A vicious or virtuous circle?

Aligning ontology and methodology in the study of participatory inequality[*]

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Jennifer Oser, jennifer.oser@mail.huji.ac.il – link to website
The Federmann School of Public Policy & Government
Hebrew University of Jerusalem
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Abstract

Is the expansion in forms of citizen participation accompanied by increased participatory inequalities? This research makes three distinct contributions to addressing this question by investigating how people combine traditional forms of participation (e.g. voting) with newer extra-parliamentary forms of participation (e.g. political consumerism). First, I demonstrate the utility of analyzing profiles or "types" of political participation in terms of how people combine traditional and extra-parliamentary political acts. Second, I analyze social and economic inequalities in light of these profiles, demonstrating that the expanded political participation is indeed the purview of the already advantaged. Finally, the findings show that national context conditions citizen participation and accompanying participatory inequality. Through the elucidation of these specific contributions, the paper indicates the necessity and possibility of better aligning ontology and methodology in the study of participatory inequality regarding expanded forms of political participation.

Introduction

Traditional political participation in advanced democracies has remained steady or declined in recent years, while more civic and cause-oriented forms of citizen participation have been on the rise (e.g. Dalton 2006; Dalton 2008; Inglehart 1997; Norris 2002; Norris 2007; Svallfors 2007a). Specifically, electoral-oriented activities such as voting, campaign activity and party activism have held steady or declined while a range of extra-parliamentary activities such as citizen lobbies, protest and political consumerism have generally been increasing.

The potential drawbacks of the decrease in electoral-oriented forms of participation have been clearly and worrisomely depicted: namely, a decrease in the legitimacy of democratic governance, in interest aggregation within the polity, in social and political trust, and in the development of civic skills (e.g. Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki 1975; Dalton and Wattenberg 2000; Pharr and Putnam 2000; Skocpol 2003). Some scholars have suggested that the newer forms of citizen participation can potentially temper such concerns. For example, Pippa Norris noted that "the traditional electoral agencies linking citizens and the state are far from dead. And, like a phoenix, the reinvention of civic activism allows political energies to flow through diverse alternative avenues as well as conventional channels" (2002, p.223). Yet Norris and others have noted that this reinvention may potentially be accompanied by an increase in participatory inequality. Sidney Verba articulates the resulting concern that is the focus of this paper: "political voice may be in the center of a virtuous circle of capabilities for those advantaged in society, but a vicious circle of incapabilities for the disadvantaged" (Verba 2003, p.666).

This research makes three distinct contributions to current scholarship regarding expanded forms of citizen participation and the resulting implications for participatory inequality. First, I demonstrate the utility of analyzing individual profiles of democratic participation. Second, I analyze participatory inequality in socio-economic terms in relation to these different participatory profiles. These two contributions are closely related: In order to better understand the link between changing forms of participation and social and economic inequalities it is not adequate to know simply that, for example, fewer people are voting while more people are engaging in political consumerism. Rather, we must analyze which social groups are participating in what kinds – and in what combinations – of political and civic acts. Finally, I use a case-oriented approach of analyzing how country of residence conditions individual-level patterns of participation, and find that countries cluster in familiar "families of nations" regarding their patterns of participation. This cross-national clustering has been found in other areas of research, such as comparative welfare state research, but has not yet been studied in the field of political participation.

One may justifiably ask: how are such contributions possible given the countless studies of political participation using myriads of data and armies of statisticians? I argue that a realignment of ontology and methodology is required for the study of expanded forms of political participation, in line with Peter Hall's argument regarding research trends in comparative politics (2003). Hall uses the term ontology to refer to the basic assumptions that scholars make about the nature of the social and political world. Noting that contemporary debates in comparative political research pay more attention to methodology than ontology, Hall argues persuasively for the need to shift this focus:

"Ontology is ultimately crucial to methodology because the appropriateness of a particular set of methods for a given problem turns on assumptions about the nature of the causal relations they are meant to discover" (2003, p.374).

This paper therefore has two overarching objectives beyond the elucidation of the three contributions described above. First, I aim to demonstrate that a form of path dependency in the automatic usage of prevailing methodologies in the study of political participation has become poorly suited to the ontological questions of scholars of expanded forms of political participation. Second, based on the preliminary findings of this better alignment between ontology and methodology, I outline a number of avenues for future research.

Two notes on the conceptual framework of this research are in order to round out this introduction. First, this research does not examine the personal or ideological motivations for citizen participation, so is therefore “color-blind” in relation to the values of the individual citizen participant. However, the normative assumption framing this research considers there to be inherent value in representative citizen participation in democratic life. Democratic theorists famously differ regarding the relative importance of citizen participation, ranging from Robert Dahl’s expansive emphasis on the importance of the conformity of democratic governance with citizens’ preferences (1998; 2006) to Joseph Schumpeter’s argument for limited citizen involvement as a method for selecting elite statesmen (1952). Yet there is broad agreement among scholars of political participation that mass participation is an essential component of representative democracy (Jacobs and Skocpol 2005a; Norris 2002), accompanied by a concern for the democratic and policy-oriented implications of increased participatory inequality since "unequal participation spells unequal influence" (Lijphart 1997, p.1).

Second, as described above, the two basic types of participation examined in this paper are generally described as electoral or "older" types of political participation versus extra-parliamentary or "newer" forms, and I will use these terms interchangeably. It is noteworthy that this basic dichotomous distinction has persisted conceptually over the past few decades despite the different specific terminology used by different scholars, such as: "conventional" vs. "unconventional" (Barnes and Kaase 1979); "elite-directed" vs. "elite-challenging" (Inglehart and Catterberg 2002); "citizen-oriented" vs. "cause-oriented" (Norris 2007); and "duty-based" vs. "citizen-engaged" (Dalton 2008). Clearly the temporal emergence of boycotting, for example, as a participatory strategy is not new in and of itself; rather, the use of these terms is based on the fact that "newer" participatory acts are part of the category of citizen participation that has increased in prevalence in recent years.

Ontology

While research on citizen participation has a long and venerable pedigree, the empirical basis for developing and testing hypotheses in this field at the national and cross-national level did not emerge until the 1960s. The first prominent comparative study researched patterns of political culture in five countries through representative national survey samples (Almond and Verba 1963). This research was expanded upon to examine political equality in seven nations to analyze how and why the relationship between individuals' socioeconomic resources and their political participation varied from country to country (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978). Two key findings of this research have since become truisms in the study of political participation. First, at the individual level, those who are socio-economically advantaged on a variety of parameters (e.g. income level, age, sex, and race/ethnicity) consistently have higher rates of political participation, particularly in activities that require more individual time and effort.[1] Second, the case study comparisons of separate countries demonstrated that mobilizing institutions at the national level – such as political parties, labor unions, and broad-based civic associations – have the capacity to moderate the effects of individual-level socio-economic inequality on political inequality.

As this field of research has expanded to explore more unconventional, elite-challenging, and cause-oriented forms of political participation (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Inglehart and Catterberg 2002; Norris 2007), three developments have occurred that lead to both the necessity and possibility of obtaining a better alignment between ontology and methodology. The necessity arises from a shift in how we conceptualize participation from the concept of a continuum to that of a "type". The possibility arises from new data that yield information on individuals' full range of political participation, along with a relatively new way of analyzing this data that focuses on delineating types. The following section details these three developments.

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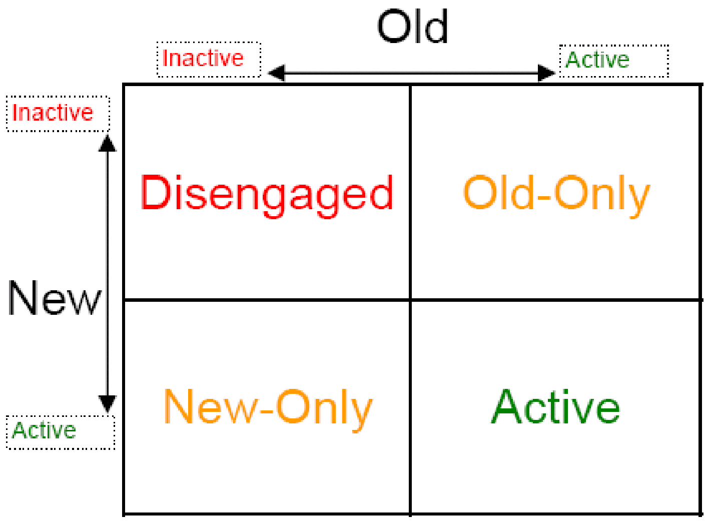
[1] In subsequent research, this finding has held true regarding both so-called "conventional" and "unconventional" political participation (Barnes & Kaase, 1979) and regarding citizen-initiated advocacy efforts Berry, Jeffrey M. 1999. *The new liberalism: The rising power of citizen groups*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, Berry, Jeffrey M., and Clyde Wilcox. 2007. *The interest group society*. London: Longman..

