

1979

# Gender and culture in political participationg a six nation study.

James G. Bruton  
*University of Windsor*

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GENDER AND CULTURE IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION:  
A SIX NATION STUDY

by

JAMES G. BRUTON

A Thesis  
submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
through the Department of  
Political Science in Partial Fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Arts at  
The University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1979

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1979

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Dedication

This paper is dedicated to my wife Kirsten.

ABSTRACT

GENDER AND CULTURE IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION:  
A SIX NATION STUDY

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James G. Bruton

This thesis is an empirical study of participation in six Western democracies - Canada, the United States, Great Britain, the Netherlands, West Germany and Japan. Voting, discussing politics, influencing others votes, attending political meetings and campaign work are the individual electoral activities used in the study. These activities are compared cross-nationally and summary participation variables are formed in each country which exhibit Guttman scale characteristics. A set of nine predictors encompassing attitudinal, socioeconomic and demographic variables are employed in the analysis in order to assess their impact on participation.

The second major focus of the paper is the investigation of male/female differences in rates of political involvement in the six countries. A breakdown of the individual activities and the summary participation variable by sex allows for the measurement of the magnitude of these differences. In addition, causal modelling enables us to determine both the direct and indirect effects of sex on participation. Finally, the participation variable is analysed by number of

children, education, employment status, and age in order to determine further, the possible causes of sex differentiation in electoral politics.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter One-

Introduction

The concept of political participation is at the heart of democratic theory. The notion of democracy is based on the premise that government should be responsible to and aware of the demands of the people it serves. Thus, the importance of political participation to any democracy cannot be understated. If a country is said to be democratic in nature, then it may be assumed that some form of mass political participation must exist in that country. Indeed, in a purely democratic society, all of the people should have an equal voice in determining how their society is governed.

While political scientists and theorists agree that participation is important to a democracy, the amount and scope of participation that should occur is not clear. Parry<sup>1</sup> cites two approaches to participation - instrumental and developmental. The instrumentalist approach did not "necessarily wish to convey that participation need be extensive in either number or scope. Participation was confined to the conventional institutions. And though participation might be necessary to ensure legitimacy as well as the satisfaction of interests, the form of participation might merely be voting in a periodical election."<sup>2</sup>

For the developmental theorists, participation is part of a process of political and moral education. While apathy was to be expected, "social and political institutions could be arranged to maximize the individual's opportunities to determine the conditions in which he lived."<sup>3</sup> The develop-

mentalists favour expansion of participatory rights to the private sector. Pateman states "it became clear that neither the demands for more participation, nor the theory of participatory democracy itself, are based, as is so frequently claimed, on dangerous illusions or on an outmoded and unrealistic theoretical foundation. We can still have a modern, viable theory of democracy which retains the notion of participation at its heart."<sup>4</sup> Thus, we have one theory which calls for the expansion of participation to all sectors of society and another theory which seems to be content with the current form and scope of participation.

Almond and Verba, in the Civic Culture, state that the best situation for preserving democratic stability is an equal balance between an active and passive population.<sup>5</sup> The fear expressed here is that too much participation, especially by extremist factions of society, will hurt the functioning of the government. Furthermore, Milbrath states that "it is a fact that high participation is not required for successful democracy. However, to ensure responsiveness of officials, it is essential that a sizeable percentage of citizens participate in choosing their public officials."<sup>6</sup>

Empirically, the study of political activity has taken two main approaches - a unidimensional and a multidimensional approach. Milbrath best summarizes the unidimensional approach. He finds that political activity is both hierarchical<sup>8</sup> and



cumulative.<sup>9</sup> Participation may be viewed as an hierarchy of costs measured in terms of the time and energy required for individual acts. Activities such as voting require little time or energy, while running for public office is a much more demanding activity. Political activities are also cumulative in that "persons engaging in the topmost behaviour are likely also to engage in those behaviours ranking lower."<sup>10</sup>

Verba and Nie stress the multi-dimensionality of political participation. They suggest four participatory modes including voting, campaign activity, citizen initiated contacts and co-operative participation.<sup>11</sup> Voting is the most widespread and regularized political activity, and in terms of the over-all impact of the citizenry on governmental performance, it may be the most single important act. "For most Americans, voting is the sole act of participation in politics. If a majority of the nation goes to the polls, much less than a majority canvasses for one of the parties; contributes to campaign funds, or engages in any other type of behaviour we associate with political activism."<sup>12</sup>

Campaign activities include working for a party or a candidate, attending meetings, contributing money, and trying to convince others how they should vote. "These activities differ from the actual act of voting in that they represent ways in which an individual can increase his influence over the electoral process by influencing the vote of

others, the selection of candidates, and/or the formation of campaign issues."<sup>13</sup> By citizen initiated contacts, Verba and Nie are referring to individual contacts with government officials - that is, when an individual decides to approach his local M.P., mayor or some other official. The fourth category is co-operative participation and this refers to group or organizational activity by citizens to deal with social and political problems. "Co-operative group activity is initiated by private citizens and may take place at any time in relation to any type of issue or problem of concern to the group."<sup>14</sup>

The unidimensional and multidimensional approaches to the study of political participation do not conflict. The unidimensional approach measures how much effort people put into political participation. Verba et al state that "this is an important distinction; 'effort' is one of our major dimensions of political activity."<sup>15</sup> Furthermore they state that political participation is both uni- and multi-dimensional."<sup>16</sup> However, they feel the "one can make finer distinctions among the activists in terms of the modes of activity in which they engage."<sup>17</sup> For this paper, the unidimensional approach will be used in the analysis of political activity. This approach is valid here because the scope of activities is limited to only electoral by-related acts. Specifically, the items used as measures of activity are voting,

discussing politics, influencing others votes, attending political meetings and campaign work. Verba and Nie state that the unidimensional approach "fit activities within the electoral sphere better than they fit the relations among other diverse activities."<sup>18</sup>

In this thesis, electoral activity in six countries -- Canada, the United States, Great Britain, Japan, the Netherlands and West Germany is studied. Relatively little work has been done investigating participation in many of these countries. Verba, Nie and Kim<sup>19</sup> have examined political activity in seven countries, three of which were the United States, the Netherlands and Japan. This is the sole cross-national study that deals primarily with participation. Almond and Verba do some participatory analysis in their classic five nation study but here the focus is mainly on comparing political attitudes across the countries.

In Canada only a few studies have dealt with participation. Van Loon uses Milbrath's hierarchical approach to measure political activity. He describes Canadians as "spectator-participants" in that while most people take part in electoral activities their motivation is a "spectator interest in what is going on in politics."<sup>21</sup> Van Loon suggests three types of resources which influence participation: socioeconomic, personality and political.<sup>22</sup> Political efficacy is introduced as an intervening variable but he

finds that efficacy does not lead directly to activity but rather the level of political interest is the key variable which determines participation.<sup>23</sup> However, Van Loon feels that political interest is derived from such superficial stimulus as the entry of an interesting personality upon the Canadian political scene.

Burke<sup>24</sup> uses a model similar to Van Loon's but his principal concern is the analysis of regional differences in activity. The hierarchical structure of electoral activities is validated statistically using scaling techniques for both federal and provincial electoral activities. Burke finds that attitudinal variables have the most explanatory power for political activity while demographic and socio-economic variables reveal much weaker effects.

Beck and Pierce compare Canadian and United States rates of involvement and party allegiances. They find that while Canadians are more cynical and have a lower sense of governmental responsiveness, Canadians participate as much or more than do Americans. Furthermore they find that education has very little impact on participation in Canada while in the United States, education is a much stronger force in determining activity.<sup>25</sup>

Uhlaner employs Verba and Nie's multidimensional approach in order to examine Canadian participation. She finds that socioeconomic forces have little effect on participation. Rather, party affiliation "has the effect of disproportion-

ately increasing the political activity of persons with fewer socioeconomic resources, thereby weakening the aggregated effects of SEA (socioeconomic status) upon activity."<sup>26</sup>

Equally important is the heightened activity of Quebecois who participate, politically, like mobilized people. She states that "societies where ethnic divisions not only exist but also provides deep roots for the political system may prove generally to be those in which explanations of activity based solely upon the individual are less descriptive than are those taking account of social group."<sup>27</sup>

The literature on political participation in the United States, comparatively, is abundant. Milbrath's book Political Participation provides an excellent review of most of the basic findings. However, the most exhaustive single study is Verba and Nie's Participation in America. Here the multidimensionality of political activities is documented in terms of the four distinct modes of participatory acts previously mentioned. The authors find that socioeconomic forces play a key role in determining American participation. Upper-status citizens participate more than lower-status ones. Coupled with this, "affiliation with voluntary associations, party affiliation and political beliefs all lead upper-status individuals to participate more than their socioeconomic status would predict."<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, group consciousness among blacks tends to increase black participation beyond their level of socioeconomic status.

Literature dealing with participation in Japan, Great Britain, West Germany and the Netherlands is sparse indeed. The best descriptive works on Britain and West Germany are found in Almond and Verba's the Civic Culture. They describe Britain as having a deferential civic culture. While, in a broad cross-national perspective, the participant role is highly developed, "the British have maintained a strong deference to the independent authority of government."<sup>29</sup> They feel that the British political culture is a combination of the subject and participant roles. Butler and Stokes however note that with regards to elections, most Britains do little beyond voting in General Elections.<sup>30</sup> West Germans exhibit similar behaviour. Voting is the sole participatory act for most people. Almond and Verba find that norms favouring active participation are not well developed here.<sup>31</sup> Awareness of politics and political activity tend to be passive and formal. "Though there is a high level of cognitive competence, the orientation to the political system is still relatively passive - the orientation of the subject rather than of the participant."<sup>32</sup> Edinger states that "for most Germans, voting represents a very low commitment to a political input role, and electoral arrangements and outcomes tend to confirm their belief that voting provides them with relatively little influence over public policymaking."<sup>33</sup>

Japanese and Dutch literature comes primarily from Verba,

Nie, and Kim's Participation and Political Equality. In both countries, socioeconomic forces are only weak predictors of political activity. What is more important is the existence of distinct social segments within each society. In the Netherlands, this division is based on religious grounds while in Japan, the main distinction is between the farming and the workers segment as opposed to the segment of independent business, management and professionals. Verba et al state that in both countries there are two kinds of segments "(1) mobilized segments from fairly low on the socioeconomic resources scale who participate above the level one might predict given their scores in the political involvement scale; and (2) inhibited segments from the upper parts of the socioeconomic scale who participate below the level one might expect given their level of psychological involvement in politics."<sup>34</sup> Also evident in Japan is higher activity among males and slightly more participation in rural areas.<sup>36</sup>

Of the other three countries in the Verba et al study, Austria most closely resembles the Netherlands and Japan. Here segments in the society are important factors in reducing the importance of socioeconomic status. Both Catholic farmers and blue-collar workers participate at higher rates than their socioeconomic position would predict. Conversely, in India and Yugoslavia, political activity is closely associated with socioeconomic status. In these two countries, socioeconomic status is as important as it is in the United

States.

This brief review of the political participation literature reveals that political activity has not received uniform attention in all nations. In some countries, particularly the United States, participation has been studied in great depth, while in other countries, specifically Germany and Great Britain, only a minimal amount of work has been spent on the study of political activity. However, the literature does suggest that activity rates should be highest in the United States and Canada. The lowest levels of activity appear to be found in Japan and West Germany.

The six countries of this study form a good basis for comparative work. All of the countries have had successful democracies at least from the end of World War II. Furthermore, these countries are industrialized societies, which provide their citizens with standards of living that by world standards, are high. A further reason for the selection of these countries was the availability of data. Essentially, we are interested in examining electoral participation - that is, comparing rates of involvement for various activities commonly associated with electoral participation as well as establishing overall activity rates for these countries. In addition, a large part of this paper will dwell on the determinants of electoral activity, specifically the socioeconomic variables. Finally, the paper will deal at length with the subject of male/female participation in the electoral process.



## THE DETERMINANTS OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Past research has indicated that political participation is a function of various attitudinal, socioeconomic and demographic variables. Specifically, the attitudinal variables to be used in this study are political interest; strength of partisan identification, sense of political efficacy and perception of party influences. Income and education are used as measures of socioeconomic level and sex, age and community size are the demographic variables which will be examined in the study. A brief review of previous findings regarding the relationship between each of these variables and participation is presented below.

Political interest is a key variable in determining participation. A person's likelihood of participating increases with his level of interest - a finding so regular that many authors do not bother to report it. Milbrath lists twelve studies which show that "persons who are more interested or concerned about an election are more likely to vote."<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, "persons who are more psychologically involved in politics are more likely to engage in political and campaign activities other than voting."<sup>38</sup> The relationship between political interest and participation may be lower in non-democracies than in Western countries where barriers to participation are relatively low.

Strength of partisan identification is also a good predictor of political activity. "Persons who strongly

identify with or intensely prefer a given party are more likely to participate actively in the political process."<sup>39</sup> Strong partisans are also highly likely to be interested in politics.

Sense of political efficacy is the feeling that one can influence governmental divisions. People who are efficacious have higher activity rates than those who are not efficacious. Milbrath states that people who are psychologically involved are more likely to manifest efficacious feelings. Furthermore, people in upper socioeconomic groups are more likely to be efficacious.<sup>40</sup>

Perception of differences between political parties can be a factor in participation. People are more likely to turn out for an election when clear differences are perceived between the alternative parties than when the alternatives are unclear.<sup>41</sup> This is particularly important for people on the periphery of politics who do not normally participate. If the choice is clear, participation will be higher.

