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ABSTRACT

To counterbalance research emphasis on conventional forms of political participation such as voting, discussing politics, and donating campaign money, the paper presents data from a crossnational study, conducted in 1974, of unconventional as well as conventional participation. "Unconventional participation" is interpreted as including an individual's potential for participating in a political protest activity as well as participation in voluntary association memberships which are not of an overt political nature. Part of a crossnational study to assess organizational membership impact on politics in eight western democracies, the paper reports only on data for the United States. Theoretical concerns of the study focus on changing trends in political protest, characteristics and motivation of individuals involved in protest, and the relationship between economic deprivation and political action. Survey respondents were asked to identify membership and classify level of activity in 19 types of organizations. Results were classified by sex, educational level, age, and race. An organizational activism index was created. Findings concerning the importance of organizational involvement for conventional participation are supported by the data. However, these analyses do not confirm the presumed impact of organizational involvement on reducing protest, dissatisfaction, and distrust in government. (Author/DB)

Some Political Consequences of Involvement in Organizations

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SOME POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF ORGANIZATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN AMERICA

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Introduction

Political participation may be the key concept of the decade for political scientists. It is currently being investigated in a myriad of contexts and from numerous methodological perspectives. It is receiving a great deal of empirical attention from students utilizing the techniques of survey research.[1] It is viewed as one of the five "crises" of political development, and hence is central to the theoretical concerns of students of developing as well as developed countries.[2] It has been viewed as a possible source of decay,[3] as a pathway to political knowledge and sophistication,[4] as a cure for elitism,[5] and as the organizing principle of the society of the future.[6] An interest in participation today, therefore, would seem to need no particular justification.

A great deal of research on participation has focused on conventional, institutionalized participation; unconventional forms have tended to be ignored. The crossnational study from which the present data derive was designed to investigate both unconventional and conventional forms of participation. Our purpose in this paper is to extend the study of the impact of organizational membership on politics beyond conventional forms of participation and, in a tentative and preliminary fashion, examine the relationship between memberships and unconventional participation as we have operationalized it. We will also examine the relationships between organizational memberships and several politically important measures of attitude.

The study of which this investigation forms a part has been carried out in eight countries—the United States, Great Britain, The Netherlands, West Germany, Austria, Finland, Switzerland, and Italy—and several volumes are projected that will report the results in comparative perspective.[7] Until the joint volumes are published, investigators may report individually only on the dataset that they themselves have generated. Hence, this paper is limited to data from the United States.

The crossnational project is a truly collaborative undertaking. The group reached decisions in a series of fourteen meetings beginning in 1971 at which we delineated the theoretical focus, identified basic concepts, decided upon operational measures for these concepts, and worked out sampling procedures. Extensive pilot work was carried out; the final questionnaire pretested; and the fieldwork was executed in late 1973 and 1974 in the first five countries. Fieldwork in Finland, Switzerland, and Italy was completed in 1975. The American study itself went into the field in the summer of 1974.

The first volume reporting the crossnational work is now substantially completed; it deals with political action in its various forms. Its focus is heavily sociopsychological, dealing in particular with such individual level attributes as ideology, values, personal satisfaction and deprivation, and political satisfaction and deprivation. The second volume will build on the first, adding explicit attention to system-level variables such as dimensions of cleavage and patterns of mobilization. Other volumes will deal with special topics. The present paper reports on exploratory work carried out in the United States on involvement in organizations—one important aspect of mobilization—and some of its political consequences. It is an initial look at the data and should be viewed as a report on work in progress. Later analyses will refine the findings reported here for the United States and will extend them to other countries.

Some Theoretical Concerns

From the beginning, we have been concerned with change—not in the precise meaning of diachronic studies measuring different points in time, but rather in the sense of tapping emerging patterns that may differ in significant ways from those existing in the past. We viewed the protest activities of the late 1960s as possible harbingers of the forms of political action of the future. We realize that protests are a very old form of political engagement that have waxed and waned without ever being totally discarded even in the most tranquil polities. But the sources of protest and the types of individuals involved in them seem to have altered in recent years. We wish to understand how the characteristics and motivations of persons engaging in various forms of political action today differ and how these might relate to changes in society.