1. Participation Profiles

Recent research regarding expanded citizen participation implicitly suggests that participation should not necessarily be conceptualized as a continuum, as is often the case. Rather, we should think of participation in terms of qualitative types – in the classic Weberian sense of “ideal types” (Weber 1949 [1904]) – that may vary regarding both content and level of activism. In order for optimistic interpretations regarding the new opportunities of expanded political participation to hold true, it would be important to discern distinct participation profiles of “old” and “new” participators. If it turns out that most people fit either one or the other of these two types, we may speculate that expanded opportunities for political participation are simply affording new strategic avenues for amplifying the political voice of those who are already articulating their political preferences via conventional channels.

We can posit four ideal types of participation, including the possibility that some people combine both “old” and “new” forms. At the extremes we would find “actives”, who engage in all forms and the “disengaged” who do not participate in any form. We would also find two kinds of participatory specialists, meaning those who specialize in “old-only”, i.e. electoral activity, versus those who specialize in “new-only”, i.e. extra-parliamentary activity.

Chart 1: Ideal Types of Participators



Establishing whether these ideal-types accurately represent empirical behavior has been difficult until recently for two main reasons. First, appropriate data was not available that allowed the exploration of a variety of indicators of citizen participation, beyond the level of a case study or an empirical analysis of a single country's population, until the implementation of the 2002 European Social Survey (ESS) module on Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy (CID).[2] Insights regarding electoral forms and extra-parliamentary forms of participation prior to this data could be gleaned only from separate data sources that are based on different representative samples. For example, scholars have combined national level data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) research of electoral forms of participation, with the World Values Survey (WVS) research of extra-parliamentary forms of participation. The combination of these types of data sources yields insights about national characteristics, but does not allow us to understand the participation profiles of individuals in terms of the kinds of activities that people tend to combine. Therefore, while these kinds of data sources allow us to conclude that, for example, voting is decreasing in a given country while political consumerism is increasing, we have no way of knowing whether the same individuals who are active in the electoral arena are simultaneously active in the extra-parliamentary arena as well.

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[2] The ISSP 2004 Citizenship Module is another new source of rich data on citizen participation.

The second limitation of prior research in examining whether our ideal-types accurately represent empirical behavior is that the analytic approaches most commonly used in this field of research are unsuitable for examining distinct participatory profiles. Scholars commonly focus on a single act of political participation (e.g. Gray and Caul 2000: voting) or a series of acts that are analyzed separately (e.g. Gallego 2007: voting, political activism, protest and political consumerism). An additional widely-used approach is to take a wide variety of indicators and use factor analysis in order to reveal the primary underlying dimensions or "modes" of participation (e.g. Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978: campaign activity, contacting politicians, community activity). Finally, a more recently developed approach is to build an index of participation in the form of a scale running from the disengaged to the super-active (e.g. Howard and Gilbert 2008).

There are important distinctions between these methodologies, but they share the common analytical limitation that they only make it possible to examine whether those with more social and economic resources will participate *more* on a linear continuum. We are interested, however, in also determining whether they participate *differently* with respect to combining different activities into distinct participatory profiles, as in the two "specialist" ideal types described above. Therefore, properly addressing our ontological questions requires using a methodology like latent class analysis (LCA) that allows us to identify distinct types of participatory profiles. In sum, this combination of appropriate conceptualization of participation as types, along with the necessary data and appropriate methodology from an analytic standpoint will allow us to properly place the totality of the repertoires of individual citizen participation on our theoretical and empirical radar screens.

2. Participatory Inequality

The typological analysis of participatory profiles indeed requires some ontological exegesis. But is there really a need to spill ink on the theoretical concerns behind the study of participatory inequality, one of the most well-studied areas of political science? The APSA Task Force on Inequality in American Democracy demonstrates that we do indeed need to revisit the fundamental questions at the heart of this field of research. The APSA Task Force noted the paradox that the U.S. is witnessing an age of increased legal equality, but decreased economic and participatory equality (APSA 2004; Jacobs and Skocpol 2005b).

Optimistic analyses note the potential for newer forms of citizen participation to contribute to a virtuous circle of expanded participation that is “multimodal” (Dalton 2006, p.58) and deploys "mixed action repertoires" (Norris 2002, p. 191). Pippa Norris paints a vivid portrait of this shift, likening new kinds of democratic engagement to “a swollen river flooding through different tributaries” (2002, p. 216) and to a democratic phoenix that operates in both conventional and alternative ways. Yet, Norris, Dalton and their collaborators raise marginal cautionary notes and questions regarding the potential implications of this participatory reconfiguration for participatory inequality that run counter to democratic ideals (Dalton 2006, p. 74; Dalton and Wattenberg 2000, p. 282;

Norris 2007, p. 644). The expanding extra-parliamentary forms of participation may in fact raise new issues and new ideas without necessarily involving new kinds of people, leading to an "activation of the active" (Norris 2001, p. 229; Schlozman et al. 2005, p. 69). This therefore raises the possibility that the decline in electoral participation and the increase in extra-parliamentary activity do not lead to a participatory "tie", particularly from the perspective of representative democracy, but rather to a consistent advantage for the more advantaged.

Indeed, scholars have found time and again that political participation is often stratified in relation to social cleavages such as gender, education, income, and class (Gallego 2007; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 1999; Svallfors 2007b). Yet, socioeconomic inequalities are more and more often overlooked in the largely U.S.-focused literature on the newer forms of participation. For example, Dalton (2008) controlled for certain individual-level factors, finding that race, ethnicity and gender are not significant predictors of citizenship norms, but that age and education do have significant effects; however, a loud silence results from the omission of indicators like income and occupation in this analysis.

While Dalton's 2008 research represents a certain trend amongst scholars of newer kinds of political participation, the APSA Task Force on Inequality and American Democracy represents an opposing effort to increase our scant knowledge of the implications of increased socio-economic inequalities on democratic participation. In addition, recent research indicates the increasing importance of examining the effects of social cleavages on political participation outside of the U.S. as well. For example, in contrast to the previously established findings that European countries demonstrate little socioeconomic and class stratification regarding basic citizen participation such as voting due to the mediating effects of mobilizing institutions like unions and labor parties (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978), recent research indicates the growing salience of social cleavages for citizen participation in these countries as well (Gallego 2007; Kittilson 2005; Oskarson 2007).

3. National Context

In addition to the goal of understanding the way the national context conditions participation, comparative research is necessary for the more basic reason of clarifying cross-national empirical trends. Much of the research in the field of expanded political participation is based on the U.S., despite the well-known “exceptionalism” of the American historical, institutional and cultural context, as colorfully described by Norris: “…it is sometimes assumed that political fashions are like the export of McDonalds, Nikes and Levis, so that patterns that first emerge in the United States (or even in California) will probably become evident later among other Western publics” (2002, p. xi). This paper utilizes a case-oriented analysis of selected countries that are representative of different “families of nations”. This approach is intended to map broad cross-national differences in patterns of political participation and their relative importance, as a prelude to further research aimed at identifying and explaining the existence of distinct “participation regimes” (Ragin 1987; Shalev 2007).

Methodology

Data and Variables

The data analyzed in this research is the 2002 European Social Survey (ESS) Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy Module and its 2005 implementation in the United States.[3] Of the 23 countries in this data set, two countries are excluded due to lack of full survey implementation (Czech Republic and Switzerland). This analysis therefore includes the remaining 21 countries.

A review of the participation indicators in this dataset demonstrates that the commonly used distinction between "older" and "newer" kinds of participation is empirically ambiguous. The following table introduces the relevant indicators regarding a range of citizen participation activities derived from the ESS survey that will be used in this analysis [see "Recoding of Indicators" in appendix for further details].

Table 1: Participation Indicators

Variable Name	Survey Question	Old/New
vote	Voted in last national election?	Old
wkparty	Worked in a political party or action group	Old
boybuy	Boycotted or bought certain products	New
newage	Involvement in org for humanitarian aid, human rights, minorities or immig., environmental protection, peace or animal rights	New
contact	Contacted a politician, government or local government official	?
sticker	Worn or displayed campaign badge/sticker	?
petition	Signed petition	?
demo	Taken part in a lawful or illegal public demonstration	?
donate	Donated money to political organization or group	?

Of these indicators, voting and party work (variable names: vote and wkparty) are classically characteristic of the "older" forms of electoral-focused political participation; while political consumerism (boybuy) and involvement in organizations working on behalf of post-modern value goals such as environmental protection and human rights (newage) can be considered representative of “newer” forms of extra-parliamentary participation. Yet, what about contacting a politician? This participatory act was considered by Verba and his colleagues to be one of the four paradigmatic “modes” of participation before scholars began to distinguish between conventional and unconventional participatory acts. Yet in the current context of participatory opportunities, it is clear that one may contact a politician in the context of either traditional, electoral-oriented activities; or alternatively as part of a radical, progressive organizational campaign.

