
RESEARCH REPORTS AND NOTES

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN LATIN AMERICA: An Agenda for Research*

Mitchell A. Seligson, University of Arizona
John A. Booth, University of Texas at San Antonio

THE STATE OF RESEARCH

The study of political participation in Latin America has, until very recently, been too narrowly conceived by social scientists, focusing largely on elites and violence. The former is illustrated by studies of the military (Lieuwen, 1961, 1966; Johnson, 1964; Horowitz, 1967; Fagen and Cornelius, 1970; Schmitter, 1973), the Church (Dillon Soares, 1967; Solari, 1967; Petersen, 1970; Suchlicki, 1972), industrialists (Cardoso, 1967; Polit, 1968; Petras and Cook, 1973), and large landholders (Whetten, 1948; Carroll, 1966; Feder, 1971; Cockroft, 1972). Attention to violent forms of political participation is found in studies of revolution and the military coup d'état (Payne, 1965; Needler, 1968; Von Lazar and Kaufman, 1969; Moreno and Mitrani, 1971; Kohl and Litt, 1974). Those studies that have centered on nonviolent mass participation (Horowitz, 1970) have generally been limited to elections (for example, Martz, 1967; Petras, 1970), political parties (Fitzgibbon, 1957; Ciria, 1974), and labor unions (Payne, 1965; Angell, 1972; Erickson et al., 1974). As a result of the narrowness of these approaches, we have only a partial image of the faces of the Latin American citizen political activity; we have underestimated the scope of such activity and have failed to investigate its many forms.

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To correct for the narrow conception offered by previous researchers, we offer here a more encompassing definition of political participation: behavior that is intended to influence the political system, be it at the national, regional, or communal level. Conceived this way, political participation goes beyond the activities of elites, elections, and violence and includes communicating about politics and communal problems, and working collectively to *solve problems not handled by government*. Hence, this definition is broader than Milbrath's (1965:1–2), for he looks only at behavior "which affects or is intended to affect the decisional outcomes of government." Similarly, it is more inclusive than that of Verba and Nie (1972:2–3), who call political participation "acts that aim at influencing *governmental* decisions." These definitions exclude numerous important ways citizens express themselves politically outside governmental channels and overlook many critical aspects of participation.

The underdeveloped state of research on political participation in Latin America is not peculiar to work on that area of the world alone. Critics (Walker, 1966; Berns, 1968; Pateman, 1970; Salisbury, 1975) have pointed out that it affects the literature on participation in general. Illustrative of difficulties with the classical participation literature (Woodward and Roper, 1950; Berelson et al., 1954; Lane, 1959; Campbell et al., 1960; Milbrath, 1965; Nie et al., 1969), particularly that referring to the United States and Europe, is its focus on either whole societies or merely urban populations; the political participation of marginal groups has largely been ignored. Furthermore, this literature has usually treated participation as a unidimensional phenomenon revolving around the electoral process (voting, campaigning, and holding public office). As a consequence there have been several important lacunae in participation research, including the investigation of other forms of politically relevant activity, other geographical and cultural areas (especially the Third World), and other important social strata (particularly peasants, the urban poor, women, etc.).

Fortunately, however, new research is beginning to broaden scholarly perspectives on participation. Cross-cultural studies of participation in local politics have been collected by F. C. Bruhns, F. Cazzola, and J. Wiatr (1974). Detailed examination of the modes, or dimensional structure, of participation has been undertaken by a team headed by Sidney Verba and Norman Nie (Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1971; Verba et al., 1973; Kim et al., 1974). These studies have shattered many previous misconceptions about citizen political activity. What was once believed to be unidimensional and largely monopolized by elites, has now been shown to have several distinct aspects, or "modes," practiced to differing degrees by different social groups, and influenced by numerous contex-

tual factors. Perhaps the most important finding of Verba and Nie's research has been that similar modes exist in widely varying cultural contexts.