Studies have indicated that the socioeconomic variables, income and education, are both positively correlated with political participation.<sup>42</sup> Milbrath lists fourteen studies which establish the link between income and participation and no less than twenty-three studies which show the relationship between education and participation. Similarly Verba and Nie report that increased socioeconomic resources lead to higher activity rates. "Individuals of higher

social status develop such civic orientations as concern for politics, information, and feelings of efficacy, and these orientations in turn lead to participation."<sup>43</sup> That individuals with high socioeconomic status tend to participate more than do those with low socioeconomic status is a given. The question remains as to why this is the case. To a large extent, the ability of a person to effectively participate is determined by the resources that he or she has at hand, particularly when operating individually. Motivations, including such factors as self interest, sense of civic duty and high levels of psychological involvement do provide incentives for people to become politically active. However, even for those who are highly motivated, an individual's likelihood of effectively participating is dependent on the skills that he or she possesses.

The demographic variables, age, sex and community size, may also play a role in determining political activity. With regards to age, life-cycle effects are relevant. In early adulthood the individual is unsettled and has yet to develop a stake in politics that comes with extended residence, home ownership and children. As a result, participation rates among young people are generally low. Old age brings with it retirement and physical infirmities that lower the rate of political activity. In addition, interest in politics is low for young people because of relatively short exposure to politics and because other aspects of life frequently are judged

more important. In later life, interest declines as a result of factors associated with aging.<sup>44</sup> Generally then, political activity starts slowly for the young, increases through middle age and declines with old age.

Two theories exist regarding the effects of community size on participation. The mobilization model predicts more political activity in urban areas than in rural areas. People in urban areas have a higher rate of social interaction and they are more active in groups than person in the periphery. There are more political stimuli in their environment and this increases the number of opportunities for them to participate. Conversely, the decline of community model predicts higher activity rates among rural rather than urban areas. In the small towns people can "know the ropes of politics, know whom to contact, know each other so that they can form political groups. In larger units, politics is more complicated, impersonal and distant."<sup>46</sup> Verba et al., support the decline of community interpretation. Their study of seven nations indicate that a loss of participatory opportunities accompanies the decline of the small community. Indeed this finding is common across all nations of their study.<sup>47</sup>

## MALE/FEMALE DIFFERENCES IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Studies have consistently shown that women are less active than men in the political sphere. While "legally, women are on an equal footing with men; they are not so in practice."<sup>48</sup> There are many theories which try to explain women's position in society. Basically these can be summed up under four categories: 1) those pertinent to the unequal statuses and resources men and women are able to bring to politics; 2) those focusing on the socialization of women into culturally approved wife-mother roles; 3) those structured in terms of a male conspiracy to keep women out of politics and out of positions of political influence in particular; and 4) those arguing the existence of political behaviour consequences of physiological differences between the sexes. Explanations which focus on the unequal statuses and resources that men and women bring to politics have been termed the social structural perspective.<sup>50</sup> Here resources such as occupation, income and middle class background are involved. These resources are impersonal social forces and are rooted in social structures and organization. Another aspect of the social and structural approach is the fact that the burdens of homemaking, childbearing and childrearing falls more heavily on women than men. Thus, women may lack the leisure time that is available to men to devote to political matters.<sup>51</sup>

In contemporary Western societies, the economic

inequality between the sexes is also a source of differentiation. The wife's frequent dependence on her husband's income causes her lack of influence both within and outside the family. Equally important is the extent to which women participate in occupational life. This in turn, is a function of the degree to which family obligations tie women to the home, their willingness to take jobs, and the amenability of the economy to the employment of female labour.<sup>52</sup>

Socialization explanations of male/female political differentiation are based on the individual learning experiences. "Women, it is said, learn that governing is men's business, incorporate this belief into their self-conceptions and behave accordingly."<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, these studies argue, politics has been deemed inappropriate for women. "A women entering politics risks the social and psychological penalties so frequently associated with nonconformity. Disdain, internal conflicts, and failure are widely believed to be her likely reward."<sup>54</sup> The socialization theories explain the lack of women in political life, by stressing the negative cultural attitudes towards women in politics, to which both men and women are exposed. Holter states that in pre-industrial society "women were relegated to inferior positions since they were not as strong as men and were made immobile by pregnancy and childrearing."<sup>55</sup> The transmission of pre-industrial norms through socialization to industrial society

has perpetuated the inferior position of women.

The male conspiracy theory sees women as oppressed, barred from power by a ruling class of men bent on maintaining its hegemony. Culture and role systems are effective instruments of male domination. "Culture rationalizes and justifies male rule in terms of the dominant values of the community. Culture serves power: social structure embodies and protects it."<sup>56</sup> Furthermore Kirkpatrick adds that men tend to behave like any other group with a vested interest in the status quo, that men seek to preserve their positions of power and privilege by barring women from access to positions of influence."<sup>57</sup>

The proponents of physiological differences between the sexes as an explanation of women's lack of political power feel that there are distinct psychological differences between men and women which are grounded in their distinctive physiologies. There is a universal relation between power, politics and maleness. Supporters of this theory refer to Freud who "describes society as rooted in forces and authority, both which he believed to be dissolubly associated with maleness."<sup>58</sup> Thus the natural order is for male political dominance and female political submission. Critics claim that scientific evidence to validate this theory is lacking: Kirkpatrick states: "A physiological explanation must provide evidence that despite the existence of a few exceptions, despite broad intrasex differences, and despite variations in

political systems, it remains true that women lack the psychosocial characteristics associated everywhere with political leadership."<sup>59</sup>

Empirically, research substantiates the fact that women are not as politically active as men. In a early study, Duverger found that men and women vote at equivalent rates but involvement in political acts beyond voting is dominated much more by males.<sup>60</sup> At the elite level, the absence of women is particularly noticeable. For example, the recent British election, which saw a women elected as Prime Minister, also resulted in only 18 out of a possible 635 seats held by women.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, in the past Canadian election, only 10 of a possible 281 seats were won by women.<sup>62</sup> Other sources indicate few women in elite positions in countries as diverse as the Soviet Union,<sup>63</sup> Norway,<sup>64</sup> and the United States.<sup>65</sup> Factors which try to explain why women are less likely to be found in elite situations are as follows:

- 1) they are less socialized into politics from an early age,
- 2) they are less able to participate to the same extent even when socialization effects are controlled, and 3) either others do not expect them to participate at the same rates as men or they do not expect it of themselves.<sup>66</sup> In addition to this, women who do enter into elite political spheres, do so only after the demands of wife-mother are met.<sup>67</sup> It should be noted that elite and mass participation are not the



same thing. The individual resources and initiative required to participate at the elite level are far more demanding than those needed at the mass level. However, the lack of women in elite positions is important in that few role models are available to women at the mass level. Hence, women may participate less because they have fewer numbers to identify with and thus this may reinforce the idea that politics is really a man's world. The difference in male/female involvement in the political sphere become greater when we move from the mass to the elite level.

The most recent study of male/female differentiation at the mass level is found in Verba, Nie and Kim's Participation and Political Equality. The author's find persistent patterns of male/female differences in political activity in all seven of the countries studied. When controls are implemented for social and psychological characteristics, the differences although smaller still persist. The study notes that women are only slightly less psychologically involved than men. "The concern for politics among women, however, is not converted into political activity."<sup>68</sup> The authors state that "their findings strongly suggest the existence of pervasive inhibiting factors that limit the political role of women."<sup>69</sup> That is, women are inhibited rather than apathetic. If women were apathetic then their levels of psychological involvement would be much lower than

the data indicates. While the author's conclude that inhibitions account for lower activity rates among women, they do not cite, specifically, factors that lead to this inhibition. The fact remains, though, that "being female - even if one has the same educational level, as much affiliation with political institutions, and as much concern about political matters - implies a lower rate of political activity."<sup>70</sup>

Some writers have criticized the above literature suggesting that examining female activity from a male perspective is an incorrect approach. McCormack lists three biases in political sociology - first that women are for social reasons impaired politically, second, that women are rooted in family roles, and third, a tendency to judge the political performances of women by male norms. She suggests women are in fact over-socialized. "Women must be highly motivated to vote at all in a political culture that excludes them from all other roles except that of voter, but their lower rates of voting are taken to mean less interest, less desire and lower self-esteem."<sup>71</sup> With regard to the family boundedness of women, McCormack feels that more research is necessary. "The fact is that statements that relate female voting to family cohesion are putative, since the studies on which they are based present no independent measures of family integration and no analysis of other (nonpolitical) decision-making acts between husbands and wives."<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, the importance

of political decision-making is the exception, but also minor and unimportant, then it is incorrect to link it to family patterns of authority; if it is highly relevant, then the burden of proof is on the investigator to demonstrate that there is some consistency between political decision-making and other forms of decision-making in families."<sup>73</sup>

As to judging females by male norms, McCormack feels women are in a no-win situation. "Regardless of how women perform in political life, and more particularly at the polls, they are found wanting. When their votes do not correspond in frequency or in party preference to men's, they are wrong; when they do, it is because they lack independent political judgment."<sup>74</sup> The solution to these problems is, according to McCormack, the realization of two political cultures, one for each of the sexes. She feels that political sociologists assume that since women are members of the same party as men, they are members of the same political culture as well. For McCormack, women live in a different political culture from men, "a culture based on difference in political socialization, differences in political opportunity structures, and the way in which the media of communication defines each of them. These add up to a female design for political living that is dissimilar from that of the male."<sup>75</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has been an attempt to outline the major findings of the literature on political participation. This literature suggests an appropriate focus for this thesis. Specifically, two main topics require examination: first a cross-national investigation of electoral participation, and secondly, an examination of male/female differences in political activity within and across nations. After discussing several aspects of the methodology of the present research in Chapter II, the thesis proceeds in Chapter III to deal with electoral participation and here the following questions are considered.

First, how much variation is there in the percentage of respondents involved in each of the individual activities across country. Given the diversity in the history and present conditions of the countries to be studied (Canada, the United States, Great Britain, West Germany, Japan and the Netherlands) some variation is to be expected. Certain activities, while being legally valid, may not be culturally acceptable forms of political activity in all countries. Specifically then, one is interested in determining the amount of variation in each act and trying to explain why this variation exists.

Second, it has been argued that electoral participation is both unidimensional and cumulative in nature. If this is the case, then the individual activities should form valid

scales in each country. This would indicate a common character of electoral activities in each country.

Third, how effective are different variables in explaining political activity in each country? Independent variables chosen include measures of attitudes, socioeconomic status and demographic characteristics. The same set of predictors is used in each country and thus one can determine how effective the set is in explaining electoral activity. Here, again, the cultural diversity of the individual countries leads one to expect some variation in the relative importance of each variable as a predictor of participation. Finally, the relative impact of each variable across countries can be assessed.

Chapter IV is an examination of male/female differences in political activity. The literature in this area notes that women are politically less active than males and similar results are anticipated in this analysis. Specifically, the following aspects regarding male/female participation are of interest; first, how much variation is there between male/female activity rates in both individual activities and our summary participation measure. Are these differences focused specifically in certain activities or are they common in all political acts? Second, how much of male/female differences are unexplainable - that is, do different attitudinal and socioeconomic characteristics held by men and women explain the lower rates of political involvement for women. Here the

direct effects of sex - the unexplained difference - will be examined. Third, the literature suggests certain variables which may account for women's lower activity rates. Specifically, the effects of income, education, age, employment status and number of children on both male and female participation will be examined. Different activity rates at varying levels of these variables will be noted.

Chapter V concludes the thesis with a discussion of the findings and offers some suggestions for further research.

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Chapter Two

METHODS AND MEASURES

In order to study participation in the six countries it was necessary to find survey data from each country that contained as many participation items as possible. In addition, each survey had to contain the independent variables needed in the investigation. Of the six data sets, four have exactly comparable participation items. The United States and German surveys provide different measures of participation which prohibit cross-national comparison but still give us some insight to the character of participation in these countries.

Data for this analysis was obtained from the following sources:

1. The British data were obtained from the STUDY OF POLITICAL CHANGE IN BRITAIN, 1963 - 1970. The principal investigators were David Butler and Donald Stokes. The survey was conducted in four waves - a pre-election wave in 1963 and waves conducted after the 1964, 1966 and 1970 elections. For this paper, the data will come from a combined panel of the 1963 and 1964 waves because these are the only waves in which a full battery of participation items are asked. The 1963 - 1964 panel yields a raw number of 1481 respondents which when weighted gives us a sample of 1603 cases.

2. The Canadian data comes from item 1974 Post-Election National Survey conducted by Harold Clarke, Jane Jenson, Lawrence Leduc and Jon Pammett. This survey is a multi-stage cluster sample of 2562 respondents weighted to an

effective sample size of 2445. The participation questions were administered to a random half-sample of the respondents thus giving us 1262 cases unweighted and 1203 cases where weights were used.

3. The Dutch data comes from the Dutch Election Study conducted by Felix Heunks, M. Kent Jennings, Warren E. Miller, Philip C. Stouthard and Jacques Thomassen. The study is a panel study consisting of three waves done in 1970 after the provincial elections, 1971 and 1972 after parliamentary elections. The waves consist of 1838, 1262 and 972 respondents respectively. Data employed here comes from the first two waves, only.

4. The Japanese data comes from the 1967 Japanese National Election study conducted by Robert E. Ward and Akira Kubota. The study consists of two waves - one before the election of 1967 and one after the election. The survey consist of 2371 respondents weighted effectively to 1973 cases. Variables from both waves are used.