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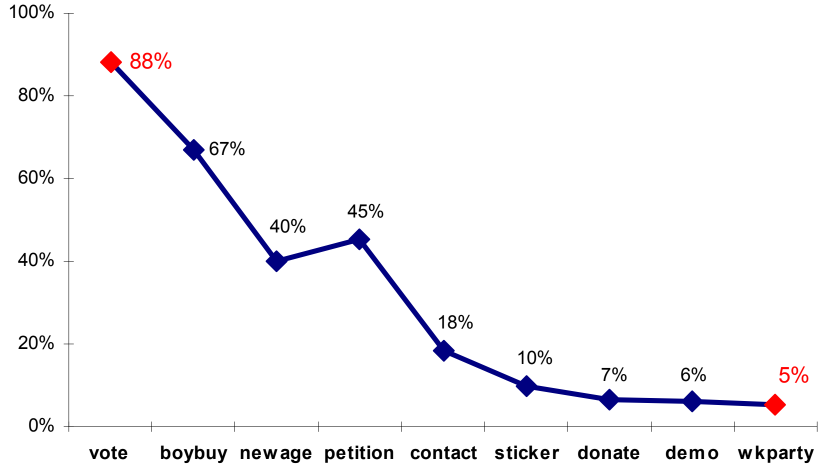
[3] For more information on these surveys see: for the ESS http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/l; and for USCID http://www.uscidsurvey.org/.

Likewise, other participatory acts in this list – including displaying a campaign badge or sticker, signing a petition, demonstrating publicly and donating money – may be thought of as neutral acts that could be undertaken in the context of either “older” or “newer” types of participation. Given this ambiguity, I prefer to avoid a priori categorization, and to treat the issue of how different participatory acts “hang together” as an empirical question. This approach is all the more important since we do not have direct measures regarding respondents’ degree of activism (e.g. frequency of activities or amount of money donated).

The following chart displays the mean probability of these indicators for the pooled 21-country dataset. The indicators are ordered with the most prevalent political act on the left to the least prevalent on the right. (The one exception to this ordering to ease visual interpretation is the placement of the two clearly “new” indicators of boybuy and newage side by side.) The two indicators of electoral participation, voting and party work, highlight a noteworthy characteristic of the data on political participation: there is a very wide range of prevalence of these self-reported participatory acts, from the high of an 88% reported rate of voting, to a low of 5% of working in a political party or action group.[4]

Chart 2: Mean Probability of Participation Indicators



For analyzing socioeconomic background I use two dichotomous indicators to carry out a preliminary analysis. Specifically, based on education (above/below college level) and income (above/below country's median income) I create two polar categories of "high education and high income" versus "low education and low income".[5] [See "Dataset Preparation" in appendix for details regarding the coding of these indicators and the dataset as a whole]. These very basic indicators are meant to lay the groundwork for future research using more sophisticated analyses of socio-economic background.

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[4] The data on voting rates highlights the well-known fact that survey data yields higher estimates of political involvement compared to national empirical measures (i.e. actual national voting rate) for two main reasons: the least engaged populations have disproportionately low participation rates in such surveys; and self-reporting leads to an inflated estimate of political activity. Yet, there is no reason to be concerned of a systematic self-reporting bias that is problematic for the theoretical concerns of this research.

[5] Two notes on the education/income analysis (1) I ran the analysis separately for income and education before creating the combined categorical variables, and for the sake of simplicity present here only the findings for the combined categorical variables. (2) This analysis then does not include those who do not belong to these two polar categories (i.e. those who are either high education and low income, or low education and high income) – see appendix for proportions of the population in our polar categories, by country.

Latent Class Analysis – Theoretical Background

The analysis of participatory profiles in this research is performed using latent class analysis (LCA), a technique originally developed by Paul Lazarsfeld in the 1940s (Lazarsfeld and Henry 1968). While LCA has been commonly utilized in some areas of social science research (such as criminology, psychology, and biomedicine), sociologists and political scientists have only recently begun to take advantage of this methodology. Noteworthy examples of such recent research include subjects related to welfare state research (Edlund 2006; Edlund 2007), social class (Evans and Mills 1998; Evans and Mills 2000; Whelan and Maitre 2008), value priorities (Moors and Vermunt 2007), ascriptive justice (Simmons 2008), and cultural consumption (Tampubolon 2008; Zavisca 2005).

The essential characteristics of LCA can be summarized as follows: The research population is assumed to be heterogeneous and LCA divides it into homogenous clusters of people on the basis of their responses to multiple indicators, thereby identifying profiles that can be interpreted as "types". Hence the word “class” in the term “latent class analysis” has a double meaning, just like the term “social class” in sociology; it refers to both an abstract analytic category that can be understood as a “type” (in our case, a participatory type), as well as to an empirical collectivity of people that is referred to as a “cluster.”

A core statistical assumption of the model is what Lazarsfeld termed “local independence”, meaning that “the association between the observed responses can be fully explained by the existence of a small number of latent classes” (de Vries et al. 2008, p. 204-205). In other words, LCA assumes that the reason for associations between indicators is not that one indicator causes another (e.g. voting causes protesting), but rather that they are all symptoms or manifestations of an unobservable latent variable.

Given its utility in identifying ideal types (Hagenaars and Halman 1989), LCA is particularly well-suited to the present study in which political participation can be most fruitfully understood from a typological perspective. Factor analysis (or principal component analysis), which is one of the most prevalent methodological approaches in the study of political participation, usually constrains the underlying participation factors to be “orthogonal” (i.e. uncorrelated). As a result, any given indicator will ideally “load” on only one factor. In contrast, LCA does not impede a single indicator like voting from being associated with more than one underlying latent class (type). This flexibility is particularly important in this study, since factor analyses of political participation indicators consistently find that voting constitutes its own separate factor. This is in fact an artifact of the data structure, given the high prevalence of voting as a participatory act in comparison to other indicators. A common resulting analytical step in political participation research is then to relate to voting separately, or to remove it from the analysis altogether. LCA therefore allows us to pursue our ontological interest of understanding whether and how people combine the act of voting with other kinds of political acts.

In addition to its conceptual utility in identifying participatory types it is noteworthy that in LCA "manifest, behavioral indicators are linked to concepts by probability relations and not by rigid laws" (Dayton 1998, p. 1). Consequently, as in the better-known methodology of structural equation modeling, measurement error is built into the model (Goodman 2002). Thus, LCA treats latent classes like the independent variables in a statistical model, as a way of probabilistically predicting variation – in this case, variation in multiple indicators of the underlying dependent variable. At first sight, LCA resembles standard cluster analysis in that it identifies a group of cases that have similar profiles given their responses on a number of indicators. However, cluster analysis deterministically assigns cases to clusters. By comparison, given a response pattern or profile, LCA estimates the probability that each case belongs to each latent class (Lazarsfeld and Henry 1968, p. 36). These "recruitment probabilities" can be saved as new variables that can be used to explore the correlates of membership in different latent classes, using either descriptive techniques or more formal models.

The first practical step in LCA is to determine the optimal number of classes. This decision is based primarily on the success of observed indicators in predicting latent class membership, as indicated by statistics like the BIC (Bayesian Information Criterion) that are commonly used to assess goodness-of-fit for maximum likelihood models.[6] As a result of the assumption of “local independence” described above, a defining technical feature of latent classes is that in principle they explain all of the association between indicators if deviations from the characteristic profiles are random. However, there may for example be a tendency among some participators to either (1) engage in both boycotting and buycotting or (2) engage in neither of them. Associations like this cannot be regarded as simply random deviations from the typical profile, and there may be a need to identify additional subtypes (i.e. additional latent classes). On the other hand, we also risk conferring the status of "classes" onto what are actually esoteric profiles. An alternative to selecting a model with more classes, if it seems likely that residual association occurs between indicators because they tap similar behaviors, is to combine linked indicators, or else measured their influence jointly through what is known as "direct effect" estimation (Hagenaars 1988).

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[6] More specifically: the likelihood ratio-goodness-of-fit chi-squared statistic (L^2) indicates how much of the observed relationships between the response variables remain unexplained by the model. The smaller the value, the better the model fits the data and the better the observed relationships are described by the specified model. The Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) weights model fit and parsimony by adjusting L^2 for the number of parameters in the model.

A final terminological note will be helpful in transitioning from ontology to methodology in the use of LCA. The term "class" in latent class analysis is conceptually interchangeable with the theoretic description of "type" elucidated above, and the empirical existence of a "profile" of participation. I therefore use these terms interchangeably, consistent with whether the emphasis is more methodological, theoretical, or empirical.

National Context

In comparative research like this, which seeks to show how patterns of individual behavior vary across different societal contexts, we can choose between two different analytical approaches. One assumes that the same typology is applicable in all countries, but that the prevalence of specific types varies between them. The other assumes that the structure of behavior – the categories themselves – varies across countries. If we were to pool the data for all countries and build a comprehensive catalog of types that included all locally idiosyncratic profiles, there would be no contradiction between these two approaches, but the findings would likely yield a large number of latent classes. Ideally a balance can be found, based on a parsimonious universal typology that is sufficiently comprehensive that it respects local uniqueness.