Latin America has not been entirely neglected by these developments, in spite of the previously mentioned narrow focus of earlier research. In the past few years, several promising areas of investigation have opened. These studies may be roughly divided into two categories—those dealing with citizen participation at the national level and those treating it at the local level.

At the national level, group politics and corporatism are being studied. Carmelo Mesa-Lago and James M. Malloy are currently conducting longitudinal, cross-national investigations of the participation of various groups in the political process in Latin America. In particular, they have focused on the evolution and expansion of social security systems as a means for determining the period in which different social sectors become sufficiently politically potent to affect public policy (Mesa-Lago, 1973 and forthcoming; Malloy, 1975; Rosenberg, 1976). This research has revealed that organized mass participation tends to reinforce existent patterns of inequality in the distribution of wealth in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Another related aspect of participation at the national level deals with the role of various social groups in corporatist political systems. Such research is exemplified by several articles that appeared in a special issue of the *Review of Politics* (January 1974), edited by Frederick B. Pike, and in a book of readings edited by Malloy (1976).

Studies of local-level participation can be subdivided into those that treat urban areas and those that deal with rural ones. Several scholars have investigated how demand-making by local, urban communities affects the delivery of public services. Some major examples include works by Cornelius (1973, 1974, 1975), Dietz (1974, 1975), Roberts (1970), Peattie (1970), Goldrich (1970), Palmer (1973), and Handelman (1975a). Recent studies of rural participation have dispelled the commonly held notion that peasants are politically inert in all but revolutionary circumstances. On the contrary, peasants interact frequently and on many levels with community organizations and with local and national government (Forman, 1975; Handelman, 1975b; Seligson, 1974; Booth, 1975a and b; Baker et al., 1972; Booth and Seligson, 1975; Palmer, 1973; Landsberger, 1970, 1973; Landsberger and Hewitt, 1970, 1971).

This ongoing research clearly demonstrates that the investigation of social and political activism in Latin America must be expanded. Indeed, many more questions and issues have been raised by the recent studies than have been resolved. In particular, we need to know much

more about why, how, and to what extent people participate; who participates, and what impact citizen activism has. Improved research techniques measuring participation, in order to explore adequately its depth and breadth, must be an instrumental part of the new departures. We propose here a research agenda that scholars may wish to use as a guide in seeking answers for these questions. We then present some of our own experiences with measuring participation in Latin America. And finally, we briefly describe an upcoming interdisciplinary seminar coordinated by the authors which, hopefully, will shed light on many of these issues.

AN AGENDA FOR RESEARCH

Why People Participate

Research to date has clearly indicated that most Latin Americans do take part in politics and suggests that citizen participation of various types is based, at least in part, on rational calculations (Portes, 1972, 1973; Cornelius, 1973, 1974; Dietz, 1974; Booth, 1975a:352–66). That is, citizens are more prone to engage in a political activity if they have relevant goals, a strong interest in an issue, and see some institution as a potentially useful channel for pursuing these goals. But we need to know much more about how these and other factors interact to motivate citizens to take part in political and social affairs. Major questions not yet clarified by the literature are, specifically: What are the goals of participation, how strongly felt are such goals, and what are the perceived means for their pursuit? In sum, for given levels of interest and resources, what may a citizen expect to gain through participating?

The case of voting, for example, has been a particularly thorny issue in the North American context, with scholars debating the motives for voting from theoretical as well as from empirical perspectives (Berelson et al., 1954; Campbell et al., 1960; Prothro and Grigg, 1960; Key, 1966; Converse, 1968; RePass, 1971; Bennet, 1973; Beck, 1975; Frohlich, 1975; Ferejohn and Fiorina, 1975; Goodin and Roberts, 1975; Mayer and Good, 1975; Owen, 1975; Stephens, 1975; Strom, 1975; Tullock, 1975; Uslaner and Davis, 1975; Weisberg and Niemi, 1976). Some have argued that since the vote of any single person has a miniscule possibility of influencing the outcome of an election, and since voting requires both time and effort, the costs of voting are greater than its utility and hence it must be motivated by other than rational considerations. However, survey research data reveal that, when asked, most voters can provide reasoned explanations for why they have chosen to vote, one of them being a sense of civic duty (i.e., a sense of obligation to party, peers, or candidates).

