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EXAMINING AND ANALYZING YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: THE CASE OF LEBANON

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To my sister
And beloved mother who always believed in me

Examining and analyzing youth political participation: the case of Lebanon

Davigh Karamanoukian

Abstract

Youth political participation is a fundamental factor in the formation and sustainability of democracy. In a country like Lebanon where politics is characterized by political hegemony of its sectarian elites, it is deemed important to examine youth engagement and voting behavior in the overall political process. Based on a survey conducted with more than one hundred university students aged 21-25, collected data is analyzed to test for voter participation behavior theories: socialization, socio-economic, psychological, mobilization, and rational choice. Empirical evidences point to correlations that explain youth political behaviors and reveal significant explanatory variables. Socio-economic, socialization, mobilization and rational choice indicators emerged salient in determining Lebanese youth political participation. Nevertheless, the findings suggest an overall lack in youth political engagement and widespread apathy, thus rendering proposals to lower the voting age from 21 to 18 as an insufficient stimulus for youth participation. Alternatively, a reformulation of political socialization and mobilization where youth can take on leading roles appear most critical in engaging the youth and vitalizing the political process.

Keywords: Political participation, Voter participation theories, University students, Lebanon

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Prior to holding the Lebanese Municipal Elections in May 2010, Minister of Interior and Municipalities Ziad Baroud submitted his municipal electoral law reform bill to the country's Cabinet on January 13th, 2010. The proposed law included reforms for proportional representation, the lowering of the voting age from 21 to 18 and a 30 percent women's quota among many others. After several months of debate and negotiations, the cabinet gave the go-ahead to Baroud's reforms and the bill went to the Lebanese Parliament. However, the Lebanese Parliament, consisting of 123 seats, rejected the so-called controversial bill: 34 voted in favor of the bill, 66 abstained and one voted against. Specifically, Baroud's proposal to lower the voting age led to sharp divisions among both Christian and Muslim politicians, and prompted a fear of turmoil in the country's sectarian power-sharing system.

In fact, lowering the legal voting age to 18 has been an issue for years, with secular and non-secular parties as well as civil society activists pushing for the measure. Baroud, who himself comes from a civil society background, called for amending Article 21 of the Constitution to allow 283,000 young people between the age of 18 and

21 to vote; however, the bill was not passed and it was agreed to apply the reforms proposed at a later stage.

Although the majority of democracies' voting age is 18, Lebanon - known as consociational democracy - is still at 21. Before even thinking about lowering the voting age, what should be examined is whether the eligible youth are casting their votes. There are no studies or researches that show whether the educated Lebanese youth aged 21 and above are actually performing their civic duty when it comes to national and/or local elections. For this purpose, a detailed small-scale quantitative study has been conducted to understand and investigate Lebanese youth political and civic participation, and if anything, the reasons behind their disengagement and the strategies needed to increase their involvement.

In fact, voting is a behavior best characterized as habitual (Verba & Nie, 1972) (Milbrath, 1965) (Plutzer, 2002), dividing citizens into the rough categories of those who vote, and those who do not. Since we lack detailed information about Lebanese youth voting trends, the thesis seeks to classify Lebanese educated youth, between the ages of 21 and 25, in one of these two categories by examining whether their political attitudes affect their voting behavior. Through statistical analysis, the thesis argues that young Lebanese's attitudes toward civic duty, political interest, political parties and party leaders among many others, exerted a meaningful influence on their level of electoral participation.

1.2 Rationale

This section discusses the importance of examining youth voting behavior and political participation. As such, three crucial questions are put forward: Why study political participation? Why study youth political participation? And why study youth political participation specifically in local affairs?

1.2.1 Why study political participation?

Political participation is not, or has never been, a static concept; in fact, it covers a wide range of activities and incorporates several elements. First, political participation refers to people in their role as *citizens*. Second, political participation is referred to as an *activity*. Some of the questions that can measure how citizens are doing politics are, do they vote, demonstrate or do they do nothing at all? (Milbrath, 1965) Also, in order to measure political participation, questions about the willingness to participate (do you think you will...) and the actual participation (have you...) should be asked.

The third element is that the activities should not be enforced on the citizens but instead they should be *voluntary*. Fourth, political participation gives the power to the citizens to *influence* and have a direct or indirect impact on the choices and decisions taken by the politicians. The above four elements can be summarized by the following quote: "... all voluntary activities by individual citizens intended to influence either directly or indirectly political choices at various levels of the political system" (Kaase & Marsh, 1979, p. 42). Citizens can therefore influence through political discussions, reading about politics, following political news, protests and demonstrations, volunteering, civic engagement, voting and so on.

The fifth component is *political decisions* which refer to the decisions of allocation of values and public goods by the government: "... is action directed explicitly toward influencing the distribution of social goods and social values" (Rosenstone & Hansen, 2003, p. 4). Finally, the concept of political participation incorporates the different aspects of *government and politics*: "... those actions of private citizens by which they seek to influence or to support government and politics" (Milbhart & Goel, 1977, p. 2).

The reasons why it is important to study political participation are due to its benefits to citizens, society and democracy. On the *individual* level, when citizens engage in a civic activity, they develop skills, attitudes and habits that lead to a deeper entry into the public life (Freie, 1997). They also become more knowledgeable about different issues. Therefore, political participation is said to create better citizens (Pateman, 1970, p. 45).

The *society* as a whole also benefits from political participation since the latter boosts democracy and stimulates the functioning of the political system (Putnam R. , 1993, pp. 98-99); Levine, 2008, pp.119). It also creates social trust and a feeling of belonging to the society (Putnam R. D., 2000, pp. 31-47).

Several studies have stated that political participation and *democracy* are indivisible. In other words, political participation is 'participation in democracy' or the 'mechanisms by which those needs and preferences are communicated to political decision makers' (Lipset, 1963; Asher, Richardson & Weisberg, 1984; Parry, Moyser & Day, 1992). As such, it paves the way for people to freely voice their opinions, views and concerns to the authorities, hence promoting and strengthening the democratic functioning of the state as well as legitimizing the process of democratic decision-

making. In fact, Pericles stressed on the role of citizens in democracy and the importance of their involvement in decision-making in his funeral speech in the winter of 431-430 B.C.:

“An Athenian citizen does not neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as a harmless, but as a useless character; and if few of us are originators, we are all sound judges of policy.” (Sabine & Thorson, 1973, p. 28)

Pericles’ statement shows that democracy is essential and should be governed by the people; and it can only function when citizens are involved and engaged in public affairs. Once democracy does not provide a space for people to freely take part in influencing decisions, then citizens will demonstrate low political participation as well as apathy, “democracy’s version of original sin” (Minogue, 1999, p. 8)

1.2.2 Why study youth political participation?

There are legislative and political reasons for consulting with children and youth on the issues that concern them. In fact, the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is based on four main categories: survival rights, development rights, protection rights and participation rights. Furthermore, according to the United Nations World Youth Report in 2003, youth participation is not an end in itself. It needs to be defined as a procedural right and represents the means through which youth “take part in and

influence processes, decisions, and activities in order to achieve justice, influence outcomes, expose abuses of power and realize their rights”.

As such, this thesis studies particularly the youth because they are one of the most important social groups with respect to their political socialization. Several reasons can be put forward to explain the importance of studying young people. The first argument is that young people are blamed to be the main factor in the decline of political participation (Putnam R. D., 2000). The survey prepared for this thesis in fact seeks to discover if they are participating and how they can be encouraged to do more so. The second reason is that since political participation is a habit, it is important to get an insight into the youth's actual political participation behavior (Plutzer, 2002; Glanville, 1999; Walgrave & Verhulst, 2006). The third argument is that during the stage of adolescence people go through psychological and social changes (Niemi & Hepburn, 1995), and start shaping their own political attitudes and behavior. Fourth, the thesis takes into account the young adults between the ages of 21 and 25 because the legal voting age is set to 21, voting being the most common form of political participation in democratic societies. The fifth argument is the differing political socialization patterns used in the past as well as the post-materialist values of the youth which are different than those of the older age group, rendering it important to have up-to-date information on the attitudes of the youth.

1.2.3 Why study youth participation in local affairs?

Local governance is responsible for a range of young people's concerns and interests such as education and leisure facilities. It has also an important role in engaging

the interest and the participation of young people in politics. The study takes into consideration some, but not all of the reasons for actively engaging youth participation in local politics.

The first argument is that the participation of the youth in local politics will encourage them to become a 'good citizen' as it will foster an interest in, and commitment to local community. According to Willow (1997), even marginalized groups will have a sense of responsibility, thus reducing their social exclusion.

The second argument is that youth are the ones who should benefit from their local community in the sense of local services, such as schools, transport and leisure facilities (Geddes & Rust, 2000). As such, their participation in local politics will result in more relevant decision making.

The third reason is that young people will be personally enriched as they gain new opportunities, skills and insights about participation in local politics (Willow, 1997).

1.3 Research Questions

As discussed in this chapter, there are no studies or researches conducted to understand educated Lebanese youth political participation and voting behavior whether on the national or local level. As such, in order to explore this topic, four important research questions have been identified:

- 1) What is the perception of Lebanese youth of local governance?
- 2) Are Lebanese youth interested in participating in elections? If yes, why and if no, why not?

- 3) What are the strategies needed to encourage Lebanese youth to participate in local decision-making?
- 4) What are the policy reforms that should be implemented?

1.4 Thesis Structure

This section introduces the five remaining chapters in this thesis. Chapter 2, *Literature Review: Theories of Voter Participation* summarizes five important models of electoral engagement based on their value and relevance to this thesis. A brief review of the socioeconomic, socialization, psychological, mobilization and rational choice theories is undertaken.

Chapter 3, *Research Methodology*, puts forward the research design, the instrument specifically prepared for the study, the participants, and the ethical considerations.

Chapter 4, *Key Findings*, introduces the data collected from one hundred and one youth and presents them in tables and figures.

In Chapter 5, *Statistical Analysis and Research Discussion*, an examination of the youth's attitude towards civic engagement and political participation is undertaken by testing the dependent and independent variables of all five theories of voting behavior. The Chapter presents surprising and interesting findings about Lebanese youth voting behavior in local elections, and the relationship of voting with civic duty, knowledge of national and local politics, political interest, political leaders and parties, identity and affiliation, party reach-out and benefit maximization among many other variables.

Chapter 6, *Conclusion*, cites the possible solutions proposed by the youth to make them engaged in the voting process. It then discusses its limitations, warps up the key findings and suggests policy recommendations.

1.5 Contribution

This research attempts to contribute to the better understanding of educated Lebanese youth political (dis)engagement, and reasons affecting their decision to vote. Its practical value could be used to enhance the proposed electoral bill as well as assist the government, political parties, even national and international organizations in building mobilization strategies for increasing the youth participation in elections.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Theories of Voter Participation

Given that no scholarly articles or studies have been found applying the different and numerous theories of voter participation in the Lebanese context, this research will put forward the major international theoretical explanations for participation with an aim to test and assess their ability to understand and explain the Lebanese youth (dis)engagement in the political process.

The research identifies five important models of electoral engagement based on their value and relevance to this thesis. A brief review of the socioeconomic, socialization, psychological, mobilization and rational choice theories will be undertaken.

2.2 Socioeconomic theory

The Socioeconomic model was first theorized by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, Gaudet and McPhee (Berelson et al., 1948 & 1954) and was further developed by Verba & Nie (1972). According to this model, participation is determined by a person's socioeconomic characteristics and civic orientations. As such, age, education, income, gender and race are some of the important factors that influence the decision of voters and affect their political behavior (Kanji & Archer, 2002; Leighley, 1995). Moreover,

variables that affect voter choice are region (North, South, East, West), urban/rural, and religious orientations. In fact, age, education, religious orientations and social class (reflected through income) are important elements for this study because it is believed that they influence Lebanese youth's decision to vote. In that regard, several works such as 'The Civic Culture' (1963), 'Participation in America' (1972) and 'Participation and Political equality' (1978) by Sidney Verba have explained that education and class differences play a strong role in determining who participates and who does not.

Education is a key element according to the socioeconomic theory for two main reasons. First, the theory hypothesizes that the more educated the person is, the chances are higher for him/her to be politically informed¹ and have a sense of civic duty, hence cast a meaningful ballot (Almond & Verba, 1963, pp. 380-381). Second, it claims that the highly educated people are more likely to follow and discuss elections compared to those with low levels of education (Almond & Verba, 1963, pp. 380-381)².

Age has also an important influence on the decision to vote. It is assumed that the youth in their twenties are more interested in finding a job and a spouse instead of engaging in politics. However, as they age, their life experience increases their information and makes them more aware of the importance of engaging in the political process. In fact, Hightong & Wolfinger (2001) explain that "low participation among the young, however, appears to be a lifestyle phenomenon. As young Americans marry, have children, and develop community ties, their turnout tends to increase." As such,

¹ This means that the person has the political skills and knowledge on how to vote, local institutional and electoral systems, information about different political parties and policies, as well as how to make a choice about who to vote for.