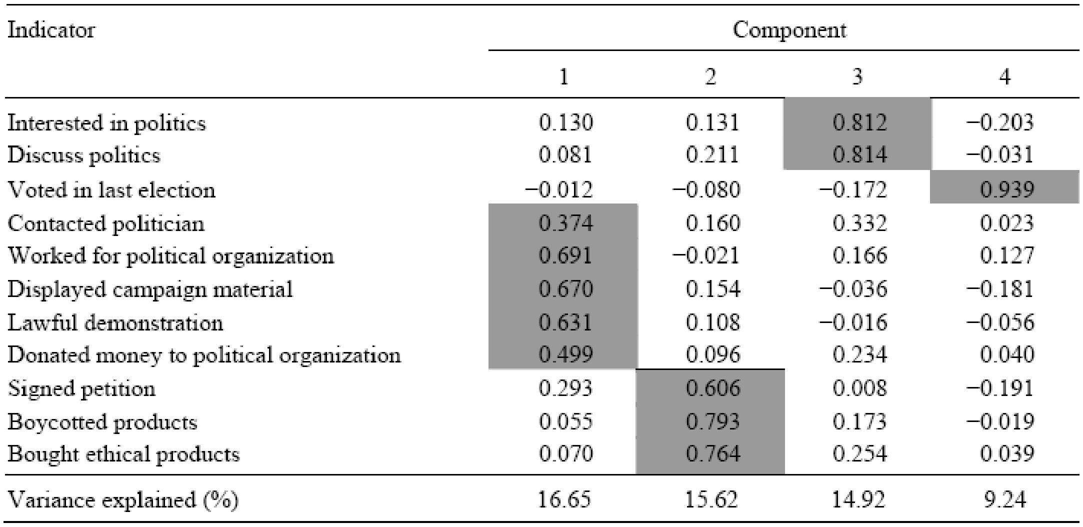
As a prelude to this endeavor, I have conducted an exploratory country-by-country analysis that taps the diversity found in the entire research population. This paper presents that analysis in order to clearly present initial results, and to build a conceptual foundation for better understanding the statistical analysis of pooled data for all countries. For a more parsimonious and informative presentation of the present findings for selected countries, I utilize the concept of "families of nations" based on research that has demonstrated that countries cluster in conspicuous country groups that are defined by geographical, historical, and/or cultural commonalities. Research on a wide range of domestic public policies in advanced democracies has typically identified country groupings for Scandinavia, Continental Europe, English-speaking countries, and Southern Europe (Castles 1993; Esping-Anderson 1990).

A cluster analysis by Obinger and Wagscahl (2001) confirms these groupings for many types of national attributes, including political institutions. Interestingly, a recent analysis of numerous broad facets of political participation concludes that they fall into the similar country groupings (Newton and Giebler 2008). Note, however, that the relationship between the formerly Communist states of Eastern Europe and these established groupings is not clear-cut, and research in this area suggests that it is worthwhile to relate to these countries as a distinct family of nations (Howard 2003; Howard and Gilbert 2008; Rueschemeyer, Rueschemeyer, and Wittrock 1998). Therefore, the first step in the analysis that follows is a latent class analysis of a number of countries that serve as representative examples of these different families of nations, including Eastern Europe. I will present findings for Sweden, Germany, Great Britain, Spain and Hungary as representatives of the five families introduced here, respectively.[7]

Findings

To illustrate the utility of the LCA findings in comparison to the common factor analytic approach, I will present an analysis using both of these methodologies. The following table details the findings of Kenneth Newton and Heiko Giebler who utilize the ESS 2002 dataset to do a factor analysis of political participation in Great Britain. They undertake this analysis to determine whether the findings of Verba and his colleagues continue to hold true despite the passage of time. The indicators used here are parallel to those presented above, along with two additional indicators that relate to political interest.

Table 2: Factor analysis of political participation (Newton and Giebler)



Indicator	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Interested in politics	0.130	0.131	0.812	−0.203
Discuss politics	0.081	0.211	0.814	−0.031
Voted in last election	−0.012	−0.080	−0.172	0.939
Contacted politician	0.374	0.160	0.332	0.023
Worked for political organization	0.691	−0.021	0.166	0.127
Displayed campaign material	0.670	0.154	−0.036	−0.181
Lawful demonstration	0.631	0.108	−0.016	−0.056
Donated money to political organization	0.499	0.096	0.234	0.040
Signed petition	0.293	0.606	0.008	−0.191
Boycotted products	0.055	0.793	0.173	−0.019
Bought ethical products	0.070	0.764	0.254	0.039
Variance explained (%)	16.65	15.62	14.92	9.24

(Newton and Giebler 2008, p. 7)

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[7] Preliminary analyses of additional countries in the dataset indicate that the findings for these countries are indeed representative of the "national family" they are meant to represent.

The four different factors here can roughly be characterized as (1) Traditional (2) New (3) Political Interest and (4) Voting. The findings corroborate previous conclusions that used the same methodology, namely that political participation at the individual level is characterized by different modes of participation that are fragmented and multidimensional. In a similar analysis that Newton conducted with Jose Ramon Montero they use a striking analogy to characterize these findings: "…citizens do not participate in politics like versatile musicians playing many instruments: they participate in politics as members of an orchestra who specialize in their own instrument" (Newton and Montero 2007, p. 207). I will extend this analogy to clarify their substantive conclusions: some citizens vote, just like some orchestra members play the cello; some citizens demonstrate, just like some orchestra members play the piano. Just as there is no one sub-group of musicians who dominate orchestral life, claim Newton and his colleagues, there is no group of citizens whose voice distinctively dominates democratic life.

Great Britain was not chosen for a specific reason, but rather to be illustrative of the patterns of political participation that can be found at the individual level. Using the same ESS 2002 dataset, my factor analysis of Sweden detailed in the following table yields similar substantive finding, using the same indicators described in the data section of this paper. The main distinction in comparison to Newton and Giebler's analysis is that I do not include indicators related to political interest, as I agree with the prevailing view that political interest is conceptually distinct from participatory acts, and therefore not surprisingly constitute a separate factor. Yet the same basic findings hold true with the first factor capturing more traditional participation, the second factor representing newer forms, and with voting constituting a separate factor. Participation at the individual-level may indeed be interpreted as fragmented and multi-dimensional.

Table 3: Factor analysis of political participation in Sweden

	Component		
	1	2	3
Wkparty	0.711		0.16
Sticker	0.666	0.144	-0.13
Donate	0.642		0.102
Demo	0.609	0.212	-0.114
Contact	0.396	0.235	0.256
Boybuy		0.745	
Newage		0.627	0.115
Petition	0.257	0.534	-0.177
Vote			0.914
Variance Explained (%)	24.26	12.89	11.05

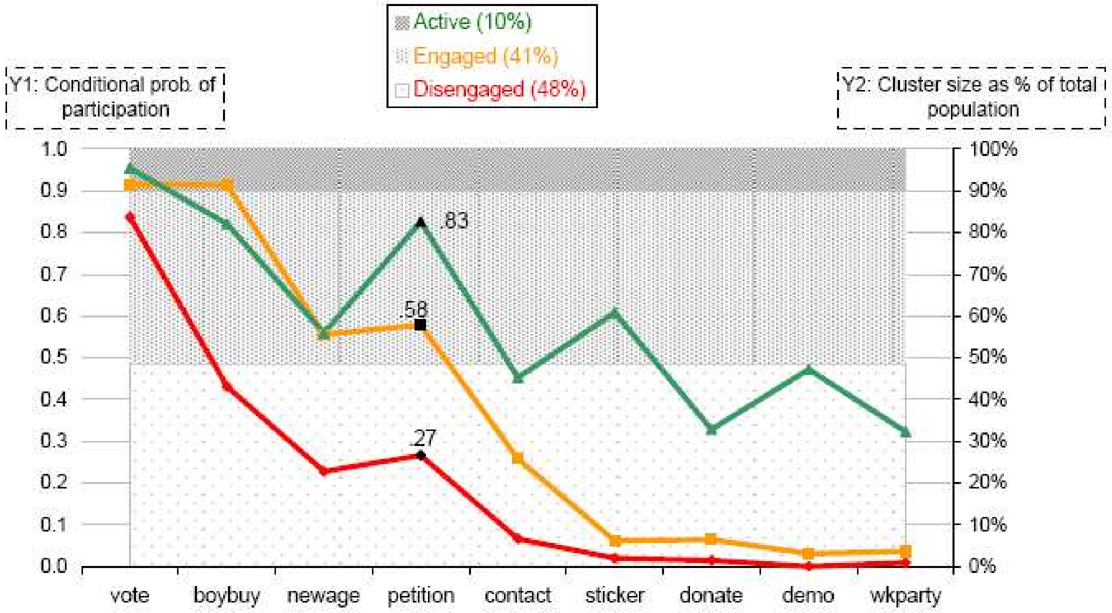
I present here my findings using LCA to analyze the same indicators for Sweden. Goodness-of-fit statistics indicate that a three-class model provides the best fit for the data for Sweden, as well as for the other countries in this study [see "Sweden LCA Model Stats" in appendix for additional information on model choice]. The resulting three classes can be described as distinct types of disengaged, engaged, and active participators. LCA yields two main pieces of information regarding these classes, as detailed in the table below. First, we learn the cluster size of each class (in parentheses beneath the name of each class), meaning the estimated proportion of the total population that belongs to each class. Second, we learn the conditional probability that a person will participate in a given act of political participation based on this person's membership in a given latent class.