In contrast to the United States, the motivation for voting in Latin America may be even more complex because of special conditions found there. In particular, in many Latin American countries voting is required by law, and failure to vote may incur certain legal sanctions, thus surely increasing the individual's incentive to at least turn out, if not to become informed. Furthermore, in much of Latin America, politics is influenced by patron-client relationships, in which many people have little choice at all as to whether to vote (Powell, 1970; Strickon and Greenfield, 1972) because social obligations unrelated to electoral politics determine electoral behavior.

However, while these factors provide clearcut incentives for voting, others simultaneously militate against it. In particular, many Latin American countries are infamous for electoral corruption and fraud, and much of the area is dominated by authoritarian regimes, so that the results of elections, and therefore individual votes, often have no real impact on politics. Under such circumstances the relevance of voting for pursuing personal political goals would be severely limited. Thus the basis for voting in Latin America is far from clear, and the calculus for a rational decision to vote may be extremely complex under many circumstances. Future research on the subject should, therefore, proceed both with great caution and careful attention to the multiplicity of goals and contextual subtleties affecting voting.

Voting, however, is only one of the many ways in which citizens participate. We need to know much more about what stimulates activity in other modes of participation. To illustrate, consider one nonelectoral mode—organizational activism. In many Latin American nations, community development associations are organized at the local level. On the face of it, one would expect individuals to engage in such affairs in order to promote progress in their communities. While this is, in fact, an important motivation for participation in such groups, many individuals join for other reasons, for example, for interpersonal contact with people of higher socioeconomic status; in order (in the case of the politically ambitious) to establish a local power base to serve as a *trampolín político*; or else merely to satisfy a need to socialize in a “coffee-klatch” type of setting. Furthermore, when such organizations engage in projects (e.g., road construction), the motives for participation on the part of any one person may involve not only satisfying a desire for community progress but potential personal benefit through, for example, increased property values; easier communication with schools, markets, and towns; or the opportunity to partake of corruption (e.g., via kickbacks on materials or wages, windfall profits from expropriation of rights of way, etc.).

The researcher examining citizen activity, therefore, must con-

stantly bear in mind the complexity of the stimuli of citizen involvement. Increased understanding of these motives is interesting in and of itself, but it may have additional benefits. Researchers who know why people get involved will have a much firmer grasp on the probable impact of participation upon a nation's development. For example, polities whose citizens are primarily motivated to participate because of patronage ties are ultimately likely to develop far differently from those whose citizens are motivated by a sense of civic responsibility. And, while the urban middle sectors might reflect their interest in national issues through electoral and party activity, urban squatters and peasants might care nothing about such things, seeking their goals through community improvement activism and demanding service infrastructure from government.

How People Participate

As we have pointed out, a major shortcoming of previous research on citizen activism in Latin America has been an excessively narrow definition of participation. Unfortunately, while we know that participation includes more than voting, campaigning, and other electoral activities, research has not yet clearly outlined all its parameters. Indeed at this point it would be premature to place limits around our conception of participation as attempts to influence the political system, since we would therefore risk obscuring important forms of social activism. Nevertheless, our own research in Costa Rica (Seligson, 1974; Booth, 1975a, 1976; Booth and Seligson, 1975) has revealed several major ways in which people participate. Furthermore, we believe these modes may characterize wide areas of Latin America, just as they do in other social and cultural regions (Verba et al., 1971; Verba et al., 1973).