² The authors also explain that the more educated the citizens are, the more they are aware of the impact of government on their lives.

Wolfinger & Rosenstone (1980) argue that age can be a key determinant of voting behavior and that the older the person, the chances are more likely that he/she will vote.

2.3 Socialization theory

The socialization theory gave birth in the 60s with Easton & Dennis (1969), Greenstein (1965) and Hess & Torney (1967). These scholars argue that political attitudes and behaviors are established prior to adolescence, and that they remain the same to a large extent until adulthood. What children are taught about politics highly affects their voting decision at a later stage, hence shaping their potential political participation as adult citizens.

These early socialization theorists discuss the role of several socialization agents that infuse political attitudes and behaviors on children and adolescents. Greenstein (1965) argues that parents are a key determinant in ensuring that their children adopt the same political orientations, while Hess & Torney (1967) emphasize on the role of the school which is “the central, salient and dominant force” in children’s political learning process. Andolina, Jenkins, Zukin and Keeter (2003:275) indicates that the factors influencing the civic engagement of youth are the lessons taught at home from the family, at school as well as the outside groups and organizations.

The new generation of socialization theorists claims that the process of this model has become more complex and diverse. In fact, Sapiro (1998), Yates & Youniss (1999), and Torney-Purta (2000), argue that media, peer groups, family, religion and school are more and more influencing the youth's political attitudes.

2.4 Psychological theory

This model examines factors such as party identification, political interest, apathy, alienation and efficacy to explain voter turnout and changes in political participation. (Campbell A. , 1960; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995; Miller & Rahn, 2002; Kenski & Jomini, 2004; Wattenberg, 2002).

Party identification and loyalty are both responsible for showing an individual's decision to vote, specifically attitudes towards issues and policies, party leaders and candidates, as well as political parties in general. According to Campbell (1960), the individual learns about which party he/she identifies with from parents and socialization agents, then he/she forms a psychological attachment to this party and as such the individual starts shaping his/her attitudes based on his/her partisanship. Therefore, once the person forms his party identity, he/she adopts its positions and votes for that given party. Moreover, these theorists claim that because individuals inherit their parents' party identity, the formers' identification becomes to a larger extent stable and resistant to external influence. In addition to the argument made above, Bondelli (2007) claims that "habitual voting trends indicate that a person voting in two consecutive elections will likely be a voter for life and voting for a political party in three consecutive elections will likely identify with that party for life". However, they acknowledge that certain external incidents can affect voters' loyalty to a party and as such vote against it.

Political interest also determines voter turnout. In fact, individuals are indeed more likely to vote if they are interested in politics, discuss it with their family and friends, and follow political news in newspapers, television, or other forms of media.

(Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995; Miller & Rahn, 2002; Russell, Fieldhouse, Purdham, & Kaira, 2002; Wattenberg, 2002)

Other variables that are thought to affect turnout are political apathy and alienation. When citizens do not care about politics or do not have any strong feelings for or against a political party/politicians, it could be said that these citizens are apathetic; thus, less likely to cast a ballot (Russell, Fieldhouse, Purdham, & Kaira, 2002, p. 21). On the other hand, when citizens have negative feelings toward politics, such as dislike or distrust of politicians, they are alienated citizens who are also less likely to vote (Russell et al., 2002, p. 85-86).³

Political efficacy has been employed as an indicator to predict and evaluate if an individual is politically active (Acock, Clarke, & Stewart, 2009; Finkel, 1987). It is defined as “the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have an impact upon the political process, that it is worthwhile to perform one’s civic duties” (Campbell, Gurin, & Miller, 1954, p. 187). Consequently, efficacious citizens believe that political and social changes are possible, and that they as individuals have the strength to bringing about this change. These individuals believe in their own ability to understand politics, be heard, and make a difference politically (Catt, 2005). They also have trust in government, interest in politics and a belief in voting (Powell, 1986).

2.5 Mobilization theory

This model argues that when a political party encourages individuals, they are more likely to increase their possibility to vote, thus developing “more positive attitudes

³ Apathy and alienation have similar characteristics as political efficacy to be explained briefly.

toward politics when their involvement is solicited” (Leighley, 1995, pp. 188-189). In order to mobilize citizens, different means can be used such as modern technology (Iyengar & Jackman, 2003), including Internet (Levine & Lopez, 2004), sending mobile messages, employing celebrities in political campaigns and applying personalized messages. In *Young Voter Mobilization Tactics 2006*, Bondelli (2007) finds that young people are more affected by peer-to-peer contact.

Other theorists such as Pammet and Leduc (2003) confirm the effect of mobilization by finding out that there is a relationship between party contact and voter turnout. Greenberg (2003) believes that political parties and candidates do not target nor engage youth in their campaigns, hence are the ones to be blamed for not mobilizing the youth and encouraging them to vote and perform their civic duty.

In ‘Bowling Alone’(2000), Robert Putnam argues that the political attitudes and behavior of the youth differs from the previous generations because of the former’s lack of participation in voluntary associations, and other types of organizations. He explains that membership in social organizations such as churches, unions, and community groups promotes values of tolerance, trust and reciprocity which facilitate cooperative action towards achieving political purposes including voting (Putnam R. , 1993, pp. 89-90). He argues that due to the declining social capital⁴ in the United States, the voter turnout has declined as well.

⁴Defined as “connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam R. D., 2000, p. 19).

2.6 Rational choice theory

This theory gave birth in the 1950s beginning with Downs' (1957) 'An Economic Theory of Democracy' in which he argues that citizens are rational political individuals whose behavior is determined by attitudes, beliefs and values. Also, Heywood (2002) defines this theory as an approach "based on the assumption that individuals are rationally self-interested actors: an 'economic' theory of politics" (Heywood, 2002, p. 430).

In fact, the rational choice theory's variables are based on utility maximization, the electoral law and political institutions. According to Aldrich (1993, p. 247), voters are rational individuals who assess the expected benefits of all possible outcomes, and then based on personal preference, they select the outcome that has the greatest utility. As such, the voter will choose to vote for the party that provides "the best benefits overall" (Kanji & Archer, 2002, p. 166). Moreover, the theory argues that if citizens do not believe that their vote will make any difference, then chances are high that they will not cast a ballot and turnout will be very low. Other theorists also argue that competitiveness (i.e. the level of competition between parties), electoral proportionality (i.e. the translation of votes into seats), multi-partyism (i.e. the number of parties forming a government), and the number of legislative chambers are important factors in determining voter turnout (Downs, 1957; Powell, 1986; Franklin, 2004)⁵.

⁵ There are other institutional factors that affect voter turnout such as the frequency of elections, availability of voting facilities, whether elections are held on weekdays or weekends, and the efficiency of voter registration procedures (Ellis, 2006).

2.7 Conclusion

The literature review in this chapter has covered five major schools of thought on voting and political participation. By using several variables from the socio-economic (age, education, gender, region, religion...), socialization (parents, school, media...), psychological (party identification, political interest, political apathy, political efficacy...), mobilization (mobilization agents, party contact...) and rational choice theories (utility maximization, electoral law, political institutions...), the Chapter IV Key Findings and Chapter V Statistical Analysis and Research Discussion will explore which model or perhaps models provide insight into the context of the Lebanese youth political participation as well as explain what refrains or motivates them to vote and why.

However, before testing and analyzing what variables affect the Lebanese youth's political participation and why, the next chapter will discuss the methodology that was selected to undertake this study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this dissertation is to understand and investigate Lebanese youth political and civic engagement, and if anything, the reasons why they are (or are not) casting their votes and the strategies needed to increase their involvement. Do age, education, religious orientations and social class have an influence on Lebanese youth's decision to vote? To which extent the Lebanese youth are affected by socialization agents such as their parents, schools, peers and the media? Can variables such as party identification, political interest, apathy, alienation and efficacy have an impact on their voting behavior? There are no researches or studies found that have taken these questions into account to try to understand Lebanese youth political participation and voting behavior whether on the national or local level. Therefore, this study relies on one specific primary source of information which is a survey designed specifically to test and assess the ability of certain variables of voter participation in understanding and explaining the youth (dis)engagement in Lebanese political affairs and examine whether young Lebanese's attitudes toward civic duty, political interest, political parties and party leaders and other variables exert a meaningful influence on their level of electoral participation. Other sources of information used in this research are books, journal articles and academic reports.

The quantitative research technique is the main tool employed throughout this paper. The importance of choosing a method is to identify how the research question will be answered. The focus of this study is to understand and investigate Lebanese youth political and civic engagement. The aim here is to uncover why, if at all, the educated Lebanese youth between the ages of 21 and 25 are not casting their votes and the strategies needed to increase their involvement.

3.2 Research Design

This thesis employs both the descriptive method and multivariate statistical technique as its research methodology. The descriptive method is used to explain the status quo of youth political engagement and voting behavior in local elections in Lebanon. This study also employs the multivariate statistical technique so as to identify the different variables that impact the Lebanese youth's decision to vote.

In fact, the aim of the study is to show what the educated Lebanese youth know about local governance, as well as what impacts their decision to participate in politics and to perform their civic duty. The thesis also sheds light on the reasons behind the youth's participation or abstention from voting. Consequently, it brings forward strategies that might be essential to encourage and increase the youth's involvement in local governance as well as policies that should be implemented.

The quantitative research method has undoubtedly a great value and is excellent in testing for the frequency of variables, exploring and measuring the relationship between different variables. It also provides a lead in identifying needed changes. In

fact, the research questions identified for investigating youth political participation and voting behavior in Lebanon are concerned with young people's attitudes and views as well as testing the variables of the five main voter participation theories with an aim to understand what causes and effects youth (dis)engagement hence have a deeper insight on what is the reasoning behind young educated people's attitude towards politics, politicians and voting.

On the other hand, the qualitative approach used in this research relied on verbal information. The key strength of qualitative research approaches is that they provide access to people's perceptions and understandings. As Jones said:

In order to understand other person's constructions of reality, we would do well to ask them... and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their own terms (rather than those imposed rigidly and a priori by ourselves) and in a depth which addresses the rich context that is the substance of their meanings. (Jones, 1985: 46, cited in Punch, 2005: 168-9)

Although, the main technique used in this thesis is quantitative, it was decided to include one qualitative question in this study because of its significant advantage; the use of a qualitative technique allows differing world views and traditions to be accommodated, which in fact provides valid and reliable measurement that can be generalized with clear anticipation of cause and effect (Lang, 2010). This method made the research setting more realistic, something which we cannot obtain solely through quantitative measures.

3.3 Instrument

This study employs a small-scale quantitative survey as its research method. In surveys, data are standardized, and comparison is easy, however it consumes much time to do it. In fact, the questionnaire was prepared specifically for this study with an aim to understand and investigate Lebanese youth political and civic participation, and if anything, the reasons behind their disengagement and the strategies needed to increase their involvement.

The research instrument is easy to follow and its questions are easy to answer (Bryman & Bell, 2003). In fact, whether to ask a question in an open or closed format is one of the most significant considerations for many researchers. According to Bryman & Bell (2003), closed questions have some advantages: it is easy to process answers; enhances their comparability, and makes it easier to show the relationship between variables. It is better than open question for this research. As such, the survey is made up of 39 multiple-choice questions and one open-ended question (see Appendix 1). The types of scales used in the questionnaire are both continuous (such as strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree) and categorical (such as yes, no, maybe, I don't know). The data collected will be managed and analyzed using *Stata: Data Analysis and Statistical Software*.

The 40 statements are developed based on the voter participation theories which are the socio-economic (age, education, gender, region, religion...), socialization (parents, school, media...), psychological (party identification, political interest, political apathy, political efficacy...), mobilization (mobilization agents, party contact...) and rational choice theories (utility maximization, electoral law, political institutions...). As

such, eight questions highlight the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents such as age, gender, confession and region. The remaining questions aim at examining their interest in politics, their attitude towards political parties, their opinion on the importance of voting, their knowledge about local governance and their considerations when and if voting for municipal officials among many others.

The questionnaire was also tested before it was used for actual research. It was tested on 20 respondents who did not take part in the actual study. They were asked to provide their comments and suggestions on the wording of questions, the format and the sequence. Their feedback was taken into account as it proved to improve the instrument and facilitate the respondents' understanding of the questions. Hence, the survey was revised based on the recommendations of the sample being tested.

3.4 Participants

In order to get relevant and accurate information, certain criteria had to be enforced. The participants qualified for sample selection had to be (1) educated; and (2) between the ages of 21 and 25. As a result, the questionnaire was distributed to one hundred and one university students during the months of May, June and July 2011 on five university campuses which have students belonging to major Lebanese confessions. The universities are: Haigazian University, Lebanese American University, Notre Dame University, University of St. Joseph and Al-Manar University of Tripoli. The students were randomly stopped on campus, and asked whether they would like to fill out the ten minutes form.