Table 4: Sweden LCA Profile - Cluster size and conditional probabilities

	Disengaged (48%)	Engaged (41%)	Active (10%)
Vote	0.84	0.91	0.95
Boybuy	0.43	0.91	0.82
Newage	0.23	0.56	0.56
Petition	0.27	0.58	0.83
Contact	0.07	0.26	0.45
Sticker	0.02	0.06	0.61
Donate	0.01	0.06	0.33
Demo	0.00	0.03	0.47
Wkparty	0.01	0.04	0.32

These two pieces of information regarding the analysis of political participation in Sweden are also displayed graphically below. Each colored line represents a distinct participation type. The left-hand y-axis (Y1) tracks the conditional probability of participation in a given political act, based on an individual's membership in a given participation profile. For example, as noted in this chart, those who belong to the "active" participation profile have an 83% probability of signing a petition; those in the "engaged" profile have a 58% probability of signing a petition; while those in the "disengaged" profile have a 27% probability of signing a petition. The right-hand y-axis (Y2) tracks – in increasingly darker shades of grey – the size of each participation cluster as a proportion of the total population. This information is also depicted in the chart legend in parentheses after each class name. Therefore, we can see that the active profile is the smallest class with 10% of the general population belonging to this group, while 41% are engaged and 48% are disengaged.

Chart 3: Sweden Latent Class Analysis



In relation to the participation indicators on the x-axis, it is clear that the "active" type is active across the board. The "engaged" type has almost the same profile as the active for voting and for the two clear indicators of new forms of participation (political consumerism and newage organizational activity); but their probability of petitioning or contacting is significantly less than the active type, and their likelihood of participating in the other activities – sticker, demonstration, donation and party work – is almost the same as the "disengaged" group. The disengaged group is lowest across the board, though it is noteworthy that they still vote at high rates, and have a non-trivial probability of being involved in new activities of political consumerism and newage organizations, as well as petitioning.

See "Participatory Profiles" (p.38 of this document) for a side-by-side comparison of the five countries examined in this paper. The participation profiles are ordered left to right presenting the data for Sweden, Germany, Great Britain, Spain and Hungary. Based on families of nations research, we would expect that the participatory profiles would become more unequal and polarized as we move from left to right, and this is indeed the case. The second row of charts is an enlarged version of the Sweden and Hungary models side by side to enable an easier visual comparison of the findings for the country with the most equally structured participation versus the most unequal.

Beginning with a comparison of participation types in Sweden and Hungary (represented by the colored lines) we see that the active profiles in both countries are active across the board. In both countries there is about a 30% probability of party participation and about a 40% or higher probability for participation in all other kinds of political activity. Yet two indicators are noticeably different; specifically in Hungary there is a lower probability of "newage" kinds of participation, and a higher probability of demonstration. The similarity is not as strong when we look at the "engaged" class. The probabilities of voting are similar in both countries, but in Hungary the probabilities of participation are much lower across the board, except for the act of contacting a politician.[8] The contrast is even starker when we look at the disengaged. In Hungary, the disengaged profile still votes, but does virtually nothing else. Therefore, we can see that in terms of participation types, there is greater polarization in Hungary in comparison to Sweden. In general, it is evident that Sweden, Germany and Great Britain have a similar structure of participation types that demonstrates relatively little polarization, whereas participation types in Spain and Hungary are more polarized.

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[8] This finding indeed raises the important question of cross-country interpretation of the political participation measures. The ESS has been lauded for investing greatly in rigorous survey methodology, winning the Descartes Prize in 2005, a prestigious annual European award that had not previously been granted to a social science research project. Yet, the question of what a Swedish citizen has in mind when she reports contacting a politician in the past year may be quite different than what a Hungarian citizen intends, in ways that may not be captured in this type of survey instrument.

Having compared the configurations of activities that make up participation types, I will now compare the prevalence of these types in the general population, shown by cluster sizes (represented by the varied grey shading). The differences between these countries are most evident in the size of the disengaged cluster, denoted by the lightest shading. While 48% of the Swedish population have a disengaged participatory profile, Germany and Great Britain have a disengaged group in the mid-50%'s (55% and 57% respectively), while Spain and Hungary are in the 70%'s (71% and 70%). In general, the size of the middle "engaged" profile decreases as we move from left to right (except for Hungary which is larger than Spain). In terms of the active profile, Great Britain has the largest active cluster (13%), followed by Sweden, then Spain and Germany, with Hungary having the smallest active cluster (4%).

Based on our understanding of participatory profiles, we can now analyze participatory inequality based on the socio-economic make-up of different latent classes. Using the LCA assignment of cases (i.e. individuals) to specific latent classes (e.g. disengaged, engaged or active) through modal classification, we can then analyze basic social and economic characteristics of the population that constitutes each latent class in a given country.[9] As described above, I have created two variables that combine dichotomous indicators of education and income into a "high education and high income" category versus a "low education and low income" category.

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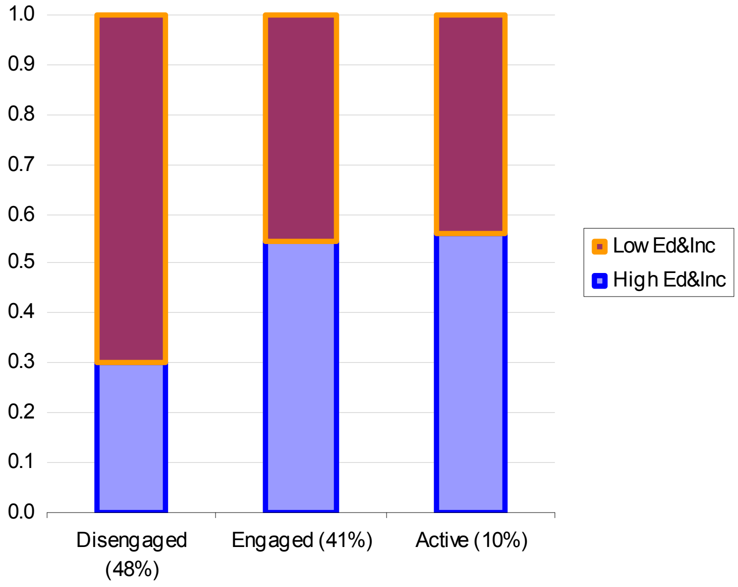
[9] To concretize the modal classification process: based on an individual's responses to the nine dichotomous participatory indicators in this study, LCA may assess the probability that a particular individual will belong to the latent class of the "disengaged" as 90%, "engaged" as 5%, and "active" as 5%. A modal classification would identify this individual as belonging to the disengaged class, and this identification can then be used as a basis for further data analysis. While this analysis is a good first step to gaining basic familiarity with the socio-economic characteristics of our research population, I am working with colleagues to conduct one-step analysis in a MIMIC (Multiple Indicators Multiple Causes) model that would decrease the "noise" produced by classification error.

The following chart shows the relative size of these two groups in each of the latent classes. Evidently, those with high income and education are substantially less likely to be found in the "disengaged" type (~30%), compared to either the "engaged" or "active" types (mid-50%).

Chart 4: Sweden LCA, Education and Income



See "Socio-Economic Indicators" (p.39 of this document) for the findings for each of our five representative countries. As expected, education and income inequalities are greater as we move from left to right across the countries. For the disengaged, education and income levels are increasingly polarized as we move from left to right. For the engaged and active groups, we see a higher proportion of those with high income and education, generally about 50% or more. Sweden and Hungary constitute the exemplary extreme, such that active political participation in Hungary is more the purview of the social and economic elite.

Discussion and Further Research

In the context of the overarching goal of attaining a greater alignment between ontology and methodology, these findings demonstrate the three main contributions of this research. First, results obtained using a typological approach to analyzing political participation directly contradict the conventional wisdom that individual participation is fragmented and multidimensional. In place of the analogy of the democratic orchestra in which each musician plays her own instrument, this research shows that in fact there are maestro musicians in the democratic orchestra who have mastered many instruments, while many do not even enter the music hall.

Second, initial investigations of the most basic indicators of social and economic cleavages (income and education) confirm the hypothesis that the expansion of political participation into newer kinds of extra-parliamentary and cause-oriented kinds of participation does indeed seem to "activate the active". These findings therefore indicate that Norris's "swollen river flooding through different tributaries" (2002, p. 216) does not seem to flow with comparable speed for different socio-economic groupings. While we do not find an engaged group that specializes in electoral kinds of participation, we do find an engaged group that specializes in the newer extra-parliamentary forms of participation. Preliminary analyses indicate that these specialists are more socially and economically advantaged than the disengaged group. In some cases, such as Sweden, Great Britain, and Hungary there is no discernable difference in the income and educational background of the engaged and active groups. However, it is noteworthy that in Germany and especially Spain, the engaged group does include somewhat more socio-economically disadvantaged participators than the active group. In short, the circle of political participation described by Sidney Verba does seem to be more vicious than virtuous overall. Yet, there is room for investigation regarding the variation in socio-economic background across country.

