribution with mean 0 and  $q \times q$  variance matrix  $\Sigma$ .  $y_{ij}^*$  is a latent linear response where  $y_{ij} = I(y_{ij}^* > 0)$

**Table 3: Factors influencing voter turnout across regions and residences**

Variable		Odds Ratio	P-value	Confidence Interval	
Age group	60+	1.000			
	18 to 30	0.332	0.000	0.239	0.460
	31 to 59	1.107	0.544	0.797	1.538
Education level	Degree & above	1.000			
	None	2.154	0.001	1.397	3.322
	Primary	1.541	0.028	1.047	2.268
	Secondary	0.985	0.939	0.668	1.452
	Diploma/certificate	1.534	0.083	0.946	2.489
Trust	High				
	Moderate	0.988	0.934	0.744	1.312
	Low	0.943	0.695	0.706	1.262
	Not applicable	0.947	0.681	0.729	1.230
Financial support	No	1.000			
	Yes	1.965	0.106	0.867	4.457
Political party office	Yes	1.000			
	No	0.923	0.414	0.763	1.118
	Don't know	0.453	0.000	0.360	0.571
Belong to political party	No	1.000			
	Yes	3.076	0.000	2.611	3.624
Employment status	Unemployed	1.000			
	Employed	1.692	0.000	1.416	2.022
Bribery	No	1.000			
	Yes	2.442	0.000	1.650	3.613
Disabled	No	1.000			
	Yes	1.300	0.062	0.987	1.712
Rating	Poor	1.000			
	Fair	0.975	0.832	0.771	1.232
	Good	1.075	0.544	0.850	1.361
	Very good	1.346	0.124	0.922	1.966
Voting rights knowledge	No	1.000			
	Yes	8.246	0.000	5.352	12.706

Region	Var(_cons)	0.149			
Region>residence	Var(_cons)	0.000			

*LR test vs. logistic regression: chi(01) = 67.02 Pr= 0.0000*

### **Introduction of the logistic regression model analysis**

In order to determine the factors that significantly affected voter turnout, a model was fitted regressing voter turnout against independent variables that were significantly associated with voter turnout including demographic factors, economic factors, disability, political factors excluding financially supporting candidates and information factors excluding use of radio as the main source of information.

### **Interpretations of independent factors significantly affecting voter turnout**

Demographic factors which comprised of age and education level significantly affected voter turnout across both regions and residences. With regards to age, the odds of a person aged 31 to 59 turning out to vote are about 1.107 times the odds of a person aged 60 plus turning out to vote other variables held constant. Similarly, the odds of a person aged 18 to 30 turning out to vote are about 0.322 times the odds of a person aged 60 plus turning out to vote other variables held constant. This was consistent with findings by Uppal and LaRochelle-Côté (2012).

Regarding education level, the odds of a person with no education turning out to vote are about 2.154 times the odds of a person with a degree & above turning out to vote other variables held constant whereas the odds of a person with primary education turning out to vote are about 1.541 times the odds of a person with a degree & above turning out to vote other variables held constant. This was consistent with findings by Blaydes (2006) who reported higher voter turnout among illiterates compared to literates attributed to votes of illiterates tending to be cheaper to purchase by political entrepreneurs and illiterates also being more vulnerable to intimidation by state authorities.

Apart from trust in the electoral commission and financially supporting candidates, the rest of the political factors significantly affected voter turnout across regions and residences. For persons who belonged to a political party, the odds of turning out to vote were about 3.076 times the odds of a person who didn't belong to a political party turning out to vote other variables held

constant. For persons who didn't know of political party offices in their sub county, the odds of turning out to vote were about 0.453 times the odds of persons who knew of political party offices in their sub county turning out to vote other variables held constant. The significance of both belonging to a political party and presence of political party offices could be attributed to their contribution to political mobilization which significantly affects voter turnout (Patterson &Caldeira, 1983; Hogan, 1999)

Regarding economic factors, both employment status and bribery significantly affected voter turnout. Pertaining to employment status, the odds of employed respondents turning out to vote were about 1.692 times the odds of unemployed respondents turning out to vote other variables held constant. The significance of employment status was consistent with findings by (Healy 2009; Margalit 2011) though they reported an increase in voter turnout among unemployed voters compared to employed voters explained by voters considering voting as one of the means to express their discontent towards the incumbent government or having more free time to take part in political activities after job loss (Charles and Stephens, 2011). The decrease in voter turnout among unemployed voters compared to employed voters in this study could be explained by the financial burden of unemployment and the demands and stresses of looking for new work (Rosenstone, 1982). For bribery, the odds of respondents who were offered a bribe turning out to vote were about 2.442 times the odds of respondents who were not offered a bribe other variables held constant. The findings were consistent with the study by Karahan, Coats and Shughart (2006) who reported increased participation in countries where candidates promised or delivered favors. This can be attributed to the effect of bribes on electorates including energizing supporters, disparaging opponents and winning new voters.

The effect of information factors on voter turnout across regions and residences was only significant for knowledge of one's voting rights. The insignificance of radios as a source of information was inconsistent with findings by Kuenzi& Lambright (2007) who reported media exposure having a positive effect on voter turnout. As for respondents who knew of their voting rights, their odds of turning out to vote were about 8.246 times the odds of respondents who didn't know of their voting rights other variables held constant.

Finally, a likelihood ratio test ( $\chi^2=67.02$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) comparing findings from the Multilevel mixed effects logistic regression model and the logistic regression indicated a significant improvement in favor of the mixed effects approach. This can be attributed to differences in voter characteristics across the different regions and residences. This was consistent with findings by (Blais, Massicotte & Dobrzynska, 2003) who assumed that, in some regions, voter turnout tends to be higher or lower because of a similar political culture or environment.

### **1.8 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

In the investigation of factors influencing voter turnout in local government council elections, analysis was carried out with regards to the effect of demographic, information, economic, political and disability factors. All demographic and economic factors ( $p<0.05$ ) were significant in explaining voter turnout. As for political factors only presence of a political party office in the sub county ( $p<0.05$ ) and belonging to a political party ( $p<0.05$ ) significantly affected voter turnout as well as knowledge of ones voting rights ( $p<0.05$ ) among the information factors.

### **1.9 CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, voter turnout was expected to increase with age and reduce with increase in education level. Voter turnout was also low among respondents who; didn't belong to a political party, had no political party offices in their area, had not received a bribe prior to the elections, were unemployed and not knowledgeable of their voting rights. A lot still needs to be done to improve voter turnout for local government council elections in Uganda due to their impact on fostering democracy and good governance, respect of human rights and service delivery.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In line with the study findings, the following recommendations are provided towards improving on voter turnout during local government elections. Government, civil society organizations and other stakeholders should carry out campaigns via social media, radio and television platforms that target eligible voters especially in rural areas aimed at sensitizing them about the importance of them taking part in elections as well as negative consequences of not participating in elections and voting into public offices candidates based on uninformed decisions such as basing on cheap

handouts and false promises from prospective candidates. The government should introduce compulsory voting as well as sanctions to be imposed on citizens who do not vote if need be. Political parties should engage in grass root mobilization of supporters and this can be through engaging women and youth in political party activities. Finally, the rules governing electoral practices should be revisited to provide for serious penalties and sanctions for candidates involved in the various forms of electoral malpractices especially voter bribery which undermine democracy and peoples' right to vote leaders who will genuinely serve them.

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