3.5 Research Ethics

There are a number of ethical issues that were considered during the study mainly for the purposes of securing the safety and privacy of respondents. The participation of respondents was purely consensual and confidential. To ensure the consent of respondents, the main details of the study were relayed to them (i.e., the purpose and aim of the study). Respondents were informed that their participation was purely voluntary and that they were at liberty to withdraw at any time. Participants were also assured of their confidentiality by explaining to them that the questionnaire is anonymous and that their views on the subject will only be used for the sake of the study.

Chapter 4

Key Findings

4.1 Sample Description

The survey targeted youth between the ages of 21 and 25. The below table shows their age distribution with an average age of 21.7, while the number of female (47%) and male (53%) respondents are relatively equally distributed:

Table 1: Age distribution

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
21	56	60.87	60.87
22	19	20.65	81.52
23	11	11.96	93.48
24	2	2.17	95.65
25	4	4.35	100.00
Total	92	100.00	

The respondents' current residency varies from Beirut being the highest percentage 43.7%, followed by 33.3% Mount Lebanon, 20.8% North and 2% in the South. They were also asked about their civil status registry (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Civil status registry distribution

Civil Registry	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Beirut	27	28.13	28.13
Bekaa	8	8.33	36.46
Mount Lebanon	26	27.08	63.54
North	21	21.88	85.42
South	11	11.46	96.88
Don't know	3	3.13	100.00
Total	96	100.00	

The survey respondents came from five universities: NDU (31.6%), LAU (20.7%), MUT (20%), USJ (17%) and HU (11%).

Table 3: University distribution

Universities	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Haigazian University (HU)	11	10.89	10.89
Lebanese American University (LAU)	21	20.79	31.68
Notre Dame University (NDU)	32	31.68	63.37
University St. Joseph (USJ)	17	16.83	80.20
Al-Manar University (MUT)	20	19.80	100.00
Total	101	100.00	

The household income per month of 91 respondents was equally distributed between the lowest income (0\$ to 999\$) and the highest income (5000\$ and above). This shows that there are significant disparities which may be due to undeclared household incomes.

Table 4: Household income/month

Household income	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0\$-999\$	21	23.08	23.08
1000\$-1999\$	18	19.78	42.86
2000\$-2999\$	14	15.38	58.24
3000\$-3999\$	7	7.69	65.93
4000-4999\$	10	10.99	76.92
5000\$ and above	21	23.08	100.00
Total	91	100.00	

When respondents were asked to describe how they introduce themselves, 52% said Lebanese (see Table 5 below).

Table 5: How do you introduce yourself?

Introduce yourself as	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Christian - Maronite, Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant	3	3.09	3.09
Muslim - Druze, Sunni, Shiite	1	1.03	4.12
Lebanese - Christian - Maronite, Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant	21	21.65	25.77
Lebanese - Muslim - Druze, Sunni, Shiite	8	8.25	34.02
Arab – Christian	0	0	34.02

Arab – Muslim	4	4.12	38.14
Lebanese	52	53.61	91.75
Arab	1	1.03	92.78
I don't know	1	1.03	93.81
Other	6	6.19	100.00
Total	97	100.00	

Among 101 respondents, 19 preferred not to mention their confession while 6 chose to skip the question. The remaining 76 respondents, which are 80%, declared their confession. The results were distributed among the main confessions found in Lebanon (see Table 6 below): Maronite (20%), Sunni (18.9%), Orthodox (10.5%), Catholic (7.3%), Shiite (6.3%), Druze (6.3%) and Armenian Orthodox (6.3%).

Table 6: Confessional distribution

Confession	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Armenian Orthodox	6	6.32	6.32
Catholic	7	7.37	13.68
Druze	6	6.63	20.00
Maronite	19	20.00	40.00
Orthodox	10	10.53	50.53
Shiite	6	6.32	56.84
Sunni	18	18.95	75.79
None of the above	4	4.21	80.00
Prefer not to answer	19	20.00	100.00
Total	95	100.00	

4.2 Political Affiliations

25% of youth expressed that none of the political leaders represent them the most. On the other hand, the strongest support among the 12 Lebanese political leaders was distributed among the following figures: Baroud (20%), Geagea (12%), Aoun (9%) and Nasrallah (10%).

Table 7: Which of the following leaders represent you the most?

Leaders	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Michel Aoun	9	9.00	9.00
Al Meer Talal Arslan	6	6.00	15.00
Ziad Baroud	20	20.00	35.00
Nabih Berry	1	1.00	36.00
Samir Geagea	12	12.00	48.00
Amin Gemayel	2	2.00	50.00
Saad Hariri	5	5.00	55.00
Walid Jumblat	1	1.00	56.00
Najib Mikati	1	1.00	57.00
Hassan Nasrallah	7	7.00	64.00
Hagop Pakradouni	2	2.00	66.00
Michel Sleiman	1	1.00	67.00
Other	8	8.00	75.00
None	25	25.00	100.00
Total	100	100.00	

Each leader's support was clearly sectarian based. Supporters matched closely the populist leader's sectarian identity (See Figure 1 below). The only leader who

received support from almost all sects is Baroud, a young Minister coming from a civil society background.

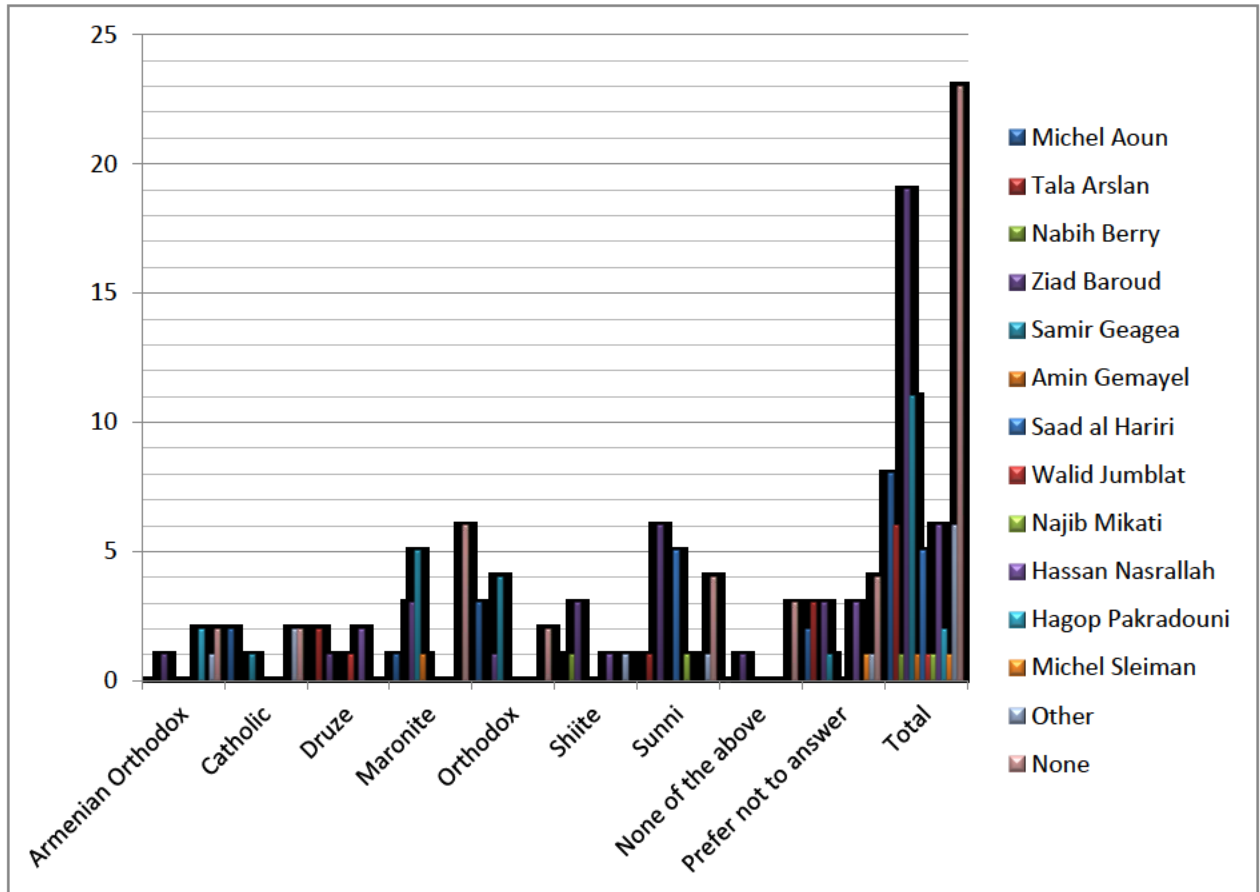


Figure 1: Confession per political leader

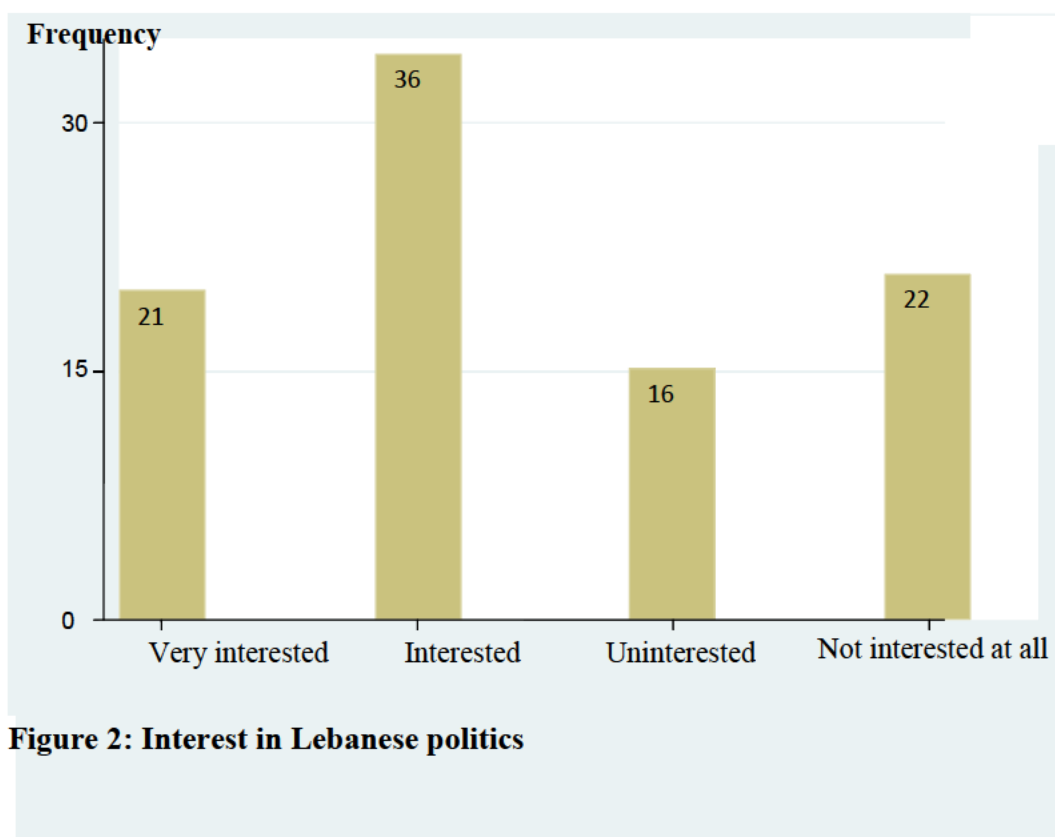
The leaders were found by 35.3% of supporters to have committed mistakes, and yet they supported them. Table 8 below shows the distribution of respondents' leaders and rate of mistakes committed (i.e. 6 respondents consider Ziad Baroud to be their leader and believe that he has committed relatively few mistakes).

Table 8: Distribution of respondents' leaders and rate of mistakes committed

Leaders	Mistakes per leader supported					
	Too many	Many	Relatively few	Very few	Never committed a mistake	Total
Michel Aoun	1	1	3	4	0	9
Talal Arslan	0	0	0	4	1	5
Ziad Baroud	1	2	6	9	1	19
Nabih Berry	0	1	0	0	0	1
Samir GeaGea	1	5	2	4	0	12
Amin Gemayel	0	2	0	0	0	2
Saad al Hariri	1	2	1	0	1	5
Walid Jumblat	0	1	0	0	0	1
Najib Mikati	0	0	1	0	0	1
Hassan Nassrallah	1	0	0	5	1	7
Hagop Pakradouni	0	0	1	0	0	2
Michel Sleiman	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other	2	1	5	0	0	8
None	1	3	0	0	0	4
Total	8	18	19	26	5	76

4.3 Political Views towards Government in Lebanon

When asked about their interest in Lebanese politics, almost half of the respondents declared that they were uninterested and not interested at all in Lebanese politics (see Figure 2 below).



