

WHO FOLLOWS HOW TO VOTE CARDS IN AUSTRALIA?

by

RESHIKESAV RAJAN

(Under the Direction of Shane P. Singh)

ABSTRACT

Minimal literature exists on which voters follow How To Vote Cards in Australia. Voters in Australia use the alternative vote system and are required to vote and fill out a complete ranking of candidates, in this system, How To Vote Cards function as a shortcut for voters provided by parties. Using a logit regression analysis, this paper seeks to determine what characteristics of voters make them more likely to follow a How To Vote Card. The results suggest that voters that have strong partisan identities, are highly satisfied with democracy, and vote for major parties are the most likely voters to adhere to How To Vote Cards.

INDEX WORDS: Australia, How To Vote Cards, voter behavior, alternative vote, electoral system

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my thesis to my family. In particular, my mom or amma, Vaidehi Chengamalam Bangaruswamy, for her love, warmth, and support throughout my life. My dad, Dr. Sundararajan Padmanabhan, for his constant jokes and the love and care he has for me. Lastly, my amazing sister, Shri Rajan MD, for her love, care, kindness, and belief in me and that I can succeed in life. I also want to dedicate this to my grandparents, Padmanabhan thatha, Seshamal patti, Bangaruswamy thatha, and Padma patti whose sacrifices, hardwork, and love allow me to live the life I am able to have; it is not lost on me that their lives determined my own (anandha kanneer). Thank you all for everything.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The alternative vote, known in the United States as rank choice voting, has seen an expansion in use throughout US state elections. Many proponents argue it better enacts the preferences of voters and allows voters full preferences to be expressed (FairVote [2023](#)). Since the start of 2010s various states and cities throughout the United States have seen movements to replace the traditional first-past-the-post system with rank choice voting, but many detractors argue the system will only confuse voters, depress voter turnout, and decrease transparency in the voting process (Maldonado [2021](#); Tegethoff [2023](#)).

In 2018, the US state of Maine adopted a new system of rank choice voting for all state-wide elections (MDSOS [2023](#)). Two years later, voters in Alaska approved an amendment that would see its state also adopt rank choice voting (ADE [2023](#)). The following year, New York City also adopted rank choice voting for primary and special elections (Democracy-NYC [2021](#)). While there was some confusion on the new election system in Maine and Alaska, New York City gained nationwide media attention for its implementation of rank choice voting with many calling it a failure in implementation (Maldonado [2021](#)). In the New York City mayoral election, many including eventual winner Eric Adams decried the system. He argued that poor education and confusion among voters disenfranchised many. Since this election many groups in New York have been renewing efforts to remove the rank choice voting system (Ibid).

While these US states may be new to rank choice voting, more commonly referred to as the alternative vote in political science literature, one solution may be found in the Australian electoral system. Australia provides a unique solution to the confusion that Adams claimed disenfranchised voters: How To Vote cards. These cards offer a simple way for voters to understand how to preference candidates in an election and can help those who struggle with the alternative vote understand who to correctly vote for in elections.

Australia's majoritarian electoral system for its lower chamber, the House of Representatives, has led to the formation of two major parties: the Australian Labor Party (ALP), the traditional center-left party, and the Coalition, a long-standing alliance between the Liberal Party, the traditional center-right party, and the Nationals, an agrarian party. These two parties are the parties of government and have formed government in every election since 1946. These two parties hold the majority of seats in the lower chamber, where governments are formed, while many minor parties exist due to the proportional representation system in the upper house, the Australian Senate.

Throughout Australian political history, there have been numerous minor parties to emerge including the Lang Labor Party, the Australian Democrats, the Greens, Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party, and the United Australia Party. Each of these parties have gained prominence at the state and federal levels with parties like the the Australian Democrats, the Greens, and Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party holding the balance of power in the Senate at various times throughout their history.

Roughly every three years (unless an early election is called), voters in Australia vote in federal elections to elect members of the House of Representatives and the Senate. These elections feature candidates from the two major parties but also a plethora of minor party candidates. In a system where voting is compulsory, voters are required to express their full preferences for candidates using the alternative vote (as opposed to an optional preferential system). These features combined have led to the creation of How To Vote Cards (HTV). These cards are designed by political parties which make it easier for voters that identify with a particular party to vote according to the party's wishes.

In many instances, parties make deals for preference positions. This is crucial in Senate elections where seats are awarded using a form of proportional voting – single transferable voting. In many elections, parties of the left such as the Labor Party and the Australian Greens will preference each other while parties of the right, like the Liberal Party and Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party will preference each other. These deals between parties are meant to increase the chances of a party winning and increase the chances that its closest ideological neighbors win (Mackerras and McAllister 1999).

While parties make preference deals and attempt to have their voters follow these HTV cards, voters have no requirement to follow these cards. Furthermore, not all voters who vote are party members seeking to follow their party's HTV cards. The question this study attempts to answer is which voters actually follow HTV cards?

CHAPTER 2

RELEVANT LITERATURE

There are many factors that could determine which voters will follow HTV cards. Some of these factors are common throughout democracies including partisan identity, political knowledge, sex, and age, while others are more unique to the Australian context like support for compulsory voting (CV). While literature on the relationship between voting as an action and these various factors can be found, the relationship between these factors and HTV card adherence is minimal due to lack of widespread use of alternative vote (currently only four countries employ the alternative vote in national or state-wide levels). Much of the relationship between HTV card adherence and these factors must be inferred by the relationships these factors have with voting patterns and participation in the political process.

The minimal literature that exists on HTV cards suggest they play an important role in determine election winners, particularly in close races (Reilly 2021). HTV cards essentially work as party ballots as it transfers agency over preferences from the voter to the party (Zimmerman 1981). Research into the number of voters that follow HTV cards suggest that more than half of voters follow HTV cards (Bean 1997). Farrell, McAllister, et al. (2005) finds that minor party supporters are the least likely to follow HTV cards.