We do not mean to imply, however, that all the modes we mention below are found universally. Quite the contrary, we anticipate significant differences in the ways people participate, depending upon the nature of specific political systems (e.g., democratic as opposed to different kinds of authoritarian polities). For example, barriers to participation, such as limitations on freedom of assembly and lack of elections in authoritarian regimes, have been demonstrated to eliminate some participatory modes (Verba et al., 1973; Dietz, 1975). On the other hand, authoritarian regimes may well stimulate certain forms of participation that are not encountered elsewhere. In Cuba (Yglesias, 1969) and Peru (Palmer, 1973:85–88), for example, participation in *Comités para la Defensa de la Revolución* and workers' councils (*Consejos de Trabajo*) would probably constitute a separate mode of "self-management" behavior as in Yugoslavia (Verba et al., 1973).

In Costa Rica, observed modes of participation are of two basic types—conventional and unconventional. Conventional modes include: Community improvement participation (i.e., working on local school projects and self-help activities); organizational activism (e.g., membership in organizations such as the PTA, community development associations, etc.); interaction with local officials in regard to a communal problem (e.g., talking with local government officers and bureaucrats, attendance at municipal or town council meetings); personalized contacting of public officials (e.g., asking officials for personal favors such as exemption from local taxes, repairing of private roads, etc.); political party and campaign activity; political communication (i.e., discussing politics and problems with neighbors and acquaintances); and voting. Unconventional forms of participation include: Strikes, protests, riots, and rural and urban land invasions (i.e., squatting). A principal goal of future research on how people participate might well be to determine the relationship between sociopolitical structures (e.g., democratic versus authoritarian systems) and the modes of citizen activity. Further research is also needed to determine for different time periods both relative levels and patterns of conventional and unconventional participation, and their effects on the stability of the systems.

The Degree of Participation

Much of the available literature suggests that citizen participation in Latin America is quite limited. For example, a recent text states that “apathy and inaction are the keynotes to the political behavior of most of the peoples south of the Rio Grande” (Denton and Lawrence, 1972:28). In the same vein, another affirms that “political participation, like social participation, is limited to a relatively small minority of the population in Latin America” (Von Lazar, 1971:49). Our own research in Costa Rica, however, demonstrates that this image grossly underestimates the degree of participation found in that country. Excluding voting, (which is required by law and therefore consistently involves over 80 percent of the electorate), more than 85 percent of Costa Ricans reported that they engaged in at least one of a wide range of political activities. Moreover, lest one suspect that Costa Rica is a deviant case, cross-national comparisons (Kim et al., 1974) show that the average level of participation in Costa Rica is but slightly higher than that in India and Nigeria, and only a bit lower than that in the United States, Austria, and Japan (Booth, 1975a:143). Findings of this nature are not limited to Costa Rica, as Cornelius’s (1974:1134–35) comparative data on other Latin American countries have shown. The existing evidence demonstrates that most Latin Americans are not basi-

cally politically inert, but rather are nearly as active as citizens in other parts of the world.

Future research on the degree of popular participation needs to determine at least two things: First, it should systematically explore the levels of citizen activity in each of the different participatory modes; second, it needs to determine how these levels vary across sociopolitical systems. Do more developed Latin American societies exhibit higher levels of certain types of activity? Do democratic and authoritarian regimes exhibit different degrees of various types of participation?

Who Participates

As we have pointed out, both the degree and manner of citizen participation have been underestimated in Latin America. However, while most citizens do engage in at least some form of activity, we know that some citizens are completely inactive, and only a few take part in all of the participatory modes. What, then, are the factors that condition participation? That is to say, what social, economic, and psychological attributes of individuals, and what environmental, historical, and cultural factors help to determine who participates and who remains inactive?