Although Lebanon is known to be a consociational democracy, a vast majority of respondents were not sure whether Lebanon is a democratic system (44.5%). In fact, 36.6% of respondents said that Lebanon is not a democracy, while only 16.8% declared that the country is democratic. In addition to that, 62% of the youth who answered the question with a yes and maybe, expressed that there are unsatisfied with the way democracy works (Table 10).

Table 9: Do you think we have a democracy in Lebanon?

Democracy in Lebanon	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Democracy	37	36.63	36.63
Democracy	17	16.83	53.47
Maybe	45	44.55	98.02
Don't know	2	1.98	100.00
Total	101	100.00	

Table 10: If yes/maybe, are you satisfied with the way democracy works in Lebanon?

Satisfied with the way democracy in Lebanon	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very satisfied	2	2.50	2.50
Satisfied	16	20.00	22.50
Unsatisfied	45	56.25	78.75
Not at all satisfied	17	21.25	100.00
Total	80	100.00	

The sects that have the strongest dissatisfaction feeling for the way democracy works in Lebanon are the Sunni (11 respondents), the Maronite (9 respondents), and the Orthodox (6 respondents). None of the sects except for one Druze respondent is very satisfied with the way democracy works in Lebanon.

Table 11: Satisfaction of the way democracy works in Lebanon by sectarian distribution

Confession	Satisfaction with Democracy in Lebanon				
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Not at all Satisfied	Total
Armenian Orthodox	0	0	2	0	2
Catholic	0	1	2	3	6
Druze	1	0	3	1	5
Maronite	0	5	7	2	14
Orthodox	0	2	4	2	8
Shiite	0	1	1	1	3
Sunni	0	5	9	2	16
None	0	0	2	1	3
Prefer not to Answer	1	2	10	4	17
Total	2	16	40	16	74

4.4 Views towards Political Parties and Participation

The reason behind the dissatisfaction of respondents in the way democracy works in Lebanon can be the political parties which 48.5% of the respondents believe are a necessary tool for democracy (Table 12) but 43% said that political parties do not play a positive role in our society (Table 13).

Table 12: Do you think political parties are a necessary tool for democracy?

Political party necessary tool for democracy	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not necessary	20	19.80	19.80
Necessary	49	48.51	68.32
Maybe necessary	27	26.73	95.05
Don't know	5	4.95	100.00
Total	101	100.00	

Table 13: Do you think political parties play a positive role in our society?

Political parties play a positive role in societies	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	43	42.57	42.57
Yes	28	27.72	70.30
Maybe	28	27.72	98.02
Don't know	2	1.98	100.00
Total	101	100.00	

Although 75% of respondents declared that they support a political leader, 73.2% of them have never been a member of a political party (see Table 14). Despite that fact, the majority holds a strong identification for Lebanese political parties (51%) (see Table 15) and has attended a political rally or demonstration (50.5%), (see Table 16).

Table 14: Are you or have you ever been member of a political party?

Been a member of political party	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	74	73.27	73.27
Yes	27	26.73	100
Total	101	100.00	

Table 15: Strength of party identification

Strength of party identification	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very strong	9	20.00	20.00
Quite strong	14	31.11	51.11
Average	8	17.78	68.89
Not very strong	5	11.11	80.00
Not strong at all	9	20.00	100.00
Total	45	100.00	

Table 16: Have you ever attended a political rally or demonstration?

Have attended a political demonstration	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	50	49.50	49.50
Yes	51	50.50	100.00
Total	101	100.00	

When asked whether they would consider running for municipal or parliamentary elections, 45 of the respondents said no, 30 said maybe, 22 yes while 4 are uncertain (Table 17).

Table 17: Will you ever consider running for municipal or parliamentary elections?

Ever consider running for municipal or parliamentary elections	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	45	44.55	44.55
Yes	22	21.78	66.34
Maybe	30	29.70	96.04
Don't know	4	3.96	100.00
Total	101	100.00	

99 respondents rated their sense of civic duty, with the majority (43.4%) describing it to be average; 35.2% said it is strong while 21.1% of respondents believe that their sense of civic duty is not strong.

Table 18: Rate of sense of civic duty

Rate of sense of civic duty	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very strong	6	6.06	6.06
Quite strong	29	29.29	35.35
Average	43	43.43	78.79
Not very strong	14	14.14	92.93
Not strong at all	7	7.07	100.00
Total	99	100.00	

Respondents were also asked whether the civic education class at school has increased their sense of nationalism and civic duty. The answers were distributed equally between No (38.6%) and Maybe (39.6%), whereas only 14.8% have been influenced by the Lebanese civic education book taught at schools (Table 19)

Table 19: Do you believe that the Civics Education class at your school increased your sense of nationalism and civic duty?

Civics education class increased your sense of nationalism and civic duty	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	39	38.61	38.61
Yes	15	14.85	53.47
Maybe	40	39.60	93.07
Don't know	7	6.93	100.00
Total	101	100.00	

4.5 Voting in Elections

Voting is considered a civic duty. Although the majority of respondents said that the Lebanese civic education book hasn't increased their sense of civic duty, more than 70% believe that it is important to perform their civic duty in the country (Table 20).

Table 20: Do you think it is important to vote in Lebanon?

Importance of voting in Lebanon	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very important	42	41.58	41.58
Important	34	33.66	75.25
Unimportant	13	12.87	88.12
Not important at all	12	11.88	100.00
Total	101	100.00	

Ironically, although the majority expressed that it is important to vote in Lebanon, only 10 have performed their civic duty during the Parliamentary elections in 2009, as well as Municipal and Mukhtars elections in 2010; whereas university elections have received the highest percentage (Table 21).

Table 21: Have you voted in any of the following elections?

Elections	Frequency	Total
Mukhtars	10	100
Municipality	10	100
Parliament	10	100
University	51	100

Survey respondents were asked four specific questions to test their knowledge on local governance in Lebanon. The first question was to see whether they know that after the end of Civil War, the first municipal election was held in 1998 (see results in Table 22). The second question aimed at finding out whether the respondents know that municipal elections are held every 6 years (see Table 23). The third question was for them to rate their knowledge about the role and tasks municipalities in Lebanon (41% said average; see Table 24 for results) whereas the last question was to examine the respondents' level of interest in the municipal elections held in 2010 (41.2% uninterested; see Table 25 for results).

Table 22: When was the first municipal election held after the end of the Civil War?

1st municipal election held after the end of the Lebanese Civil War	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1992	47	61.03	61.03
1995	17	22.07	83.10
1998	13	16.88	100.00
2001	0	0	
Total	77	100.00	

Table 23: Every how many years are municipal elections held?

Municipal elections are held every:	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
3 years	3	3.37	3.37
4 years	47	52.80	56.10
5 years	2	2.25	58.35
6 years	37	41.57	100.00
Total	89	100.00	

Table 24: How would you rate your knowledge about the role and tasks of the municipality?

Knowledge rate	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very strong	5	5.26	5.26
Quite strong	21	22.11	27.37
Average	39	41.05	68.42
Not very strong	15	15.79	84.21
Not strong at all	15	15.79	100.00
Total	95	100.00	

Table 25: How interested were you in the 2010 Municipal Elections?

Interest in municipal elections	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very interested	11	11.34	11.34
Interested	26	26.80	38.14
Uninterested	40	41.24	79.38
Not at all interested	20	20.62	100.00
Total	97	100.00	

Table 26 showed that only 10 respondents have voted during the municipal elections. It is interesting to see the correlation between these 10 voters and their level of interest in the municipal elections. The table shows that out of the 10 voters, only 1 was very interested in the elections, 6 were interested while 3 uninterested yet voted.

Table 26: Interest in elections vs. voting during elections

Interest in municipal elections	Voter		
	No	Yes	Total
Very interested	10	1	11
Interested	20	6	26
Uninterested	37	3	40
Not at all interested	20	0	20
Total	87	10	97

Respondents were asked about the reasons behind their abstention from voting. The top three reasons put forward by the respondents were: 24 said that their name was not on the register of voters , 18 were not interested in politics, 11 said that all candidates are corrupt and other 11 said that their vote would not have made any difference (Table 27: Reasons behind abstention from voting)

Table 27: Reasons behind abstention from voting

Reasons for not voting	Frequency	Total
Not interested in politics/elections	18	78
Too busy to vote	2	78
All candidates are corrupt	11	78
Living far from polling station	1	78
Did not support candidate	10	78
My name was not on the register of voters	24	78
My vote would not have made a difference	11	78
Was out of the country	5	78

Although the majority of respondents did not vote, when asked whether they believe it is a serious problem if Lebanese youth do not vote, more than half said yes (see Table 28).

Table 28: Do you think it is a serious problem if Lebanese youth (21-25) do not vote?

Seriousness of problem	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very serious	42	43.30	43.30
Serious	32	32.99	76.29
Not serious	16	16.49	92.78
Not at all serious	7	7.72	100.00
Total	101	100.00	

To further understand why the young Lebanese are less likely to vote than younger voters of past generations, respondents were given 8 reasons to choose from (see Table 29 below).

Table 29: Reasons that make youth less likely to vote than younger voters of past generations

Potential reasons that might affect voting	Frequency	Total
Lack of integration into the political system	21	94
Feelings of apathy and general distrust in politics	29	94
Diminished sense of civic responsibility	19	94
Lack of meaningful choices	21	94
Lack of information, understanding and knowledge	29	94
Little political interest	21	94
Lack of encouragement	20	94
Laziness, irresponsibility	30	94
Other	11	94

Respondents were given a set of statements about voting, and its importance, the voting process, the local governance and so on. The table below shows the level of agreement of the respondents to each of the below statements. For instance, what can be seen is that the majority of youth believe it is important to pay attention to local governance; that they take an active role in their community; and believe that municipalities do not care about what the youth think.

Table 30: Statements

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Value voting system	29	30	19	9	30	97
Important to pay attention to local governance	45	30	13	6	3	97
I take an active role in my community	16	24	30	18	10	98
I believe my vote counts	32	29	14	8	15	98
So many people vote that my vote hardly counts	22	15	23	15	21	96
Municipalities do not care about what the youth think	21	27	22	11	15	97
No point in voting for independent municipal official who will win few seats	7	17	26	24	22	96
More likely to vote if I knew how	11	20	14	15	36	96
More likely to vote if election process was explained better	23	23	13	17	20	96
More likely to vote if informed of candidates' agendas	35	32	16	4	9	96
More likely to vote where I live	32	27	17	10	10	96
More likely to vote if municipal official reflected youth's interests	45	25	12	7	8	97

Respondents were asked to rank the issues that municipal officials should prioritize while in office from most important to least important (1 to 10).

Table 31: Priorities of municipal officials

Priorities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Crime	12	10	7	6	14	13	7	6	3	6	84
Drug control	14	9	5	9	8	5	9	9	5	11	84
Local security	21	4	12	16	9	7	2	8	4	1	84
Leisure facilities	7	2	4	3	3	10	12	8	11	24	84
Education	17	14	13	10	10	4	2	3	6	5	84
Infrastructure	16	7	5	9	8	6	7	9	14	13	84
Poverty	10	18	13	9	7	7	6	9	4	0	83
Environment	10	0	8	4	14	13	15	8	5	6	83
Gun control	9	5	3	3	2	8	11	11	16	15	83

4.6 Socialization Behaviors

Table 32 shows that educated youth spend a great amount of time hanging out with their friends, surfing the web, studying and watching TV (1 being the highest score).

Table 32: Most to least time spent doing the following activities

Most time spent:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Watching TV	11	13	16	11	7	16	14	89
Hanging out with friends	24	19	12	13	10	9	2	89
Working a job	14	13	6	10	13	12	21	89
Surfing the web/internet	9	16	18	20	10	13	3	89
Playing sports	11	5	11	14	13	18	17	89
Participating in clubs	4	6	13	8	18	14	26	89
Studying	15	16	12	13	16	9	8	89

The below table shows from where respondents get their information. Out of 95 respondents, 31 said that the source of information specifically political information is from family, international TV channels, newspapers and the Internet.

Table 33: Source of information

Source of information	Frequency	Total
Family	31	95
Friends	5	95
Newspaper	30	95
Internet	26	95
National TV	21	95
Radio	6	95
Magazine	4	95
International TV	31	95

The number of respondents was somehow divided equally between those who hold communal attitudes towards political issues in the country and those who do not (see Table 34 below).

Table 34: Do you consider your political attitudes similar to those of your parents?