Finally, the representative country analyses indicate that there is a conceptual cogency to understanding citizen participation in a "families of nations" framework. While this kind of cross-national clustering has been found in other areas of research, like comparative welfare state research, I am unaware of such findings in the field of political participation.

These insights point to a number of areas for further research.[10] First, there is a need to sharpen the analysis of the income cleavage by including more nuanced explanatory factors, such as the social class typology developed by Daniel Oesch (2006; 2008a; 2008b). Social cleavages like ethnicity, gender and region constitute another potential source of fruitful analysis. In fact, the conceptual framework I developed in this research was inspired by an analysis of Israeli civic and political organizations (Oser 2008; Oser 2009), and the observation that Jewish-Israeli civic activists do not seem to be as consistently and prominently active in political parties as their Palestinian-Israeli counterparts.

Second, the findings regarding the contours of the political participation "types" indicate the need for a more nuanced understanding of participatory inequality. The charts comparing participatory profiles for Sweden and Hungary intuitively display participatory inequality in terms of the distinctiveness of the different latent classes. I am working with colleagues to develop a numerical measure of the degree of inequality – in the sense of differentiation – between the active, engaged and disengaged classes in different country contexts.

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[10] Prof. Michael Shalev of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Prof. Jeroen Vermunt of Tilburg University in the Netherlands are active partners in developing implementing this research agenda.

Third, while I utilize an exploratory form of latent class analysis in this research, it is also possible to assess the "phoenix hypothesis" in a confirmatory fashion. Specifically, it would be possible to test hypotheses regarding the distinctiveness of old and new participatory patterns using confirmatory methods such as principal component analysis (PCA) or what is known in the LCA framework as a DFactor analysis.

Finally, the indications that the significance and even the character of different types of political participation may vary systematically across families of nations indicate the potential utility of a multi-level analytic framework. Such an analysis would attempt to explain why different national contexts are characterized by different configurations of participation, controlling for differences in population composition. This analysis would also examine the different national-level factors that shape political participation at the individual level, or condition relationships between the background of individuals and their participation behavior.[11] Research on political participation points to three primary categories of national-level factors that merit further investigation in this framework: mobilizing institutions, economic factors, and institutional features of the polity [see

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[11] Specifically, I am exploring with colleagues the possibility of conducting a multi-level analysis that would analyze sub-national regions as the "Level 2" unit, instead of countries. This approach is attractive for both theoretical and statistical reasons. Theoretically, it has been demonstrated that we have as much to learn from regional analyses as we do from national ones; for example, Robert Putnam's classic research on "Making Democracy Work" Putnam, Robert D. 1993. *Making democracy work*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. was famously based on the regional differences he found in his study of political participation in Italy. Statistically, one of the main drawbacks of multi-level analysis for the purpose of cross-national research is that it is desirable for purposes of model stability to have a larger number of Level 2 units (such as countries) than is usually empirically possible. Given that the ESS dataset includes 240 sub-national regions, a regional analytic approach could address this statistical conundrum.

“National-Level Factors for Multi-Level Analysis” in appendix for description of specific factors]. Hence, further research will investigate not only whether the “swollen river” of expanded participation flows at comparable speeds for different socio-economic groupings in different countries, but also will more clearly specify the causal mechanisms at the national level that lead to twists and turns in the flow of citizen participation.

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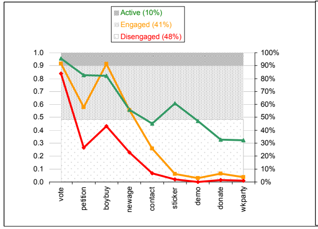
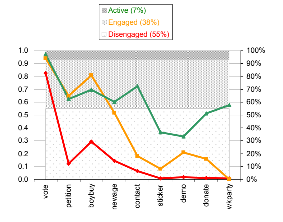
Participatory Profiles - Representative "Families of Nations" Countries

Jennifer Oser, "A vicious or virtuous circle? Aligning ontology and methodology in the study of participatory inequality", Dec. 10, 2009, Graduate Student Conference