Previous research on the First World has emphasized the role of socioeconomic status in determining electoral participation (Milbrath, 1965). Undoubtedly, socioeconomic status is an important determinant of some forms of participation under certain circumstances. However, our own research has demonstrated that this factor falls far short of being the only, or even the best, predictor of all types of participation. In fact, among Costa Ricans, community improvement activism is negatively correlated with socioeconomic status (SES), since it is among the lowest SES groups that needs are greatest and pressures for collective problem solving therefore most pronounced. It is in remote rural areas and in the *barriadas* and *favelas* of Latin America's growing cities that governments most often fail to provide needed public services (e.g., roads, water, sewage, schools), and, therefore, individuals and communities in such places tend to rely on their own resources to satisfy their service demands. A further limitation on the predictive power of SES affects socially homogeneous subsectors of the population (for example, peasants or urban squatters). Among such populations we find relatively uniform low levels of income, education, and occupational status. Yet, within these strata, important differences in levels of participation exist that cannot be accounted for by socioeconomic status. We need to look at many other factors, then, in order to understand fully who participates.

We believe that environmental factors are among the most impor-

tant determinants of participation. The structural characteristics of the individual's community have been found to influence citizen activity in Costa Rica, where, for example, remoteness from centers of social and political activity has a number of interesting effects. We observed that in rural areas, as would be expected, citizens living farthest from the polls voted less than those who are more centrally located. However, insofar as community improvement activities are concerned, remoteness has the opposite effect. This seems to be because individuals in remote areas are unable to obtain government services easily and therefore must rely upon themselves and their neighbors. Other factors that may reinforce participation in isolated areas are the impact of small community growth upon demand for public services (Booth, 1975b) and the greater interpersonal intimacy found in rural communities in contrast to their more impersonal urban counterparts (Verba and Nie, 1972).

Aside from socioeconomic and ecological influences, certain psychological characteristics may predispose individuals toward particular types of participatory activity. Some researchers have found, for example, that individuals who have a strong sense of personal efficacy and high levels of trust in government are more active in conventional political activities than are people who do not hold this combination of attitudes (Miller, 1974a, 1974b; Citrin, 1974; Almond and Verba, 1965; Nie, Powell, and Prewitt, 1969). Conversely, individuals with strong feelings of efficacy coupled with political cynicism tend to be likely candidates for unconventional modes of participation (Gamson, 1968; Clarke, 1973). Apparently, it is the latter combination of attitudes that motivates landless Costa Rican peasants to invade land (Seligson, 1976). These findings strongly suggest that different combinations of social-psychological attitudes will predispose individuals to different modes of participation (see, however, Langton, 1975). Similar factors that influence whether and how people engage in political activity include relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970), modernity (Kahl, 1968; Portes, 1973a and b; Inkeles and Smith, 1974), anomie (Seeman, 1959; Aberbach, 1969), and internal versus external control (Rotter, 1966; Archetti et al., 1970). The possible effects of such variables in Latin American societies should be further explored.

Historical factors are often thought to influence participation. Major historical events, such as revolutions and economic depressions, can produce "political generations." Zeitlin (1967) has shown that in Cuba support for Castro among laborers was conditioned by support for previous revolutionary movements. The massive repression of peasant rebellions, as in El Salvador in 1932 (Anderson, 1971), has been shown to suppress political activism for generations to come (Huizer, 1969, 1972). Similarly, revolution or civil war can mobilize individuals, resulting in

abnormally high levels of participation that may persist for years, as in Bolivia, Cuba, and Colombia (Yglesias, 1969; Malloy, 1970; Malloy and Thorn, 1971; Mesa-Lago, 1971; Gonzalez, 1974; Booth, 1974). In Peru, SINAMOS was established by the military regime in 1971, and was designed to channel mass participation in constructive, system-supporting ways (Palmer, 1973:77–115; Bourque and Palmer, 1975). Historical developments may produce traditions and institutions which can either encourage or discourage participation. Empirical research in Costa Rica has demonstrated that in some *cantones* municipal government is dominated by a small group of families united by close blood ties. In such areas local “power elite” domination of municipal government strongly discourages the participation of the public in local decision-making (Baker et al., 1972:ch. 3). However, there are other areas in Costa Rica where the apparent early establishment of a tradition of democratic participation in local government has produced unusually high levels of citizen activity (Booth et al., 1973:338–59; Booth, 1975:147–94).