In the past much protest activity was associated with the claims of new groups against established elites. First, the middle class fought the old elites, then workers pushed claims against the middle class. Religious, ethnic, linguistic, and other minorities have traditionally been willing to engage in unconventional forms of political action. Declining groups such as farmers or shopkeepers have also been willing to utilize protest techniques, demonstrating that it is not inevitably a left-wing practice. What seemed new in the 1960s was that unconventional forms of political action were embraced by groups that were traditionally closest to the established order—the educated and affluent young. Those who seemingly had the most to gain from the existing order were often its most vigorous critics, while the disadvantaged or at least the less affluent, lower middle-class and working-class whites were defenders of the status quo. It is not our intention in this paper to review the extended discussions published elsewhere.[8] We will mention here only the general outlines of three convergent theoretical perspectives that have influenced the design of the larger study, as these fragments of theory explain the choice of age, education, and left-right self-placement as principal variables in our analyses of unconventional participation.

The literature on postindustrial society suggests that education and knowledge will be the pathways to status in the future.[9] The changing com-

position of the labor force, especially the shift from the secondary to the tertiary sectors of the economy, will increase the centrality of education. Furthermore, theoretical knowledge will be of particular importance, and this, rather than more narrow technical training, is the primary focus of the elite universities that were at the forefront of the student protest in the 1960s. David Apter has hypothesized that the locus of the push for social and political innovations will shift from the "have nots" to the "haves", to segments of a radicalized educated bourgeoisie.[10] These structural changes in the economy thus should lead to changes in the social bases of different forms of political action. Furthermore, as the disaffected are better educated, there should also be a change in attitudes toward the political system, with those individuals and groups toward the perifery of society no more likely to be disaffected than those near the center.

Somewhat different in emphasis but similar in conclusion are the implications of the concept of a hierarchy of needs, which is associated with the work of Abraham Maslow.[11] The Maslow thesis posits that human needs form a hierarchy, with security needs, as for shelter and food, dominating the lower levels. Next come higher order needs, as for esteem and belonging. Finally, self-actualization or self-realization, which refer to the development of one's potential, form the highest order of needs. These needs are fixed early in life, so that an individual is driven by what is lacking in childhood. Only need for self-actualization is not formed by these deprivations, hence only those with secure formative years will be motivated by higher order needs. This perspective would, like the post-industrial-society literature, lead us to expect the affluent to be concerned with self-actualization; and, given the increase in affluence and education during the past generation, we would expect the young to be especially motivated by higher order needs. Older and less affluent individuals would be much more concerned with security and other lower order needs. The empirical evidence for and against the existence of a need hierarchy is mixed.[12] But, whether its existence is ultimately confirmed or not, it suggests that the affluent and educated young are of particular importance for the understanding of changes in the dynamics of political action and attitude formation.

The third theoretical strand that has influenced our design is the line of thinking associated with the concept of relative deprivation. This concept has been thoroughly explored elsewhere, especially in the work of Ted Gurr.[13] Several studies have demonstrated that the relationship between measures of objective deprivation and politics is not very strong.[14] It is obvious that many factors of a cultural and contextual nature intervene, hence perceptions and expectations are more important than objective conditions. If this is the case, then the expectations of the affluent young, and consequently their levels of felt deprivation, could differ vastly from what would be predicted from their objective conditions. And the actual levels of deprivation of the disadvantaged likewise would not be as important as the gap between their expectations and levels of achievement. We are not, in this paper, interested in deprivation, hence we will spend no time on the complexity of the concept and the ways in which it can be conceptualized.[15] What seems most important is that people tend through time to come to terms with the realities of their situation so that deprivation, no matter how conceptualized, is not widely perceived. Numerous studies have shown that

satisfaction is remarkably constant across socioeconomic categories.[16]

Consequently, from this perspective it should not be surprising that those who for various reasons have not yet made peace with their situation should be especially prone to protest activity and feelings of dissatisfaction.

These theoretical interests have led us to focus on unconventional as well as conventional political action, and have also suggested a special concern with age and education as determinants of political attitudes and action. Our interest in organizational involvement, on the other hand, stems from our concern with the impact of aspects of mobilization on politics.

In our first crossnational analyses we largely concentrated on socio-psychological variables. At this time the way in which people are tied into the political system becomes the focus, and this paper concentrates on a single important aspect of mobilization—involvement in organizations.

