



Popular Attitudes toward Democracy in Tanzania: A Summary of Afrobarometer Indicators, 2001-2008

13 August 2009

This document provides a summary of popular attitudes regarding the demand for and supply of democracy in Tanzania as revealed over the course of four Afrobarometer surveys conducted between 2001 and 2008 (Feb.-Aug. 2001, N=2198; July-Aug. 2003, N=1223; July-Aug. 2005, N=1304; June-July 2008, N=1208). Samples of this size yield a margin of error of +/- 3 percent at a confidence level of 95 percent. The charts that follow capture perceptions of:

- The meaning of democracy;
- The demand for democracy (including individual support for democracy, patience with democracy and rejection of military rule, one-party rule, and one-man rule);
- Support for democratic institutions (including attitudes towards elections, term limits, multi-party rule, and checks on presidential powers); and
- The supply of democracy (including satisfaction with democracy and the perceived extent of democracy, quality of elections and the protection of key freedoms).

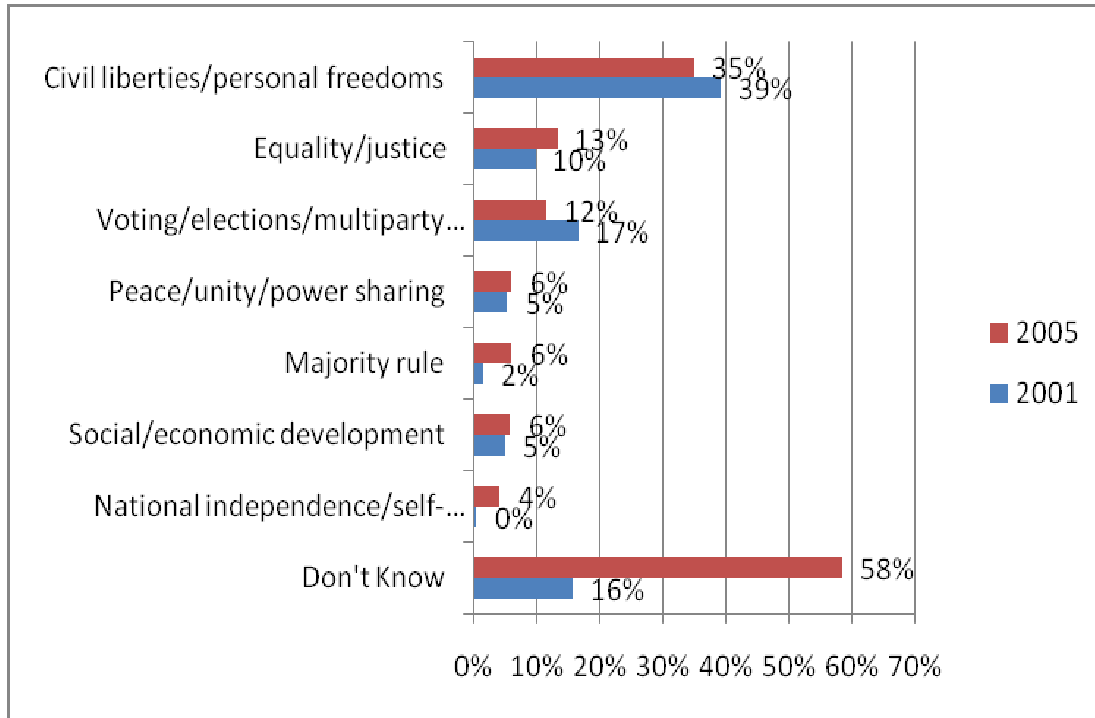
Points of Interest

- The trend in popular support for democracy is not entirely clear in Tanzania due to anomalies in how the question was administered in 2005. However, in general, it appears that support has dropped from the high level (84%) recorded in the first survey in 2001, but has level out around two-thirds since then (with 2005 results excluded) (2.1).
- Rejection of all military rule and one-man rule has been consistently high (2.2 and 2.4), but Tanzanians are considerably more willing to entertain the possibility of a one-party state as an alternative form of government (2.3).
- Support for an independent legislative role for parliament has increased steadily since 2003 (3.4), and commitment to term limits appears to be increasing as well (3.2).
- The trend in indicators of supply (extent of democracy and satisfaction with democracy) appears to be quite positive if the anomalous 2005 results are excluded. Ratings of the extent of democracy increase very markedly between 2001 and 2008 (4.1), while satisfaction has also increased, albeit by a considerably smaller margin (4.2).
- Ratings of election quality have also improved (4.3).

MEANING OF DEMOCRACY

1.1 Variable: Meaning of democracy

Question: What if anything does democracy mean to you?



* In 2005 respondents could offer up to three meanings. Figures shown are the percentage of all substantive responses offered.

DEMAND FOR DEMOCRACY

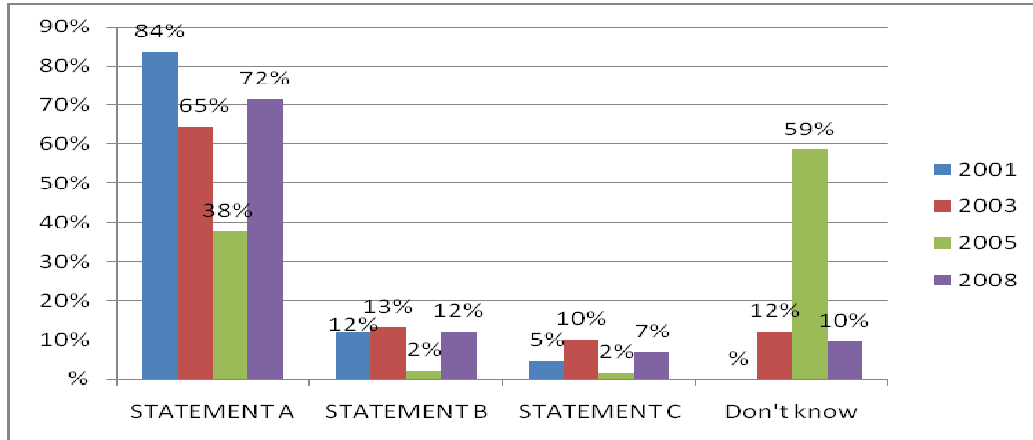
2.1 Variable: Support for democracy

Question: Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?