5. The German data comes from the 1972 German Election Panel Study conducted by Manfred Berger, Wolfgang Gibowski, Max Kaase, Dieter Roth, Uwe Schleth and Rudolf Wildenman. The study was done in three waves consisting of 2052 respondents for the first wave done in September, 1972, 1603 respondents interviewed a few days before the election in November, 1972 and 1222 respondents interviewed after the election in

December, 1972. The three waves are weighted to 2024, 1603 and 1583 respondents respectively. Only waves two and three were used in the analysis.

6. The American data comes from the 1976 American National Election Study conducted by Warren E. Miller and Arthur H. Miller. The survey was conducted in two waves - one before and one after the election. The data yields 2248 respondents which when weighted gives a sample size of 2868 respondents. Data from both waves were used in the analysis.

### The Dependent Variables

Electoral participation encompasses a number of acts which vary in terms of their focus and in terms of the amount of initiative required to perform the act. The act of voting requires very little initiative and may have only minimal impact in terms of the outcome of an election. Conversely, running for public office requires a great deal of initiative on the part of the individual and may afford the individual much more influence in the political system than does the act of voting.

The following questions, taken from the Japanese Election Study, illustrates the participation items to be used for this paper.

Did you vote in this general election or did something keep you from voting?

Do you talk about politics with other people?

Did you suggest to anyone how they should vote?

Did you attend any public debates or other political meetings during the campaign?

Did you do any work for one of the parties or candidates during the campaign?

It should be noted that the questions in all the surveys were not worded in the same way. However, the wording was close enough so that the focus of the question did attempt to measure the same phenomena. The response to the questions were coded dichotomously - any positive response coded one

while any negative response was coded zero. Some of the surveys allowed for a wider range of responses than others. For example, the Canadian study allowed the following responses - often, sometimes, seldom or never. In such cases responses were dichotomized such that often, and sometimes were coded one while a seldom or never response was assigned a score of zero.

In order to establish one participation variable, Guttman scaling techniques were applied to the participation questions in each survey. Guttman scales must be unidimensional and cumulative. By unidimensionality, we mean that "the component items must all measure movement towards or away from the same single underlying object."<sup>1</sup> In this case, the underlying object is political participation as all the questions clearly deal with some form of political activity.

A cumulative scale implies two qualities. First the items may be ranked in terms of difficulty. Secondly "respondents who reply positively to a difficult item will always respond positively to less difficult items and vice versa."<sup>2</sup> Figure 2-1 illustrates a perfect set of responses for the participation items. From Figure 2-1, we can see that in the perfect situation, a respondent who engages in the most difficult act (campaign work) also engages in all the less difficult acts. Conversely, a respondent who does not engage in the easiest act (voting) does not take part in any of the



most difficult acts. Of course, in practise, there are exceptions to the perfect situation. For example, a person may discuss politics but not vote. "The test of reliability of the items in the Guttman procedure is the degree to which the data indeed fit the model."<sup>3</sup> Two statistics are used to determine if a set of items do indeed exhibit scalar properties. The coefficient of reproductibility (C.R.) must be higher than .9 in order to indicate a valid scale.<sup>4</sup> The coefficient of scalability (C.S.) must be higher than .6 in order to have a valid scale.<sup>5</sup> If both of these criterion are met than it may be assumed that the items tested form a scale which is unidimensional and cumulative in character.

Figure 2-1

Respondent	Vote	Discuss Politics	Attend Meetings or Convince Friends	Campaign Work
A	0	0	0	0
B	1	0	0	0
C	1	1	0	0
D	1	1	1	0
E	1	1	1	1

Milbrath's hierarchy of political involvement (Figure 2-2) is an example of a unidimensional and cumulative scale. The hierarchy is divided into three main categories in terms

of difficulty of activity - gladiatorial, transitional and spectator activities. The gladiators are the most active in the political arena while spectators are the most passive of the participants. Transitional acts are seen as a stepping point to gladiatorial activities. Milbrath states that in the United States 5 - 7% of the adult population could be classified as gladiators, about 60% are largely spectators and approximately 30% are politically apathetic or passive.<sup>6</sup>

Figure 2-2

HIERARCHY OF POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT\*

\*Source: Milbrath, L., Political Participation, P. 18

Gladiatorial Activities	Transitional Activities	Spectator Activities
Holding Public and Party Office Being a Candidate for Office Soliciting Political funds Attending a caucus meeting Becoming an active Party member Contributing time in a campaign	Attending political meeting or rally Contributing money Contacting a public official	Wearing a button or sticker Attempting to talk another into voting a certain way Initiating a Political Discussion Voting Exposure to political stimuli

In the Canadian study, Political Participation, Some Methodological and Substantive Considerations,<sup>7</sup> the authors test the scalability of participation. They devise a participation variable composed of the following categories:

Vote, discuss politics, a combined item of convincing friends how to vote and attending political meetings, and finally campaign activity. This summary participation variable was found to exhibit scalar properties. The combining of the variables "attend meetings" and "convince friends" gives a more even distribution of the participation items. The scale is presented in Figure 2-3.

A FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE PARTICIPATION SCALES (CANADA)

Figure 2-3

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Inactive (0)	11 %
Vote (1)	29 %
Discuss Politics (2)	29.8%
Attend Meetings or Convince Friends (3)	20.9%
Campaign Activity (4)	9.4%
C.R. =	.95
C.S. =	.77
N =	1203
Source:	Burke, M., Clarke, H., Leduc, L., Federal and Provincial Participation: Some Methodological and Substantive Considerations.

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This scale is composed of components of Milbrath's hierarchy. In this scale, Vote and Discuss Politics would be spectator activities, Attend Meetings or Convince Friends

are representative of transitional activities and Campaign Activity is a gladiatorial activity. In the following analysis to be performed on the six countries in this study, this model will be tested to see if it is applicable in the other countries. In each country we will try to use the identical components of this scale and see if they do indeed scale in the other countries.

We have stated that electoral participation is unidimensional and cumulative in nature. Verba and Nie reject the unidimensionality of political participation. Rather, they find that there are four modes of participation - each mode having its own distinct characteristics. The main distinction between Milbrath's unidimensional approach and Verba and Nie's multi-dimensional approach is one of scope. Verba and Nie view participation in both electoral and non-electoral terms. Their four modes of participation are voting, campaign activity, citizen-initiates contacts and communal activity.<sup>8</sup> However, with regard to electoral activities, Verba and Nie find that a cumulative structure does exist and thus they do not reject the hierarchical assumption of participation when dealing with electoral acts.<sup>9</sup>

The summing of the items used in the Guttman scale procedures give us a dependent participation variable which ranges from 0 to 4. If the items meet the requirements of Guttman scaling, then it may be assumed that this variable

has interval level qualities. Thus, we will be able to use multivariable statistical techniques in analyzing the relationships between the dependent variable and the various independent variables to be used in the following study.

It should be noted that in the United States and German surveys some of the participation items were not available. Specifically, the United States data lacks a question determining political discussion. The German survey does not ask questions about influencing other votes or campaign activity. Thus, for these countries our participation variable will be different from those of the other four countries. This difference will prevent direct cross-national comparison of the summary participation variable as well as a comparison of the effects of the independent variables.

The variables that are used in Germany and the United States do allow us to get a measure of participation in those countries. Thus, while cross-national comparison may be limited by lack of comparable participatory measures, the variables that are included in both Germany and the United States, give us valid measures of political activities within the respective countries. The analysis of participation in both the United States and Germany will not be hindered by lack of comparable data. The American participation variable is identical to those of the other four countries with the exception of a political discussion variable. The German variable is

more radically different. While lacking items pertaining to "influencing others vote" and "campaign activity", a variable asking whether a person showed support for a candidate or party is included. This activity is a transitional activity. Thus, in Germany, we are lacking variables which measure gladiatorial activity such as campaign work, but other points on the scale are adequately measured.

## THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Political participation has been shown to be a function of various socioeconomic, attitudinal and demographic variables. The socioeconomic variables to be used in this study are income and education. Income, in each country, was recoded using the midpoint of each category set up by the principal investigators of each survey. Thus, the interval level properties of this variable were preserved.

Education was measured in the survey either by number of years of school attended or by age left school. In either case we were then able to measure education in years.

The demographic variables used in the study were age, sex and community size. Age, measured in years, and sex were left as is. Community size is measured either in terms of the type of community i.e. small town, metropolitan areas, or by the actual population. Those surveys using actual population were left as is while those using type of community were divided between rural and urban areas.

Political interest, strength of party identification, perceived differences between parties, and sense of efficacy are the attitudinal variables used in the study. The responses were dichotomized except in those cases where three responses were allowed. These were left as is.

The independent variables are constructed as similarly as possible. Using regression analysis, we will determine the impact of each independent variable on our dependent partici-

pation variable.

Two statistics will be presented - a simple  $r$  which shows the relationship between the independent and dependent variable, and secondly the beta coefficients which show the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable controlling for the effects of all the other independent variables in the equation. In this manner, we can determine the effects of each independent variable on participation.<sup>10</sup>

The Pearson's  $r$  and standardized beta coefficients allow for analysis within countries. In order to facilitate a cross-national comparison, unstandardized beta coefficients must be used.<sup>11</sup> Thus, using unstandardized beta coefficients will allow us to state if an independent variable has a stronger effect in one country as compared to another. From this we will be able to determine the relative influence of a variable in each country.

Chapter four focuses on the impact of male/female differences in each country. In order to study the differences between the sexes with regard to participation, the following steps will be taken. First, the composite participation variable as well as the individual components will be broken down by sex. From this we should be able to see if there are significant differences and if these differences are common to all the participatory activities. Secondly, in order to more

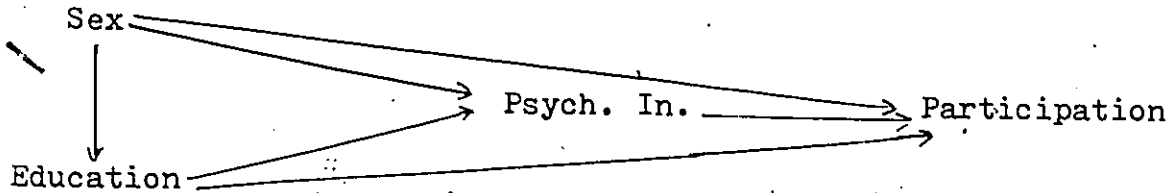


fully explain the impact of sex in each country, a path model will be constructed. The path model is based on Verba and Nie's socioeconomic resource model.<sup>12</sup> Simply stated, this model suggests that socioeconomic status influences attitudes which in turn influence participation. This model is presented below:

socio-economic status  $\longrightarrow$  attitudes  $\longrightarrow$  participation

To this model, we add sex as an exogenous variable. Education will be used as a surrogate measure of socioeconomic resources. We use education rather than income because education of the individual can be assessed. In the case of income, it is difficult to know within the family structure who controls income and to distinguish between family income and personal income.<sup>13</sup> The attitudinal measure is a combination of four variables - political interest, strength of participation, sense of political efficacy and perception of party differences. We combine these variables to form a summary attitudinal measure called psychological involvement (Psych. In.). This measure is constructed such that the highest score attainable in five of the six countries is twelve.<sup>14</sup> In Germany, we do not have a variable which measures a respondents perception of party differences and thus the possible maximum score of our psychological involvement variable in this country is nine.

The model we will use is presented below:



We will use standardized beta coefficients as measures of the relationships between the variables. This allows us to assess the strength of relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable while controlling for the effects of the other independent variables in the equation. The model is constructed such that the following relationships may be examined.

1. The relationship between sex and participation - i.e. is there a difference in the rate of male/female participation.
2. The relationship between sex and psychological involvement - i.e. are women as psychologically involved as men.
3. The relationship between sex and education - i.e. are women as well educated as men.
4. The relationship between education and psychological involvement - i.e. does increased education lead to higher levels of psychological involvement.
5. The relationship between education and partici-

pation - i.e. does increased education lead directly to increased participation.

6. The relationship between psychological involvement and participation - how strong a role do attitudes play in influencing participation.

It is not valid to use beta coefficients for comparisons cross-nationally. That is, we cannot compare the size of the beta coefficients in the United States with that in Japan, for example. We can only see if there is a statistically significant relationship and whether it is positive or negative in each country.

The final step in the fourth chapter is to investigate more fully the effects of sex in participation. We will present the mean participation scores for men and women controlling for the effects of number of children at home, whether or not a respondent is employed, age, education and income. In this manner, we will be able to determine the effects (if any) of these independent variables on male/female participation rates.

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14. This number was arrived at in the following manner. Each of the four attitudinal variables were weighted such that their maximum scores would equal three. Thus summing these variables together yields a possible maximum score of twelve.
15. The same steps were taken in Germany as in the other five nations. Here, three of the four attitudinal measures were available and thus the possible maximum score of our summary variable is nine.

Chapter Three

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND ITS CORRELATES

## POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND ITS CORRELATES

This chapter focuses on participation and its correlates in each country. The first section will center on an examination of the components of the participation variable as well as the construction of a summary participatory variable in each country. In addition, mean scores will be presented so that the level of participation may be compared in the four countries with similar participation variables. The second section will deal with the impact of a common set of independent variables in each country. Cross-sectional comparison of the relative importance of the independent variables will be undertaken using unstandardized beta coefficients.

### 1. The Participation Variable and Its Components

Electoral activity encompasses many individual acts besides voting. In selecting the participation variables, we had to find variables which measured different levels of participation in addition to being common across all of the countries. Due to the limitation of data, we have found common variables in just four of our six countries. Only in Germany and the United States were we unable to find comparable data for some of the variables.