In Latin America cultural factors have often been viewed as inhibitors of citizen activism. Researchers have explored the “culture of poverty” (Lewis, 1959, 1966), and have alleged that deprivation and discriminatory barriers established by power holders generate a mentality that sees little sense in individual participation. Such cultures are thought to be self-perpetuating—i.e., future generations do not even attempt to become involved. It has also been suggested that in some areas of rural Latin America a situation of “limited good” exists (Foster, 1965, 1970). In such contexts individuals view community resources as finite. Thus, attempts by a given community member to increase his share are supposedly seen by others as a direct threat to their own resources, therefore eliciting strong community pressure against any form of citizen activism. Moreover, individuals in such communities are thought to be loath to petition outside forces (e.g., government) since they do not believe that the “pie” of resources can be expanded. Another cultural factor thought to be inhibiting is what has been termed the “*encogido* syndrome” (Erasmus, 1968), whereby peasants behave in obsequious ways and hence rarely take any initiative within the community. In contrast to this image of the *campesino humilde* is that of peasants characterized by “*entrón* behavior,” who are the ones most likely to be activists. The effects on political participation of these and other cultural factors such as “amoral familism” (Banfield, 1958) and “low N-achievement” (McClelland, 1961) need further exploration.

We have mentioned a number of intriguing factors that may influence who engages in political activism and who does not. Further research is needed in each of these areas. Obviously, however, no single

project could ever deal with all of these issues simultaneously. We hope, nonetheless, that this brief listing of various social, psychological, historical, and cultural factors, which may be potentially important for understanding who takes part in political activity, will be considered by those who would advance explanations of such complex behaviors.

The Payoffs of Participation

An underlying assumption common to much political participation research has been that activism in and of itself is socially beneficial and is therefore to be encouraged. Certainly, the tone of this article has at times implied that. We believe, however, that this assumption may be challenged for important theoretical and empirical reasons, especially in the Latin American case.

At issue here, then, is the impact of participation on the processes of social and political development in Latin American societies. On the positive side of the ledger, participation in mass organizations such as political parties can be very helpful in nation-building, as a means for leadership to mobilize popular support for programs. Furthermore, participation in organizations and community improvement activities can contribute substantially to the development process itself, providing voluntary labor and material support for infrastructure improvements. In this way, the scarce capital resources of developing areas can be significantly increased.

On the other hand, participation may also have its negative payoffs. Mass mobilization can lead to political instability and thereby imperil development. For example, many regard the political mobilization of such groups as labor unions in Argentina as a fundamental cause for both economic stagnation and political decay, by diverting a disproportionate share of scarce resources to mollify these groups while ignoring other important social sectors. Similarly, the organization of urban communities can lead to a situation of system demand overload (Cornelius, 1974), making it impossible for governments to satisfy all requests for services. This often leads to the atomization of distributable public resources among a wide range of recipients, thereby reducing the chances that any developmental projects will come to fruition. Hence, in many areas of Latin America, one encounters such things as half-built roads, airports without runways, water systems without distribution networks, and schools without desks, usually because insufficient capital was allocated to each project. Thus, in the larger sense, certain types (modes) of participation may stand as barriers to the implementation of development plans and the rational allocation of scarce resources.

THE MEASUREMENT OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The agenda for research just presented demonstrates how complex the study of participation can be. Researchers wishing to investigate participatory phenomena should be aware of this complexity and should therefore be highly conscious of their methodology. For example, in order to determine the extent to which people participate, it is critical that the researcher first determine the ways in which they do so in order to avoid summary statements about overall levels of activity that may seriously misrepresent substantial variation among the different participatory modes. Perhaps the most difficult problem that the researcher encounters is the myriad of variables with which he is forced to deal. Despite significant advances in data manipulation techniques for the social sciences, any single analytic technique can simultaneously consider only a limited number of variables. Consequently, in the course of our research, we have employed several techniques to circumvent this problem and have taken note of methodological tools used by others. These techniques include special research design, data reduction and mapping, and the use of multiple data sets.