When understanding the relationship between partisan identity and voting behavior it is easiest to conceptualize it as a component of social identity (Anderson, McGregor, and Stephenson 2022). In the canonical work of Campbell et al. (1980), the authors define partisan identification as a “psychological identification” with a party that lasts even when voting patterns may not show consistent support. Anderson, McGregor, and Stephenson (2022) suggest that party identification is a “stable, long-standing component of one’s identity.” Recent work by Bankert, Huddy, and Rosema (2017) and Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe (2015) argue that the social component of partisanship is the driving force which creates behavioral effects of partisanship. Furthermore, Greene (1999) describes party identification as being a chosen identity at its core but rarely changes.

Partisan identity is a frequently studied aspect of Australian politics. Party identity is an identity that has remained relatively unchanged in Australian political history. Aitkin et al. (1982) finds that Australian politics has been essentially unchanged since federation. Sharman, Sayers, and Miragliotta (2002) finds that Australian parties strongly expect their supporters to follow HTV cards. Furthermore they find that many parties can use HTV cards as a signalling message to their supporters of where they stand ideologically – this is especially true for minor parties that are single-issue focused. Research by Sharman, Sayers, and Miragliotta (2002) finds Australia’s political parties have transformed the candidate-focused aspect of the alternative vote system into a more partisan drive system through HTV cards. They find that HTV cards can significantly manipulate alternative vote and single transferable vote elections into partisan exercises despite a key benefit of these electoral systems being their ability to make elections more candidate focused and less party focused (Sharman, Sayers, and Miragliotta 2002). In a comparison with four Anglophonic countries, Kollman and Jackson (2021) finds high levels of partisanship among the Australian electorate. Research into elections finds that across countries elections activate heightened levels of partisanship (Singh and Thornton 2019). The frequency of election cycles in Australia thus may also contribute to consistent heightened levels of partisanship.

Research into the relationship between compulsory voting and HTV card adherence is also limited but an extensive literature exists on the relationship between compulsory voting and partisan identities as well as compulsory voting and satisfaction with democracy. Research into compulsory voting has shown that compulsory voting in Australia has heightened partisanship (Mackerras and McAllister 1999; Fowler 2013; Birch 2016; McAllister and McAllister 2011). Singh (2018) finds that overall, those who hold anti-democratic sentiments are

more likely to be dissatisfied with compulsory voting as they question the democratic process. Further research into attitudes of democracy finds that in countries with CV, voters should be more satisfied with democracy (Birch 2016). When comparing countries that require voting with those that do not, supporters of the winning party have less satisfaction with democracy relative to countries without compulsory voting, this is even stronger in countries that impose penalties on non-voters (such as Australia) (Singh 2023). Based on this literature, it seems that voters in countries with compulsory voting would have less satisfaction with democracy.

Studies looking at satisfaction with democracy argue that citizens that are more satisfied with democracy are more likely to engage in the voting process. Satisfaction with democracy has consistently been proven to lead to higher voter turnout (Ezrow and Xezonakis 2016; Franklin et al. 2004; Hobolt 2012). Lijphart argued the voters who turn out to vote are those that are most satisfied with democracy and in order to ensure that democracy is truly representative, all citizens must cast a vote (Lijphart 1997). We observe compulsory voting in Australia, which suggests that those who are both satisfied and dissatisfied with democracy are voting in Australia. Recent literature on dissatisfaction with democracy finds that those who are dissatisfied are less likely to go towards unconventional forms and are likely to adopt a mixed approach of both unconventional forms, such as protest, and conventional forms, such as voting (Gurr 2015; Norris et al. 2002).

Research on political interest suggests that voters that are more politically interested are more likely to have higher turnout rates (Acevedo and Krueger 2004). Further research looking at the UK argues that voters that have greater political interest have greater political knowledge and thus are more likely to vote (Tilley, Sturgis, and Allum 2004). Research looking into seeking political information is intricately linked with turning out. Larcinese (2009) finds that this relationship is “jointly determined.” This is supported by further research arguing this relationship is endogenous (Matsusaka 1995; Lassen 2005).

Research into political knowledge in Australia finds that political knowledge does not mean active participation in political groups. Voters in Australia who do have higher levels of political knowledge are more likely to vote strategically. Tranter (2007) finds that left-wing voters who are politically informed are more likely to turn out and vote for the Australian Labor Party in the lower chamber and the Australian Greens in the upper chamber.

Literature that looks into demographic characteristics’ impact on political participation can also provide potential insight into factors effecting HTV card adherence. Goldfinch, Gauld, and Herbison (2009) finds that male voters, older

voters, and voters who live in more rural areas are more likely to be politically engaged and participate. Their research also finds that voters in Australia are more likely to participate in state politics over federal politics (Goldfinch, Gauld, and Herbison 2009).

Some of the earliest comparative research on gender differences in political participation finds that more developed countries are less likely to have a large gap in political participation among genders (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978). Comparative research into gender and political knowledge finds that women have lower levels of political knowledge than men (Dassonneville and McAllister 2018). Research looking at gender based political participation in Australia in particular finds that men are on average more likely, but not at a statistically significant rate, to participate in politics over women (Bean 1991).

Overall, demographic literature suggests the importance of controlling for confounding variables such as gender, age, and income levels. The literature that exists regarding important turnout factors suggests that voters in compulsory voting systems like Australia may have lower levels of satisfaction with democracy, but more equal distribution of political knowledge, and higher levels of partisanship. This suggests that voters in Australia are as a whole more engaged with the political process. Furthermore, research in Australia and comparatively show that voters who are male, older, and live in rural areas are more likely to be politically active than women, younger voters, and voters who live in urban areas.

CHAPTER 3

THEORY & HYPOTHESIS

We see in the literature that partisan identity plays a crucial role for Australian voters. If we conceptualize partisan identity as an aspect of social identity, those with strong partisan identities are more likely to view it as a key component of the social identity. Thus, these voters would be more likely to follow their HTV cards as a way of reinforcing and performing this aspect of social identity. Furthermore, parties depend on supporters following a HTV card which may factor into a voter's decision to follow their HTV card. Voters with strong partisan attachments may feel that their party relies and depends on them to follow their HTV card to ensure the best outcome for their party as an institution. Voters with higher levels of partisanship we would expect to follow HTV cards.