We begin the analysis with an examination of the participation variables in each country. Looking at Table I,<sup>1</sup> it becomes evident that there are substantial differences across country in the percentage of people engaged in similar acts.

In all countries, voting is by far the act in which most people are involved. The rate of reported frequency of voting is over 80% in all countries except the United States. The low American score is probably due to the fact that voting is more difficult act in the United States than in the other five countries. In the United States, it is necessary to register in order to be eligible to vote on election day. In all other countries, no registration is necessary as this is done automatically by the government of the respective countries. Of the six countries, Germany and Japan have the highest rates of voting - a fact that is interesting because of the comparatively short history of democratic government found in these countries. However in both countries, studies have shown that the high voting rate is based on a sense of civic duty rather than an underlying willingness to take an active part in its political process. For example, Bradley Richardson makes the following statement about Japanese participants:

"The evidence from studies of voting behaviour and political attitudes so far suggests that feelings of duty and obligations are also a primary motivation to vote in Japan, exceeding in importance responses to appeals to vote."2

Similarly, Edinger notes the following regarding the German case:

"Although the German, preoccupied with his private problems, may see it as his duty to fulfill the public function which he identifies with the legitimate role of the citizen, he looks upon these largely as formal obligations that involve him only peripherally in the political process and do not demand more than sporadic participation." 3

The passive nature of electoral participation found in Germany and Japan is also evident in Britain. Indeed, the small percentages of those involved in activities other than voting (Table I) reflect this passivity. Butler & Stokes state that "what is most notable (about participation) is the small number who do anything at all beyond voting in General Elections."<sup>4</sup>

The discussion of politics is an activity which, relative to voting, involves slightly more motivation and interest in political matters. Because this act is regarded as more difficult, fewer people can be expected to engage in this activity - a fact which is evident from the data. Of the six countries, political discussion is most widespread in Canada and the Netherlands where over 60% of respondents report involvement in this activity. While no data is available for the United States, Almond and Verba in the five nation study report that 76% of Americans took part in some political discussions.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, the reported frequencies for Germany, Japan and particularly Great Britain are much lower. Slightly less than one-half of the German and Japanese respondents responded positively



FREQUENCY OF INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATORY ACTS BY COUNTRY

TABLE I

	GERMANY	CANADA	UNITED STATES	JAPAN	NETHERLANDS	UNITED KINGDOM
Vote	97.3	85.6	71.6	89.5	83.3	89.0
Discuss Politics	49.6	62.1	-- XX	42.3	63.7	27.5
Attend Meetings	12.4	20.4	6.3	13.3	14.7	7.7
Influence Others'	-- XX	21.3	36.7	6.9	12.3	12.0
Campaign Work	-- XX	10.8	4.4	3.4	6.3	3.2
*Show Support	29.4					

\* Germany only

XX - Data not available

to questions measuring political discussions. Conversely, in Britain, almost three-quarters of the respondents indicate they do not talk much about politics. The low scores of these three countries are a reflection of this passive character of participation that has already been noted although the small British score is somewhat surprising.<sup>6</sup>

The attending of political meetings or rallies, according to Milbrath, may be either a spectator or gladiatorial activity.<sup>7</sup> The spectators are non-committed people who merely come for the show. The gladiators are usually party officials or highly involved partisans. 20.4% of Canadian respondents attend political meetings, Germany, Japan and the Netherlands show similar rates of about 13% of respondents involved. Comparatively lower are the rates of meeting attendance for Britain and the United States (roughly 7%). Assuming that those who do campaign work (gladiators) also attend political meetings, it becomes apparent from the small difference in the reported frequency of these two activities, that a large proportion of the people who attend meetings in the United States and Britain are the most active and loyal supporters of the party. Indeed, Campbell et al<sup>8</sup> show data revealing that in 1952 and 1956 the percentage of American respondents attending meetings was 7% indicating that, at least since the war, the attending of political meetings in the United States is for the most part a gladiatorial activity. A similar situation appears to

exist in Britain. Richard Rose states that political parties have not developed a base for soliciting widespread public opinion. Specifically he says "the increasing importance of popular political involvement has not been matched by a development of party institutions permitting individuals to voice their views to governors, or governors to explain their actions to the governed in a process of mobilizing consent."<sup>9</sup>

While in the United States and Britain, attending meetings is mainly done by gladiators, the larger figures in the other countries suggest that there is far more spectator involvement in this activity.

Influencing others' votes is an activity found most predominantly in the North American countries. Indeed, more than one-third of American respondents and roughly one-fifth of Canadian respondents report involvement in this activity. The Dutch and British show a smaller incidence with similar scores of about 12%. Smaller still is the Japanese case where only 6.9% of respondents report influencing others' vote. While the low Japanese score is again a reflection of the passivity of participation, the figure also indicates that this activity in terms of difficulty may rank as a gladiatorial act. That is, only the most highly involved try to influence others' vote in Japan. Conversely, the much larger scores in the United States and Canada are probably a reflection of the acceptability of this act as a legitimate form of political activity, thus making

this act easier to engage in these countries.

Campaign activity is the participatory act that requires the most initiative and time of the individual. For this reason, we expect to find the smallest percentage of respondents engaged in this act of any of the participatory activities. Indeed, this is the case. In Japan, the United States and Great Britain, similar percentages of respondents report campaign work (3 - 4%). Slightly higher is the Netherlands where 6.3% engage in campaigning while fully 10.8% of Canadian respondents report involvement in this activity.

In the German case, a variable which measures a respondent's support of a party or candidate by wearing a button or sticker, is added. As mentioned earlier in this paper, this variable is at best a measure of transitional behaviour. The data reveals that 29.4% of respondents showed support in this manner. The inclusion of this variable was necessitated by the lack of data measuring campaign work and influencing others' vote. While this variable certainly does not take the place of the other two variables, it does yield a little more information about German participation.

7

II. The Scalability of Participatory Acts and the Formation of a Summary Participation Variable.

The individual participatory acts, discussed above, may be tested to see if they exhibit scalar properties. By employing Guttman scaling techniques, it is possible to test for the properties of cumulativeness and unidimensionality for the various activities in each country. Two statistics are used in testing for the presence of a Guttman scale - the coefficient of scalability (C.S.) and the coefficient of reproductibility (C.R.). In order for a Guttman scale to exist the C.R. must be greater than .9 and the C.S. must be equal to or greater than .6. The data presented in Table II clearly indicates that these requirements are met in all countries with the exception of Great Britain. In this latter case, the C.R. is .93 but the C.S. is only .55, slightly below the minimum requirements for a valid scale. The scalability of these items is marginal. However, to facilitate further analysis, we will assume that these variables do indeed possess scalar qualities. The formation of Guttman scales in each country allows for the following assumption:

1. In each country, the items used are unidimensional - that is, they all measure the same phenomena i.e. electoral participation.
2. In each country, the individual items may be ordered in terms of difficulty, with those respondents doing the most difficult acts also engaging in the easier acts.

3. The character of participation is common in that in every country electoral participation is a unidimensional and cumulative assortment of various activities.

For the purpose of comparison, a summary participation variable was constructed for each country by simply summing each individual's positive responses for the various activities. The range of this variable is from 0 to 4. From this summary variable, the percentage of respondents engaging in 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 participatory activities can be obtained. Remembering that the individual participation measures differ in the United States and Germany, cross-national comparison of the summary participation variables will only be possible for the four remaining countries. The results are presented in Table II.

The United States data reveals that the majority of respondents are found at the low end of the scale. Indeed, fully 22.6% are inactive, 43.8% engage in only one activity, while 27.5% are involved in 2 activities. At the high end of the scale only 4.3% take part in 3 electoral acts while merely 1.5% of the respondents report involvement in all 4 activities. This distribution can be at least partially explained. One of the main reasons for the large percentage of inactives is the relative difficulty of voting in the United States - a point that has been discussed earlier. Similarly the lack of a

political discussion variable skews the distribution to the low end. It is not inconceivable that the inclusion of an activity in this scale which, in terms of difficulty, lies between voting and influencing others' vote, would probably raise the American score significantly.

While the American data consists of activities that measure more of the difficult acts of electoral participation, the German summary variable is composed of relatively easier individual activities. For this reason, it is not surprising to find much smaller percentages of respondents at the lower levels of the scale. Indeed, the largest groups of respondents report engaging in 2 or 3 activities. Two points are notable about this distribution. First, the low percentage of inactives indicate that nearly all (about 98%) respondents engage in some electoral activity. Secondly, the percentage reporting involvement in all four activities is relatively small given the ease of these acts. This leads one to suspect that if measures of influencing others' vote and campaign work were available, the distribution of the summary participation variable would be skewed sharply to the low end of the scale.

The establishment of summary participation variables in the United States and German case is important. Even though these variables cannot be compared cross-nationally, the existence of these variables will facilitate the analysis of the determinants of participation which follows later in this

DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPATION SCALES AND GUTTMAN  
SCALE STATISTICS BY COUNTRY

TABLE II

Number Activities	<u>Canada</u>	<u>United States</u>	<u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>Nether- lands</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>Germany</u>
0	6.6	22.6	7.9	8.3	7.8	1.2
1	30.1	43.8	56.3	29.6	47.1	15.4
2	33.7	27.5	27.3	40.6	31.0	49.7
3	21.8	4.3	7.3	16.3	12.2	27.3
4	7.7	1.5	1.2	5.3	1.9	6.4
	N = 1083 C.R. = .93 C.S. = .73	N = 2403 C.R. = .95 C.S. = .73	N = 1587 C.R. = .93 C.S. = .55	N = 1235 C.R. = .95 C.S. = .73	N = 1559 C.R. = .96 C.S. = .78	N = 1147 C.R. = .96 C.S. = .71

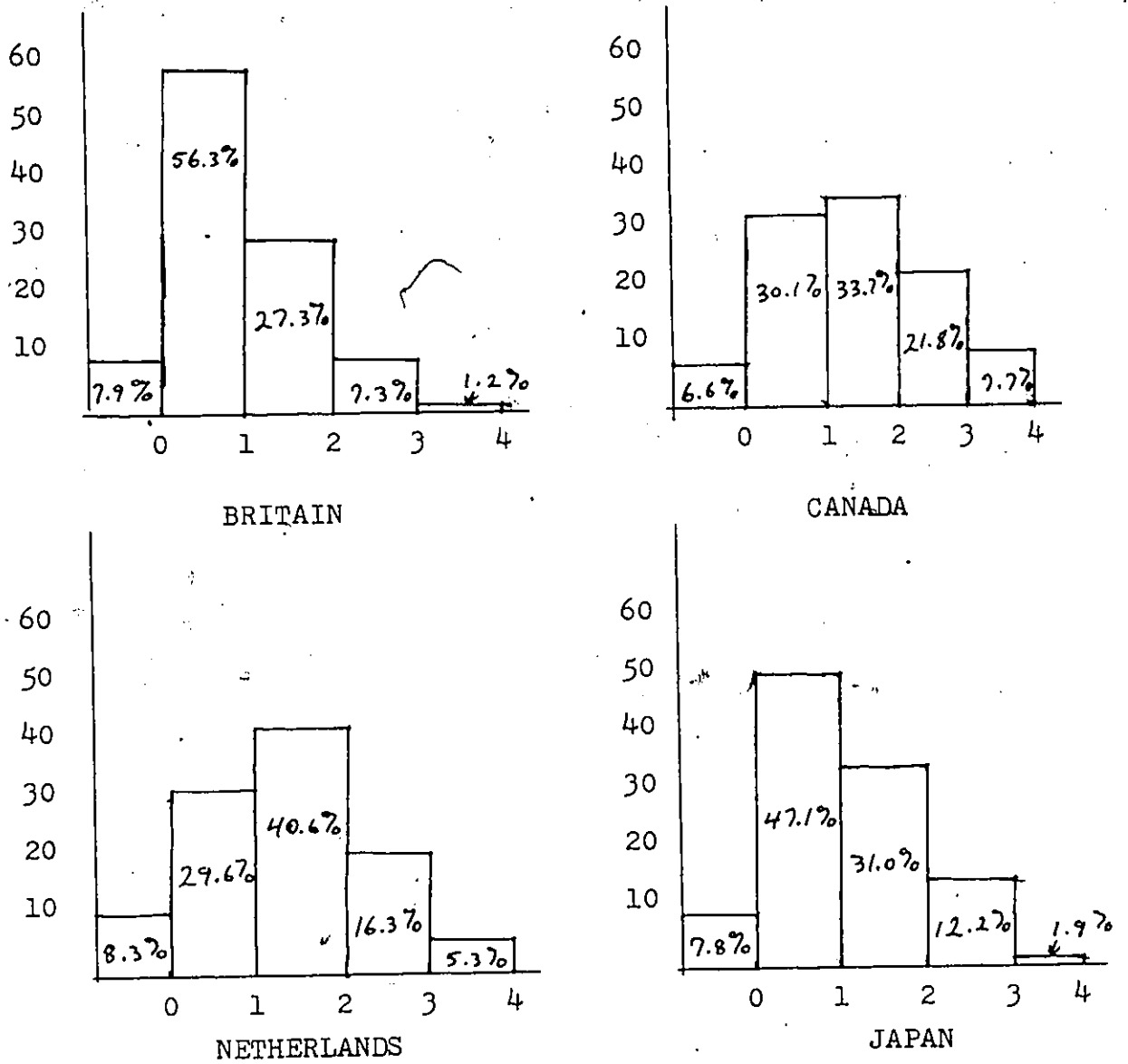


chapter.