Literature that documents the contribution of organizational involvement to conventional participation is cited below. To our knowledge, the relationship of organizational involvement with unconventional participation has not been directly examined, so there is little to guide us when we turn in this direction. The "participatory democracy" literature, however, suggests that people who are active in organizations have more positive views toward the political system. Indeed, participation is widely viewed as an antidote for feelings of alienation and inefficacy. And little in the literature of participation would lead us to expect people with high involvement in the organizational infrastructure of society to be involved deeply in unconventional activities, which, by their very nature, would seem to attract the marginal rather than the integrated.

The relevance of the participatory democracy literature, however, is dubious. The nature of the participation involved is much different from that experienced in the organizations examined here and, to a large extent, its utility for the real world of politics is untested. It is better to approach the data without preconceptions: the exploration in the pages that follow of the relationship between organizational involvement and t less investigated arenas of politics is tentative.

Organizational Involvement in America—Measurement and Dimensions

The method used to obtain information about organizational involvement reflects the interests and needs of the crossnational research undertaking of which this dataset is a part. Respondents were shown a list of organizations and asked to indicate to which they belonged, if any. For each indicated organization they were asked their level of activity—very active, fairly active, or not at all active. Some organizational categories were country specific, such as those of refugees from the east in Germany, but the broad structure of organizations is similar in all the countries we studied.

The distribution of memberships and levels of activity are shown in Table 1. Church membership, claimed by 48%, is by far the most common variety;[17] political parties are the next most numerous category with 16% of

Table 1 here

the population. Trade-union membership is claimed by only 13%. It is surprising that party membership, which in a formal sense is less widespread in the U. S. than in Europe, should be second only to church membership in number of respondents claiming it. We looked at several background and political involvement characteristics of these party members and found that they were as a group highly involved in conventional aspects of political activity. Party membership is closely associated with conventional participation. For this reason, as well as some lack of clarity in the meaning of party membership in the U. S., we will not include party membership in the summary measures used in the following analyses.

Three summary variables were constructed from the organizational memberships information. One simply summarizes total memberships. Another reflects level of activity for those with at least one membership: it consists of the mean level of activity of the respondent in the organizations to which he or she belongs. An index of organizational activism was created by weighting level of activity by number of organizations, with the results expressed by four levels of activism—none, low, medium, and high.

Table 2 shows the organizational involvement of respondends with breakdowns by sex, education, race, and age. Table 3

Table 2 here

shows the mean level of activity in organizations with the same breakdowns. Finally, Table 4 shows the same

Table 3 here

breakdowns for the summary index of organizational activism.

Table 4 here

Numerous studies have demonstrated the heavily middle-class nature of voluntary association membership, at least in the United States. These findings are, in general, replicated in our study. Class and education are closely related; because of the theoretical importance of education, we will concentrate on that measure. Higher educational levels are over-represented in organizations and among activists. Table 5 presents these finds. In the

Table 1

Organizational Involvement[a]

Type of organization	Members	Not active	Fairly active	Very active
Church or religious organization	48	10	20	18
Political party	16	7	7	2
Trade union	13	5	6	2
Social group	12	1	6	5
Fraternal lodge	11	4	5	2
Professional association	11	3	6	2
Athletic club or team	11	—[b]	4	6
Special interest/hobby group	10	1	5	4
Veterans organization	7	3	3	1
Civic group	7	1	3	3
Charitable-social welfare organization	6	1	3	2
Neighborhood association	5	1	3	1
Business association	5	1	3	1
Youth club	3	—[b]	1	2
Farm organization	3	1	1	—[b]
Cooperative society	2	—[b]	1	—[b]
Other political club	2	1	1	1
Racial or ethnic association	1	—[b]	1	—[b]
Other organizations	8	2	2	4

[a]All percents are of total sample.

[b]Fewer than 5 cases.

Table 2

Total Organizational Membership Claimed (in %)

	None	1	2	3	4 or more
Total Sample	26	30	21	12	12
Sex:					
Men	23	25	23	15	14
Women	28	33	19	10	9
Education:					
Less than High School	36	37	17	7	3
High School	26	33	23	9	9
Some College	15	18	21	22	23
Race:					
White	26	29	21	12	12
Black	23	41	16	12	7
Age:					
Less than 30	32	31	17	14	6
30+	23	29	22	12	14
Total N =	440	503	349	211	192

Table 3

Activity Level
(% in each level)