A: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.

B: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.

C: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.



Note that the 2005 figures are affected by a significant difference in how the question was administered compared to other years. Those who could **not offer a meaning for democracy were **not** asked this question, leading to the very high proportion of "Don't Know" responses in 2005.*

2.2 Variable: Reject military rule

Question: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: The army comes in to govern the country?

2.3 Variable: Reject one-party rule

Question: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office?

2.4 Variable: Reject one-man rule

Question: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: Elections and Parliament/National Assembly are abolished so that the President/Prime Minister can decide everything?



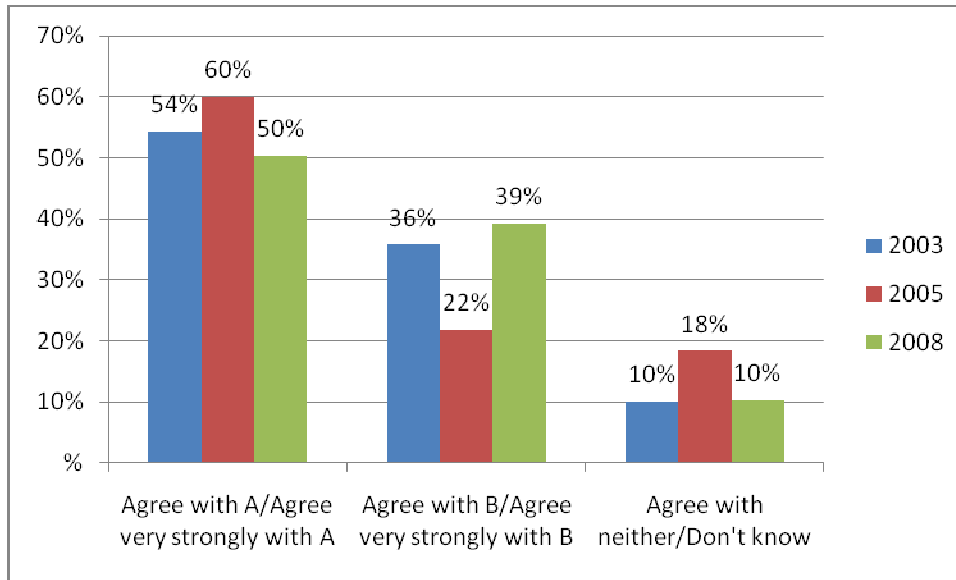
(Percent who disapprove/strongly disapprove of military rule, one-party rule and one-man rule)

2.5 Variable: Patience with democracy

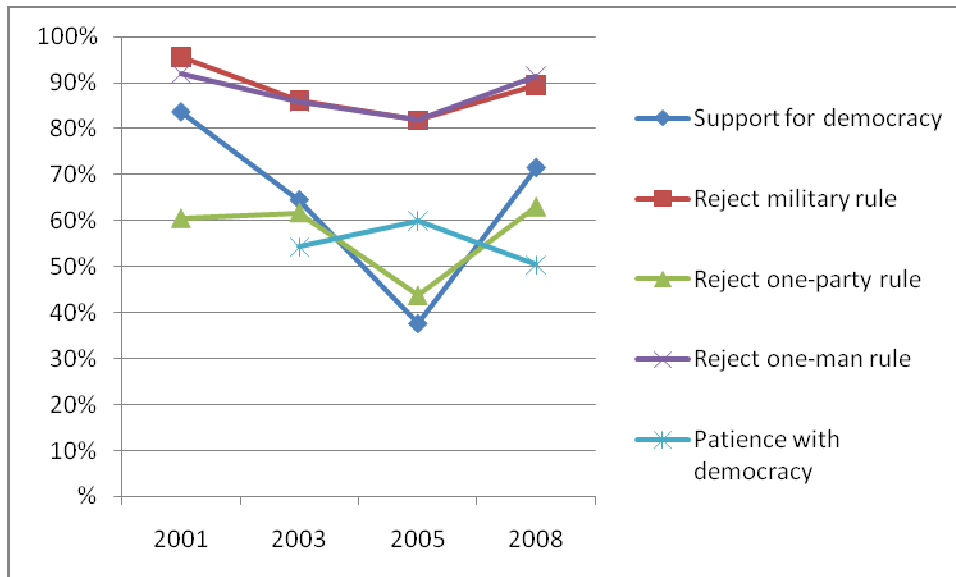
Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: Our present system of elected government should be given more time to deal with inherited problems.

B: If our present system cannot produce results soon, we should try another form of government.