Similar Political Attitudes with Parents	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	36	52.17	52.17
Yes	25	36.23	88.41
Maybe	1	1.45	89.86
Don't know	7	10.14	100.00
Total	69	100.00	

Table 35 below shows the majority of respondents are ready to defend their country (43 respondents out of 95), family/clan (41 out of 94) and their religion (25 out of 95).

Table 35: In general, which of the following are you most likely to defend?

Ready to defend	Frequency	Total
Family/clan	41	94
Sect	7	95
Social status	18	95
Country	43	95
Religion	25	95
None	7	95
Other	6	94

Chapter 5

Statistical Analysis and Research Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter puts into test the five main voting behavior theories which have been discussed in Chapter II: the socioeconomic, the socialization, the psychological, the mobilization and the rational choice theories. Each of the theories' variables are tested and examined with the main dependent variable which is the act of voting. The chapter begins with observing the youth's perception and understanding of local governance in Lebanon, and then it tests the five theories with an attempt to prove their hypotheses.

5.2 Importance of engaging youth in local governance

Local governance is responsible for a range of young people's concerns and interests such as education and leisure facilities. As such, it has also an important role to play in engaging the interest and participation of young people in politics. In fact, the participation of the young in local politics will encourage them to become a 'good citizen' as it will foster an interest in and commitment to local community. The second argument is that youth are the ones who should benefit from their local community in the sense of local services, such as schools, transport and leisure facilities (Geddes & Rust, 2000). As such, their participation in local politics will result in more relevant decision making. The third reason is that young people will be personally enriched as

they gain new opportunities, skills and insights about participation in local politics (Willow, 1997).

5.2.1 Knowledge of local governance in Lebanon

Survey respondents were asked four specific questions to test their knowledge on local governance in Lebanon (see Table 22, Table 23, Table 24 and

Table 25 for results). This section tests whether knowledge of local governance has impact on voting behavior.

The partial correlation shows that the higher the respondents rate their level of knowledge the more likely they are to vote during municipal elections by 0.10 (Table 36).

Table 36: Effect of knowledge about local governance on voting for municipal officials

	Vote for Municipality	Knowledge rate
Vote for Municipality	1.0000	
Knowledge rate	-0.1088	1.000

To confirm respondents' rate of knowledge, questions regarding basic and key information about municipalities in Lebanon were asked such as, when was the first municipal election held after the end of the Lebanese Civil War. Out of 101 respondents, only 13 (12.87%) answered the correct year which is 1998, of which, 4 (30.76%) have voted during municipal elections. In other words, out of the 10 respondents who voted, 4 knew the correct answer (Table 37 below).

Table 37: Knowledge of first municipal election date after Lebanese Civil War and voting for municipal officials

Vote for Municipality	First Municipal Election after Civil War			
	1992	1995	1998	Total
No	46	14	9	69
Yes	1	3	4	8
Total	47	17	13	77
Percentage of total (%)	61.03	22.07	16.88	100.00
Percentage of Voters (%)	2.12	17.64	30.76	

Another question was also asked, about every how many years are municipal elections held. And in this case, the correct answer is six years, to which only 37 respondents answered correctly, of which only 2 voted (5.40%) (Table 38)

Table 38: Distribution of voters and non-voters for municipal elections based on their knowledge of the years municipal elections are held

Vote for Municipality	Municipal Elections held every				
	Three years	Four years	Five years	Six years	Total
No	3	39	2	35	79
Yes	0	8	0	2	10
Total	3	47	2	37	89
Percentage of total (%)	3.37	52.81	2.24	41.58	100
Percentage of Voters (%)	0.00	17.02	0.00	5.40	

5.2.2 Consideration of running for municipal and parliamentary elections

Respondents in this study were asked whether they will ever consider running for municipal or parliamentary elections. Out of the 63 respondents who answered, 34 were male

and 29 females. 11 of the males considered running for elections (32.35%), but 11 (37.93%) females also considered running for elections (Table 39). This shows that the new female generation is highly interested in running for elections, and in this study, they show higher interest than men.

Table 39: Consideration of running for municipal and parliamentary elections based on gender distribution

Consider Running for Municipal and Parliamentary Elections	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
No	23	18	41
Yes	11	11	22
Total	34	29	63

After evaluating the respondents' consideration on running for municipal and parliamentary elections based on their gender, let us discuss based on their confession. Out of 62 respondents 4 were Armenian orthodox, of which 2 considered running for elections. Out the 6 Druze respondents, only 1 considered running for elections. 40% of Maronite respondents, 25% of Orthodox, 50% of Shiite, 37% of Sunni and 42% of Catholic respondents considered running for elections. Out of the other respondents who preferred not to reveal their religious confession, 35% considered running for elections (Table 40).

Table 40: Consideration for running for elections based on confessions

Consider Running for Elections	Confession								
	Armenian Orthodox	Catholic	Druze	Maronite	Orthodox	Shiite	Sunni	None	Prefer not to Answer
No	2	4	5	6	6	2	5	3	40
Yes	2	3	1	4	2	2	3	0	22
Total	4	7	6	10	8	4	8	3	62
Percentage of Running for Elections (%)	50.00	42.85	16.67	40.00	25.00	50.00	37.50	0.00	35.48

5.2.2 Priorities of municipal officials in the eyes' of the youth

Believing in the importance of youth's integration in the decision-making process in local governance, respondents were asked to rank from most important (1) to least important (10) the priorities they consider municipal officials should take into consideration (Table 34). The priorities that were given to the respondents were crime, drug control, local security, leisure facilities, education, infrastructure, poverty, environment and gun control. In the youth's opinion, the municipalities should give high priority to the top three rankings which are local security, poverty and education. They also believe that infrastructure, gun control, environment, drug control and crime are important elements of everyday life which should be taken care of by the municipalities. Despite the fact that the respondents are youth and that they should claim for more social and leisure facilities, the majority of respondents said that municipalities should give little attention to that.

5.2.3 General Conclusion

Lebanese youth have little information about the history of local governance in Lebanon whether it is about the date of the first municipal election, every how many years it is held or about the roles and tasks of municipalities. In fact, the study has proven that the more they know about local governance, the more likely they are to vote during municipal elections. Moreover, youth have voiced that the priorities that municipal officials should take into consideration while in office are local security, poverty and education. The study has also showed that the new female generation is highly interested in running for elections, and in fact they show higher interest than men. Finally, the study has not seen any difference between sects when deciding to run for elections.

5.3 Socioeconomic Theory

According to this model, participation is determined by a person's socioeconomic characteristics and civic orientations. The socioeconomic variables that can influence the voting behavior of citizens are mainly age, education and income. Wolfinger & Rosenstone (1980) argue that age can be a key determinant of voting behavior and that the older the person, the chances are more likely that he/she will vote. Almond & Verba (1963 & 1968) examine the education variable and come up with two main hypotheses: the more educated the person is, the chances are higher for him/her to be knowledgeable about the local institutions as well as electoral systems and have a sense of civic duty, hence cast a meaningful ballot; and highly educated people are more likely to follow and discuss elections compared to those with low levels of education. On the other hand,

Verba (1963, 1972 & 1978) in several of his works has explained that class differences also play a strong role in determining who participates and who does not. While, according to Pammett & Leduc (2003) civic duty is believed to have an influence on the act of voting as well claiming that the stronger the sense of civic duty of an individual, the higher is the chance that a ballot will be casted. As such, this section will test and determine whether the variables are significant predictors of voting.

5.3.1 Age

To test the relationship between age and voting behavior, partial correlation analysis was conducted. Table 41 presents the results, whereby age affects voting for Mukhtars by 0.27, significant at a 95% level of confidence. As age value increases by 1 unit, the likelihood for voting for Mukhtars increases by 0.27.

Table 41: Effect of age on voting behavior during Mukhtars elections

	Vote for Muhtars	Age
Vote for Mukhtars	1.0000	
Age	0.2728*	1.000

When examining the relationship between age and voting for municipalities, age affects voting for municipalities by 0.23, significant at a 95% level of confidence; while age affects voting for parliament by 0.24, significant at a 95% level of confidence.

Table 42: Effect of age on voting behavior for municipal and parliamentary elections

	Vote for municipalities	Age
Vote for municipalities	1.0000	
Age	0.2329*	1.000
	Vote for parliament	Age
Vote for parliament	1.0000	
Age	0.2462*	1.000

On the other hand, age affects respondents' voting behavior in Universities negatively. As a student's age increases by 1 year, he/she is less likely to vote by 0.24 during university elections. This is significant at a 95% level of confidence.

Table 43: Effect of age on voting behavior during university elections

	Vote for university	Age
Vote for university	1.0000	
Age	-0.2462*	1.000

As such, what can be inferred from the results above is that as older the citizens are, the more likely they are to vote for Mukhtars, Municipalities and Parliament. As for university elections, it is determined that the older the students, the less likely they are to be interested in voting.

5.3.2 Education Level

The tables below summarize the voting behavior of the respondents for the four voting categories studied sorted by educational level.

Table 44: Voting behavior based on educational level

Vote for Mukhtars	Education Level				
	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate	Total
No	16	37	16	4	73
Yes	1	5	3	0	9
Total	17	42	19	4	82
Percentage of Voters (%)	5.88	11.90	15.78	0	10.97

Out of the 9 respondents who voted for Mukhtars, 1 student is a Sophomore, 5 are Junior and 3 are Senior (see Table 44 above); while out of 8 respondents who voted for Municipalities, 1 is Sophomore, 5 are Junior and 2 are Senior (Table 45 below).

Table 45: Voting for municipalities based on educational level

Vote for Municipalities	Education Level				
	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate	Total
No	16	37	17	4	74
Yes	1	5	2	0	8
Total	17	42	19	4	82
Percentage of Voters (%)	5.88	11.90	10.51	0	9.75

Out of 8 respondents who voted for Parliament, 1 is Sophomore, 4 are Junior and 3 are Senior; while out of 45 respondents who voted during university elections, 8 are Sophomore, 22 are Junior, 11 are Senior and 4 are Graduates (see Table 46 and Table 47 below).

Table 46: Voting for parliament based on educational level

Vote for Parliament	Education Level				
	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate	Total
No	16	38	16	4	74
Yes	1	4	3	0	8
Total	17	42	19	4	82
Percentage of Voters (%)	5.88	9.52	15.78	0	9.75

Table 47: Voting for university elections based on educational level

Vote in University	Education Level				
	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate	Total
No	9	20	8	0	37
Yes	8	22	11	4	45
Total	17	42	19	4	82
Percentage of Voters (%)	47.05	52.38	57.89	100	54.87

Education level affects positively voting for Mukhtars, Municipalities, Parliament and Universities. It is assumed that the more educated the more they are informed of the importance of casting a ballot. This theory holds in this study, but it is not significant at a 95% level of confidence. The higher the education level, youth are more likely to vote for Mukhtars by 0.04, for municipalities by 0.001, for Parliament by 0.05 and in universities by 0.17.

Table 48: Effect of education on voting behavior

	Vote for Mukhtars	Education Level
Vote for Mukhtars	1.0000	
Education Level	0.0447	1.000
	Vote for Municipality	Education Level
Vote for Municipality	1.0000	
Education Level	0.0013	1.000
	Vote for Parliament	Education Level
Vote for Parliament	1.0000	
Education Level	0.0535	1.000
	Vote in University	Education Level
Vote for University	1.0000	
Education Level	0.1717	1.000

5.3.3 Household Income

As for the third variable, household income, Table 49, Table 50, Table 51 and Table 52 below summarize the distribution of voters and non-voters based on their household income. For example, the majority of those who have voted for Mukhtars, Municipalities and Parliament have a household income of \$1000 to \$1999. The same applies to those who have voted for university elections whereby the majority's household income is below 2999\$. As such, it could be argued that the lower the income of citizens', the more likely they would vote.

Table 49: Distribution of voters and non-voters for Mukhtars based on their household income

Voted for Mukhtars	Household Income						Total
	\$0-\$999	\$1000-\$1999	\$2000-\$2999	\$3000-\$3999	\$4000-\$4999	Above \$5000	
No	20	12	14	7	10	18	81
Yes	1	6	0	0	0	3	10
Total	21	18	14	7	10	21	91
Percentage of Voters (%)	4.76	33.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	14.28	10.98

Table 50: Distribution of voters and non-voters for municipal officials based on their household income

Vote for Municipality	Household Income						Total
	\$0-\$999	\$1000-\$1999	\$2000-\$2999	\$3000-\$3999	\$4000-\$4999	Above \$5000	
No	20	12	13	7	10	19	81
Yes	1	6	1	0	0	2	10
Total	21	18	14	7	10	21	91
Percentage of Voters (%)	4.76	33.33	7.14	0.00	0.00	9.52	10.99

Table 51: Distribution of voters and non-voters for parliament based on their household income

Vote for Parliament	Household Income						Total
	\$0-\$999	\$1000-\$1999	\$2000-\$2999	\$3000-\$3999	\$4000-\$4999	Above \$5000	
No	21	12	13	7	9	19	81
Yes	0	6	1	0	1	2	10
Total	21	18	14	7	10	21	91
Percentage of Voters (%)	0.00	33.33	7.14	0.00	10.00	9.52	10.99

Table 52: Distribution of voters and non-voters for university elections based on their household income

Vote for University	Household Income						Total
	\$0-\$999	\$1000-\$1999	\$2000-\$2999	\$3000-\$3999	\$4000-\$4999	Above \$5000	
No	8	9	7	1	6	11	42
Yes	13	9	7	6	4	10	49
Total	21	18	14	7	10	21	91
Percentage of Voters (%)	61.90	50.00	50.00	85.71	40.00	47.61	53.84

5.3.4 Sense of Civic Duty

The tables below summarize the voting behavior of the respondents on the four voting categories studied based on their rating of their sense of civic duty.