	None	Low	Medium Low	Medium High	High
Total Sample	25	19	25	14	18
Sex:					
Men	22	24	24	15	14
Women	27	15	25	13	21
Education:					
Less than High School	35	17	22	7	19
High School	25	16	28	12	19
Some College	14	23	25	22	16
Race:					
White	25	20	25	14	17
Black	22	9	27	12	29
Age:					
Less than 30	31	15	26	11	16
30+	22	20	24	15	19
Total N =	419	317	419	229	303

Table 4

Organizational Activism Index
(% in each level)

	None	Low	Medium	High
Total Sample	25	26	22	27
Sex:				
Men	22	26	23	29
Women	27	26	21	25
Education:				
Less than High School	36	30	20	14
High School	25	27	24	24
Some College	14	20	23	43
Race:				
White	25	26	22	27
Black	23	26	23	28
Age:				
Less than 30	32	26	20	22
30+	22	26	23	29
Total N =	419	436	369	450

Table 5

Education and Involvement. Percent With More Than 12 Years of Education at That Level of Activity

Organization	Level of activity		
	Low	Medium	High
Fraternal lodge	35	51	42
Business association	62	67	76
Professional association	83	84	74
Farm organization	67	28	36
Church or religious organization	37	39	34
Neighborhood association	67	56	44
Social group	40	59	57
Athletic club or team	20	54	44
Cooperative society	62	55	—[a]
Political party	50	64	59
Other political club	45	54	54
Charitable-social welfare organization	46	57	66
Veteran's organization	35	45	38
Civic group	64	68	67
Specialized interest/hobby group	64	64	53
Racial or ethnic association	50	75	80
Youth	43	56	46
Trade unions	22	24	24
Other organizations	52	33	49

[a] Fewer than 5 cases.

total sample 34 percent possess at least some college (see Table 5).

Table 5 here

People under thirty are not as heavily involved in organizations as those thirty and over, but the differences in overall levels are not great.[18] Youth, however, is somewhat concentrated in youth and sport organizations. Men are slightly more likely than women to join and to be active. Finally, the differences between Blacks and Whites are negligible when differences between the two groups in education and other variables are taken into account, the participation rates of Blacks are in fact higher than those of Whites.

With the exception of the findings concerning Blacks, our research is thus in line with previous findings about organizational involvement.[19] Slight differences in operationalizations make precise comparisons difficult to achieve; but, in general, there are no surprises. Men, the better educated, and the not-so-young are higher in number of memberships and in activism than their complementary sets. As our concern is not with the investigation of organizational involvements but with political consequences we turn now to conventional participation.

Organizational Involvement and Conventional Participation

Most writing about political participation has emphasized institutionalized activities such as voting, discussing politics, and donating money for campaigns. The relationship between this type of political activity, which we label conventional participation, and involvement in organizations does not receive great attention. An exception is the previously mentioned Participation in America of Verba and Nie.[20] Their analysis documented several findings concerning the impact of organizational involvement on participation. The relationship was genuine and not due to other social characteristics, though it was weakened by correcting for social characteristics. Levels of activity in the organization are also important.[21] "The individual who is a passive member in one or more organizations is no more likely to be active in politics than the individual who belongs to no such association".[22] They also found that exposure to political discussions and community activities within the organization increased its political impact.[23] Even activity in nonpolitical organizations had an impact on political participation.[24]

Our results support these findings insofar as we can reconstruct them with our data. Our measure of conventional participation differs from theirs in details but taps roughly similar aspects of political action. The Verba-Nie summary participation index, also referred to as the standard participation scale, is constructed from a factor analysis of the four factor scales that defined the four modes of participation.[25] Our conventional participation index is composed of elements from three of the four modes: we omit voting because it does not vary greatly within several of the countries in our crossnational study. The construction of our conventional participation variable is explained in greater detail in the forthcoming volume.

It is clear that organizational involvement is a principal contributo r to conventional participation. Because of our interest in the relative impact of youth and education we have chosen to evaluate the impact of organizations along with these two variables. We know that people who see themselves as being on the left in politics are more likely to engage in unconventional politics than those on the right—at least in the United States at the present time. For this reason we control for general political tendency in our analysis of conventional participation in order to show how its impact differs between the two forms of participation. We performed a Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) of conventional participation with these four variables as predictors. As Table 6 demonstrates, total

Table 6 here

organizational activity is a better predictor of conventional participation than the other three. All make an important contribution. Given the error inherent in survey data, an explained variance of 22% is not unimpressive. The importance of organizational activism rather than mere membership has been widely noted, so we performed an MCA analysis of conventional participation with the two components of the index as predictors. We find that both total memberships and level of activity contribute to conventional participation, and at the same level of strength. The β for total membership is .28 and for level of activity is .27. These two together explain 14 percent of the variance in conventional participation. This finding merits further consideration not possible in this paper. It is clear that both memberships and activism contribute to conventional participation.