Summary of demand for democracy



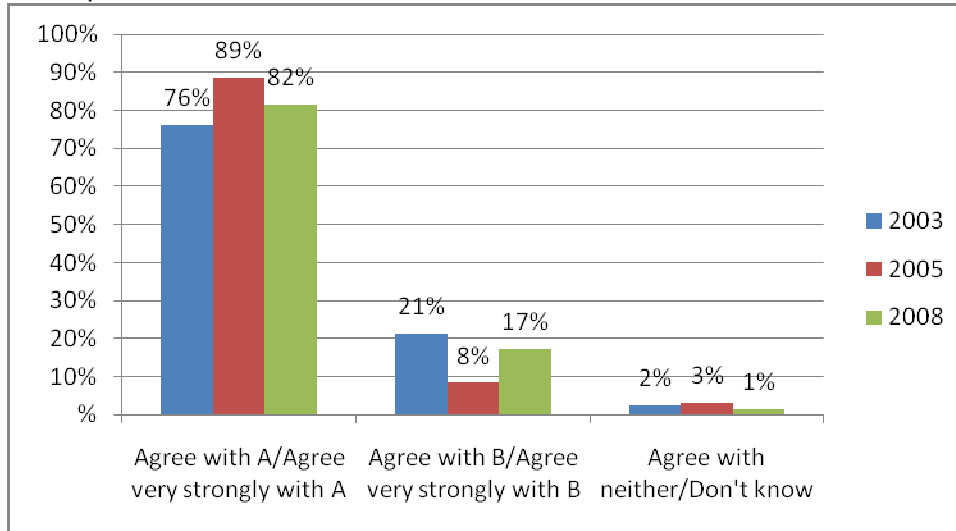
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

3.1 Variable: Choose leaders through elections vs. try another form

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: We should choose our leaders in this country through regular, open and honest elections.

B: Since elections sometimes produce bad results, we should adopt other methods for choosing this country's leaders.

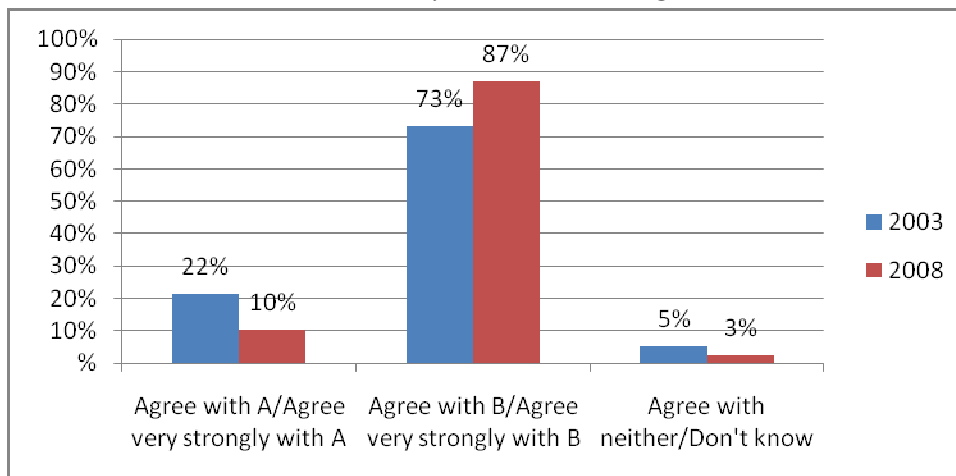


3.2 Variable: No term limits for the president vs. two terms only

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: There should be no constitutional limit on how long the president can serve.

B: The constitution should limit the president to serving a maximum of two terms in office.

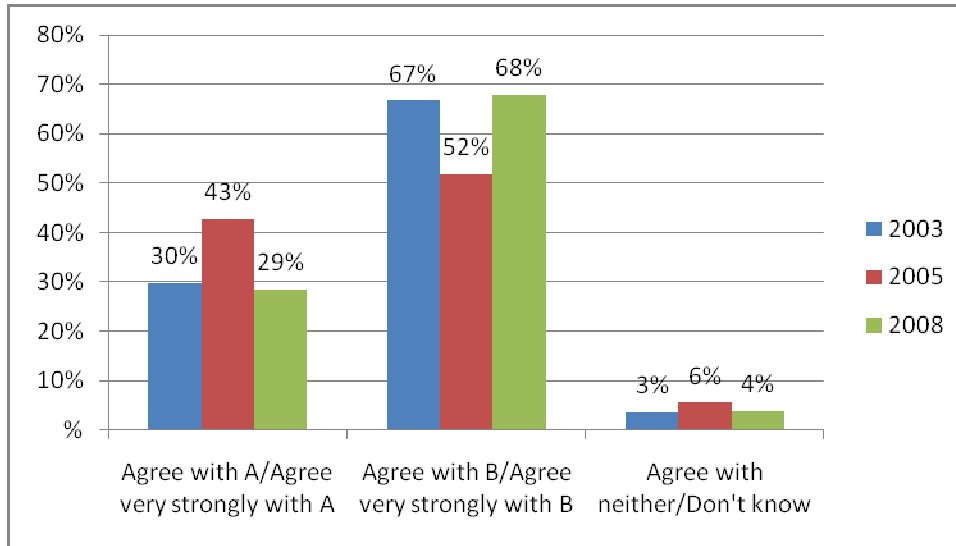


3.3 Variable: Political parties divisive vs. many parties needed

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: Political parties create division and confusion; it is therefore unnecessary to have many political parties in Tanzania.

B: Many political parties are needed to make sure that Tanzanians have real choices in who governs them.