Out of 99 respondents, 7 considered they had a very strong sense of civic of which only 1 voted during Mukhtars elections (14.28%). 29 respondents had a quite strong sense of civic duty though none of them voted. Out of 43 respondents with average sense of civic duty, only 6 voted (13.95%). 13 respondents with a not very strong civic duty, 3 voted; and out of the 7 respondents with no sense of civic duty, none of them voted.

Table 53: Voting for Mukhtars based on degree of civic duty

Sense of Civic Duty	Vote for Mukhtars			
	No	Yes	Percentage of Voters (%)	Total
Very strong	6	1	14.28	7
Quite strong	29	0	0.00	29
Average	37	6	13.95	43
Not very strong	10	3	23.07	13
Not strong at all	7	0	0	7
Total	89	10	10.10	99

With 36 respondents who had very strong and quite strong sense of civic duty, none of the respondents voted. But out of the 43 respondents who rate by average their sense of civic duty, 9 voted. Out of the 13 respondents with not very strong sense, 1 voted and 7 respondents with no sense of civic duty none of them voted.

Table 54: Voting behavior for municipality based on degree of civic duty

Sense of Civic Duty	Vote for Municipality			
	No	Yes	Percentage of Voters (%)	Total
Very strong	7	0	0.00	7
Quite strong	29	0	0.00	29
Average	34	9	20.93	43
Not very strong	12	1	7.69	13
Not strong at all	7	0	0.00	7
Total	89	10	10.10	99

Out of 7 respondents with very strong sense of civic duty only 1 voted for parliament (14.28%). Of the 29 with quite strong sense, 2 voted (6.89%). With an average sense of civic duty, 4 out of 43 voted (9.30%). 3 out of 13 respondents with not very strong sense of civic duty voted for parliament (23.07%) and none of the 7 respondents with no sense of civic duty voted (Table 55 below).

Table 55: Voting for parliament based on degree of civic duty

Sense of Civic Duty	Vote for Parliament			
	No	Yes	Percentage of Voters (%)	Total
Very strong	6	1	14.28	7
Quite strong	27	2	6.89	29
Average	39	4	9.30	43
Not very strong	10	3	23.07	13
Not strong at all	7	0	0.00	7
Total	89	10	10.10	99

Out of 7 respondents with very strong sense of civic duty 5 voted during university elections (71.42%) and 4 out of 7 respondents with no sense of civic duty voted (57.14%).

Table 56: Voting for university elections based on degree of civic duty

Sense of Civic Duty	Vote in University			
	No	Yes	Percentage of Voters (%)	Total
Very strong	2	5	71.42	7
Quite strong	12	17	89.47	29
Average	22	21	48.83	43
Not very strong	9	4	30.76	13
Not strong at all	3	4	57.14	7
Total	89	10	10.10	99

5.3.5 General Conclusion

The variables of the socioeconomic theory seem to be applicable to the Lebanese youth voting behavior. First, the study indicates that age is a significant predictor of political participation in elections. In fact, what can be inferred from the results above is that as older the citizens are, the more likely they are to vote for Mukhtars, Municipalities and Parliament. As for university elections, it is determined that the older the students, the less likely they are to be interested in voting. This could be explained

by the fact that students in the beginning of their academic career are more engaged in university life on campus and participate in social, political and cultural events contrary to those who are older and have been in university for several years and looking forward to graduate.

Second, the study found out that education affects positively voting for Mukhtars, Municipalities, Parliament and Universities. It is assumed that the more educated, the more they are informed of the importance of casting a ballot, and hence vote. Income is the third variable studied and it showed that the lower the household income of citizens, the more likely they are to vote. Finally, the study shows that having a strong sense of civic duty does not positively affect the propensity of voting.

5.4 Socialization Theory

The socialization theory argues that political attitudes and behaviors are established prior to adolescence, and that they remain the same to a large extent until adulthood. In fact, socialization theorists argue that parents are a key determinant in ensuring that their children adopt the same political orientation (Greenstein, 1965), while others such as Hess & Torney (1967) explain that the school plays a role in shaping students' political learning. Moreover, media and peer groups have an impact on the shaping of youth's political behaviors.

5.4.1 Family

Table 34 showed that the number of respondents was somehow divided equally between those who hold communal attitudes towards political issues in the country and those who do not. In order to further study whether family is a significant variable, the below table explains whether there is a relationship between having similar attitudes with parents and having parents as the source for political news. The results show that 31 out of 40 youth do not share similar political views with their parents and are not their source of information; while 16 out of 21 youth's parents are their source of news information and adopt their parents' political stance (Table below).

Table 57: Relationship between having similar attitudes with parents and family as source of information

Source of information: Family	Similar political attitudes with parents		
	No	Yes	Total
No	31	9	40
Yes	5	16	21
Total	36	25	61

5.4.2 Media

To test which variables affect and by how much whether students' political attitude is similar to their parents, the logit regression analysis was conducted (see Table 58 below). The variables tested are the different source of information: parents, friends, newspaper, internet, national TV and international TV (listed in same order in Table 58 below). Out of these variables, source of information family increases the likelihood of having similar political attitudes with their parents. The coefficient is 2.79, significant at a 99% level of confidence. Newspaper being source of information, positively affects the likelihood of having similar attitude with parents; that is by 1.49 and significant at a

90% level of confidence. As for the internet, it decreases the likelihood of having similar political attitudes with their parents, significant at 90% level of confidence.

Table 58: Logit regression

Logistic regression				Number of obs	=	57
				LR chi2(6)	=	24.39
				Prob > chi2	=	0.0004
Log likelihood = -26.881788				Pseudo R2	=	0.3121
<hr/>						
similaratt~s	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
asourcefam~y	2.79918	.8811554	3.18	0.001	1.072147	4.526213
bsourcefri~s	-.5096695	1.379168	-0.37	0.712	-3.21279	2.193451
csourcenew~r	1.498781	.8372121	1.79	0.073	-.1421245	3.139687
dsourceint~t	-2.641229	1.457109	-1.81	0.070	-5.49711	.2146517
esourcenat~v	.6484761	.9002405	0.72	0.471	-1.115963	2.412915
hsourceint~v	.4629034	.8224752	0.56	0.574	-1.149118	2.074925
_cons	-1.742328	.750901	-2.32	0.020	-3.214067	-.2705891

5.4.3 School: civic education class

The below tables test the relationship between voting for the different categories of elections and the civic education class taught at schools. In fact, out of the 7 who have voted for Mukhtars, only 2 believe that the school has increased their sense of nationalism and civic duty. As for those 5 respondents who voted for municipalities, only one has expressed that the school has played a role in increasing his/her sense of civic duty; one out of six who have voted for parliamentary elections said that the class has affected him/her; while 7 out of 25 who have voted during university elections, expressed that they have been influenced by the civic education class at school. It could be argued that the level of impact that the civic education class has on students in terms of increasing their sense of nationalism and civic duty is quite low, instead of being one of the major sources for students to learn about politics, the importance of political participation and casting a ballot.

Table 59: Relationship between voting for Mukhtars and civic education class

Vote for Mukhtars	Civics Education class at school increased your sense of nationalism and civic duty		
	No	Yes	Total
No	34	13	47
Yes	5	2	7
Total	39	15	54

Table 60: Relationship between voting for municipalities and civic education class

Vote for municipalities	Civics Education class at school increased your sense of nationalism and civic duty		
	No	Yes	Total
No	35	14	49
Yes	4	1	5
Total	39	15	54

Table 61: Relationship between voting for parliament and civic education class

Vote for parliament	Civics Education class at school increased your sense of nationalism and civic duty		
	No	Yes	Total
No	34	14	48
Yes	5	1	6
Total	39	15	54

Table 62: Relationship between voting during university elections and civic education class

Vote in universities	Civics Education class at school increased your sense of nationalism and civic duty		
	No	Yes	Total
No	21	8	29
Yes	18	7	25
Total	39	15	54

5.4.4 General Conclusion

As per the theory's hypothesis, this study shows that when families specifically parents are the main source of information of political news, youth are more likely to adopt their parents' political views, attitudes as well as opinions. Second, when media

specifically newspaper is where youth receive their information from; the higher the chances are that they will have similar political stands as their parents. The reason behind that could be the fact that newspapers are usually found and read at home. On the other hand, the research found out that the internet decreases the likelihood of having similar political attitudes with parents. It could be argued that the youth surf the web more freely and can have access to different news sources of different political affiliations. Third, the hypothesis of the impact of schools can be rejected in the Lebanese case as the study showed that the relationship between voting for the different categories of elections and the civic education class taught at schools is not valid.

5.5 Psychological Theory

Three variables have been chosen to be tested from the psychological theory. The first is party identification and loyalty which are both responsible for showing an individual's decision to vote. Second, political interest also determines voter turnout. In fact, individuals are indeed more likely to vote if they are interested in politics, discuss it with their family and friends, and follow political news in newspapers, television, or other forms of media. Third, political efficacy has been employed as an indicator to predict and evaluate if an individual is politically active. In fact, these individuals believe that they are capable of understanding politics and make a difference. They also have trust in government, interest in politics and have a belief in voting.

5.5.1 Party Identification

Party identification plays a major role in citizens voting behavior. Though out of 45 respondents, only 9 considered having very strong party identification, of which only 1 voted in Mukhtars. 25% of respondents with average party identification voted. Respondents with not very strong party identification didn't vote. But on the other hand, 2 out of 9 respondents with no party identification voted for Mukhtars.

Table 63: Impact of party identification on voting for Mukhtars

Vote for Mukhtars	Party Identification					Total
	Very Strong	Quite Strong	Average	Not Very Strong	Not Strong at All	
No	8	13	6	5	7	39
Yes	1	1	2	0	2	6
Total	9	14	8	5	9	45
Percentage of Voters (%)	11.11	7.14	25.00	0.00	22.22	13.33

As for municipality elections, out of the respondents who have party identifications (very strong and quite strong) only 3 of them voted. With an average party identification, 2 out of 8 voted. The remaining respondents with low and no identification, 2 out 14 voted (Table 64 below).

Table 64: Impact of party identification on voting for municipal officials

Vote for Municipality	Party Identification					Total
	Very Strong	Quite Strong	Average	Not Very Strong	Not Strong at All	
No	7	13	6	4	8	38
Yes	2	1	2	1	1	7
Total	9	14	8	5	9	45
Percentage of Voters (%)	22.22	7.14	25.00	20.00	11.11	15.56

During parliamentary elections, party identification doesn't appear to play a major role. With 23 respondents having party identification only 2 voted. Out of 8 with average party identification, 2 voted. And the remaining with low and no party identification, seem to vote more, with 4 out 14 voters.

Table 65: Impact of party identification on voting for parliament

Vote for Parliament	Party Identification					
	Very Strong	Quite Strong	Average	Not Very Strong	Not Strong at All	Total
No	7	14	6	3	7	37
Yes	2	0	2	2	2	8
Total	9	14	8	5	9	45
Percentage of Voters (%)	22.22	0.00	25.00	40.00	22.22	17.77

As for university elections, more than 64% of students with party identification have voted. But only 50% with average identification voted during university elections. Even though none of the respondents with not very strong party identification has voted, 4 out 9 with no party identification have voted.

Table 66: Impact of party identification on voting during university elections

Vote for University	Party Identification					
	Very Strong	Quite Strong	Average	Not Very Strong	Not Strong at All	Total
No	3	5	4	5	5	22
Yes	6	9	4	0	4	23
Total	9	14	8	5	9	45
Percentage of Voters (%)	66.67	64.28	50.00	0.00	44.44	51.11

Party identification seems not to have any significant correlation with respondents' voting behavior during Mukhtar, Municipal and Parliamentary elections. However, it has a positive effect on respondents' voting behavior during university elections. As party identification grows stronger, students are more likely to vote in their universities by 0.26, significant at a 95% level of confidence (Table 67 below).