In Britain, Canada, Japan and the Netherlands, it was possible to construct a summary participation variable which is comparable cross-nationally. The results, found in Table II are presented graphically in Figure I. All four countries report similar rates of inactivity - roughly 7%. In Britain and Japan, the distribution of the summary variable is skewed indicating a majority of activity at the low end of the scale. Conversely, in Canada and the Netherlands the distribution approximates the shape of a normal curve demonstrating a higher level of political activity than that found in Britain and Japan. In this latter case, more than one-half of the respondents of both countries are inactive or take part in only one activity (most probably voting). At the high end of the scale, less than 2% in both countries report involvement in all 4 activities. Canadian and Dutch respondents both report higher percentages of involvement in all 4 activities (7.7% and 5.3% respectively). The data clearly indicates then, that a majority of Canadian and Dutch respondents are involved in more than one political activity while the opposite is true in Britain and Japan. This higher level of activity is substantiated when the mean scores are examined. Data presented in Table III shows that Canadian respondents have the highest level of participation followed by the Netherlands, Japan and Great Britain. The difference in scores is statistically

FIGURE I

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF SUMMARY PARTICIPATION VARIABLE -  
BRITAIN, CANADA, JAPAN and the NETHERLANDS



significant revealing varying levels of political activity in the four countries.

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MEAN PARTICIPATION SCORES

TABLE III

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<u>Canada</u>	<u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>Netherlands</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>United States</u>	<u>Germany</u>
1.94	1.38	1.81	1.53	1.19*	2.22*

---

\*Scores are not comparable

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III. The Determinants of Electoral Participation

In the preceding sections, the focus has been on a discussion of the individual political acts and the compiling of these acts into a summary measure of political activity for each country. This section is an analysis of attitudinal, socioeconomic and demographic variables undertaken in order to assess their impact on participation. Specifically, the attitudinal variables used are political interest, strength of party identification, sense of political efficacy and perception of party differences. Education and income are used as measures of socioeconomic resources while age, sex and community size are demographic variables.

Two statistics are presented - a Pearson's r which measures the zero order relationship between the independent

and dependent variable, and a standardized beta coefficient (B) which measures the unique effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable while controlling for the effects of all other variables in the equation. In addition, a statistic  $R^2$  is presented which measures the amount of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the entire set of independent variables. The data is presented in two forms - first by each independent variable for all countries and secondly by country showing the effects of each variable within that country.

Table IV shows the relationship between political interest and participation in each country. Strong zero-order relationships are evident, which diminish slightly when controls are instituted. In all countries there is at least a moderately strong positive coefficient indicating that as the level of political interest rises, the likelihood of participation increases. It should be noted that political interest is the most powerful predictor of political activity in all countries.

Strength of partisan identification (Table V) is a positive predictor of political activity although the strength of its predictive power varies. In Canada and Britain, this variable is only a weak predictor while in the remaining four countries, the somewhat larger B's indicate the strength of relationship is moderate.

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TABLE IV  
Zero-Order r's\* and Beta Coefficients\* between  
Political Interest and Participation

	r	B
Canada	.35	.30
Britain	.50	.42
Japan	.46	.27
Netherlands	.44	.30
United States	.44	.28
Germany	.46	.28

\*Significant at or beyond the .05 level of confidence  
unless otherwise noted

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TABLE V  
Zero-Order r's and Beta Coefficients between  
Strength of Party Identification and Participation

	r	B
Canada	.17	.11
Britain	.20	.11
Japan	.29	.16
Netherlands	.31	.22
United States	.25	.15
Germany	.29	.18

---

---

TABLE VI  
Zero-Order r's and Beta Coefficients between  
Perception of Party Difference and Participation

	r	B
Canada	.19	.10
Britain	.18	.07
Japan	.18	.08
Netherlands	.30	.09
United States	.20	.09
Germany	---*	---*

\*Data not available

---

Perception of party difference proves to be a weak predictor of political activity in all countries. While the zero-order r's suggest a more substantial effect of this variable on political activity, this relationship does not hold when controls are applied. Thus the unique effects of party difference are weak at best.

Similarly, the zero-order r indicates that those high in feelings of efficacy are also high in political activity. But the direct effects of efficacy on participation are weak when controls are implemented.

The zero-order r's between the socioeconomic variables and participation reflects the fact that increased political activity is positively associated with increments in education

TABLE VII

Zero-Order r's and Beta Coefficients between  
Sense of Political Efficacy and Participation

	r	B
Canada	.15	.05
Britain	.25	.05
Japan	.28	.10
Netherlands	.32	.09
United States	.27	.13
Germany	.28	.07

TABLE VIII

Zero-Order r's and Beta Coefficients between  
Education and Participation

	r	B
Canada	.12	N.S.
Britain	.09	N.S.
Japan	.11	.05
Netherlands	.24	.12
United States	.31	.14
Germany	.21	.08

N.S. = Not significant

and income. Data in Table VIII indicates only a small difference in rates of activity between high and low educated respondents in Canada, Britain and Japan. The somewhat larger correlation coefficients found in the German, Dutch and American data, indicate a larger difference in the rates of participation for low and highly educated people. The direct effects of education as a determinant of political activity are weak in Germany, Holland, Japan and the Netherlands and non-significant in Canada and Britain. This reflects the fact that education while not being an important direct determinant of political activity may work indirectly through other variables in order to influence participation.

The same phenomena is revealed regarding income and participation (Table IX) where higher levels of participation are found more commonly among those of high income levels. Again, the unique effects of income on participation are weak or non-significant when controls are implemented. However, the fact that higher levels of political activity are found as the level of income increases cannot be denied.

Socioeconomic variables have been found to be important sources for the formation of political attitudes.<sup>10</sup> The higher the socioeconomic level of a respondent is, the more likely he will form positive political attitudes. It is for this reason then, that levels of political activity have been found to increase as income and education levels increase.



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TABLE IX  
Zero-Order r's and Beta Coefficients between  
Income and Participation

	r	B
Canada	.08	N.S.
Britain	.16	.07
Japan	.10	N.S.
Netherlands	.15	.04
United States	.27	.13
Germany	.23	.10

N.S. = Not Significant

---

---

TABLE X  
Zero-Order r's and Beta Coefficients between  
Community Size and Participation

	r	B
Canada	N.S.	N.S.
Britain	N.S.	N.S.
Japan	N.S.	-.08
Netherlands	N.S.	-.07
United States	-.04	-.05
Germany	N.S.	N.S.

N.S. = Not Significant

---

Thus, while the direct effects of these two variables may be small, the indirect effects may be more important in determining political activity.

Table X contains data on the relationship between community size and participation. Only in the United States is there any significant difference between urban-rural participation rates with rural respondents showing slightly more activity than urban dwellers. When controlling for the effects of the other variables, significant but small differences are found in Japan, the United States and the Netherlands, again favouring rural residents. No significant difference exists between these groups in Canada, Britain and Germany.

Significant differences in rates of participation exist in Japan, the Netherlands and the United States, and Germany with regards to age (Table XI). Japan and Germany show young respondents to be slightly more participant than older respondents. The reverse is true for the Netherlands and the United States where rates of political activity increase slightly as people get older.<sup>11</sup>

Of the demographic variables, the findings involving male/female participation rates are the most interesting. The zero-order  $r$ 's reveal that males participate at higher levels than females in every country but Canada where no difference is evident. In the United States the difference is small while Britain, the Netherlands and Germany show moderate differences.

---

TABLE XI  
Zero-Order r's and Beta Coefficients for  
Age and Participation

	r	B
Canada	N.S.	N.S.
Britain	N.S.	N.S.
Japan	-.11	-.09
Netherlands	.11	.08
United States	N.S.	.04
Germany	-.07	-.07

N.S. = Not Significant

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TABLE XII  
Zero-Order r's and Beta Coefficients for  
Sex and Participation

	r	B
Canada	N.S.	N.S.
Britain	.19	.06
Japan	.30	.16
Netherlands	.23	.08
United States	.11	.04
Germany	.21	N.S.

N.S. = Not Significant

---

The Japanese data indicate that the rates of male/female participation differs substantially. Are these differences attributable to different attitudes, socioeconomic resources and demographic characteristics that are held by the sexes? When these factors are taken into account, the relationship between sex and participation is reduced in all countries. In Germany, no significant difference remains. In Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States small differences persist while in Japan there is still a moderate relationship between sex and political activity. Thus, for these four countries and particularly Japan, being a man or a woman is a significant determinant of political activity.

To this point, this study has focused on a description of the effects of each independent variable across country. In Tables XIII to XVIII data is presented that allows for the assessment of the relative impact of each of these variables within country. The variables are arranged in descending order according to the amount of variance they explain in the dependent variable. All figures are significant to the .05 level of statistical significance unless otherwise noted.

In Canada (Table XIII), of the nine independent variables, only the four attitudinal variables show significant direct effects on the dependent variable. Of these, only political interest is a strong predictor with the other three variables having only weak effects. Comparatively, the set of independent

variables works least well in Canada for here, only 16% of the variance in participation is explained - the smallest percentage of any of the six countries.<sup>12</sup>

TABLE XIII

CANADA

	r		B	
Interest	.35		.30	
Party Difference	.19		.10	
Strength Party Identification	.17		.11	
Education	.12		.05	XXX
Efficacy	.15		.05	
Income	.08		.03	XXX
Community Size	.02	XXX	-.02	XXX
Sex	.04	XXX	.00	XXX
Age	.01	XXX	-.00	XXX

XXX - N.S. at .05 level

N = 981    R<sup>2</sup> = .16

The British data reveals the overriding importance of political interest as a predictor of political activity (Table XIV). All other variables are dwarfed in terms of the relative amount of impact on participation. Again, all attitudinal variables are significant predictors. In addition income and sex have

direct effects on political activity. 28% of the variance in the dependent variables was explained by this set of predictors.

---

TABLE XIV  
BRITAIN

	r		B	
Interest	.50		.42	
Strength Party Identification	.20		.11	
Income	.16		.07	
Party Difference	.18		.07	
Sex	.19		.06	
Respondent	.25		.05	
Education	.09		.01	XXX
Community Size	.02	XXX	.01	XXX
Age	-.03	XXX	.01	XXX

XXX - N.S.

N = 1318

$R^2 = .28$

---

In Japan (Table XV), the importance of sex as a predictor of political activity is notable. Indeed this variable ranks second only to political interest in terms of the amount of variance explained. Also important is the fact that political activity is slightly higher for young respondents and people

from rural areas. Again the attitudinal variables are significant predictors of electoral participation. Of the nine independent variables only income has no direct effect on the dependent variable. 24% of the variance in participation was explained by this set of predictors.

---

TABLE XV  
JAPAN

	r	B
Interest	.46	.27
Sex	.30	.16
Strength Party Identification	.29	.16
Efficacy	.28	.10
Age	-.11	-.09
Community Size	.04 XXX	-.08
Party Difference	.18	.08
Education	.11	+.05
Income	.10	.01 XXX

XXX - N.S.

N = 784       $R^2 = .24$

---

All of the independent variables are significant predictors of political activity in the Netherlands (Table XVI)

although political interest and strength of partisan identification are the most important. Unexplained differences remain between male/female participation rates indicating that being a man or a woman in the Netherlands will to a small extent determine the level of political activity. Also notable is the fact that rural respondents are slightly more active than their urban counterparts. Fully 32% of the variance in the dependent variables - the largest percentage explained in any of the six countries.

---

TABLE XVI  
HOLLAND

	r	B
Interest	.44	.30
Strength Party Identification	.31	.22
Education	.24	.12
Party Difference	.30	.09
Sex	.23	.08
Age	.11	.08
Efficacy	.32	.09
Community Size	-.01 XXX	-.07
Income	.15	.04

XXX = N.S.

N = 1025      R<sup>2</sup> = .32

---



As in the Netherlands, all nine independent variables are statistically significant in the United States. Political interest is the most important predictor. The fairly high ranking of the socioeconomic variables is important. Indeed, education and income are second and fourth respectively in terms of variance explained, indicating their importance in explaining United States participation. Again, rural residents are slightly more active than urban dwellers but the difference is small. In the United States, 29% of the variance in participation was explained by this set of independent variables.

---

TABLE XVII  
UNITED STATES

	r	B
Interest	.44	.28
Education	.31	.14
Strength Party Identification	.25	.15
Income	.27	.13
Efficacy	.31	.11
Party Difference	.20	.09
Community Size	-.04	-.05
Sex	.11	.04
Age	.01 XXX	.04

XXX = N.S.

N = 2038       $R^2 = .29$

---

The German data (Table XVIII) reveals that political interest and strength of partisan identification are the most significant predictors of political activity. All other variables have weak effects with the exception of sex and community size which are non-significant predictors. Slightly more activity exists among young respondents than older people - a finding that is evident also in Japan. 23% of the variance in participation was explained.

TABLE XVIII  
GERMANY

	r	B	
Interest	.46	.28	
Strength Party Identification	.29	.18	
Income	.23	.10	
Education	.21	.08	
Efficacy	.28	.07	
Age	-.07	-.07	
Sex	.21	.03	XXX
Community Size	.02	-.01	XXX

XXX = N.S.