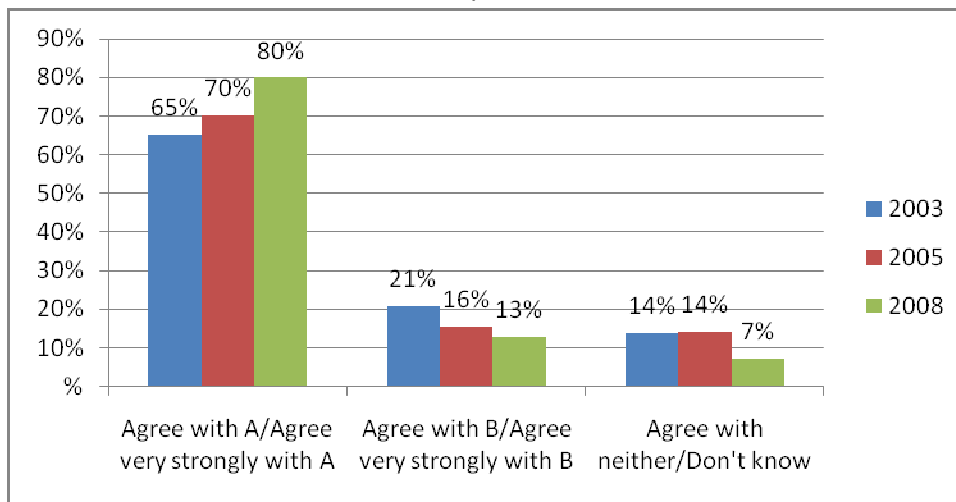


3.4 Variable: Parliament makes laws vs. President does

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: The members of Parliament/National Assembly represent the people; therefore they should make laws for this country, even if the President/Prime Minister does not agree.

B: Since the President/Prime Minister represents all of us, he should pass laws without worrying about what the Parliament/National Assembly thinks.

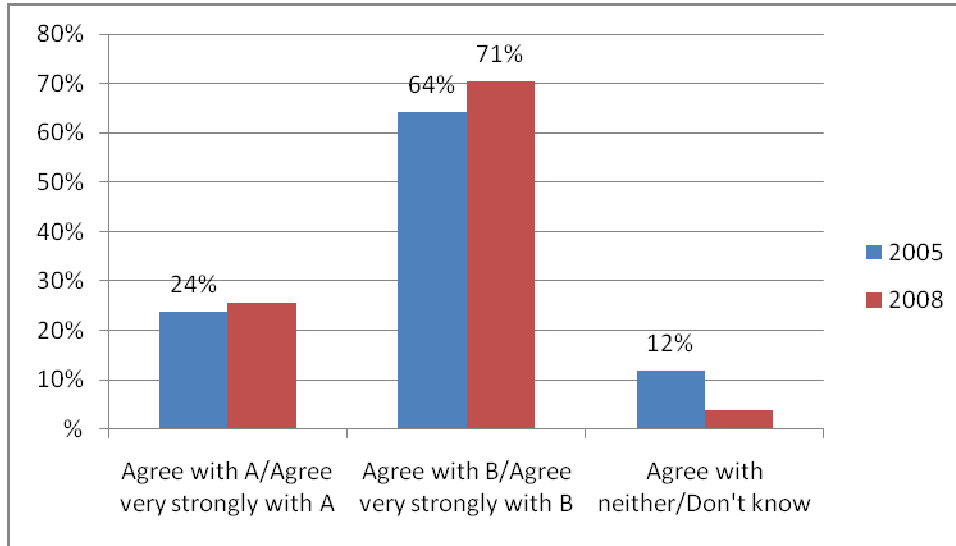


3.5 Variable: President free to act vs. obey the laws and courts

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: Since the President/Prime Minister was elected to lead the country, he should not be bound by laws or court decisions that he thinks are wrong.

B: The President/Prime Minister must always obey the laws and the courts, even if he thinks they are wrong.

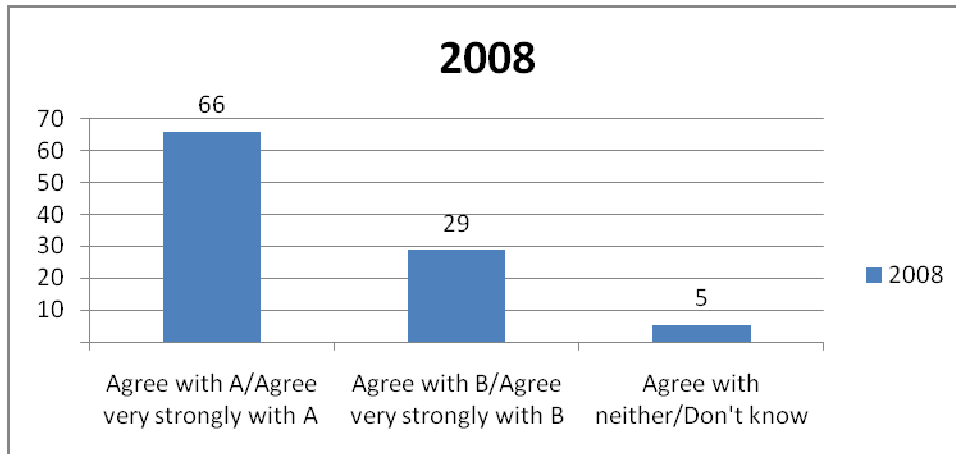


3.6 Variable: Parliament monitors President vs. cooperate

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: Parliament should ensure that the president explains to it on a regular basis how his government spends the taxpayers' money.

B: The President should be able to devote his full attention to developing the country rather than wasting time justifying his actions.