Conversely, voters that do not have a very strong partisan identity would have weaker attachments to a particular party. In a system with compulsory voting, many voters that are not partisans will simply rank parties in order of their perceptions of proximity. For voters without a partisan affiliation, there is no sense of emotional attachment or loyalty, voters essentially vote based on their preferences alone, there is no consideration of a parties' best interests. Essentially, the main difference between a partisan and a non-partisan is whether the individual or the party holds greater weight in preference formulation. Thus, I hypothesize:

H1 (Partisanship Hypothesis): Voters that have a strong identity with a party are more likely to adhere to HTV cards.

The research on satisfaction with democracy suggest that voters living in countries with compulsory voting, like Australia, would be overall less satisfied with democracy. The literature that exists suggest that compulsory voting activates partisanship while also lowering satisfaction rates of democracy. Furthermore, literature looking at dissatisfaction with democracy suggests that citizens employ a mix of unconventional and conventional methods of protest such as voting.

Voters that are dissatisfied with democracy are more likely to not follow a HTV card. These voters are fundamentally dissatisfied with democracy and as a consequence: institutions that it produces. HTV cards are an inherently electoral device. Citizens that are dissatisfied with democracy would not adhere to a HTV card and would be more likely to spoil a ballot, abstain from voting, or fill out preferences according to their beliefs. Voters that are satisfied with democracy are more likely to turnout. These voters are more likely to be engaged with the election and as such would be more likely to follow the candidates and parties' positions. Furthermore, they are more likely to vote in the election with a first preference already determined. Given these voters are more satisfied, they are more likely to have faith in democratic institutions, like a HTV card. As such, this suggests that those that are more (less) satisfied with democracy are more (less) likely to follow a HTV card. Therefore, I hypothesize:

H2 (Satisfaction with Democracy Hypothesis): Voters that are more satisfied with democracy are more likely to adhere to HTV cards.

The minimal research that exists into party vote and HTV cards suggest that minor party voters are the least likely to follow a HTV card. Thus voters who vote for a major party are more likely to follow a HTV card versus a minor party voter. This would logically support the theory made by Bean (1997) which finds that more than half the Australian population follow HTV cards and the majority of voters do support major parties in lower chamber elections. In making the decision on the first preference vote, voters inherently also make some decision on whether or not they will follow the party's HTV card.

The major parties in Australia have maintained a presence in the political system since the 1950s. Their presence in society is deeply engrained. In contrast, minor parties have much shorter lives. The Australian Democrats wielded large sway in Australian politics in the latter half of the 20th century, yet today the party has largely become irrelevant. The minor parties with large following today are relatively new in the politics of Australia, as such, their voters have

had less time to form the strong emotional attachment voters of major parties do. Many major party voters inherit political attachments, are socialized by peers in school, etc. These voters emotional attachments are most likely stronger than those of minor parties meaning they have a deeper, vested interest in their parties' electoral successes and be more likely to follow their party's HTV card. Thus, it follows logically that voters of minor parties would be the least likely to follow a HTV card. Therefore, I hypothesize:

H₃ (First Preference Hypothesis): Voters that preference minor parties first are less likely to adhere to HTV cards.

The research into political interest and voting behaviors suggest that voters with greater levels of political interest are more likely to turn out and vote. While literature on political information in Australia specifically strongly suggests that voters with higher amounts of political knowledge vote more strategically (Tranter 2007). These factors suggest that voters with greater political interest are more interested in voting and the institutions of democracy. The presence of compulsory voting in Australia complicates the connection between higher levels of political interest and turnout as all voters are required to turn out in Australia. The HTV card allows a different measure of whether voters with greater political interest are more likely to understand the ideology of the parties and the manifestos they run on in elections. Thus these voters, once they have determined their first preference party, would have greater faith in the party's decisions. Voters that are more politically informed would thus be more likely to follow a HTV card.

H₄ (Political Interest Hypothesis): Voters that are more politically interested are more likely to adhere to HTV cards.

Overall, the literature on voting behavior in Australia is uneven with certain components such as partisanship and political information more studied than components such as gender. Given the information we have both on the Australian case and comparatively, I am able to make tentative claims about the relationship between some of these variables. The existing literature on HTV cards suggests that parties rely upon their voters to follow HTV cards. The theory that is built comes from the minimal literature about partisanship, political information, and various voter demographics.

CHAPTER 4

DATA COLLECTION & METHODS

To test partisanship I again use adherence to HTV cards as my dependent variable. In order to understand the relationship between partisanship and HTV cards, data was collected from the Australian Electoral Survey (AES). The AES conducted surveys every election cycle. In elections starting in 1998, voters were asked if they followed a HTV card. To test the relationship across time, survey data from the 1998, 2004, 2010, 2016, and 2022 elections were chosen.

Data was collected from each of these five election cycles. These elections were chosen for this analysis based on three major factors including limitations of the data, selection of elections retaining and changing governments, and holding as small an interval between elections as possible, in this instance, a six-year interval between surveys.

Covariates were chosen in order to control for confounding variables. Survey data collected by the AES included measures of political interest, interest in the election, views on compulsory voting, likelihood of voting if compulsory voting were removed, partisan identification, strength of partisan identification, first preference party, final preference party, and time when a voter made their decision. Furthermore, AES recorded the state, age, gender, income, education

level, union membership, and sex of respondents. Each of these were used as covariate controls in the dataset.

A logistic regression/logit model was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables and adherence to HTV cards. These included variables measuring state and year fixed-effects, political interest, support for compulsory voting, first preference vote, strength of partisan identification, and sex. Furthermore, covariates were added to control for other factors: these included interest in the election, the belief that a voter would still vote even without compulsory voting, the final party preference of the voter, the partisan identification of the voter, the time it took to make the decision of the preferred candidate/party, income, and age.

A logit model was chosen due to the nature of the data, the dependent variable – HTV card adherence – was asked in surveys as the following: “in voting for the House of Representatives, did you follow a party ‘How to Vote’ card or did you decide your own preferences,” this presented respondents with a yes or no option and was accordingly coded as a binary option of 0 (no) or 1 (yes), thus producing a Bernoulli distribution.