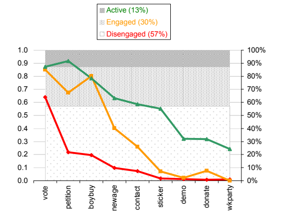
Sweden



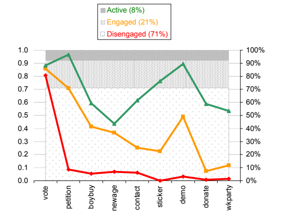
Germany



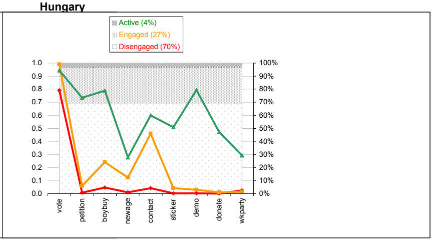
Great Britain



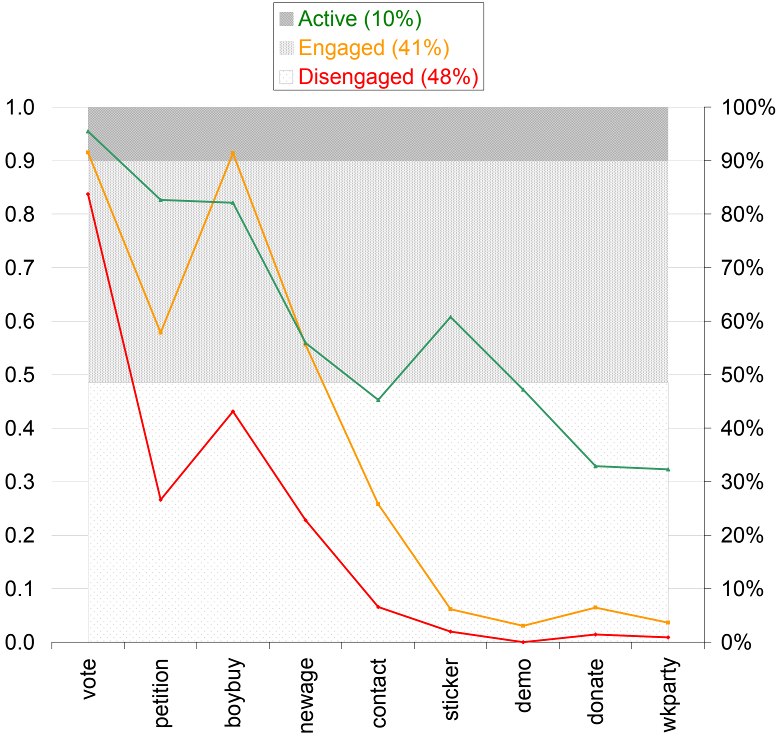
Spain



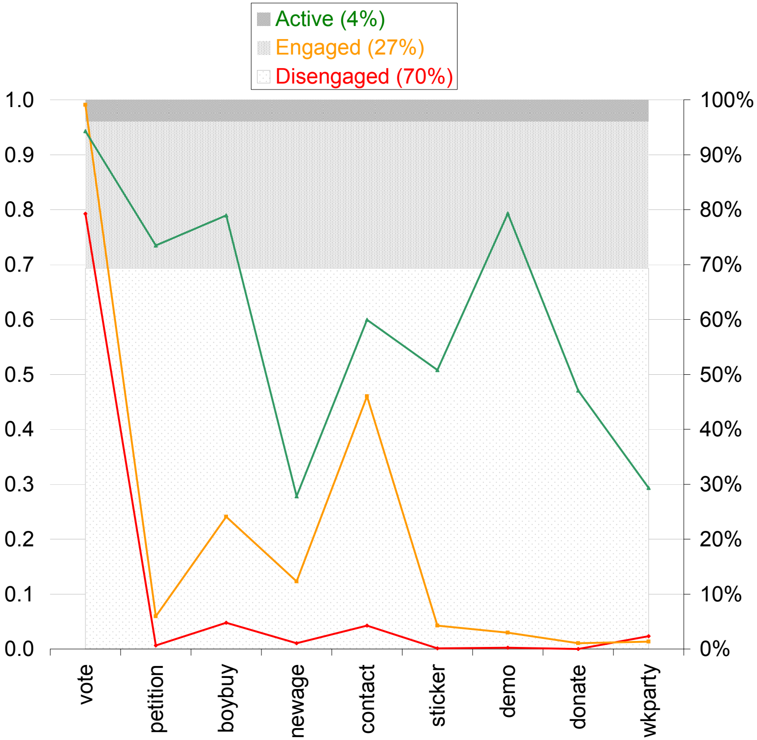
Hungary



Sweden



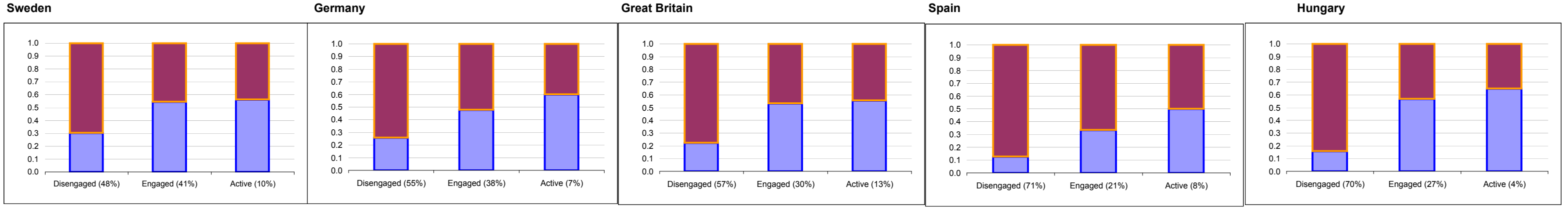
Hungary



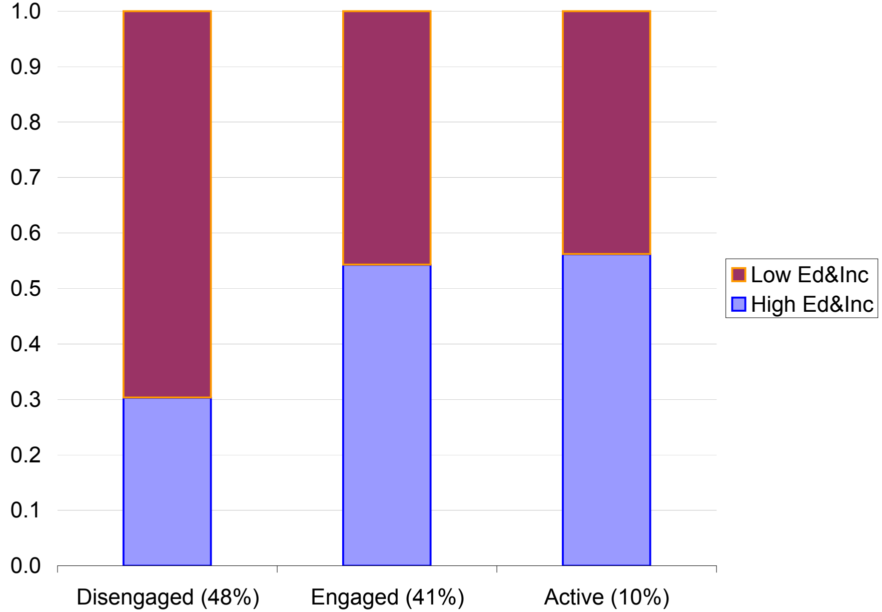
Socioeconomic Indicators - Representative "Families of Nations" Countries

Proportion of Hi Inc&Ed vs. Lo Inc&Ed in Each Latent Class

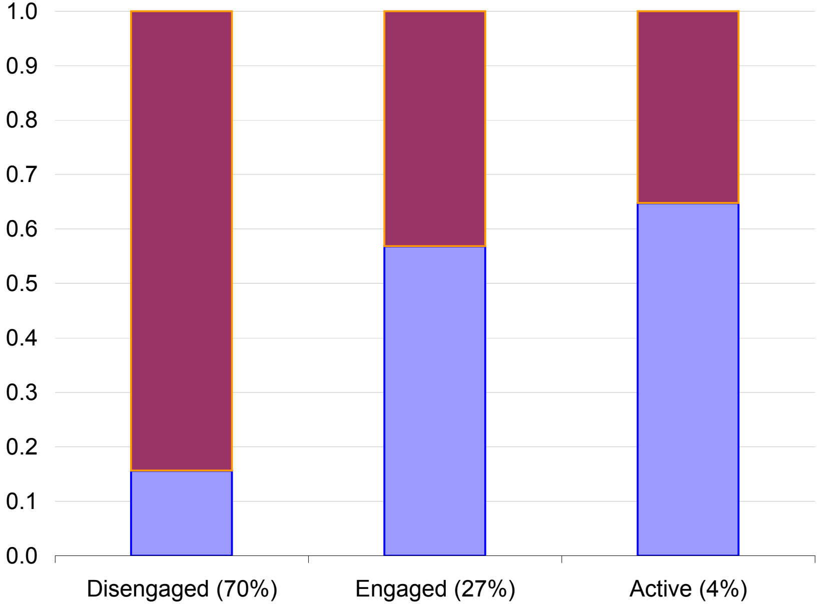
Jennifer Oser, "A vicious or virtuous circle? Aligning ontology and methodology in the study of participatory inequality", Dec. 10, 2009, Graduate Student Conference



Sweden



Hungary



Appendix - Jennifer Oser, "A vicious or virtuous circle?" Dec. 4, 2009

1. Recoding of Indicators……………………………………………………………1
2. Dataset Preparation………………………………………………………………..1
3. Sweden LCA Model Stats…………………………………………………………4
4. National-Level Factors for Multi-Level Analysis………………………………..6

1. Recoding of Indicators

Var. Name	ESS Var Base (Ques. #)	Question	Old/ New
vote	VOTE (B13)	Voted in last national election?	Old
wkparty	WRKPRTY (B16)	Worked in a political party or action group	Old
boybuy*	BCTPRD + BGHTPRD (B21 + B22)	Boycotted or bought certain products	New
newage*	HMNO series + EPAO series (E6a + E7a)	Involvement in org for humanitarian aid, human rights, minorities or immig + involvement in org for environmental protection, peace or animal rights.	New
contact	CONTPLT (B15)	Contacted a politician, government or local government official	?
sticker	BADGE (B18)	Worn or displayed campaign badge/sticker	?
petition	SGNPTIT (B19)	Signed petition	?
demo*	PBLDMN + ILGLPST (B20+B24)	Taken part in a lawful or illegal public demonstration	?
donate	DNTMNY (B23)	Donated money to political organization or group	?

Note: variable names with an asterisk (*) are derived by combining separate variables from the ESS survey. For two of the indicators – boybuy and newage – the base variables are combined into a single indicator in order to avoid problems of high bivariate residuals (as explained in methodology section). The same reasoning holds true for the recoding of the demonstration indicator, though many scholars using this dataset have chosen to eliminate illegal demonstration from analyses altogether since it is a fairly uncommon activity. Future data analyses will include sensitivity-testing that utilizes different combinations of the base variables (e.g. run the same analysis with PBLDMN without ILGLPST to note the impact of this data recoding on research findings).

2. Dataset Preparation

Relevant SPSS syntax for explaining recoding of variables and delimiting of dataset as a whole. Description of coding preceded by *** in "Times New Roman font", followed by actual syntax in "Arial" font.