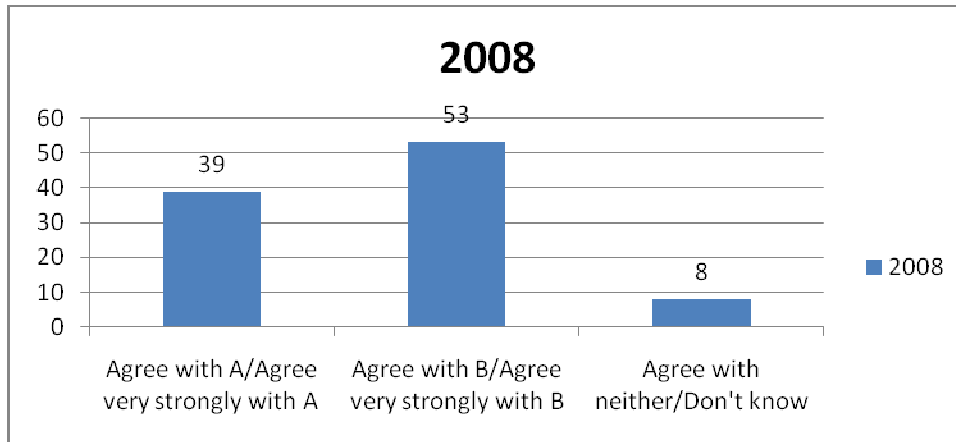


3.7 Variable: Opposition parties examine government vs. cooperate

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: Opposition parties should regularly examine and criticize government policies and actions.

B: Opposition parties should concentrate on cooperating with government and helping it develop the country.

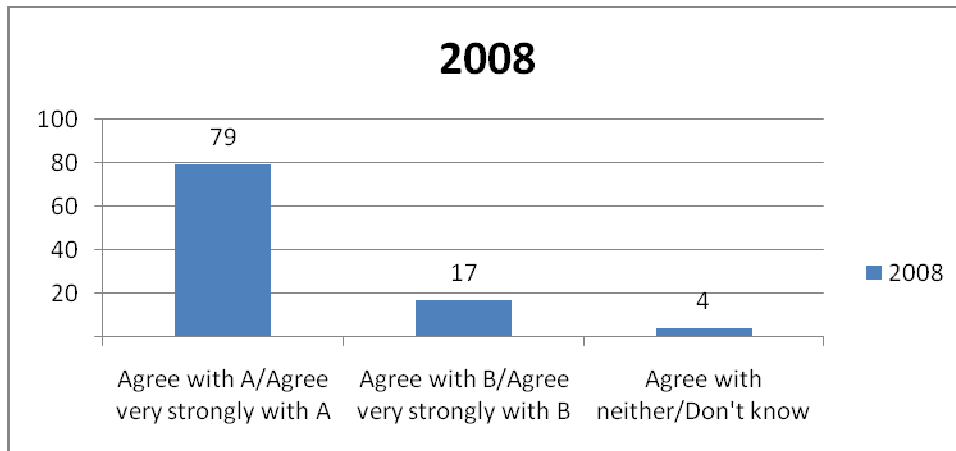


3.8 Variable: Media examines government vs. cooperate

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: The news media should constantly investigate and report on corruption and the mistakes made by the government.

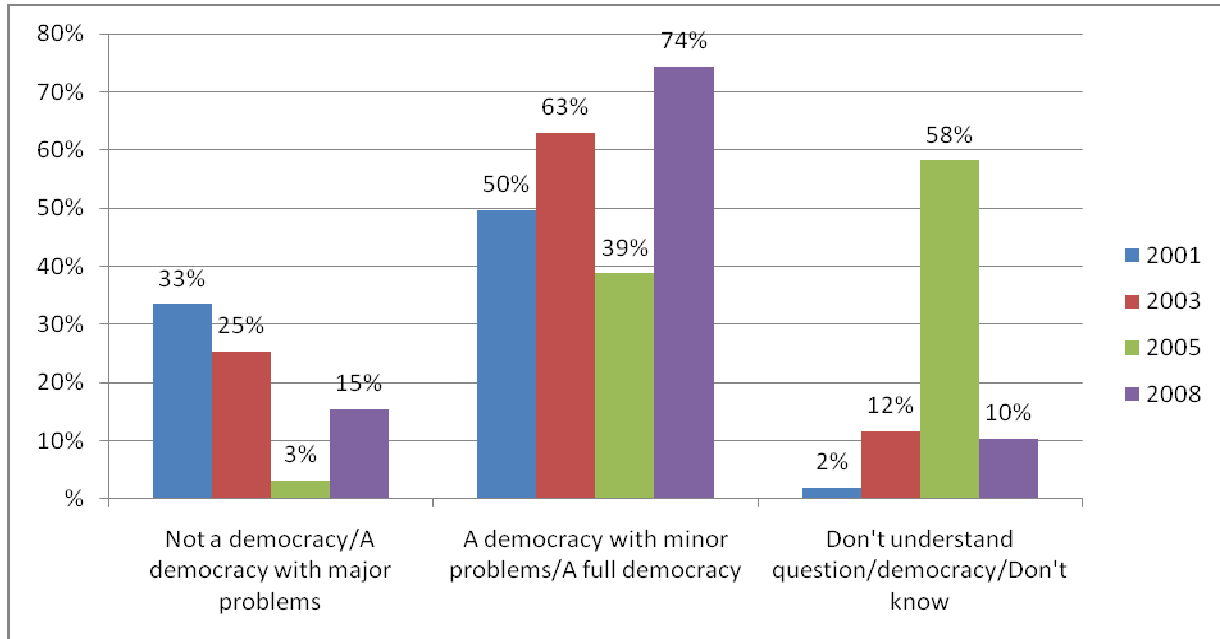
B: Too much reporting on negative events, like corruption, only harms the country.