The fixed effects model combined all the AES survey data into one dataset and used the dummy variable approach with a standard logit model. The summary statistics for the fixed effects model is provided in the two tables below. The first shows values of variables that were continuous or have an underlying continuous representation. The second shows counts of ordinal and nominal variables by sub-group.

Table 4.1: Summary Statistics for Continuous Variables

Statistic	Mean	Median	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Decision Time	2.673	2.0	1.802	1.0	7.0
Income Level	11.25	11.0	6.099	1.0	25.0
Age	55.43	56.00	16.231	7.0	107.0

A fixed effects model was run in order to ensure that variation between states and election years does not affect the correlation between independent variables and HTV card adherence (Bailey 2021), (Huntington-Klein 2022). This allows me to control for the relationship between year and HTV card adherence – removing some of the effects of election to election variation. In using the fixed

Table 4.2: Summary Statistics for Categorical Variables

Variable	Category	Count	Frequency
State	NSW	2533	31.88%
	VIC	2006	25.25%
	QLD	1496	18.83%
	SA	663	8.34%
	WA	765	9.63%
	TAS	229	2.88%
	NT	69	0.87%
	ACT	184	2.32%
Political Interest	A Good Deal	3215	40.47%
	Somewhat	3482	43.82%
	Not Much	1105	13.9%
	None	143	1.80%
Election Interest	A Good Deal	3087	38.85%
	Somewhat	3303	41.57%
	Not Much	1356	17.07%
	None	198	2.49%
Satisfaction with Democracy	Very Satisfied	1129	14.21%
	Fairly Satisfied	4716	59.36%
	Not Very Satisfied	1725	21.71%
	Not at All Satisfied	375	4.72%
Strength of Party ID	No Party ID	875	11.01%
	Very Strong	1456	18.33%
	Fairly Strong	3864	48.63%
	Not Very Strong	1930	24.29%
First Preference Vote	Major Party	6470	81.43%
	Minor Party	1475	18.57%
Final Preference Vote	NA	5517	69.44%
	Coalition	478	6.01%
	Labor Party	1525	19.19%
	Unsure	425	5.35%
Gender	Male	3994	50.27%
	Female	3951	49.73%
Education	No University	4494	56.56%
	University	3451	43.44%
Union Membership	Member of a Union	1798	22.63%
	Not a Member of a Union	6147	77.37%
Election Year	1998	1254	15.77%
	2004	988	12.44%
	2010	1653	20.81%
	2016	2063	25.97%
	2022	1987	25.00%

effects model, we intend to control for time effects caused by serial dependence and common exposure. For the analysis of the data, both a one-way and two-way fixed effects model was used – the one-way fixed effects model only factored by years and the two-way fixed effects model factored by both state and year.

An important feature of note, is when considering the impact of time, we see that all of these trends hold regardless of the election year. When looking at the average rate of HTV card adherence across election years, we see that HTV card adherence has remained roughly constant with one sharp increase between 2010 and 2016, as shown in Figure 1. This is an interesting point as it suggests that these trends are resistant to any sudden increases in HTV card adherence. This suggests that factors driving HTV card adherence are stable across time. Nevertheless, the sharp increase in HTV card adherence from 2010 to 2016 confirms the need for a fixed effects model.

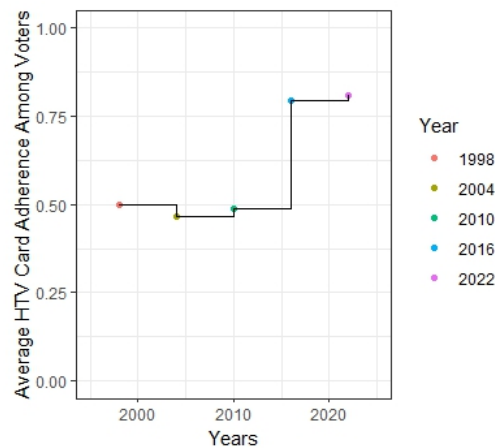


Figure 4.1: Average HTV Card Adherence Rates Across Election Years

Furthermore, when looking at the impact of a voter's location on HTV card adherence, we see that it too has remained roughly constant throughout time. Figure 2 shows the average HTV card adherence rate across time by state and territory. The results suggest that no one state is driving the sharp increase in HTV card adherence and from 2010 to 2016 voters in all states and territories are increasing their adherence to these cards. It does show that the level of HTV card adherence by state/territory has changed over time and some states/territories have increased/decreased their HTV card adherence relative to other states and territories.

The AES collected data on first preference parties and grouped parties into major and minor parties. Leading election scholars and analysts, including Australian psephologist Antony Green, define the two major parties as the Labor Party and the Coalition (a long-standing agreement between the Liberal Party

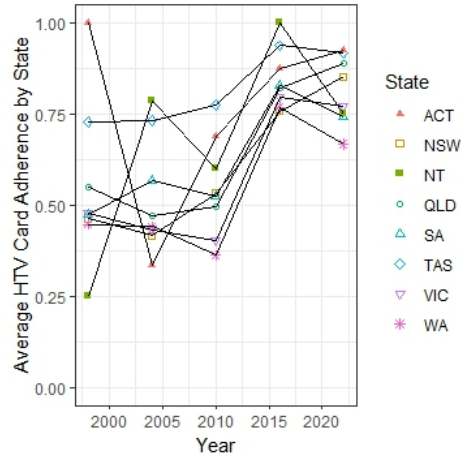


Figure 4.2: Average HTV Card Adherence Rates Sorted By State

and National Party which has become so entrenched into Australian politics the two parties rarely compete against each other) (Green 2022; Australia 2019). The survey data grouped voters into voters who ranked as their first preference either the Labor Party, the Liberal Party, the National Party, the Australian Greens, unlisted minor parties, and then a list of minor parties. This creates issues with the data as the Nationals traditionally do not compete against the Liberal Party.