N = 915      R<sup>2</sup> = .23

COMPARATIVE STRENGTH OF INDEPENDENT PREDICTORS

UNSTANDARDIZED BETA'S

TABLE XIX

	<u>Britain</u>	<u>Holland</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>Canada</u>
Interest	.46	.64	.35	.45
Strength Party Identification	.10	.35	.28	.12
Income	.00	.00	.00	.00 XXX
Party Difference	.07	.17	.08	.13
Sex	.09	.16	.28	.01 XXX
Efficacy	.02	.07	.08	.04
Education	.01 XXX	.03	-.01 XXX	.01 XXX
Community-Size	.02 XXX	-.00	-.00	-.00 XXX
Age	.00 XXX	.00	-.00	-.00 XXX

XXX = Not Significant

All figures significant to the .05 level or more unless indicated

A cross-national comparison of the relative importance of each variable in each country can be made using unstandardized beta coefficients. Data is presented in Table XIX for the countries with similar participation variables - Britain, Holland, Japan and Canada. Political interest has its strongest effect on participation in Holland. Britain and Canada report similar scores, while in Japan, political interest has the smallest impact of any of the four countries.

Strength of partisan identification is most important again in Holland. The effects of this variable are slightly smaller in Japan while Canadian and British participation scores are least influenced by strength of party identification.

With regards to income, there is no difference in the impact of this variable across the four countries.

The perception of party difference is most important in Holland. Canadian participation scores are influenced slightly less than the Dutch case. The smallest effects are found in Japan and Britain where similar scores are found.

The impact of sex is largest in Japan followed by the Netherlands and Britain. In Canada, sex has no influence on political activity.

Sense of political efficacy has small effects in all countries. Holland and Japan report similar scores indicating similar impact of this variable, while scores for Canada and Britain reveal even smaller coefficients indicating that this

variable has only a slight effect.

Education has significant but small effects on participation only in Holland. In all other countries this variable is not significant. Similarly there is no visible difference in the impact of either community size or age across the four countries.

### Conclusion.

This chapter has focused on three main aspects of electoral participation. First, an examination of the individual participatory items revealed variations across country in the percentage of respondents engaging in similar activities, particularly those activities beyond voting. These variations were not unexpected given the unique cultural and institutional characteristics that are inherent in each country. Thus, while the six countries adhere to democratic norms which allow for the involvement of people in all of these activities, the actual rate of involvement depends upon the acceptability and accessibility of these acts to the people of each country.

The scalability of the participatory acts and the construction of a summary participation variable was the second step of this analysis. The fact that the participatory items formed a valid Guttman scale in all countries suggest that electoral participation has a common form in all countries. That is, it is an hierarchical and unidimensional phenomena. The construction of summary participation variables in each

country allows for cross-national comparison of rates of electoral activity in the four countries with similar participatory items. Britain and Japan have the lowest rates of activity while Holland and Canada show more active levels of electoral involvement.

The third section of this chapter on the determinates of electoral activity. Of the nine independent variables, the attitudinal variables were the most important in explaining participation. Political interest was a particularly strong determinant in all countries. The socioeconomic variables were most important in the United States, Germany and Holland but even here, the direct effects of these variables on the rate of electoral activity were marginal. Of the demographic variables, sex was the most notable contributor to the explanation of political activity. In all countries, but Canada, men scored higher than women on the participation scale. Indeed, sex had direct effects on participation in Britain, Holland, Japan and the United States. Thus, being a man or a woman has important ramifications in terms of electoral activity for these countries. In the following chapter, the relationship between sex and political activity will be examined more fully.

### FOOTNOTES

1. Data was not available for political discussion in the United States, and influencing others vote and campaign work in Germany. In the latter case, a transitional activity, show support for a party or candidate, is included. In Germany, we have no measure of gladiatorial activity.
2. Bradley Richardson, The Political Culture of Japan (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1974), p. 85.
3. Lewis J. Edinger, Politics in Germany (Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1968), p. 105.
4. David Butler and Donald Stokes, Political Change in Britain (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1974), p. 21.
5. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 116.
6. Almond and Verba report that 70% of Britons engaged in political discussion. (p. 116, The Civic Culture). The difference between these two scores can be at least partially explained by the wording of the respective questions. The Butler and Stokes questionnaire asks if the respondent talked much about politics. The Almond and Verba question asked only about political discussion, without using the word much. All positive leaning responses were combined. This probably accounts for the low British score in the Butler and Stokes data.
7. Lester Milbrath, Political Participation (Rand McNally & Company, Chicago, 1965), p. 24.
8. Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes, The American Voter (John Wiley & Sons Inc., New York, 1960), p. 91.
9. Richard Rose, The Problem of Party Government (MacMillan Press Ltd., London, 1974), p. 249.
10. See Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1963), Robert A. Dahl, Who Governs? (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1961), 282 - 301, Norman H. Nie, Bingham Powell Jr., and Kenneth Prewitt, Social Structure and Political Participation Developmental Relationships, in Cross-national micro-analyses, John C. Pierce and Richard A. Pride editors, (Beverly Hills, Sage Publications, 1972).

11. Problem of linearity exist here. Age has been been shown to be curvilinear in most countries. Thus, treating age or a linear variable may reduce the strength of relationship formed in this analyses.
12. The  $R^2$ 's presented in Tables XIII through XVIII may differ because of variances in the variables considered.



Chapter Four

SEX AND PARTICIPATION

## SEX AND PARTICIPATION

In the previous chapter, differences were found in the rates of male/female participation in all countries but Canada. Even when controls were instituted, unexplained differences remained in Japan, the Netherlands, Great Britain and the United States. The purpose, then, of this chapter is to pursue the investigation of male/female participation. The analysis will proceed in the following manner. First, the individual participation items as well as the composite participation variable will be broken down by sex in each country. This is done in order to determine if differences are peculiar to specific acts or are found in all activities. Secondly, a causal model is presented examining the relationship of sex, education and psychological involvement with participation. Finally, the summary participation variable will be analyzed by sex while controlling for education, number of children, employment status and age in order to see what effect, if any, sex has on levels of political activity independently of these other variables.

I. Participatory Activities By Sex

The fact that males are more politically active than females has been documented in the previous chapter. In order to investigate this phenomenon more fully a detailed analysis of the participation activities by sex is necessary for each country. This procedure allows for the examination of the magnitude of differences in male/female participation in specific acts as well as in the overall participation variable.

In Canada (Table I) the only activity in which there is a statistically significant difference between the sexes is in influencing others' voting behaviour. Here, 6% more men than women report involvement in this activity. In all other activities, ranging from the relatively easy act of voting to the more difficult act of campaign work, no difference in rates of involvement is evident. Looking at the summary participation variable, we find that females rank as high in this composite measure as men. Thus, in Canada, there is very little difference in male/female participation and this difference is limited to only the activity of influencing others' vote

In Holland, (Table II), there is a great deal of difference in male/female participation rates for nearly every activity. Only at the level of voting, do we find similar rates of involvement for men and women. Clearly the data indicates significantly lower rates of involvement for women

TABLE I  
CANADA

	SEX			SEX	
	F	M		F	M
Vote	85.8	85.5*	<u>Participation</u>		
			(Number of	0	7.1 6.0
Discuss Politics	61.1	63.3*	Activities)	1	31.5 28.6
				2	33.8 33.7
Influence Vote	18.2	24.8		3	19.3 24.6
				4	8.3 7.0
Attend Meetings	20.2	20.5*			
Campaign Work	11.6	9.9*			N = 1083

\* = No significant differences

All percentages significantly different at or beyond the .05 level unless noted.

TABLE II  
HOLLAND

	SEX			SEX	
	F	M		F	M
Vote	81.5	84.9*	<u>Participation</u>		
			(Number of	0	10.5 6.4
Discuss Politics	52.8	73.2		1	37.1 23.2
				2	40.4 40.7
Influence Vote	7.8	16.2		3	9.8 21.8
				4	2.3 7.9
Attend Meetings	6.2	22.0			N = 1235
Campaign Work	3.2	8.9			

\* = No significant differences

All percentages significantly different at or beyond the .05 level unless noted

with regards to discussing politics, influencing others votes, attending meetings and campaign work. The lower scores are reflected in the summary participation variable where the male scores are significantly higher than female-scores. Thus in Holland, there are significant differences in male/female participation rates and these differences are found in those activities beyond voting.

As in Canada, influencing others' vote is the only activity with significantly different levels of involvement for American males and females. Here, the difference between the two groups is approximately 13% in favour of male participants. In all other activities however, female involvement is not significantly different from males. The summary participation variable reveals the fact that males participate slightly more than females in the American case. Clearly, this is due to lower rates of activity for women in influencing others' vote (see Table III).

In Japan (Table IV), we find a pattern similar to that of Holland. Only at the voting level do women report scores equal to men. At all other levels, there are significant differences between the percentages of men and women involved in the various acts. The difference is particularly large in the discuss politics category where fully 30.4% more men than women report a positive response. The summary participation variable reflects the disparity between male/female activity

TABLE III  
UNITED STATES

	SEX			SEX	
	F	M		F	M
Vote	67.9	77.0*	<u>Participation</u>		
			(Number of	0	26.1
Influence			Activities)	1	44.7
Vote	31.7	44.3		2	22.9
Attend				3	4.7
Meetings	6.8	5.7*		4	1.6
Campaign Work	4.5	4.4*			2.1

\* No significant differences

N = 2386

All percentages significantly different at or beyond the .05 level unless noted.

TABLE IV  
JAPAN

	SEX			SEX	
	F	M		F	M
Vote	88.0	91.1*	<u>Participation</u>		
			(Number of	0	9.7
Discuss			Activities)	1	59.6
Politics	27.5	57.9		2	24.5
Influence				3	5.4
Vote	3.4	10.3		4	0.7
Attend					3.0
Meetings	8.2	18.7			
Campaign					
Work	1.8	5.4			

N = 1502

\* = No significant differences

All percentages significantly different at or beyond the .05 level unless noted.

rates, for here, too, there is a significant difference in the participation rates of men and women in Japan.

The German data (Table V) reveal similar findings. The difference between men and women is significant for every activity. Women are less active than men in the German electoral process. Likewise in Britain (Table VI) the results show a lower percentage of women engaged in each of the activities except voting. This disparity is further shown in the overall participation variable where the difference between men and women is significant to the .001 level.

Summarizing the results, we find significant differences in the rates of participation between men and women in five of our six countries. In all countries but Germany, women vote as much as men. In Germany, the difference between the voting rates of the sexes is small but significant. Only in Canada do women participate as much as men, although even here, as in the United States, women are less likely to influence others' vote. American women score as well as men in every category except influencing others' votes, but here the difference is large enough to be reflected in the summary participation variable which showed small but significant differences were found in every country with regards to each activity other than voting.

TABLE V  
GERMANY

	SEX		Participation (Number of Activities)	SEX	
	F	M		F	M
Vote	96.2	98.6	0	1.8	0.4
Discuss Politics	77.6	89.5	1	20.8	9.0
Show Support	25.7	33.7	2	50.0	49.5
Attend Meetings	6.3	19.7	3	24.4	30.8
			4	3.1	10.3
N = 1207					

\* = No significant differences

All percentages significantly different at or beyond the .05 level unless noted.

TABLE VI  
BRITAIN

	SEX		Participation (Number of Activities)	SEX	
	F	M		F	M
Vote	87.9	90.3*	0	9.7	5.8
Discuss Politics	21.3	35.2	1	61.2	50.1
Influence Vote	9.0	15.6	2	24.3	30.9
Attend Meetings	5.1	11.0	3	4.3	11.0
			4	0.5	2.2
Campaign Work	2.4	4.2	N = 1587		

\* = No significant differences

All percentages significantly different at or beyond the .05 level unless noted.

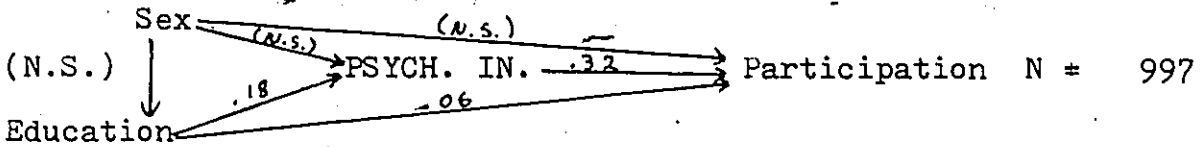


## II. Sex and Participation: Direct and Indirect Effects

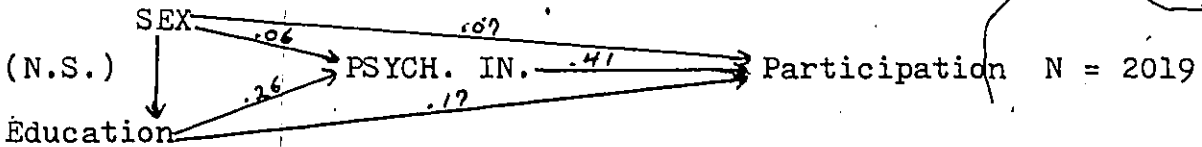
While we have determined that there are significant differences in male/female participation rates, we have not determined if these differences are directly attributable to the sex of the respondents. That is, females, may have lower levels of socioeconomic status or different attitudes which may be the cause of their lower rates of participation. In Tables VII and VIII, we have constructed path models which will allow us to examine the linkage between sex, education, psychological involvement and participation. This model is based on Verba and Nie's socioeconomic resource model. Simply stated the model predicts that socioeconomic resources influence the formation of attitudes. Attitudes, in turn shape political behaviour.<sup>2</sup> Our measure of political behaviour is the summary participation variable. Attitudes are measured by a combined variable (PSYCHIN) composed of political interest, strength of partisan identification, sense of political efficacy and perception of party differences. (This last variable was not available in the German data). In this model, sex is an exogenous variable. In this manner, we will be able to determine the effects of sex on participation in terms of both indirect and direct influence.