SUPPLY OF DEMOCRACY

4.1 Variable: Extent of Democracy

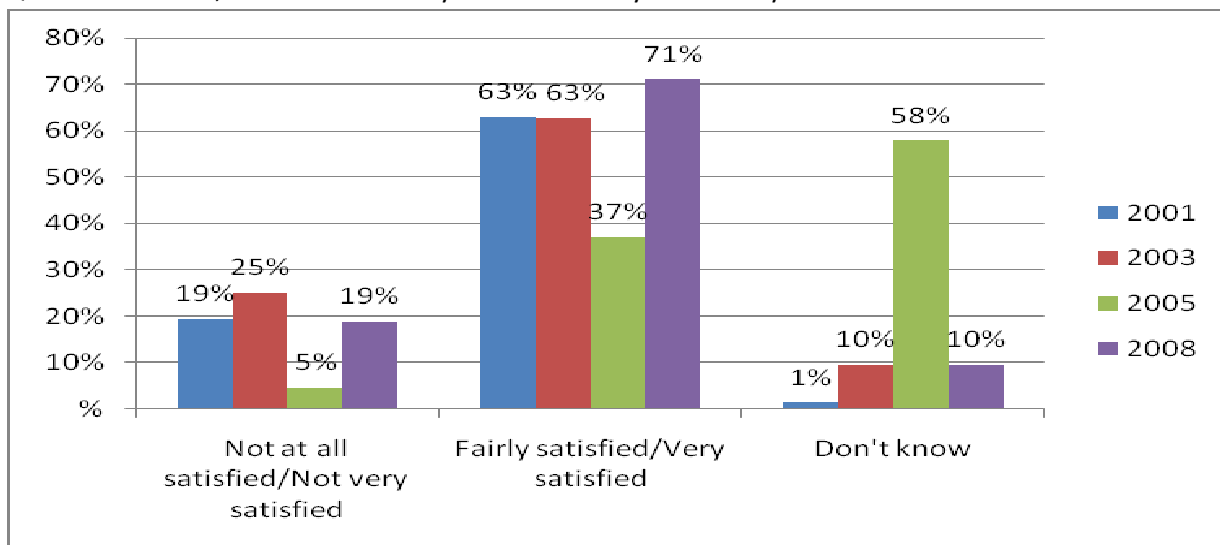
Questions: In your opinion how much of a democracy is Tanzania today?



Note that the 2005 figures are affected by a significant difference in how the question was administered compared to other years. Those who could **not offer a meaning for democracy were **not** asked this question, leading to the very high proportion of "Don't Know" responses in 2005.*

4.2 Variable: Satisfaction with democracy

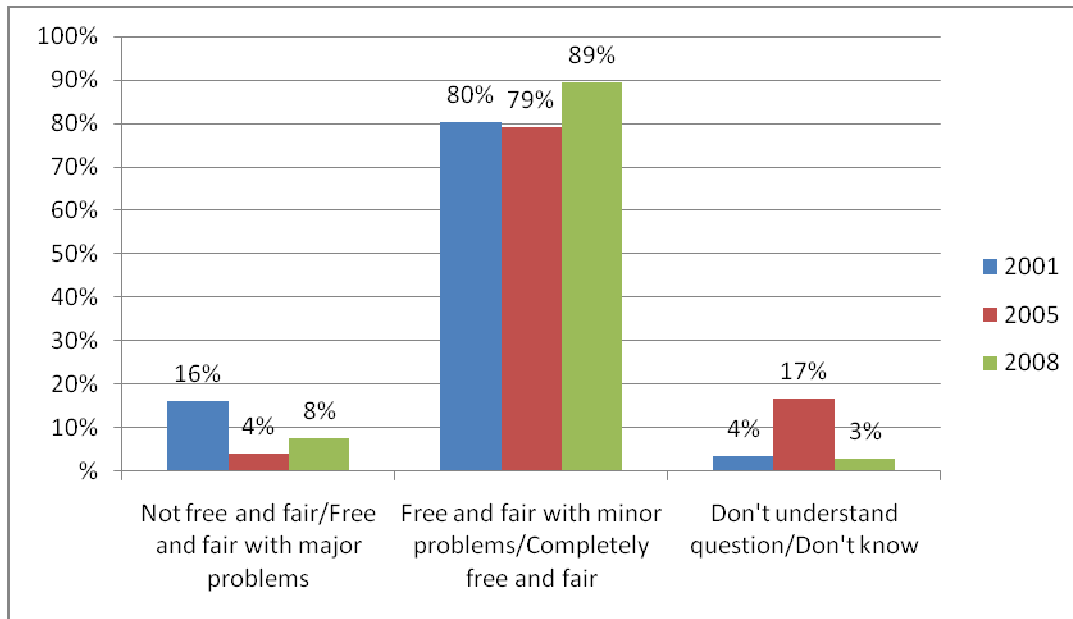
Question: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Tanzania?



Note that the 2005 figures are affected by a significant difference in how the question was administered compared to other years. Those who could **not offer a meaning for democracy were **not** asked this question, leading to the very high proportion of "Don't Know" responses in 2005.*