Furthermore, by placing the Greens as their own category outside of the placement of minor parties, the categorization system may skew the data. In order to ensure the model was able to correctly determine the relationship between first preference vote for a major or minor party and HTV card adherence, a supplementary regression was run where the Labor Party, Liberal Party, and National Party were all re-coded as a major party and all other parties were re-coded as minor parties. This allowed the first preference variable to be a dichotomous variable. The results are presented below, as seen, the results continue to show that those who vote for a minor party are more likely to follow their HTV card. A secondary model, placing the Greens with the major parties was also run. This is due to the increase in Greens voters in Australia suggesting an increase in political influence, the results are included in the appendix.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

The results are presented in Table 3, the first model shows the results without any fixed effects for year and state, the second model shows the results with fixed effects for year and state. The results suggest evidence for H₁ (partisanship hypothesis), H₂ (satisfaction with democracy hypothesis), H₃ (minor party hypothesis), while H₄ (political information hypothesis) had null findings. Since most independent variables were ordinal and nominal variables, reference categories were needed. For H₁ (partisanship hypothesis), the reference category was no party ID. For H₂ (satisfaction with democracy hypothesis), the reference category were respondents who were very satisfied with democracy. For H₃ (minor party hypothesis), the reference category was major parties. For H₄ (political information hypothesis), the reference category were voters with high political interest. The results are presented below; the expected percent correctly predicted (ePCP) for the logit model was 56.72%.

With regards to H₁, the partisanship hypothesis, we see that in relation to voters with no partisan identification, HTV card adherence is much higher for voters that strongly identify with a party. The results furthermore show that as voters attachment to a party decreases, their likelihood of following a HTV card decreases. This is in line with my theorized hypothesis. The results show that as voters' partisan identification increases, their adherence to a HTV

Table 5.1: Results of Regression Model

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	How To Vote Card Adherence	
Very Strong Party ID	0.976*** (0.104)	0.959*** (0.106)
Fairly Strong Party ID	0.648*** (0.090)	0.606*** (0.092)
Not Very Strong Party ID	0.414*** (0.093)	0.366*** (0.095)
Fairly Satisfied with Democracy	-0.094 (0.070)	-0.074 (0.072)
Not Very Satisfied with Democracy	-0.252*** (0.082)	-0.204** (0.084)
Not At All Satisfied with Democracy	-0.549*** (0.136)	-0.505*** (0.139)
Minor Party First Preference	-1.096*** (0.092)	-0.962*** (0.095)
Some Political Interest	0.167** (0.066)	0.151** (0.067)
Not Much Political Interest	0.146 (0.098)	0.106 (0.100)
No Political Interest	0.510** (0.219)	0.525** (0.223)
Some Election Interest	0.134** (0.066)	0.129* (0.068)
Not Much Election Interest	0.107 (0.091)	0.105 (0.093)
No Election Interest	-0.081 (0.191)	-0.107 (0.194)
Coalition Final Preference	-0.389*** (0.124)	-0.500*** (0.127)
Labor Party Final Preference	-0.276*** (0.079)	-0.421*** (0.082)
Unsure Final Preference	0.295** (0.119)	0.135 (0.123)
Decision Time	-0.088*** (0.015)	-0.097*** (0.015)
Gender	0.069 (0.049)	0.104** (0.050)
Income Level	-0.026*** (0.004)	-0.017*** (0.004)
Age	-0.005*** (0.001)	-0.003* (0.002)
Union Membership	-0.069 (0.057)	-0.016 (0.058)
Constant	0.252 (0.160)	-0.110 (0.176)
Year Fixed Effects?	No	Yes
State Fixed Effects?	No	Yes
Observations	7,945	7,945
Log Likelihood	-5,066.148	-4,931.987
Akaike Inf. Crit.	10,176.300	9,929.975

Note: * p < 0.1; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01

Reference Categories:
H1 (Strength of Party ID): No Party ID
H2 (Democracy Satisfaction): Very Satisfied
H3 (Minor Party Vote): Major Party First Preference
H4 (Political Interest): A Great Deal
Election Interest: A Great Deal
Final Preference: NA
Gender: Male
Union Membership: Member of a Union

also increases. It should be noted as seen in Figure 3, the predicted probability plot corresponding to H1 that the voters with the lowest predicted HTV card adherence rate, voters with no partisan identity, are only predicted to follow a HTV card less than half of the time. In contrast, those voters with with any partisan identity they identify with are predicted adhere to the HTV card with more than 50% probability.

The results also provides evidence in support of H2, the satisfaction with democracy hypothesis. The results suggest that voters with higher satisfaction with democracy have higher HTV card adherence rates. Voters that are not at all satisfied with democracy have a 42.24% lower level of HTV card adherence and voters that are not very satisfied with democracy have a 22.28% lower level of HTV card adherence compared to those that are highly satisfied. Given the literature that exists on satisfaction with democracy and compulsory voting, these results suggest that voters who are satisfied with Australian democracy (with institutional features like the alternative vote and compulsory voting) are more likely to engage with other informal institutions, like HTV cards. Normatively, this suggests that satisfaction with democracy boosts support for institutions and is important for relationship between institutions and citizens.

The results show that H3, the first preference hypothesis, is also proven correct; moreover, the results suggest that voting for a minor party means a voter is 66.58% less likely to follow a HTV card. The party a voter chooses for the first preference has a significant effect on whether the voters follows the HTV card. A separate analysis in which survey respondents that voted for the Greens are included as a major party finds the relationship between HTV card adherence and first preference choice to also increase when an individual is a major party voter. The results of this analysis are presented in the appendix. These results provides complementary results to the work of Farrell, McAllister, et al. (2005) which found minor party voters are less likely to follow HTV cards.

H4, the political interest hypothesis is not supported by the data. The results show that in relation to voters with high political interest, there is a statistically significant difference from voters that are both somewhat politically interest and not politically interested. We also see no difference between voters that are very politically interested and voters that responded they were not much interested in politics. The combination of these factors, as well the results seen in figure 6 suggest that political interest does not affect HTV card adherence.