Table 67: Effect of party identification of voting for university elections

	Vote for University	Party Identification
Vote for University	1.0000	
Party Identification	- 0.2632*	1.0000

5.5.2 Political Interest

The tables below summarize the respondents voting behavior during the four categories studied versus their interest in Lebanese politics.

In fact, out of 21 respondents who are very interested in Lebanese politics only 2 voted in Mukhtars. Out of 41 respondents who are uninterested in Lebanese politics, 5 voted.

Table 68: Impact of interest in Lebanese politics on voting for Mukhtars

Vote for Mukhtars	Interest in Lebanese Politics				
	Very Interested	Interested	Uninterested	Not at all Interested	Total
No	19	35	16	20	90
Yes	2	3	1	4	10
Total	21	38	17	24	100
Percentage of Voters (%)	9.52	7.89	5.88	16.67	10.00

Out of 59 respondents who are interested in Lebanese politics, 5 voted during municipal elections. On the other hand, 5 out of 41 respondents with no interest voted.

Table 69: Impact of interest in Lebanese politics on voting for municipalities

Vote for Municipalities	Interest in Lebanese Politics				
	Very Interested	Interested	Uninterested	Not at all Interested	Total
No	20	34	15	21	90
Yes	1	4	2	3	10
Total	21	38	17	24	100
Percentage of Voters (%)	4.76	10.52	11.76	12.5	10.00

As for parliamentary elections, with 57 respondents being interested in Lebanese politics, only 3 voted. And out of 43 with no interest, 6 have voted.

Table 70: Impact of interest in Lebanese politics on voting for parliament

Vote for Parliament	Interest in Lebanese Politics				
	Very Interested	Interested	Uninterested	Not at all Interested	Total
No	17	36	22	15	90
Yes	2	2	1	5	10
Total	19	38	23	20	100
Percentage of Voters (%)	10.52	5.26	4.34	25.00	10.00

Voting behavior in universities seems to have different path. With 59 students interested in Lebanese politics, 36 voted during elections (61.01%). As for the students who are uninterested, only 15 out of 41 voted (36.58%).

Table 71: Impact of interest in Lebanese politics on voting for university elections

Vote for University	Interest in Lebanese Politics				
	Very Interested	Interested	Uninterested	Not at all Interested	Total
No	7	16	12	14	29
Yes	14	22	5	10	51
Total	21	38	17	24	100
Percentage of Voters (%)	66.67	57.89	29.41	41.67	51.00

5.5.3 Political efficacy

When examining the relationship between the importance of voting and actual voting for Mukhtars and Parliament, believing in the importance of voting affects voting for Mukhtars by 0.21, significant at a 90% level of confidence and for parliament by 0.14, significant at a 85% level of confidence. Moreover, the partial correlation shows that the more the respondents believe that it is important to vote in Lebanon, the more likely they are to vote during municipal elections by 0.08 and during university elections by 0.008 (Table 72 below).

Table 72: Effect of importance of voting in Lebanon on actual voting

	Vote for Mukhtars	Importance of voting in Lebanon
Vote for Mukhtars	1.0000	
Importance of voting in Lebanon	- 0.2137*	1.000
	Vote for Municipality	Importance of voting in Lebanon
Vote for Municipality	1.0000	
Importance of voting in Lebanon	- 0.0822	1.000
	Vote for Parliament	Importance of voting in Lebanon
Vote for Parliament	1.0000	
Importance of voting in Lebanon	- 0.1480*	1.000
	Vote in University	Importance of voting in Lebanon
Vote in University	1.0000	
Importance of voting in Lebanon	- 0.0089	1.000

5.5.4 General Conclusion

The variables of the psychological theory seem to have a different impact in the Lebanese case. First, party identification seems not to have any significant correlation with respondents' voting behavior during Mukhtar, Municipal and Parliamentary elections. However, it has a positive effect on respondents' voting behavior during university elections. It could be argued that youth at their universities have the chance to create their own identity and by participating they protect their 'own small society' which they create on campus. Also, peer pressure could be a reason for such a result. Second, interest in politics does not have a direct impact on the act of voting per say except in the case of university elections whereby results showed that among 59 students interested in Lebanese politics, 36 voted during elections. Third, the political efficacy variable proved to be valid as the results showed that the more the respondents believe that it is important to vote in Lebanon, the more likely they are to vote.

5.6 Mobilization theory

The mobilization theory asserts that there is a relationship between party contact and voter turnout. Greenberg (2003) believes that political parties and candidates do not target nor engage youth in their campaigns, hence are the ones to be blamed for not mobilizing the youth and encouraging them to vote and perform their civic duty. Moreover, Putman (2000) argues that political attitudes and behavior of the youth differ from the previous generations because of the former's lack of participation in voluntary associations, and other types of organizations. As such, three variables will be tested

which are party contact and membership, participation in campaigns and rallies, and participation in club and organizations.

5.6.1 Political party contact and membership

To test the relationship between party membership and voting behavior, partial correlation analysis was conducted. Table 73 below presents the results, whereby membership affects voting for Mukhtars by 0.24, significant at a 95% level of confidence; 0.17 for Municipalities, significant at a 90% level of confidence; 0.24 for Parliament, significant at a 95% level of confidence and 0.19 in universities, significant at a 90% level of confidence. This in fact shows that the more the youth are members of political parties, the more likely they are to vote during any type of elections whether local, national or on university campuses.

Table 73: Effect of being a member of political parties on voting behavior

	Vote for Mukhtars	Member in political parties
Vote for Mukhtars	1.0000	
Member in political parties	0.2478*	1.000
	Vote for Municipality	Member in political parties
Vote for Municipality	1.0000	
Member in political parties	0.1727*	1.000
	Vote for Parliament	Member in political parties
Vote for Parliament	1.0000	
Member in political parties	0.2478*	1.000
	Vote in Universities	Member in political parties
Vote in Universities	1.0000	
Member in political parties	0.1906*	1.000

5.6.2 Volunteering in political campaigns

The tables below present the relationship between volunteering in political campaigns and the voting behavior of youth. Results show that participating in political campaigns affects voting for Mukhtars, Municipalities and Parliament by 0.25, significant at a 95% level of confidence while for universities by 0.28, significant at a 95% level of confidence.

Table 74: Effect of volunteering in political campaigns on voting behavior

	Vote for Mukhtars	Volunteering in political campaigns
Vote for Mukhtars	1.0000	
Volunteering in political campaigns	0.2533*	1.000
	Vote for Municipality	Volunteering in political campaigns
Vote for Municipality	1.0000	
Volunteering in political campaigns	0.2533*	1.000
	Vote for Parliament	Volunteering in political campaigns
Vote for Parliament	1.0000	
Volunteering in political campaigns	0.2533*	1.000
	Vote for University	Volunteering in political campaigns
Vote for University	1.0000	
Volunteering in political campaigns	0.2812*	1.000

5.6.3 Participation in political rallies and demonstrations

Partial correlation was done to figure out whether the youth's participation in political rallies and demonstrations increases the likelihood of casting a ballot during

elections. As such, results in the table below show that participating in political rallies and demonstrations affects voting for Mukhtars by 0.19, significant at a 90% level of confidence; for Municipalities and Parliament by 0.12, significant at a 80% level of confidence; and for Universities by 0.11, significant at a 80% level of confidence.

Table 75: Effect of participation in political rallies on voting behavior

	Vote for Mukhtars	Participated in political rallies
Vote for Mukhtars	1.0000	
Participated in political rallies	0.1934*	1.000
	Vote for Municipalities	Participated in political rallies
Vote for Municipalities	1.0000	
Participated in political rallies	0.1267*	1.000
	Vote for Parliament	Participated in political rallies
Vote for Parliament	1.0000	
Participated in political rallies	0.1267*	1.000
	Vote for University	Participated in political rallies
Vote for University	1.0000	
Participated in political rallies	0.1196*	1.000

5.6.4 Participation in clubs and organizations

Participating in clubs and organizations affect positively voting for Municipalities (0.02), Parliament (0.08) and Universities (0.06), but it is not significant at a 95% level of confidence; whereas participation in clubs affects voting for Mukhtars by 0.18, significant at a 90% level of confidence. Based on the results found in this study, it is assumed that even if the youth do not participate in clubs, the chances are that they will cast a ballot.

Table 76: Effect of participation in clubs on voting for Mukhtars

	Vote for Mukhtars	Participated in clubs
Vote for Mukhtars	1.0000	
Participated in clubs	0.1800*	1.000

5.6.5 General Conclusion

As such, the theory shows that the more the youth are members of political parties, participate in political campaigns and rallies, the more likely they are to vote during any type of elections; whereas participation in clubs that not necessarily has a direct impact on the act of voting.

5.7 Rational choice theory

The rational choice theory's variables are based on utility maximization, the electoral law and political institutions. According to Aldrich (1993, p. 247), voters are rational individuals who assess the expected benefits of all possible outcomes, and then based on personal preference, they select the outcome that has the greatest utility.

5.7.1 Utility maximization

The below tables show the correlation between respondents' voting behaviors and whether they are affected by the fact that the candidate provides services for their families. The analysis show that the more the candidate provides, the more likely he/she will voted for Mukhtar by 0.11, but not significant at a 95% level of confidence.

Table 77: Effect of candidate providing services for family on voting for Mukhtars

	Vote for Mukhtars	Candidate providing services for your family
Vote for Mukhtars	1.0000	
Candidate providing services for your family	-0.1116	1.000

As for municipal election candidates, they are more likely to be voted for by 0.22, significant at a 95% level of confidence, if they provide services for the voter's family (Table 78 below).

Table 78: Effect of candidate providing services for family on voting for municipalities

	Vote for Municipalities	Candidate providing services for family
Vote for Municipalities	1.0000	
Candidate providing services for family	-0.2266*	1.000

Electors are more likely to vote by 0.03 for parliamentary candidates if they provide services for the families, but not significant at a 95% level of confidence.

Table 79: Effect of candidate providing services for family on voting for parliament

	Vote for Parliament	Candidate providing services for family
Vote for Parliament	1.0000	
Candidate providing services for family	-0.0355	1.000

5.7.2 Providing for the area

When it comes to voting behaviors based on candidates' level of providing for the area, electors will vote for the Mukhtar who provides more by 0.11, not significant at 95% level of confidence.

Table 80: Effect of providing for the area on voting behavior for Mukhtars

	Vote for Mukhtars	Candidate providing for the area
Vote for Mukhtars	1.0000	
Candidate providing for the area	-0.1160	1.000

Similarly during parliamentary elections, voters consider the candidate who is providing for the area and more likely vote for him/her by 0.11 (Table 81 below).

Table 81: Effect of candidate providing for the area on voting for parliament

	Vote for Parliament	Candidate providing for the area
Vote for Parliament	1.0000	
Candidate providing for the area	-0.1122	1.000

5.7.3 General Conclusion

The analysis shows that providing for the family and the area have a relationship with the voting behavior of the youth. The more the candidate provides, the more likely he/she will be voted for.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Possible solutions to engage youth in the voting process

The study has shown that young people in Lebanon are not fully participating in the political life and specifically are not performing the act of civic duty. In order to understand what the youth need to be engaged politically and cast a ballot, it is important to see what the possible solutions are, what are the methods and approaches that might strengthen their sense of civic duty as well as improve their views regarding local governance, political parties and their leaders. In fact, survey respondents were asked the following qualitative question “what do you think should be done to engage young people like you in the voting process at the local/municipal level?” (Q32).

The possible solutions that were brought forward by the youth can be categorized as following:

- ***Politicians and party leaders***: one respondent said that in order for youth to participate in the political process, it is important to “change all present leaders”; another respondent said that “politicians should not be corrupt”; another expressed that “till present date, none of the previous candidates have made a dramatic change”; another respondent said that in order for the youth to vote, candidates should be “qualified with real tangible agendas”; one respondent explained that “the candidates must be qualified and fit their offices.

They must have a clear agenda; they must work hard and show the youth that they are really interested in developing their village. Besides, the election process should be clear and the youth must be engaged in it”; another interesting explanation has been brought forward by a respondent who said that there is a need to “have candidates that actually have programs and plan to implement after elections and better represent their programs rather than just a reflection of the bigger political representation of the present parties in government”.

- ***Politics***: several said that “politics should become more appealing to the youth, and candidates should work for our better interest and not to the politicians’ interest.”
- ***Awareness/education***: one respondent said that “teaching young people about the importance and the efficiency of voting in schools and colleges and on TV programs”; one respondent cited that “elections should be a responsibility to everyone, there should be more programs in universities that would introduce politics in a matter that is strictly political far from the partisanship politics of Lebanon”; another respondent said “more community activities/better education”; several mentioned that awareness campaigns and training on the roles of the municipalities should be conducted.
- ***Young candidates***: someone called to “change all ministers and put new young people and let it be a real democratic Lebanon”; another said that the youth will engage in the political process if “young leaders who are educated, non-corrupt and with a clear agenda run for elections. They should also enjoy a sense of

democracy and openness”; someone else called to “introduce young people to represent us since they understand us”.