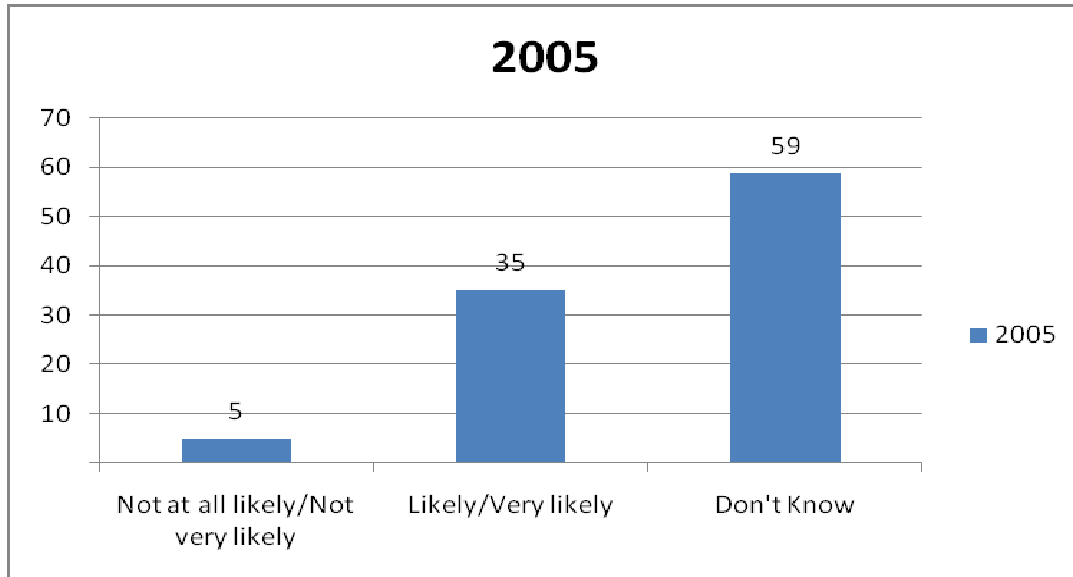
4.3 Variable: Elections free and fair

Question: On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in [20xx]? Was it:



4.4 Variable: Future of democracy

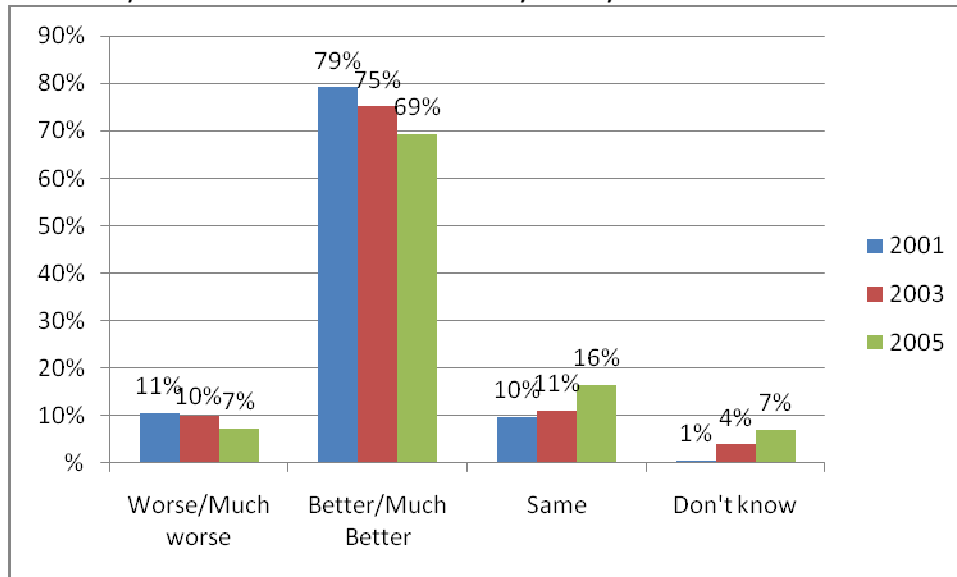
Question: In your opinion, how likely is it that Tanzania will remain a democratic country?



**Note that the high proportion of “Don’t Know” responses on this question was likely affected by how the question was administered. Those who could not offer a meaning for democracy were not asked this question, contributing to the very high proportion of “Don’t Know” responses.*

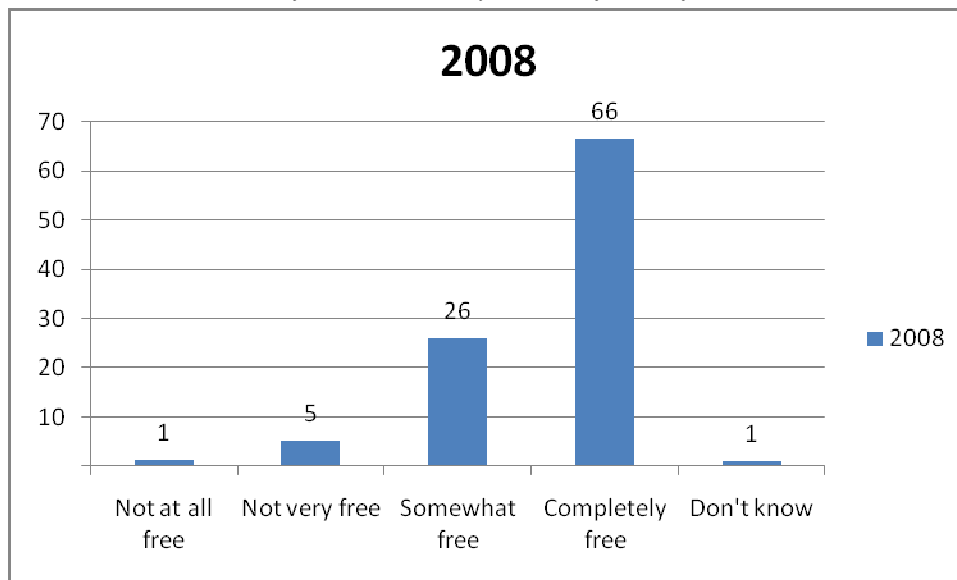
4.5 Variable: Freedom of speech (2001-2005)

Question: Please tell me if the following things are worse or better now than they were a few years ago, or are they about the same: Freedom to say what you think?