Predicted probability plots for each of the relevant variables are also shown. The plots re-affirm and visually represent the results of the regression model. The relationships between the first three hypotheses and HTV card adherence

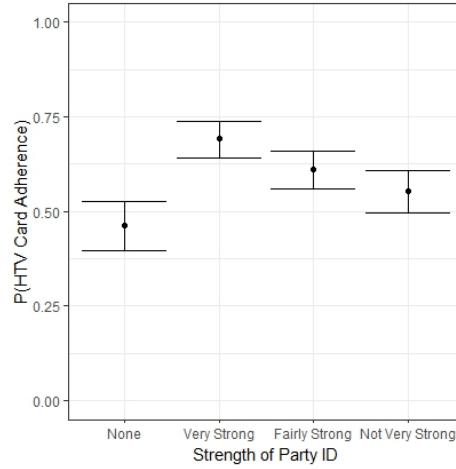


Figure 5.1: Predicted Probability Plot of Strength of Party ID

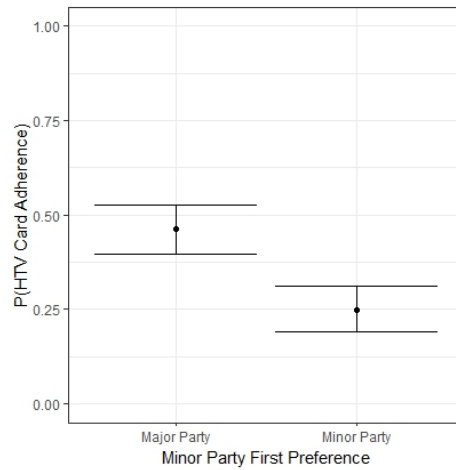


Figure 5.2: Predicted Probability Plot of Satisfaction with Democracy

is strongly correlated providing further evidence in support of the theory put forward.

Overall, the logit model does show support for H₁, H₂, and H₃ while providing no evidence in support of H₄. The results suggest that voters that have strong partisan identities, are very satisfied with democracy, and vote for a major party are the most likely to follow a party's HTV card. Furthermore, the results suggest that political interest does not play a meaningful role in HTV card adherence.

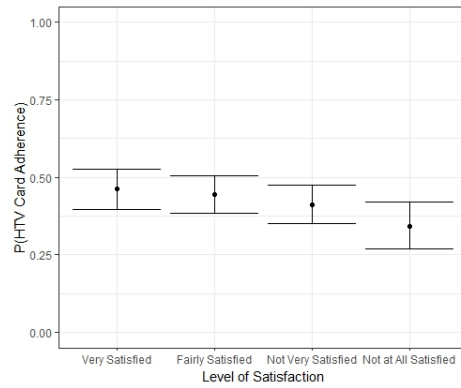


Figure 5.3: Predicted Probability Plot of Minor Party First Preference

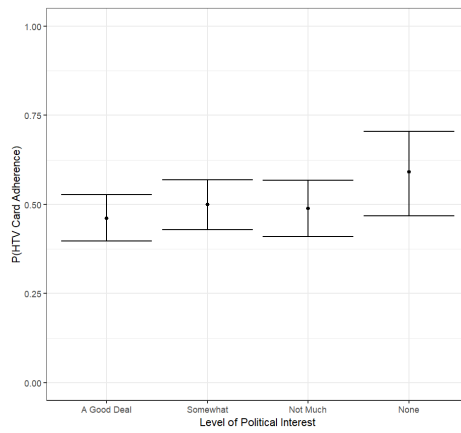


Figure 5.4: Predicted Probability Plot of Political Interest

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

Very little research has been conducted on the factors influencing HTV card adherence, yet this research is becoming increasingly relevant as more countries consider the alternative vote system including the United States. As more countries adopt the alternative vote, political tools such as the HTV card will perhaps become increasingly considered. Understanding the characteristics of voters that follow HTV cards can provide useful information on who benefits from these cards.

In this article, I build on some existing literature while also discovering new relationships between HTV card adherence and a variety of factors. The results of this regression provide clarity on the characteristics of the voters who are most likely to follow HTV cards. Building on existing empirical research into political interest, political knowledge, compulsory voting, and party preferences, I use a logit model to determine the relationship between these variables and HTV card adherence. The results suggest that voters with strong partisan identities, high levels of satisfaction with democracy, and voters of the two major parties are the most likely to follow HTV cards.

My results are consistent with literature concerning partisanship and minor party HTV card adherence. The existing research suggests that voters who are more politically informed are less likely to follow HTV cards and voters

who hold weaker partisan attachments are also less likely to follow HTV cards (Sharman, Sayers, and Miragliotta 2002; McAllister 1998; Tranter 2007). The results of my analysis show that voters that are stronger partisans do indeed have greater propensities to follow HTV cards, but finds no evidence of greater levels of political interest contributing HTV card adherence. The results furthermore suggest that levels of political interest have no effect, positive or negative, on adherence to HTV cards.

My results are furthermore consistent with research such as Bean (1997) which finds that minor party voters are the most likely to stray from their party's HTV cards. This could be due to weaker partisan attachments, due to the shorter lifespans of minor parties or due to the mechanical effects of the Australian voting system. The underlying cause, which may be one or a combination of both has evidence in the results presented, minor party voters are less likely to follow HTV cards.

In areas with little to no existing research on HTV cards, the results provide some information on the relationship between these variables and HTV cards. It is important to distinguish compulsory voting as a institution from its effects – including its effects on satisfaction with democracy. The compulsory voting literature on Australia traditionally focuses only the relation to voter turnout and satisfaction with democracy (Mackerras and McAllister 1999; Panagopoulos 2008; Fowler 2013; Singh 2018; Singh and Thornton 2019). The results of these findings suggest that satisfaction with democracy is highly related to whether a voter follows a HTV card. Voters that are more supportive of the democratic institution as a whole are more likely to adhere to a HTV card. This suggests that faith in the underlying institution (democracy) does produce some level of trickle-down support for institutions that are by-products like the HTV card.