Research Design

Quasi-experimental designs may be of considerable utility in participation research. They involve the careful selection of experimental and control groups, the object of the design being to determine the impact of one or more stimuli upon the experimental group. For example, several have focused on urban settlements in Latin America (Goldrich, 1970; Roberts, 1970; Cornelius, 1973; Dietz, 1974). These studies selected different urban communities or neighborhoods according to such characteristics as their age, wealth, and development of public services, in order to provide multiple controls and experimental groups. A similarly designed study, comparing members of self-run communal farms with nonmember cultivators, is now underway in Costa Rica (Seligson and Wachong, 1975).

Genuine before-and-after sample designs are rarely possible, but owing to the existence of data sets that are stored in data banks (Tyler, 1975), such as those at the University of Florida, the University of Michigan, and the University of California at Berkeley, researchers can take advantage of existing studies when planning their projects. One recent analysis (McClintock, 1975) utilized data collected in rural Peru prior to the establishment of agrarian cooperatives for the baseline or control group. Subsequent interviewing in the same region yielded the experi-

mental group. Designs such as these are suggestive of what other researchers interested in participation might wish to consider. Perhaps their major advantage is that they permit the use of the powerful multivariate technique of analysis of variance, a statistical method that has been highly productive in the physical sciences for many years.

Data Reduction and Mapping

Several techniques have been particularly useful in our research (Booth and Seligson, 1975), especially factor analysis (Rummel, 1970; Vincent, 1971) and nonmetric multidimensional scaling (Kruskal, 1964a, 1964b; Romney et al. 1972; Lingoes, 1973; Green and Carmone, 1970). These techniques share two very useful characteristics: They permit mapping large data domains to determine patterns of covariation among the variables (factors, dimensions), and they provide a basis for data reduction by permitting the construction of parsimonious indices or scales of participation phenomena. Once data have been reduced by such means, multiple and partial correlation, discriminant function analysis, and other similar techniques can be employed to examine relationships between participation indicators and independent variables.

Multiple Data Sets

A major shortcoming of the social sciences, when compared with the natural sciences, has been the difficulty of validating both theoretical constructs and empirical results because of the common failure to replicate findings. The problem lies in part with the structure of support for social enquiry, in which research-sponsoring agencies prefer not to fund replication efforts necessary for validation. Nor are social scientists usually rewarded with the publication of replication studies unless their results conflict with previous findings, and, even then, contrary results themselves are seldom validated. Such self-compounding weaknesses of research have affected participation studies, as we have shown, but they can be at least partly overcome by the careful use of reliability measures and multiple data sets. There are a surprisingly large number of data sets containing participation variables available on Latin America (Portes, 1972b, 1973c:211–15). Many of these may be employed to compare different societies, while others provide independently collected data sets on similar populations within societies. Successful uses of multiple data sets include our study on Costa Rican peasants (Booth and Seligson, 1975) and Portes's (1973a) work on modernity.

While our emphasis here has been primarily on quantification of

participation phenomena, we are well aware that numerical analysis is not always possible—or even desirable. Researchers wishing to examine participation trends over long periods of time will in many cases be unable to quantify their research. The in-depth analysis of particular forms of participation—for example, studies of communities—may also be better approached through nonnumerical methods. Furthermore, nonconventional and relatively rare modes of citizen activity are often particularly difficult to study using survey research or other quantitative techniques. Nevertheless, new advances in quantitative history and anthropology are beginning to make these areas more amenable to numerical techniques.