Organizations and Unconventional Participation

Up to this point in the discussion our findings are in line with previous work. They now become less readily predictable, and one reason is simply the absence of previous research to guide us.

Much has been written about unconventional forms of political participation. The unrest of the late 1960s led to a great interest in protest behavior, its origins, and consequences. The findings of these studies are still in the process of being integrated into the literature on political participation. It is a slow process, because protest behavior is rare and sporadic among mass publics, which make it difficult to study in a systematic fashion. Moreover, most empirical work on participation did not consider unconventional forms of participation at all: only institutionalized, "normal", forms were included. Milbrath, in his influential synthesis of knowledge about participation, specifically excluded protest behavior.[26] And so do Verba and Nie in Participation in America: only in The Netherlands in their crossnational work did the Verba-Nie, et al. research group include questions about unconventional forms of behavior, and there they found that protest behavior formed another mode of political action.[27] The eight-nation study of which the data utilized here are a part was designed to investigate unconventional as well as conventional participation, and it is to the measurement of the former that we now turn.

Table 6

Model of Conventional Participation

	β
Organizational activism index	.27
Education	.20
Age	.18
Left-right self placement	.14
Variance explained (adjusted R^2) = .22	

Actual involvement in unconventional political action is limited. It is not difficult to see why this is so. The very nature of unconventional activity makes it costly for many people to become involved. It requires that one act contrary to general norms, and that too is often difficult for people to do unless they are part of a subculture that supports them in this activity. Involvement in unconventional activities is also constrained by the context of action, by the vastly differing environments within which people find themselves. The impact of the setting can be controlled for in the research design, but in the present study we have opted for national samples and have not attempted to institute controls for differing environments.

We have measured protest potential rather than actual involvement in protest activities. This decision flows from the above reasons, and especially from our recognition that involvement is heavily dependent on opportunity. Our scale of protest potential was decided upon after extensive developmental work in several countries. It provides a single score for each respondent that says, in effect, I would go this far and no further in engaging in an increasingly difficult set of protest behaviors. These behaviors ranged from signing petitions to engaging in boycotts, occupying buildings, taking part in unofficial strikes, damaging property, and fighting with other demonstrators and police. There were originally ten of these items, and the respondent was asked about three dimensions of each of them. The first was whether he or she approved strongly, approved, disapproved, or disapproved strongly of the act. Respondents were then asked whether they considered the act very effective, somewhat effective, not very effective, or not at all effective. The final dimension concerned behavior—whether the respondent had done the act, would do it, might do it, or would never do it. Our composite index is heavily weighted by the approval dimension. The items concerning protest meet the requirements of Guttman scales. Seven items were utilized for the final version of the scale, and in the United States they ranged in difficulty as in Table 7.[28]

Table 7 here

The theoretical literature on which our work on unconventional political behavior is based led us to diverse and sometimes conflicting expectations concerning the impact of organizational involvement. One line of thought is that protest activity is a political tactic of those without normal, regularized forms of access for political action. Organizational involvement should be expected to reduce the need for unconventional action, as those with extensive ties to organizations would have ready access to political decision makers. This line of thinking suggests a strong negative relationship between organizational involvement and protest potential. In addition, extensive organizational ties should reduce feelings of estrangement and lack of trust; organizational activists should feel closer to the political system. Another set of expectations derive from viewing organizations as vehicles of mobilization, in which case organizational activists could be expected to possess the personal and political resources essential to unconventional as well as conventional activities, and hence would be heavily represented among those high on protest potential. Still another view is that the nature of the organization itself would make a substantial difference.

Table 7

Protest Potential Scale—United States
(With Percent "Willing to Go That Far")

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No protest	Petitions	Demonstrations	Boycotts	Rent Strikes	Occupations	Unofficial strikes	Blocades
9	21	24	26	8	6	3	3

6% of responses were not scalable

CR = .96

N = 1615

That is, some organizations have a conservatizing impact while others radicalize their members.