Future directions could see greater understanding of demographic factors and their effects of HTV card adherence rates. While comparative studies of the effect of gender and political participation have suggested that gender gaps do exist (Desposato and Norrander 2009) but are smaller in developed countries (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978), further research is needed to provide greater clarity on the Australian case. The gender literature finds evidence that men and women view political participation differently and so women may view HTV card adherence differently from men. Testing this theory could show whether Australia is in line with other advanced Western democracies or not and can provide greater understanding of what HTV cards mean to voters, are they seen as a form of political participation? Bean (1991) finds that while there is a discrepancy between men and women's participation in Australia, the difference

is insignificant, the use of HTV cards could provide greater understanding of the effect of gender.

Coffé and Bolzendahl (2010) suggest that women and men engage in different forms of political participation and these results may add to this theory. The results suggest that women are more likely to follow HTV cards than men, a comparison of HTV card adherence and other forms of political participation in Australia may help identify if the Coffé and Bolzendahl (2010) theory holds in Australia. Overall, more research must be done in understanding the factors determining HTV card adherence rates. Literature suggesting that a variety of factors may contribute to rates of participation among women (Clark and Clark 1986) provides further thrust in determining the relationship between demographic factors like gender and HTV card adherence.

My findings provide a better understanding of which voters follow HTV cards. They show that a variety of factors are correlated with HTV card adherence, but further research must be done to determine if there is one factor in particular that is decisive in predicting HTV card adherence. A voter may vote for a minor party, but also be a strong partisan that is unsatisfied with Australian democracy, in these instances, the various factors cannot be dissociated to determine a sole driver of HTV card adherence. One factor cannot be determined as the only cause. The results of my findings suggest that as with many forms of political participation, voters choose actions based on a variety of characteristics and more research should be done to determine the level of salience of these factors.

In terms of normative consequences of these findings, if HTV cards were implemented in other places, such as the US states of Alaska and Maine, the results of these findings suggest that parties should seek to have their most loyal voters receive HTV cards. Furthermore, issues encountered in the New York City Mayoral Race could be avoided as voters that are strong partisans could rely on HTV cards once they make their first preferences. Determining the factors that lead to HTV card adherence in Australia will be useful in determining the applicability of HTV cards in other instances.

APPENDIX A

EFFECTS OF AUSTRALIAN GREENS

The Australian Greens political presence has increased since the 1990s. At the start of the 21st century, the Greens were limited to one senator in the upper chamber. In 2010, the party officially had a federal parliamentary leader in Tasmanian Senator Bob Brown and since then have continued to create organizational structures at the federal level. Since then, the Australian Greens have increased their vote share across subsequent elections. They have representation in almost all state and territory governments and as of the 2022 federal election, all states had elected two out of twelve of their senators from the Greens party. Furthermore, in this election, the Greens were able to expand their representation in the lower chamber holding four seats in the chamber.

This increase in both electoral and legislative influence suggests that the Australian Greens may be coming on par with major parties in Australia in a position analogous to the National Party. In order to ensure there is no difference in the effect of minor party support with or without the Australian Greens, a secondary model in which the Greens are categorized as a major party are computed. The results are shown below.

As seen, the results indicate that the Greens can reasonably be argued to be considered a major party with respect to this aspect of voting (a more standard threshold – ability to form a majority government – would not). Greens votes are more in line with Labor and Coalition voters than other minor parties. The results reaffirm the original findings that in relation to major parties, minor party voters are more likely to follow their HTV cards. This is visually represented with the predicted probability plot below showing the increase in adherence rates of major party voters in relation to minor party voters.

Table A.1: Regression Results with Greens as Major Party

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	htv	
	(1)	(2)
Very Strong Party ID	0.989 *** (0.104)	0.958 *** (0.106)
Fairly Strong Party ID	0.660 *** (0.090)	0.598 *** (0.092)
Not Very Strong Party ID	0.433 *** (0.092)	0.362 *** (0.095)
Fairly Satisfied with Democracy	-0.101 (0.070)	-0.078 (0.072)
Not Very Satisfied with Democracy	-0.272 *** (0.082)	-0.210 ** (0.084)
Not At All Satisfied with Democracy	-0.562 *** (0.136)	-0.503 *** (0.139)
Minor Party First Preference	-0.965 *** (0.114)	-0.954 *** (0.117)
Some Political Interest	0.187 *** (0.065)	0.166 ** (0.067)
Not Much Political Interest	0.170 * (0.098)	0.127 (0.100)
No Political Interest	0.505 ** (0.218)	0.528 ** (0.222)
Some Election Interest	0.131 ** (0.066)	0.124 * (0.068)
Not Much Election Interest	0.099 (0.091)	0.096 (0.092)
No Election Interest	-0.084 (0.190)	-0.108 (0.194)
Coalition Final Preference	-0.624 *** (0.120)	-0.681 *** (0.123)
Labor Party Final Preference	-0.701 *** (0.066)	-0.774 *** (0.068)
Unsure Final Preference	0.046 (0.114)	-0.072 (0.117)
Decision Time	-0.092 *** (0.015)	-0.102 *** (0.015)
Gender	0.040 (0.048)	0.081 * (0.049)
Income Level	-0.031 *** (0.004)	-0.020 *** (0.004)
Age	-0.004 *** (0.001)	-0.002 (0.002)
Union Membership	-0.080 (0.057)	-0.017 (0.058)
Constant	0.313 ** (0.159)	-0.085 (0.175)
Year Fixed Effects?	No	Yes
State Fixed Effects?	No	Yes
Observations	7,945	7,945
Log Likelihood	-5,100.006	-4,948.376
Akaike Inf. Crit.	10,244.010	9,962.752

Note:

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

Reference Categories:

H₁ (Strength of Party ID): No Party ID
H₂ (Democracy Satisfaction): Very Satisfied
H₃ (Minor Party Vote): Major Party First Preference
H₄ (Political Interest): A Great Deal
Election Interest: A Great Deal
Final Preference: NA
Gender: Male
Union Membership: Member of a Union