***To avoid confounding effects of age, limiting ourselves to ages 25-65.

```
select if range(age,25,65) .
```

***Exclude those not eligible to vote (coded 3).

```
miss val vote () .
select if any(vote,1,2,7,8,9) .
```

```
miss val vote (7,8,9) .

***Exclude immigrants less than 5 yrs in country and/or non-citizens.
miss val livecntr () .
select if (livecntr>2) .
miss val livecntr (7,8,9) .

***Selecting for citizens.
miss val ctzship () .
select if (ctzship='66') .

***Harmonizing education variable for all countries and US specific variable.
miss val edulvl () .
recode edulvl (0=1)(7,8,9,sysmis=10)(else=copy) into educ .
format educ (F1) .
if (edlvus=1) educ=1 .
if (edlvus=2) educ=2 .
if any(edlvus,3,4) educ=3 .
if (edlvus=5) educ=4 .
if any(edlvus,6,7) educ=5 .
if (edlvus=8) educ=6 .
if (edlvus=77) educ=10 .
recode educ (10=sysmis) .
val lab educ
  1 'Primary' 2 'SecondaryLo' 3 'SecondaryHi' 4 'Post-secondary' 5 'University' 6
'Post-grad' .

***Creating dichotomous “college” variable for use in working paper analysis.
comp college=any(educ,5,6) .
form college (F1) .
val lab college
  0 'less than college' 1 'college' .

***Creating 3-category education variable for multi-level analysis.
recode educ (1,2=1)(3,4=2)(5,6=3)(else=sysmis) into educ2 .
val lab educ2 1 'Low' 2 'Medium' 3 'High' .

***Use category midpoints for income values and create median income variable for all
Eur countries.
recode hinctnt
(1=.9)(2=2.7)(3=4.8)(4=9)(5=15)(6=21)(7=27)(8=33)(9=48)(10=75)(11=105)
(12=150) into incnotusa .
var lab incnotusa 'Annual European Income Midpoints 000 Euros' .
AUTORECODE VARIABLES=cntry /INTO cntry# .
rank var=incnotusa  (A) by cntry# /NTILES (2) into inctwonotusa /PRINT=NO .
var lab inctwonotusa 'Med Income Europe' .
```

```
***Use European median but put missings in a separate category .
recode inctwonotusa (sysmis=3)(else=copy) into incmednotusa .
var lab incmednotusa 'Med Income Europe with missing' .
val lab incmednotusa 1 'below median' 2 'above median' 3 'missing' .

***Create US median variable.
recode hinctnus
(1=7.5)(2=17.5)(3=22.5)(4=27.5)(5=35.0)(6=45.0)(7=62.5)(8=87.5)(9=125.0)(10=
175.0)(11=250.0) into incusa .
var lab incusa 'Annual US Income Midpoints 000 $' .
rank var=incusa  (A) /NTILES (2) into inctwousa /PRINT=NO .
var lab inctwousa 'Median Income US' .

***Use US median but put missings in a separate category .
recode inctwousa (sysmis=3)(else=copy) into incmedusa .
var lab incmedusa 'Med Income US with missing' .
val lab incmedusa 1 'below median' 2 'above median' 3 'missing' .

***Combine USA and Eur median income variables .
comp income=incmednotusa .
if (cntry='US') income=incmedusa .
var lab income 'Med Income All cntries' .
val lab income 1 'below median' 2 'above median' 3 'missing' .

***Recode income variable to dichotomous ie missing into sysmis instead of separate
category .
recode income (1=1) (2=2) (3=sysmiss) into income2.

***Create 4 category income education variable .
comp edhi_inchi=(college=1 and income=2) .
comp edhi_inclo=(college=1 and income=1) .
comp edlo_inchi=(college=0 and income=2) .
comp edlo_inclo=(college=0 and income=1) .
comp edhi_incmiss=(college=1 and income=3) .
comp edlo_incmiss=(college=0 and income=3) .
var lab edhi_inchi 'High Ed&Inc' edhi_inclo 'HighEducation LowIncome'
edlo_inchi 'LowEducation HiIncome'
   edlo_inclo 'Low Ed&Inc' edhi_incmiss 'HighEducation IncomeMissing'
edlo_incmiss 'LowEducation IncomeMissing' .

***Create single categorical income education variable .
comp edinc=edhi_inchi .
 if edhi_inclo=1 edinc=2 .
 if edlo_inchi=1 edinc=3 .
 if edlo_inclo edinc=4 .
 if edhi_incmiss edinc=$sysmis .
 if edlo_incmiss edinc=5 .
var lab edinc='Education and Income Categories' .
val lab edinc 1 'High Ed&Inc' 2 'HighEd LowInc' 3 'LowEd HighInc' 4 'Low
Ed&Income' 5 'LowEd MissingInc' .

***Recode and rename participation indicators.
recode vote contplt wrkprty badge sgnptit  bctprd bghtprd dntmny pbldmn ilglpst
(1=1)(2=0)(else=sysmis)
into vote contact wkparty sticker petition boy buy donate ldemo ildemo.
comp newage=(HMNONN=0 or EPAONN=0) .

***To pre-empt problems with residuals, combine boycott & buycott.
comp boybuy=(boy=1 or buy=1) .

***Combine legal and illegal demonstrations .
comp demo=(ldemo=1 or ildemo=1) .

***After doing LCA and merging datasets, calculating mean ed-inc categories by cluster.
means edhi_inchi edlo_inclo by clu# / cell=mean .
```

Income and Education Analysis: Population Proportion in Polar Categories, by country

	High Ed&Inc	Low Ed&Inc
Sweden	0.24	0.33
Germany	0.17	0.30
Great Britain	0.20	0.38
Spain	0.08	0.33
Hungary	0.12	0.35

3. Sweden LCA Model Stats

Sweden LCA Model Stats

	LL	BIC(LL)	Npar	L^2	df
1-Cluster	-4983	10030	9	863	502
2-Cluster	-4746	9628	19	390	492
3-Cluster	-4702	9612	29	303	482
4-Cluster	-4688	9656	39	274	472

While the 3-cluster model has the best global measure of good fit, it is noteworthy that the local measures of good fit regarding bivariate residuals (BVRs) show that two pairs of variables have relatively high residuals, thereby violating the assumption of local independence. In general, BVRs larger than 3.84 indicate correlations between variable pairs that are not adequately explained by the model (Vermunt and Magidson 2005, p.125). One method for addressing problematic BVRs is to increase the number of classes in the preferred model, which in this case would entail selecting the 4-cluster instead of the 3-cluster model. While this does improve the problematic BVRs, it does not lead to a theoretically more informative model.[1] Therefore, I opted to add in "direct effects" to the variable pairs that exceed the 3.84 threshold, as indicated in the following table.

Sweden, BVR's – 3 Cluster Model

Indicators	vote	boybuy	petition	newage	contact	wkparty	donate	sticker
vote	.							
boybuy	0.1695	.						
petition	0.3027	0.516	.					
newage	0.0012	0.9295	2.3229	.				
contact	0.423	0.6147	0.1893	0.6653	.			
wkparty	0.473	0.2724	0.2555	0.4345	5.8998	.		
donate	0.494	0.002	0.132	0.0984	0.1664	3.4072	.	
sticker	1.2858	0.0575	1.3488	0.0622	0.0275	0.0196	0.0425	.
demo	0.0072	0.2327	3.32	1.3266	0.6081	1.5089	0.1137	2.1211

Following standard practice, I first added a direct effect first to the variable pair with the highest BVR, contact and wkparty. Doing so artificially reduces the BVR between these variables to 0, but it also affects the BVRs between other variables – in some cases increasing them, and in other cases decreasing them. In this case, the addition of a direct effect between contact and wkparty increased the BVR between wkparty and donate to 4.3, which is above our threshold. Therefore, I added a second direct effect (DE) for the variable pair wkparty and donate, leading to a model with no problematic BVRs, as shown in the table below.

Sweden, BVRs – 3 Cluster model after adding 2 DE's (contact&wkparty; donate&wkparty)

Indicators	vote	boybuy	petition	newage	contact	wkparty	donate	sticker
vote	.							
boybuy	0.0194	.						
petition	0.3466	0.6808	.					
newage	0.0286	0.4941	1.9419	.				
contact	0.6339	1.03	0.0138	0.7451	.			
wkparty	1.5568	0.5992	0.0025	0.2687	0	.		
donate	0.984	0.1178	0.1048	0.097	0.0862	0	.	
sticker	0.8488	0.0988	0.1724	0.0518	0.7231	0.9794	0.316	.
demo	0.0147	0.2603	1.0959	1.3161	0.0172	0.056	0.455	0.0003

---

[1] Likewise I analyzed a 4-cluster model in all five of the countries described in this paper. In all cases except for Great Britain, a 4-cluster model simply adds in an additional category of a slightly different profile of "engaged" participators. In Great Britain, a more interesting 4th cluster model emerges where one of the "medium" clusters specializes more in "older" forms of participation, while the other specializes more in "newer" forms. Ironically, however, Great Britain is the only country for which there were no problematic BVRs.

4. National-Level Factors for Multi-Level Analysis

Regarding *mobilizing institutions,* the pioneering research of Verba and his colleagues (Almond and Verba 1963; Verba et al. 1978) and subsequent studies have shown that institutions such as political parties, labor unions, religious institutions, and broad-based civic associations have played mediating roles in the past to increase the participation of citizens with fewer socioeconomic resources. Recent research indicates that some of these institutions still play a significant mobilizing role for certain kinds of citizen participation (Norris 2002; Gray and Caul 2000; Kittilson 2005). Given the general, but uneven, weakening of these institutions in advanced democracies, it is possible to examine whether and under what circumstances these institutions influence citizen participation.

Regarding *economic factors,* greater and earlier industrial economic development has been demonstrated to be positively related to voluntary association activity (Curtis et al. 2001) and specifically to newer kinds of citizen participation (Inglehart and Catterberg 2002); yet, regarding voting at least, a "ceiling effect" has been demonstrated in postindustrial and older democracies(Norris 2002). Additionally, we know that economic inequality has increased significantly at the national level in recent years, and evidence indicates that greater economic inequality leads to decreased political engagement for all citizens; however, those with fewer socioeconomic resources are affected more strongly than the general population (Solt 2008).

Finally, a number of different *institutional features of the polity* have been demonstrated to influence different aspects of citizen participation. First, democratic stability and level of democratic quality have been demonstrated to be positively associated with civic association (Curtis et al. 2001). Second, patterns of state-society relations, operationalized as degrees of "statism" and "corporatism", have been demonstrated to influence the amount and nature of different kinds of civic activity (Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001). Third, it has been argued that the welfare state has critical feedback effects on citizens' democratic involvement (Rothstein 1998). For example, countries that have experienced substantial retrenchment in social security programs, regardless of how the welfare system is organized, have witnessed greater political alienation amongst those with fewer socioeconomic resources (Oskarson 2007). Fourth, a variety of electoral institutional arrangements, such as mandatory voting laws and ease of registration, have been demonstrated to influence turnout rates (Norris 2002). Finally, greater globalization or integration into world culture is said to have promoted newer forms of citizen participation (Tsutsui and Wotipka 2004).

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