The most important finding that we have to report is that organizational involvement is simply not strongly related to protest potential when simple controls are applied (see Table 8). Our simple four predictor model fits

Table 8 here

protest potential even better than conventional participation, but the relative contribution of the variables to the explanation differs. Age is the most important, followed by education and left-right self placement, which are roughly equal in explanatory power. The contribution of organizational activism is modest when controls for the other three variables are instituted. Protest potential does increase modestly with organizational activism, and in a monotonic fashion, from a mean score of 3.37 among those with no memberships to 3.38 among those low, 3.48 among those in the middle group, and 3.63 among the most active. But this impact is overshadowed by that of the other variables.

It remains possible that the impact of organizational involvement varies from organization to organization and thus the inclusion of so many different ones leads to a canceling of effects. Table 9 shows the many levels of protest potential of the various categories of activism for each type of organization. It is clear that membership in most organizations is

Table 9 here

not strongly related to increased protest potential, and organizational activism is in fact associated with decreased protest potential. In almost all cases, the most active category has a lower mean protest potential score than at least one of the lesser levels of activism. There are only two exceptions, and they follow expected trends: athletic and youth categories exhibit the highest levels of protest potential among the most active members. This fits neatly into our explanation of why the relationship between organizational involvement and protest potential is not stronger (and negative) when multi-variant analysis techniques are employed.

Athletic and youth categories are dominated by young people, and it is the high protest potential of individuals with these characteristics that is important, rather than the fact of organizational involvement. Age and education are more important than organizational involvement as predictors, and when left-right self-placement is included little variance is explained by organizational involvement. Unlike the case with conventional participation, when the impact of these other three predictors is partialled out, organizational involvement makes very little difference.

Table 8

Model of Protest Potential

	β
Age	.35
Education	.19
Left-right self placement	.18
Organizational activism index	.06
Variance explained (adjusted R^2) = .24	

Table 9

Level of Organizational Activism and Protest Potential[a]

	Non-members	Level of activism		
		Low	Medium	High
Church or religious organization	3.0	2.4	2.3	2.1
Political party	2.4	2.8	2.9	2.6
Trade union	2.4	2.5	2.9	2.9
Social club	2.5	2.7	2.9	2.6
Fraternal lodge	2.6	2.4	2.2	1.9
Professional association	2.4	3.0	3.0	2.6
Athletic club or team	2.4	—[b]	2.7	3.1
Special interest/hobby group	2.4	3.4	3.2	2.8
Veteran's organization	2.5	2.2	2.4	1.5
Civic group	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.4
Charitable-social welfare organization	2.5	1.9	3.2	2.7
Neighborhood association	2.5	3.0	2.8	2.0
Business association	2.5	2.9	2.4	2.3
Youth club	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.4
Farm organization	2.5	2.1	1.8	1.5
Cooperative society	2.5	2.9	3.1	—[b]
Other political club	2.5	3.6	3.1	3.1
Racial or ethnic association	2.5	3.7	3.4	2.6

[a]Figure is mean protest potential score.

[b]Fewer than 5 cases.

Organizational Involvement and Perceptions of Politics

In this final section we briefly introduce two measures that relate to respondents' perceptions of the political system. They are a political dissatisfaction index (PDI) and a trust in government index. We then examine the relationship between these measures and organizational involvement, with a continued concern with the mediating impact of age, education, and left-right self location.

As mentioned briefly previously, the societal integration represented by organizational ties could be expected to reduce the feelings of alienation and dissatisfaction. The general literature on participatory democracy, in particular, emphasizes the beneficial effects that should be expected to flow from widespread participation. Without entering directly into the debate over the relevance of commonplace variables such as organizational memberships and activism for the participation hypothesis, we present findings that should not encourage optimism concerning the attitudinal consequences of organizational involvement.

Our PDI measure is constructed from a battery of questions tapping three dimensions of public policy in ten issue areas. The areas are as follows:

Looking after old people
Guaranteeing equal rights for men and women
Seeing to it that everyone who wants a job can have one
Providing good education
Providing good medical care
Providing adequate housing
Fighting pollution
Guaranteeing neighborhoods safe from crime
Providing equal rights for racial minorities
Trying to even out differences in wealth

The dimensions investigated were the importance of the issue to the respondent, the responsibility of the government for dealing with the issue, and the satisfaction of the respondent with governmental performance in that area. A measure of political dissatisfaction was constructed for each issue: people scored high on dissatisfaction if they were dissatisfied with the government's performance on the issue if it was viewed as a responsibility of government and if it was considered to be very important to the respondent. Low dissatisfaction scores represented either satisfaction, lack of responsibility assigned to government, or lack of importance of the issue to the respondent. Each dimension involved four response categories, hence intermediate levels on the index reflect moderate responses to the individual questions. The PDI measure is the mean score for the respondent across all ten issue areas.[29]

The trust in government measure is derived from two items from the SRC-CPS battery:

> Generally speaking, would you say that this country is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?