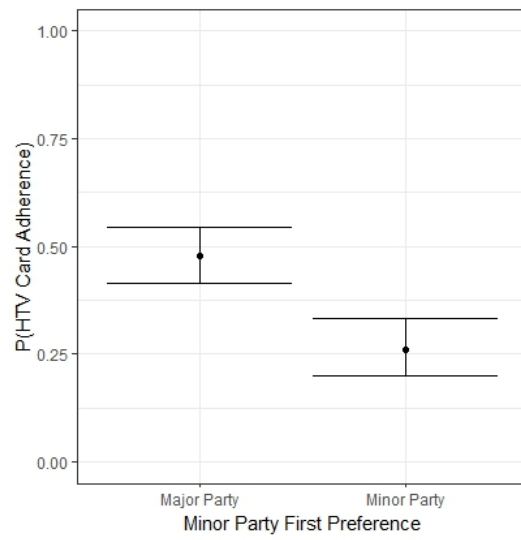


Figure A.1: Predicted Probability Plot of First Preference Vote with Greens as Major Party

APPENDIX B

HTV CARD TRENDS ACROSS TIME

In addition to the large multi-year data provided, analysis of each election was also done. The results are displayed below. The results suggest that as time has gone on, party identification has played an increasing role in HTV card adherence rates. It also suggests that perhaps in an individual year level, satisfaction with democracy may not play as strong role in HTV card adherence as seen in the main model. Further investigation of this phenomenon may better uncover the processes and reasons why this may be the case.

As in the main model, we see that political interest across years does not influence HTV card adherence rates. This provides support for the main model conclusion that HTV cards adherence rates are not influenced by a voter's level of political interest. Furthermore, H₃ (Minor Party preference) also is supported in the individual year analysis. These models also confirm that voters that vote for minor parties are less likely to follow their HTV cards across election years.

Overall, the results of this model reaffirm the key findings of the aggregated model with the exception of H₂ (satisfaction with democracy hypothesis). Further analysis should be done to understand why the effects of satisfaction with democracy do not appear to influence HTV card adherence on an individual election year basis.

Table B.1: Individual Election Years Regression Analysis

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	How To Vote Card Adherence				
	1998	2004	2010	2016	2022
Very Strong Party ID	0.306 (0.266)	1.297** (0.586)	1.362*** (0.244)	0.738*** (0.208)	1.105*** (0.201)
Fairly Strong Party ID	0.285 (0.216)	0.926* (0.560)	0.794*** (0.206)	0.464** (0.182)	0.572*** (0.172)
Not Very Strong Party ID	0.076 (0.220)	0.238 (0.554)	0.675*** (0.212)	0.286 (0.189)	0.301 (0.185)
Fairly Satisfied with Democracy	0.127 (0.180)	-0.131 (0.184)	-0.097 (0.172)	-0.072 (0.160)	-0.162 (0.139)
Not Very Satisfied with Democracy	0.072 (0.211)	-0.283 (0.262)	-0.218 (0.197)	-0.157 (0.176)	-0.268 (0.169)
Not At All Satisfied with Democracy	-0.719** (0.337)	-0.379 (0.448)	-0.561 (0.344)	-0.270 (0.252)	-0.586* (0.311)
Minor Party First Preference	-1.105*** (0.221)	-0.707*** (0.271)	-1.289*** (0.213)	-0.434** (0.194)	-1.713** (0.757)
Some Political Interest	0.112 (0.168)	0.296 (0.195)	0.500*** (0.149)	0.026 (0.141)	0.280** (0.137)
Not Much Political Interest	0.571** (0.245)	0.329 (0.287)	0.199 (0.230)	0.164 (0.210)	0.287 (0.214)
No Political Interest	1.087* (0.615)	1.178* (0.627)	2.025*** (0.597)	-0.046 (0.390)	0.573 (0.560)
Some Election Interest	0.045 (0.168)	0.386* (0.203)	0.082 (0.150)	0.204 (0.143)	0.198 (0.138)
Not Much Election Interest	-0.323 (0.229)	0.618** (0.271)	-0.268 (0.207)	0.270 (0.187)	0.452** (0.202)
No Election Interest	-0.639 (0.492)	-0.489 (0.460)	-0.490 (0.518)	0.228 (0.367)	0.390 (0.448)
Coalition Final Preference	-0.551* (0.287)	-0.440 (0.343)	-0.232 (0.310)	-1.022*** (0.225)	0.708 (0.805)
Labor Party Final Preference	-0.038 (0.177)	-0.514** (0.201)	-0.199 (0.154)	-0.989*** (0.197)	0.485 (0.769)
Unsure Final Preference	0.133 (0.248)	0.190 (0.382)	0.441* (0.235)	-0.274 (0.235)	
Decision Time	-0.076** (0.038)	-0.063 (0.045)	-0.027 (0.035)	-0.112*** (0.032)	-0.121*** (0.033)
Gender	0.260** (0.126)	0.180 (0.145)	0.171 (0.111)	0.211** (0.102)	0.040 (0.104)
Income Level	0.015 (0.015)	0.027 (0.017)	0.007 (0.010)	0.0001 (0.009)	-0.005 (0.008)
Age	-0.018*** (0.005)	-0.026*** (0.005)	-0.029*** (0.004)	0.021*** (0.004)	0.012*** (0.004)
Union Membership	-0.210 (0.140)	-0.127 (0.160)	-0.084 (0.127)	0.227* (0.130)	0.056 (0.125)
Constant	1.228*** (0.381)	0.785 (0.659)	0.925** (0.367)	-1.809*** (0.405)	-1.269*** (0.402)
State Fixed Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	1,254	988	1,653	2,063	1,987
Log Likelihood	-785.127	-600.622	-993.663	-1,220.780	-1,189.690
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,628.253	1,259.244	2,045.326	2,499.559	2,435.380

Note:

* p < 0.1; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01

Reference Categories:

H1 (Strength of Party ID): No Party ID

H2 (Democracy Satisfaction): Very Satisfied

H3 (Minor Party Vote): Major Party First Preference

H4 (Political Interest): A Great Deal

Election Interest: A Great Deal

Final Preference: NA

Gender: Male

Union Membership: Member of a Union

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