No one researcher or any single research project can hope to address all of the questions raised here. However, multiple projects focusing on a single country and cross-national projects can greatly expand the range of phenomena considered and can add significantly to the validity of the findings of any single analysis (Verba et al., 1971; Booth and Seligson, 1975).

SEMINAR ON THE FACES OF PARTICIPATION IN LATIN AMERICA

In order to encourage precisely this sort of approach, the authors are coordinating an interdisciplinary meeting to promote the sharing of research strategies and findings in hopes of increasing the joint exploitation of existing data resources on political participation in Latin America. On 12–13 November 1976, a seminar will be held at the Lutcher Center of the University of Texas at San Antonio. It will be a multi-disciplinary examination of participation in social, political, and economic spheres by more than twenty social scientists specializing in Latin America and will consist of four panels:

I. National Level Participation

A. Robert Biles, Department of Political Science, Sam Houston State University: “The Dimensional Structure of Participation in Uruguay.”

B. Howard Handelman, Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee: “The Implications of Union Participation on Working-Class Politics in Mexico.”

C. Enrique A. Baloyra and John D. Martz, Department of Political Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: "Classical Participation in Venezuela; Campaigning and Voting in 1973."

D. Steven Neuse, Department of Government, University of Texas at El Paso: "Participation and Voting: Environmental Correlates of Radical Voting in Chile, The Female Vote."

II. Participation in the Countryside

A. Reynold Bloom, Department of Geography, SUNY at Oswego: "The Chilean Campesinado—The Political Implications of Socio-economic Diversity."

B. John A. Booth, Division of Social Sciences, University of Texas at San Antonio, and Mitchell Seligson, Department of Political Science, University of Arizona: "Peasant Political Participation: An Analysis Using Two Costa Rican Samples."

C. Shepard Forman, Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan: "The Extent and Significance of Peasant Political Participation in Brazil."

D. Donna Guy, Department of History, University of Arizona: "The Expansion and Limitation of Participation in Regional Areas of Argentina in the 19th Century."

E. James D. Henderson, Department of History, Grambling State University: "Citizen Interaction with National Government in Post-Violencia Colombia: The Case of Tolima."

F. Henry Landsberger, Department of Sociology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: "Peasants in the Laguna Region of Mexico."

G. Brian E. Loveman, Department of Political Science, San Diego State University: "Political Participation and Rural Labor in Chile, 1919–1973."

III. Special Panel on Peru

A. Susan Bourque, Department of Government, Smith College, and Kay Warren, Department of Anthropology, Mount Holyoke College: "Female Participation in Two Andean Communities."

B. Henry Dietz, Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin, and David Scott Palmer, Department of Government and Legal Studies, Bowdoin College: "Peasant and Poblador Participation under Innovative Military Corporatism in Peru."

C. John T. Fishel, Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin at La Crosse: "Modes of Participation in a Limited Democracy—A Peruvian Highland District."

D. Thomas C. Greaves, Division of Social Sciences, University of Texas at San Antonio: "Post-Peasant Political Participation: Peru and Bolivia."

E. Cynthia McClintock, Department of Political Science, George Washington University: "Political Participation in Peru: The Impact of Agrarian Cooperatives, 1969–1975."

F. Sandra L. Woy, Department of Political Science, California State College at Bakersfield: "SINAMOS: Infrastructure for Participation."

IV. *The Theory of Participation and an Overview*

A. Richard N. Adams, Department of Anthropology, University of Texas at Austin: "An Overview and Comment."

B. Thomas A. Baylis, Division of Social Sciences, University of Texas at San Antonio: "The Meaning of Participation: The Ideological and Instrumental Aspects."

C. Mark Rosenberg, Department of Political Science, Florida International University, and James Malloy, Department of Political Science, University of Pittsburgh: "Interest Group Participation in Social Security Policy Formulation in Latin America."

D. Edward Williams and Lawrence Scaff, Department of Political Science, University of Arizona: "The Primacy of Politics: Participation and Developmental Progress."

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