How much do you trust the government in Washington to do what is right? Do you trust it just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or almost never?

Our analysis strategy is to utilize the MCA program in order to evaluate the contribution to PDI and trust of organizational involvement compared with age, education, and left-right self placement. The organizational involvement variable is the summary index.

The contribution of the index of organizational activity to political dissatisfaction is quite modest. Table 10 shows the contribution of the four variables. It seems that organizational involvement does not

Table 10 here

contribute greatly to the satisfaction of members with the outputs of the political system.

The power of this set of variables for explaining levels of political trust is likewise unimpressive, though organizational activity is no longer--by a small margin--the weakest of the predictors (see Table 11). It is clear that, whatever the causes of political dissatisfaction and distrust,

Table 11 here

they are not greatly affected by organizational involvement.

Conclusions

This paper has reviewed the relationship between organizational involvement and several aspects of politics. The strong contribution of organizational involvement to conventional political participation, which has been noted in many studies, is reconfirmed. The relationship holds even when controls for age, education, and left-right self placement are instituted. It was expected that organizational involvement would depress protest potential, and this was shown to be the case. However, when the same set of controls are employed, the relationship largely vanishes, for organizational activists tend to possess the demographic and political characteristics of the members of the population who are low on protest. The relationships between organizational involvement, on the one hand, and political dissatisfaction and distrust, on the other, are quite weak. Indeed, the variables that were strong predictors of conventional and unconventional participation explain little of the variance in dissatisfaction and distrust.

The received wisdom concerning the importance of organizational involvement for conventional participation is supported by the data. But the presumed impact of organizational involvement on reducing protest, dissatisfaction, and distrust is not confirmed in these analyses.

Table 10

Model of Political Dissatisfaction

	β
Left-Right Self Placement	.14
Age	.11
Education	.09
Organizational Activity Index	.08
Variance explained (adjusted R^2) = .04	

Table 11

Model of Political Trust

	β
Left-Right Self Placement	.11
Age	.08
Organizational Activity Index	.08
Education	.06
Variance explained (adjusted R^2) = .02	

Footnotes

[1]In addition to the eight-nation study that is referred to here, the work of the crossnational group associated with Sidney Verba and Norman Nie has been of particular importance. Their major work is forthcoming: Verba, Nie, and Jae-on Kim, Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison. Previously published are Verba and Nie, Participation in America, New York: Harper and Row, 1972; Verba, Nie, and Kim, The Modes of Democratic Participation: A Crossnational Comparison, Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage, 1971; Verba et al., "The Modes of Participation: Continuities in Research", Comparative Political Studies, 6 (July 1973), 235-50; and numerous other publications.

[2]Myron Weiner, "Political Participation: Crisis of the Political Process", in Leonard Binder et al, Crises and Sequences in Political Development, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971, pp 159-204.

[3]Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.

[4]Samuel H. Barnes, Party Democracy, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967, chapter 7, pp 112-125.

[5]For example, in Jack Walker, "A Critique of the Elitist Theory of Democracy", American Political Science Review, 60 (June 1966), 285-95; Peter Bachrach, The Theory of Democratic Elitism, Boston: Little, Brown, 1967.

[6]Carole Pateman, Participation and Democratic Theory, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970; and Paul Blumberg, Industrial Democracy: The Sociology of Participation, New York: Schocken, 1969.

[7]Principal researchers in the project are as follows: United States: Samuel H. Barnes, Ronald Inglehart, and M. Kent Jennings; Great Britain: Mark Abrams and Alan Marsh; The Netherlands: Philip Stouthard; West Germany: Klaus Allerbeck, Max Kaase, and Hans D. Klingemann; Austria: Leopold Rosenmayr; Finland: Pertti Pesonen and Risto Sankiaho; Switzerland: Henry Kerr and Dusan Sidjanski; Italy: Alberto Marradi, Giacomo Sani, and Giovanni Sartori.