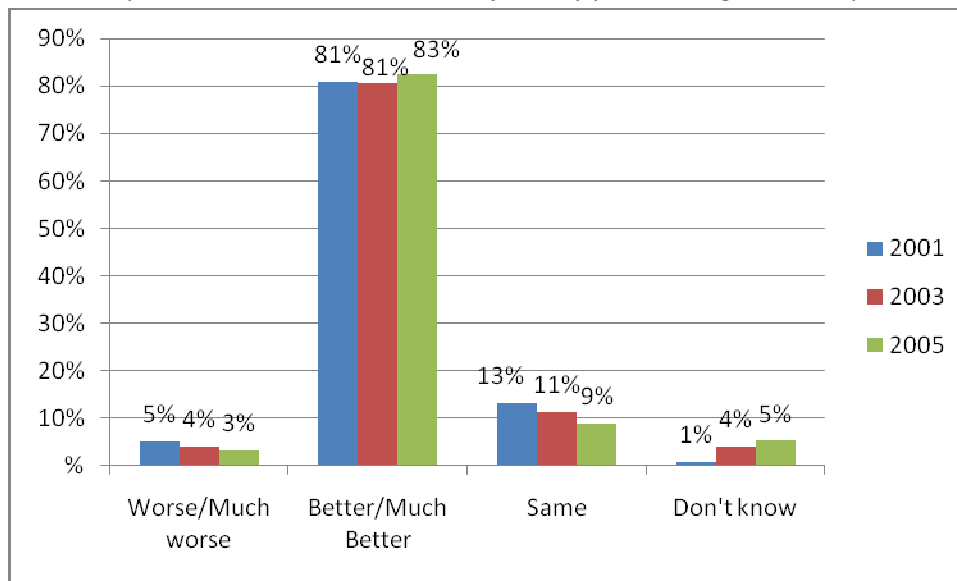
4.6 Variable: Freedom of speech (2008)

Question: In this country, how free are you: to say what you think?



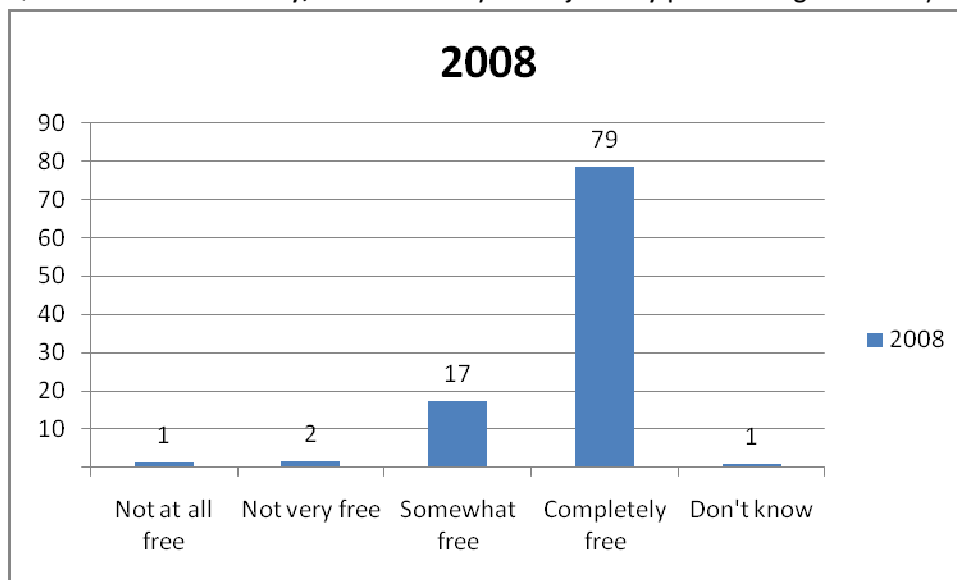
4.7 Variable: Freedom of association (2001-2005)

Question: Please tell me if the following things are worse or better now than they were a few years ago, or are they about the same: Freedom to join any political organization you want?



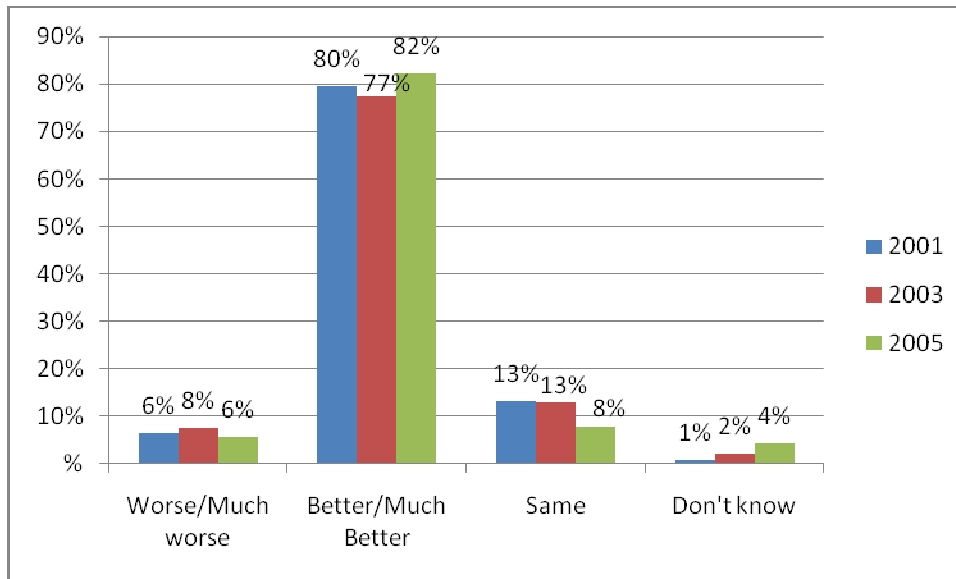
4.8 Variable: Freedom of association (2008)

Question: In this country, how free are you: to join any political organization you want?



4.9 Variable: Voting freedom (2001-2005)

Question: Please tell me if the following things are worse or better now than they were a few years ago, or are they about the same: Freedom to choose who to vote for without feeling pressured?



4.10 Variable: Voting freedom (2008)

Question: In this country, how free are you: to choose who to vote for without feeling pressured?