We will begin the analysis by examining the relative effects of each variable across countries. The manner in which the relationship between psychological involvement and

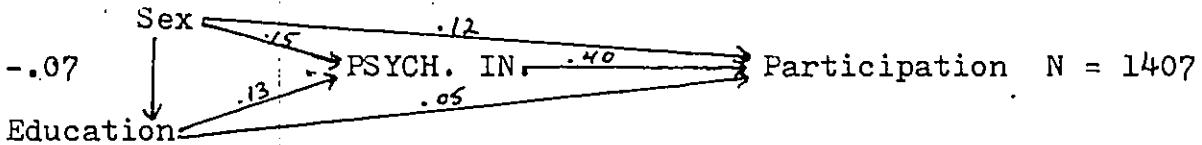
TABLE VII  
PATH MODELS  
CANADA



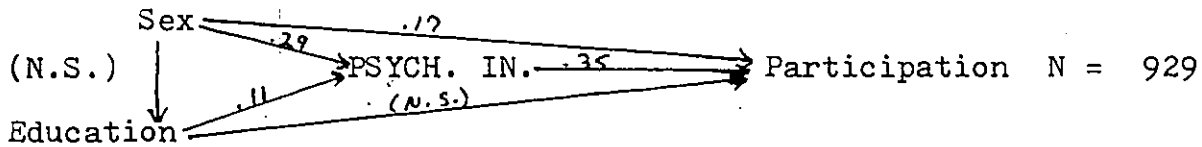
UNITED STATES



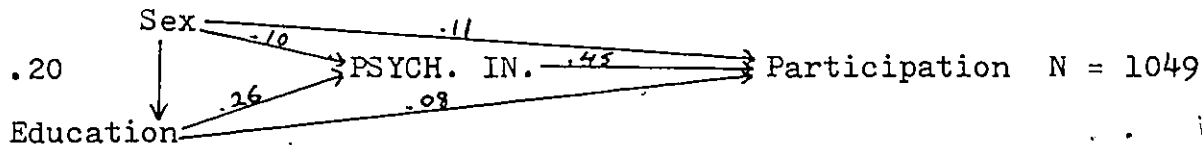
BRITAIN



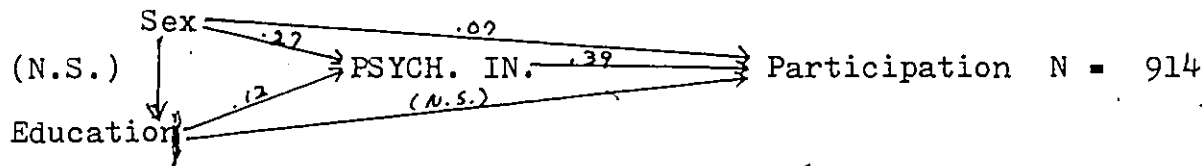
JAPAN



HOLLAND



GERMANY



participation yields the largest coefficients in each country. The strong positive relationship between these two variables indicates that participation rates will increase as levels of psychological involvement rise. This relationship is common in all countries.

The impact of education is weak or non-existent in all countries but the United States. Here, the beta coefficient (.17) indicates increased education leads to higher rates of participation. It is important to note that the United States is the only country which exhibits this type of relationship between education and participation. In all other countries, the direct link is weak at best.

With regards to sex and education, the model reveals no statistically significant relationship in Canada, Japan, United States or Germany. Here then, there is no statistically significant difference in the level of education attained by men or women. In Britain however, there is a small negative coefficient indicative of slightly higher levels of education for women. The Dutch model reveals, to the contrary, a bias in educational levels towards men. This relationship is of moderate magnitude and shows the largest difference between the sexes in terms of education in any of the six countries.

The relationship between sex and psychological involvement varies in strength. In Britain, Japan and Germany there is a moderate to moderately strong beta coefficient indicating

that men are more psychologically involved than women. In the United States and Holland men are also more psychologically involved than women but the differences are small.

In order to more fully understand the model and its implications, an analysis of the model by country will be presented. Starting first with Canada, we find a strong relationship between psychological involvement and participation. Education has only weak direct effects but has a moderate influence on psychological involvement which in turn has a strong effect on participation. The fact that sex is non-significant indicates that there is no difference between men and women in terms of their amount of participation, their level of psychological involvement or their level of education. Thus sex plays neither a direct or indirect role in determining participation in Canada.

In the United States, the strongest relationship exists between psychological involvement and participation. Education has both a moderate direct effect on participation and a moderate indirect effect working through psychological involvement. Increased levels of education positively effect participation and levels of psychological involvement. Sex is only a weak positive predictor of participation and psychological involvement indicating that men rank slightly higher than women in both these categories.

The British model again reveals the strong link between

psychological involvement and participation. Education has only a weak effect on participation indicating that participation increases only slightly as a result of higher levels of education. Furthermore, education is a moderate determinant of psychological involvement. The weak positive coefficient between sex and participation tells us that men are slightly more involved than women even when the effects of education and psychological involvement are taken into account. The data also reveals that men are more psychologically involved than women while controlling for the effects of education. Finally, the negative relationship between sex and education indicates that women are slightly better educated than men.

In Japan, we again find a strong relationship between psychological involvement and participation. Education, while having no direct effects on participation, does moderately influence the level of psychological involvement, which in turn, is a strong determinant of electoral activity. Thus, education does indirectly influence the level of participation in Japan. With regards to sex, the data indicates that men participate more than women and are much more psychologically involved.

The model for Holland reveals a strong relationship between psychological involvement and participation. Education has both direct and indirect effects on participation. Directly, education is a weak predictor of political activity

while indirectly, education is a moderately strong determinant of psychological involvement which in turn is a strong determinant of political activity. Direct relationships exist between sex and the other variables in the model. The data reveals that men are slightly more participant than women, are more psychologically involved, and are better educated. Indirectly, this male advantage influences the level of political activity by working through both psychological involvement and education.

Finally, the German data shows a strong, direct relationship between psychological involvement and participation. Education does not have any significant direct effects on participation but it does work weakly through psychological involvement to influence participation. Sex has a weak direct effect on participation - an indication that men are slightly more participant than women. The relationship between sex and psychological involvement is fairly strong and positive. Here again, we see that men are more psychologically involved than women and of course this fact has important effects on participation. With regards to sex and education, no significant difference exists between the education levels of men and women.

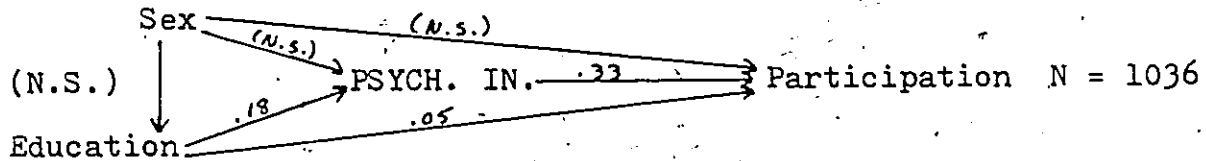
In summation the path models allow us to make the following conclusions.

1. Psychological involvement (attitudes) is the strongest predictor of participation in each country.
2. The direct effects of education on participation are weak in every country but the United States. Verba and Nie have shown that socioeconomic measures (e.g. education) are good predictors of political activity in the United States. They reason that due to lack of class based parties, no outlet is given to working class groups. Specifically they state that "the absence of institutions and ideas associated with social status makes, paradoxically, such status a more potent force in American politics."<sup>3</sup>
3. Education has at least modest effects as far as determining positive political attitudes in each country. That is, increased education leads to a higher level of psychological involvement in all countries.
4. In five of our six countries, we find that males participate in politics at a greater rate than women. Only in Canada, do we find no statistical difference in male/female participation.
5. There are no male/female differences in terms of education level with the exception of Britain and Holland. In Britain, we find a slight edge in the level of women's education as compared to men. In Holland, a more substantial relationship reveals that

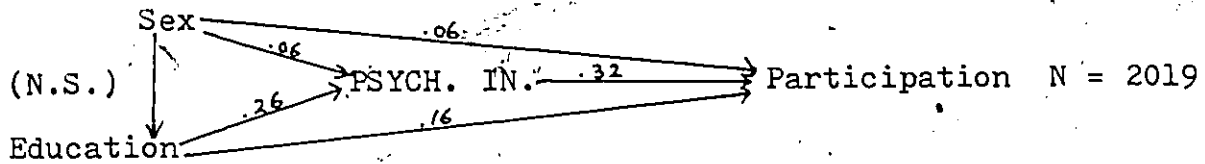
TABLE VIII

Path Models (Voting Excluded)

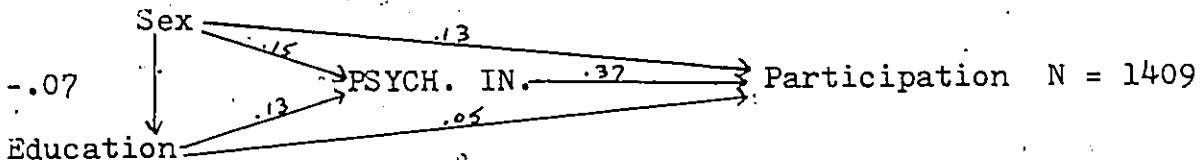
CANADA



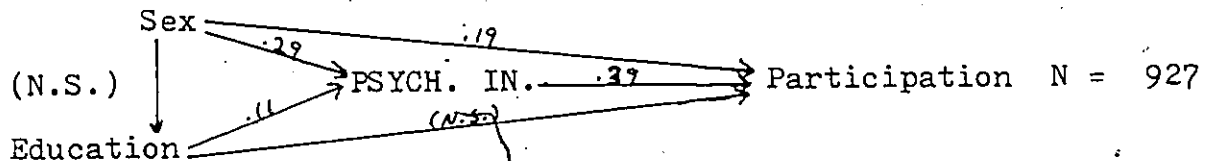
UNITED STATES



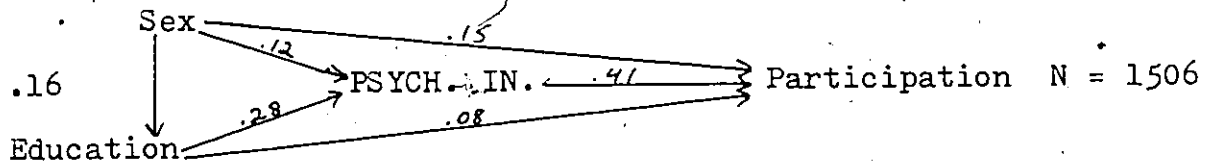
BRITAIN



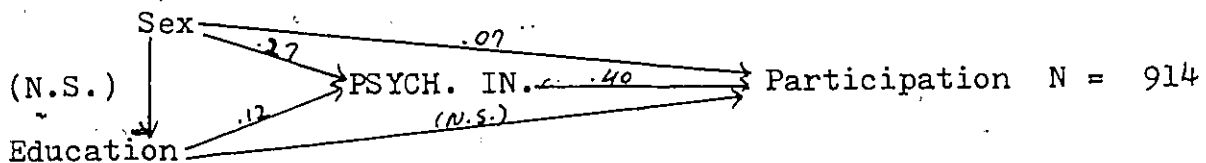
JAPAN



HOLLAND



GERMANY





men are better educated than women.

6. In all countries except Canada, we find that males have a higher level of psychological involvement than women. This is important because psychological involvement has been shown to be a strong predictor of participation in all countries.

Table VIII is a replication of the path models presented in Table VII with one difference. The act of voting is excluded from these models in order to see if the relationships hold when we exclude this, the easiest of the participatory acts. In every country, the same relationships that were found with the full participation variable exist when we exclude voting. Thus with regard to these more difficult acts, significant differences in male/female participation rates are found in all countries but Canada. Furthermore, the importance of the other independent variables in the model holds as well. Thus, the relationships within the model are common to both non-voting and full participatory activities.

We have noted that in five of the six countries, men participate more than women even when we assign the same education and psychological involvement levels to each of the sexes. These are direct effects. Sex may also work indirectly. In every country but Canada, men are more psychologically involved and in Holland and Britain differences in education levels exist. In Table IX, data is presented which summarizes

TABLE IX

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Effects of Sex on Participation			
	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	Total Effects
Britain	.12	.05	.17
Japan	.17	.11	.28
Canada	--	--	--
United States	.07	.02	.09
Holland	.11	.08	.19
Germany	.07	.10	.17

---

TABLE X

---

Effects of Sex on Participation (Excluding Voting)			
	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	Total Effects
Britain	.13	.05	.18
Japan	.19	.11	.30
Canada	--	--	--
United States	.06	.02	.08
Holland	.15	.08	.23
Germany	.07	.11	.18

---

the, direct, indirect and total effects of sex on the full participation variable. Table X presents the same information with voting excluded from the participation variable.

Looking first at Table IX, we see that in Britain, the total effects of sex are moderate - that is, men are moderately more participant than women. Indirectly, sex works through psychological involvement in men's favour to influence participation. Sex also works through education and here women have the advantage. However, the sum of the indirect effects of sex is positive indicating that the benefit derived by men from higher levels of psychological involvement more than offsets the positive effects women gain from their higher education levels.

In Japan, the direct effects reveal that men are participants moderately more than women. Added to this, is the fact that men are much more psychologically involved. Indeed, this link between sex and participation entirely accounts for the indirect effects of sex. The combination of direct and indirect effects yield a moderately strong coefficient, making sex an important factor in Japanese political activity.