[8]For example, the forthcoming volume dealing with political action edited by Samuel H. Barnes and Max Kaase; and Ronald Inglehart, The Silent Revolution, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977.

[9]Good introductions to the literature on postindustrial society include the following: Daniel Bell, The Coming of Postindustrial Society, New York: Basic Books, 1973; Zbigniew Brzezinski, Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era, New York: Viking Press, 1971; M. Donald Hancock and Gideon Sjoberg, Politics in the Postwelfare State, New York: Columbia University Press, 1972; Samuel Huntington, "Postindustrial Politics: How Benign Will It Be?", Comparative Politics, 6 (January, 1974), pp 163-91;

the contributions to Leon Lindberg (ed.), Politics and the Future of Industrial Society, New York: David McKay, 1976; Theodore Roszak, Where the Waste-Land Ends: Politics and Transcendence in Postindustrial Society, Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1972; Donald Schon, Beyond the Stable State, London: Temple Smith, 1971; and Alain Touraine, The Postindustrial Society, New York: Random House, 1972.

[10] Choice and the Politics of Allocation, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971, pp. 93-95.

[11] See Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, New York: Harpers, 1954; and Jeanne M. Knutson, The Human Basis of the Polity, Chicago: Aldine, 1972.

[12] See Knutson, op. cit; and Markku Haranne and Erik Allardt, Attitudes Toward Modernity and Modernization: An Appraisal of an Empirical Study, Helsinki: Research Group for Comparative Sociology, Research Report No. 6, 1964, p. 67.

[13] Why Men Rebel, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.

[14] Among others: Gurr, op. cit. and Douglas A. Hibbs, Jr., Mass Political Violence: A Crossnational Causal Analysis, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973.

[15] These have been extensively reviewed in Bernard Grofman and Edward N. Muller, "The Strange Case of Relative Gratification and Potential for Political Violence: The V-Curve Hypothesis", American Political Science Review, 67 (June 1973), pp 514-539.

[16] Ronald Inglehart, "Values, Objective Needs, and Subjective Satisfaction Among Western Publics", Comparative Political Studies, 9 (January, 1977), pp 429-58; Erik Allardt, "The Question of Interchangeability of Objective and Subjective Social Indicators of Well-Being", paper prepared for the 1976 Congress of IPSA, Edinburgh, August 16-24, 1976; Frank M. Andrews and Stephen B. Withey, Social Indicators of Well-Being: American's Perceptions of Life Quality, New York: Plenum Press, 1976, pp 138-42.

[17] It should be noted that our church membership variable includes church affiliation as well as membership in church-related organizations. Hence it is not comparable to the variable coded by Verba and Nie in Participation in America, p. 178.

[18] The nature of youth organizational involvement merits special attention that cannot be allocated it here. The same is true of women and blacks (see below).

[19] In particular, compare with Verba and Nie, op. cit., pp. 174-208; Milbrath, op. cit., pp. 134-35,

John C. Scott, Jr., "Membership and Participation in Voluntary Associations," American Sociological Review, 22 (June 1957), 315-26; and Charles R. Wright and Herbert H. Hyman, "Voluntary Association Memberships of American Adults: Evidence from National Sample Surveys," American Sociological Review, 23 (June 1958), 284-93.

[20] pp. 174-208.

[21] Ibid., 183-84.

[22] Ibid., 186; italics in original.

[23] Ibid., 186-191.

[24] Ibid., 191-94.

[25] Ibid., see Appendix B, pp. 356-357.

[26] Op. cit.

[27] Verba, et al., "The Modes of Participation," Comparative Political Studies, 6 (July 1973), 235-50. The drawbacks of research on participation that excludes protest and other unconventional forms have been widely noted. See, for example, Robert H. Salisbury, "Research on Political Participation," American Journal of Political Science, 19 (May 1975), 323-41; Jerrold Rusk, "Political Participation in America: A Review Essay," American Political Science Review, 70 (June 1976), 583-91; William R. Schonfeld, "The Meaning of Democratic Participation--Review Article," World Politics, 28 (October 1975), 134-58.

[28] Further details of the construction of the scale will be found in the initial report on the study, edited by Samuel H. Barnes and Max Kaase, forthcoming.

[29] The construction of the measure is described in detail in Barnes and Kaase, eds., op. cit.