- ***Voting process***: several respondents expressed that the laws should be modified and “lower the age to higher the voting possibility and choice”
- ***Nothing***: several respondents answered the question by expressing that nothing would make them engaged in the political life.
- ***Personality characteristics***: some respondents offered personality characteristics such as honesty, integrity, loyalty and dignity; in fact, one only put it in a sentence which said “when candidates are loyal and honest, everyone will vote.”

6.2 Research limitations

The study has faced some limitations. To begin with, only one hundred and one youth participated in the research; a number relatively small when conducting a quantitative study. As such, it is not a representative sample. Due to the low number of respondents, the results were not always significant but the theories in general were applicable. Overall, the sample size used in this study has provided explanatory value. Moreover, the research has targeted only the educated youth currently in private universities, not taking into account the public Lebanese university students. As such, conducting this study on a larger sample of perhaps educated and none educated youth, as well as with students from the public university is a must as it will offer greater explanations and clarifications concerning the political behavior of youth in Lebanon. Another limitation is the fact that only one qualitative question was introduced in the

study. In further research, qualitative studies should be conducted as they provide additional interpretation. Another major limitation is the lack of data and studies on voting behaviors of the educated youth in Lebanon. The research could not base on Lebanese studies or statistics and hence had to rely extensively on the international literature.

6.3 Summary of Discussion and Policy Suggestions

The data presented indicates that educated Lebanese youth aged 21 to 25 have little information about the history of local governance in Lebanon whether it is about the date of the first municipal election, every how many years it is held or about the roles and tasks of municipalities. The study has also showed that the new female generation is highly interested in running for elections, and in fact they show higher interest than men. This suggests that the increase of the women's quota should be taken into consideration as females are showing interest in participating in the country's political life. On the other hand, the study has not seen any difference between sects when deciding to run for elections.

When it comes to talk about the five different theories tested in this study, it is important to note that some of the hypotheses hold in the Lebanese case while others can be refuted. To begin with, the variables of the socioeconomic theory seem to be applicable to the Lebanese youth voting behavior: 1) age is a significant predictor of political participation in elections in Lebanon; 2) education affects positively voting for Mukhtars, Municipalities, Parliament and Universities; 3) income showed that the lower

the household income of citizens, the more likely they are to vote; 4) having a strong sense of civic duty does not positively affect the propensity of voting.

Both parents and the media have been found out to be the main political information providers to Lebanese youth. Data supports the two variables of the socialization theory that when parents and media are where youth receive their political information from, the latter are more likely to be influenced by the source of information and hence adopt political views, attitudes and opinions similar to those of the source. On the other hand, the impact of schools can be rejected in the Lebanese case as the study showed that the relationship between voting for the different categories of elections and the civic education class taught at schools is not valid. This suggests that schools are not being positive socialization agents. The civic education classes are not playing their role in explaining to the youth the importance of political participation and its positive impact on the society. Unfortunately, the majority of schools in Lebanon offer this class as it is a requirement in the Lebanese governmental examinations (brevet and baccalaureate). In order for the class to have a better impact on students' perception of political life, it should be given to students as early as possible with a hope to shape their civic and national attitudes. It could be argued that the teaching material should accommodate more practical information.

The variables of the psychological theory seem to have a different influence in the case of Lebanon: 1) party identification seems not to have any significant correlation with respondents' voting behavior; 2) interest in politics does not have a direct impact on the act of voting. In fact, almost half of the respondents declared that they were uninterested and not interested at all in Lebanese politics. Moreover, 18

respondents expressed that disinterest in politics is the reason behind their abstention from voting; 3) political efficacy variable proved to be valid because youth showed that they are more likely to vote if they believe that the act of casting a ballot is important to the future of the country.

When applying the mobilization theory in Lebanon, results have shown that the more the youth are members of political parties, participate in political campaigns and rallies, the more likely they are to vote during any type of elections; whereas participation in clubs and organizations does not necessarily have a direct impact on the act of voting.

As for the rational choice theory, the analysis shows that providing for the family and the area have a relationship with the voting behavior of the youth. In fact, the more the candidate provides, the more likely he/she will be voted for. Unfortunately, the idea of clientelism prevails in the minds of the youth; preferring to put in office a candidate with whom they can have a mutual beneficial relationship.

On a final note, youth political and electoral participation are fundamental factors in the formation and sustainability of democracy. In a country like Lebanon where politics is characterized by political hegemony of its sectarian elites, it is deemed important to further examine youth engagement and voting behavior in the overall political process. The civil society and academic institutions should feel encouraged to study youth political behavior and attitudes, as it will provide an insight into the country's future. Also, encouraging Lebanese youth to participate in the political and social life of the country should constitute a priority to government and civil society.

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Appendix

Survey

Examining and Analyzing Youth Political Participation: the case of Lebanon

Q1. How interested are you in Lebanese politics?

1 Very interested 2 Interested 3 Uninterested 4 Not at all interested

Q2. How interested are you in international politics?

1 Very interested 2 Interested 3 Uninterested 4 Not at all interested

Q3. Do you think we have a democracy in Lebanon?

1 Yes 2 Maybe 3 No 4 I don't know

Q4. If **yes/maybe**, are you satisfied with the way democracy works in Lebanon?

1 Very satisfied 2 Satisfied 3 Unsatisfied 4 Not at all satisfied

Q5. Do you think political parties are a necessary tool for democracy?

1 Yes 2 Maybe 3 No 4 I don't know

Q6. Do you think political parties play a positive role in societies?

1 Yes 2 Maybe 3 No 4 I don't know

Q7. Are you or have you even been a member of a political party?

1 Yes 2 No

Q8. If **yes**, how strong is your party identification?

1 Very strong 2 Quite strong 3 Average 4 Not very strong 5 Not strong at all

Q9. Have you ever volunteered on a political campaign?

- 1 Yes 2 No

Q10. Have you ever attended a political rally or demonstration?

- 1 Yes 2 No

Q11. Will you ever consider running for municipal or parliamentary elections?

- 1 Yes 2 Maybe 3 No 4 I don't know

Q12. Which of the following leaders represents you the most? (Listed alphabetically by family name)

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 1 General Michel Aoun | 6 President Amin Gemayel | 11 Mr. Hagop Pakradouni |
| 2 Al Meer Talal Arslan | 7 President Saad al Hariri | 12 President Michel Sleiman |
| 3 Minister Ziad Baroud | 8 Mr. Walid Jumblat | 13 Other |
| 4 President Nabih Berry | 9 President Najib Mikati | 14 None |
| 5 Doctor Samir Geagea | 10 Al-Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q13. What is the proportion of mistakes committed by the leader you support?

- 1 Too many 2 Many 3 Relatively few 4 Very few 5 Never committed a mistake

Q14. How would you rate your sense of civic duty:

- 1 Very strong 2 Quite strong 3 Average 4 Not very strong 5 Not strong at all

Q15. Do you believe that the Civics Education class at your school increased your sense of nationalism and civic duty?

- 1 Yes 2 Maybe 3 No 4 I don't know

Q16. Do you think it is important to vote in Lebanon?

- 1 Very important 2 Important 3 Unimportant 4 Not at all important

Q17. Have you voted in any of the following elections (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Mukhtars 2010 | 2 Municipalities 2010 | 3 Parliamentary 2009 |
| 4 University | 5 None of the above | |

Q18. When was the first municipal election held after the end of the Civil War?

- 1 1992 2 1995 3 1998 4 2001

Q19. Every how many years are municipal elections held?

- 1 Three years 2 Four years 3 Five years 4 Six years

Q20. How would you rate your knowledge about the role and tasks of the municipality?

- 1 Very strong 2 Quite strong 3 Average 4 Not very strong
5 Not strong at all

Q21. How interested were you in the 2010 Municipal Elections?

- 1 Very interested 2 Interested 3 Uninterested 4 Not at all interested

Q22. If you **did not** vote, what was your reason? (check all that apply)

- 1 Not interested in politics/elections 5 Did not support any candidate
2 Too busy to vote 6 My name was not on the register of voters
3 All candidates were corrupt 7 My vote would not have made a difference
4 Living far from the polling station 8 Was out of the country

Q23. Do you think it is a serious problem if Lebanese youth (21-25 years) do not vote?

- 1 Very serious 2 Serious 3 Not serious 4 Not at all serious

Q24. In your opinion, is there something about this generation of young Lebanese that makes them less likely to vote than younger voters of past generations? (check all that apply)

- 1 Lack of integration into the political system 6 Little political interest
2 Feelings of apathy and general distrust in politics 7 Lack of encouragement
3 Diminished sense of civic responsibility 8 Laziness, irresponsibility
4 Lack of meaningful choices 9 Other
5 Lack of information, understanding, knowledge

Q25. Please indicate your agreement with the statements below by ranking each from 1 to 5 (1 strongly agree, 2 agree, 3 no opinion, 4 disagree, 5 strongly disagree):

I value the voting process

I think it is important to pay attention to local governance and community

I take an active role in my community and village

I believe my votes count

So many people vote that my vote hardly counts

I do not think that municipalities care much of what the youth think

No point in voting for an independent municipal official who will only win few seats

I am more likely to vote if I knew how to vote

I am more likely to vote if the election process was better explained to me

I am more likely to vote if I was informed of the candidates' agendas

I am more likely to vote if I could vote where I live and not the place on the civil registry

I am more likely to vote if the municipal officials reflected the interests of the youth

Q.26 Rank the following from most important to least important (1 to 10) considerations if and when you vote for municipal officials:

Agree with the candidate on the issues

Candidate with the best leadership
qualities/charisma

Candidate with the right kind of experience

Candidate with the same political affiliation

Candidate from the same religious confession

Candidate providing for your area

Candidate providing services for your family

Candidate who is not corrupt

Candidate based on previous performance

My family and friends like the candidate and want to vote for him/her

Q.27 Rank the following from most important to least important (1 to 10), the issues that municipal officials should prioritize while in office

Drug abuse

Local security

Leisure facilities

Education

Crime

Infrastructure

Poverty

Environment

Gun control

Jobs/unemployment

Q.28 Rank the following from the most to least amount of time (1 to 7) you spend doing these activities

Watching television

Playing sports

Hanging out with friends

Participating in clubs and organizations

Working a job

Studying

Surfing the Web/Internet

Q.29 Which of the following sources of political information do you trust the most? (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1 Family | 2 Friends and neighbors | 3 Newspaper |
| 4 Internet | 5 National television | 6 Radio |
| 7 Magazine | 8 International TV channels | |

Q.30 Do you consider your political attitudes similar to those of your parents?

- | | | | |
|-------|---------|------|----------------|
| 1 Yes | 2 Maybe | 3 No | 4 I don't know |
|-------|---------|------|----------------|

Q.31 In general, which of the following are you most likely to defend? (check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1 Family/clan | 2 Sect | 3 Social status | 4 Country |
| 5 Religion | 6 I don't know | 7 None | 8 Other |

Q. 32. What do you think should be done to engage young people like yourself in the voting process at the local/municipal level?

Q33. How do you introduce yourself?

- 1 Christian – Maronite, Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant
- 2 Muslim – Druze, Sunni, Shiite
- 3 Lebanese – Christian – Maronite, Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Armenian
- 4 Lebanese – Muslim - Druze, Sunni, Shiite
- 5 Arab – Christian
- 6 Arab – Muslim
- 7 Lebanese
- 8 Arab
- 9 I don't know
- 10 None
- 11 Other -----

Q.34 Gender

- | | |
|--------|----------|
| 1 Male | 2 Female |
|--------|----------|

Q.35 Confession

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Armenian Orthodox | 2 Catholic | 3 Druze |
| 4 Maronite | 5 Orthodox | 6 Shiite |
| 7 Sunni | 8 None of the above | 9 Prefer not to answer |

Q.36 Age

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 21 | 2 22 | 3 23 | 4 24 | 5 25 |
|------|------|------|------|------|

Q.37 Educational level and year of study

Q.38 Household monthly income (family):

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 \$0 - 999 | 2 \$1000 - 1999 | 3 \$2000 - 2999 |
| 4 \$3000 - 3999 | 5 \$4000 - 4999 | 6 \$5000 and above |

Q.39 Current residency:

- | | | | |
|----------|---------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1 Beirut | 2 Bekaa | 3 Mount Lebanon | 4 Nabatiyeh |
| 5 North | 6 South | | |

Q.40 Civil status registry:

- | | | | |
|----------|---------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1 Beirut | 2 Bekaa | 3 Mount Lebanon | 4 Nabatiyeh |
| 5 North | 6 South | 7 I do not know | |