The United States data reveal only small differences between male/female activity rates that can be directly attributed to sex. Indirectly, working through psychological involvement an additional smaller coefficient adds slightly to the total. The total effects of sex, while small in the United

States indicate that men are slightly more involved than women.

German and Dutch data reveal a pattern similar to that of Britain. In both countries the unique effects of sex are small as are the indirect effects. In Holland, men have higher levels of both education and psychological involvement and hence these contribute indirectly to influence the activity rates of the sexes. While no difference in education is apparent in Germany, here men are much more psychologically involved and this has an effect on participation. Thus, in both countries, the direct and indirect effects of sex are weak, but when combined, they reveal a moderate total effect of sex on the rate of political activity.

Table X shows the effects of sex when we exclude the voting component from the summary participation variable. Here, we are dealing with a summary participation variable which measures only the more difficult activities. The results reveal a slight increase in the difference between male/female participation rates in Britain, Japan, Holland and Germany. These increases, while not large, do reflect the fact that women are less inclined than men to be involved in the activities beyond voting. In the United States, however, the total effects of sex becomes smaller when the voting component is excluded. Indeed, this must be interpreted as a narrowing of the gap between male/female participation rates when only non-

voting activities are considered.

The preceding analysis has partially explained some of the causes of differences in male/female participation rates. In particular, men have higher levels of psychological involvement in all countries except Canada. This translates into higher activity rates for men particularly in Japan and Germany where the difference between male/female levels of psychological involvement is fairly large. Education is a minor factor in most countries. Only in Britain and the Netherlands are there significant differences in levels of education for the sexes. In Britain, women were found to be better educated. The difference however was small and did little to improve women's activity rates. In the Netherlands, men hold the education advantage and this further widens the difference between the sexes.

While different levels of psychological involvement and education do explain some of the difference in male/female participation, there are still unexplainable differences in all five countries. These direct or unique effects of sex are not attributable to being a man or a woman but rather they reflect different characteristics that are held by the two sexes. Without further information, such as, psychological, sociological and cultural variables, a total explanation of sex differences in political participation is not possible.

### III The Effects of Education, Age, Employment Status and Number of Children on Male/Female Activity Rates.

A number of variables are thought to have some bearing on male/female participation rates. Here we will examine a few of these. Women, traditionally have been responsible for remaining at home and raising the children while men go out and work in order to support the family. Thus, having children ties women to the home, limiting the amount of political stimuli she receives as well as limiting the time available for political activity.<sup>4</sup> In Table XI, participation mean scores are presented for men and women by the number of children at home. British data reveal significant differences in the scores of men and women at each level of number of children. Women with one or two children have slightly higher scores than women with no children. Women with three or more children show the lowest activity score of any of the three categories. Men's activity scores follow the same pattern as women but the decrease in activity for those with three or more children is only slight. Here, then, it is clear that both the sexes become more involved when they have children although a slight decline in activity is evident for those with three or more children.

In Germany, as in Britain, both sexes report higher scores for those having one or two children as opposed to those with no children. However, for those with three or more

children, no significant difference exists between men and women activity rates. The scores of both sexes decline for that category, but men's scores are greater affected than are females. Thus, in Germany, those having children are more active than those who do not, while those that have three or more children, show lower rates than those having one or two children. This is particularly true for men.

Japanese data reveals that both men and women with one or two children have higher scores than men and women without children. However, men's activity scores for those with three or more children are higher again, while women's activity levels decline to their lowest level in this category. It should be noted that men's scores are significantly higher than women's for all levels of this variable with the largest difference found among those with three or more children.

Unlike any of the other countries, both men and women's scores are lower for those with one or two children than they are for those with no children in the Netherlands. Indeed women's scores get lower as the number of children increases. While men's scores decline initially, from the 0 to 1, 2 category, men with three or more children are the most active participants of any of the groups. As in Japan, the largest difference in male/female scores is found among those with three or more children. All male scores are significantly higher than female scores in Holland, a reflection of the over-

all higher activity rate of men that was discussed earlier in this paper.

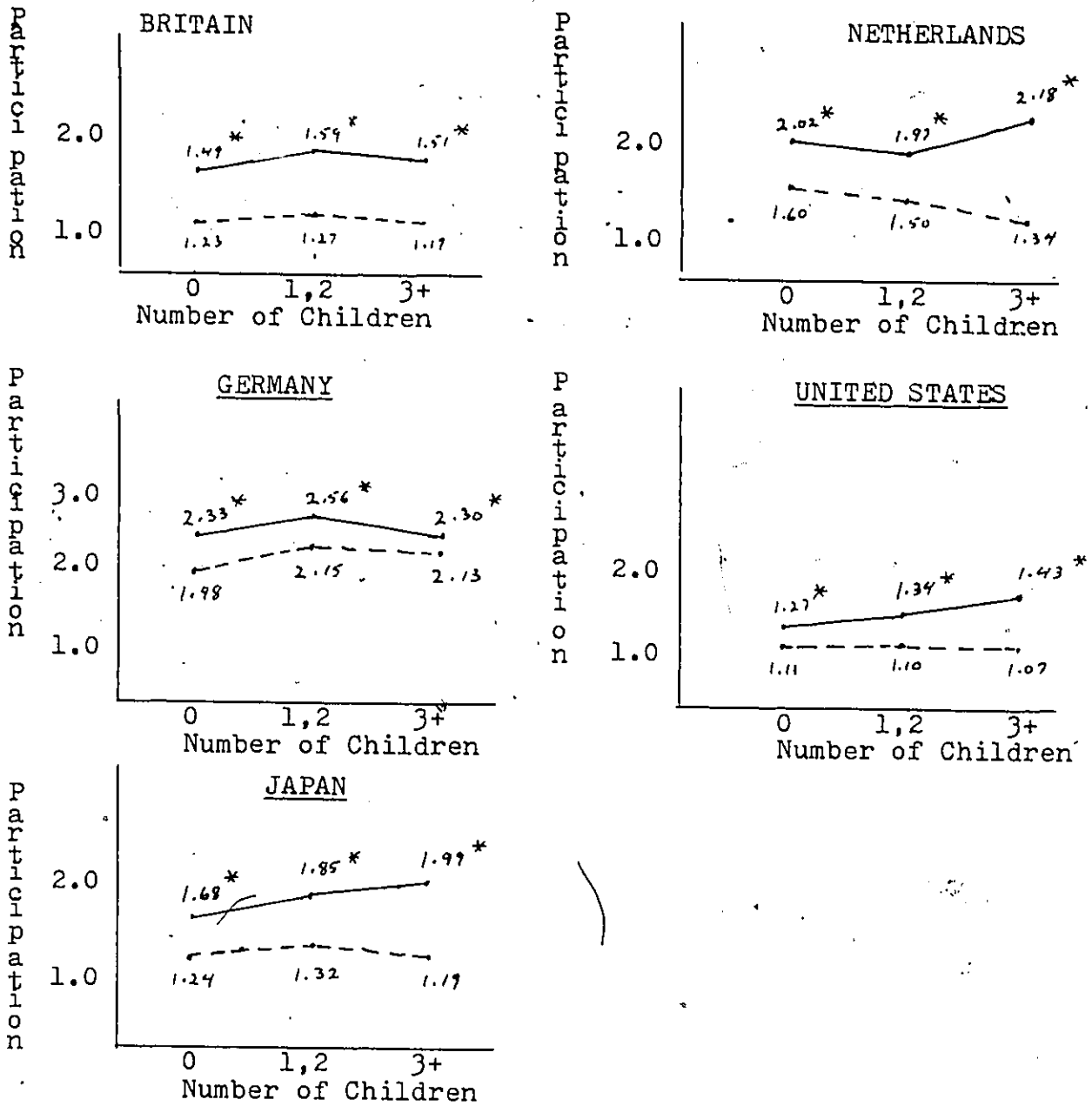
The United States data indicate that men's activity rates increase as the number of children increases. Conversely, women's activity rates decline as the number of children increase. At all levels, men's scores are significantly higher than women's. Data was not available for Canada.

The results of this analysis are somewhat inconsistent. Looking first at women, we find that in every country, for women with children, activity rates become lower as the number of children increases. However, women with no children are not the most active participants. The data clearly reveals that women's activity rates are highest for women with one or two children. This occurs in every country but the Netherlands. While large families (three or more children) appears to be associated with low activity rates for women, the absence of children certainly does not lead to higher levels of participation.<sup>5</sup> Only in the Netherlands are women with no children, the most active. As for men, in every country but the Netherlands men with one or two children are more active than those with no children. Furthermore, in Japan, the Netherlands and the United States, men's activity rates for those with three or more children is greater than those with only one or two children. In Britain and Germany, the data reveals that men with three or more children are less active than men



TABLE XI

Participation Mean Scores for Men and Women by number of children



\*Indicates mean scores for men and women are statistically different at the .05 level of significance

————— = men  
 - - - - - = women

with one or two children.

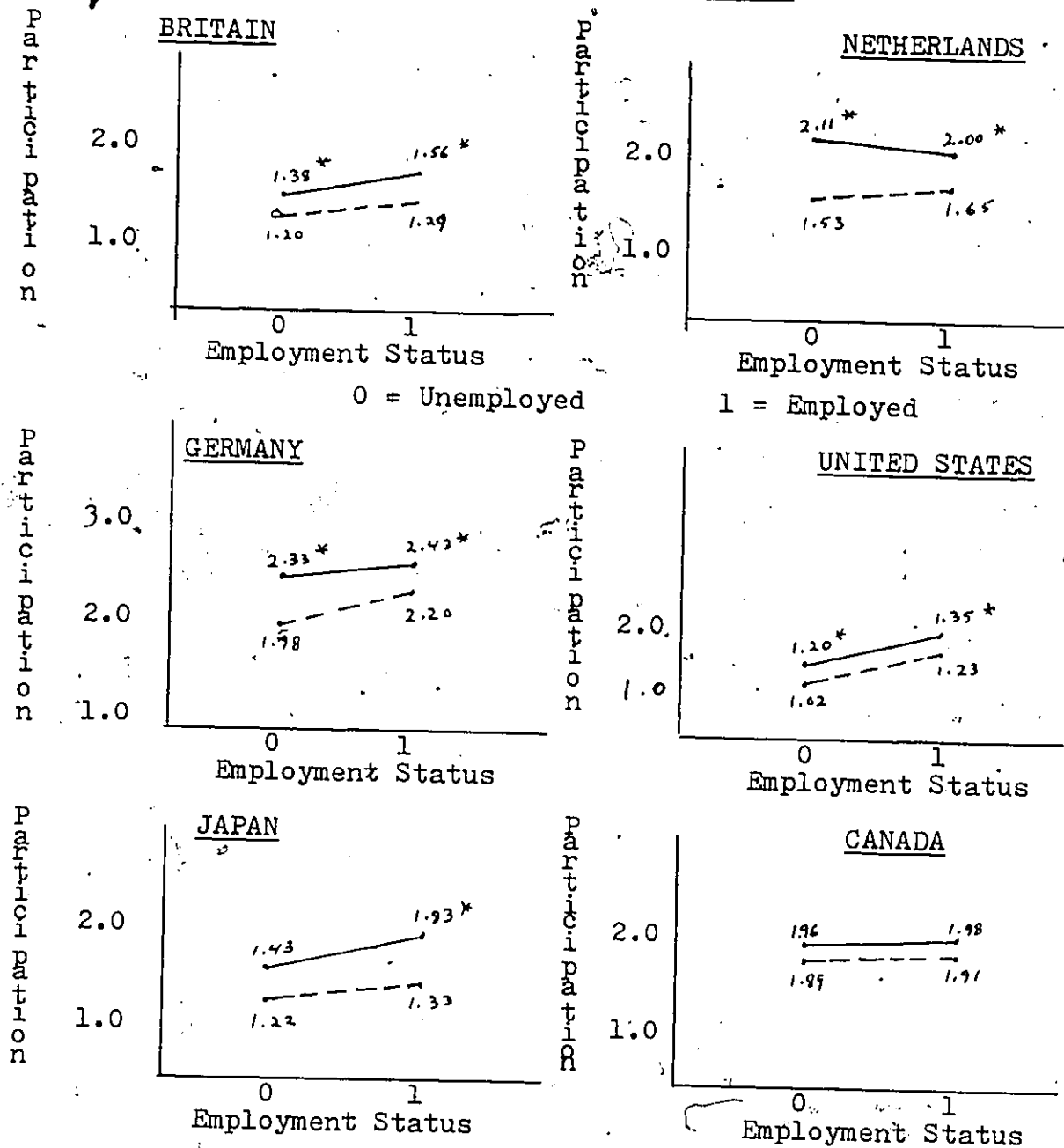
The effects of having children at home then are different for men and women. For both sexes having one or two children is associated with a rise in activity rates over those who have no children (except the Netherlands and for American women). For women, having three or more children leads to lower activity rates than those with only one or two children. For men in Japan, the Netherlands and the United States, large families (three or more children) are associated with higher levels of participation, while in Britain and Germany, men in this category are slightly less active.

Generally speaking then, women with large families are less active than women with small families while women with no children are less active than women with one or two children. The assumption that children restrict a woman's political activity holds only in the case of relatively large numbers of children. Women with small families are most active.

Lower activity among women may also be associated with occupation. If a woman is employed, she has her own income making her less dependent on her husband.<sup>6</sup> Employment brings with it the broadening of the external stimuli to which women have been traditionally exposed. "The postadolescent life experience of the majority of American women - a focus on home and family, connection to the "outside world" primarily through their husbands - has reinforced the political division of labour

TABLE XII

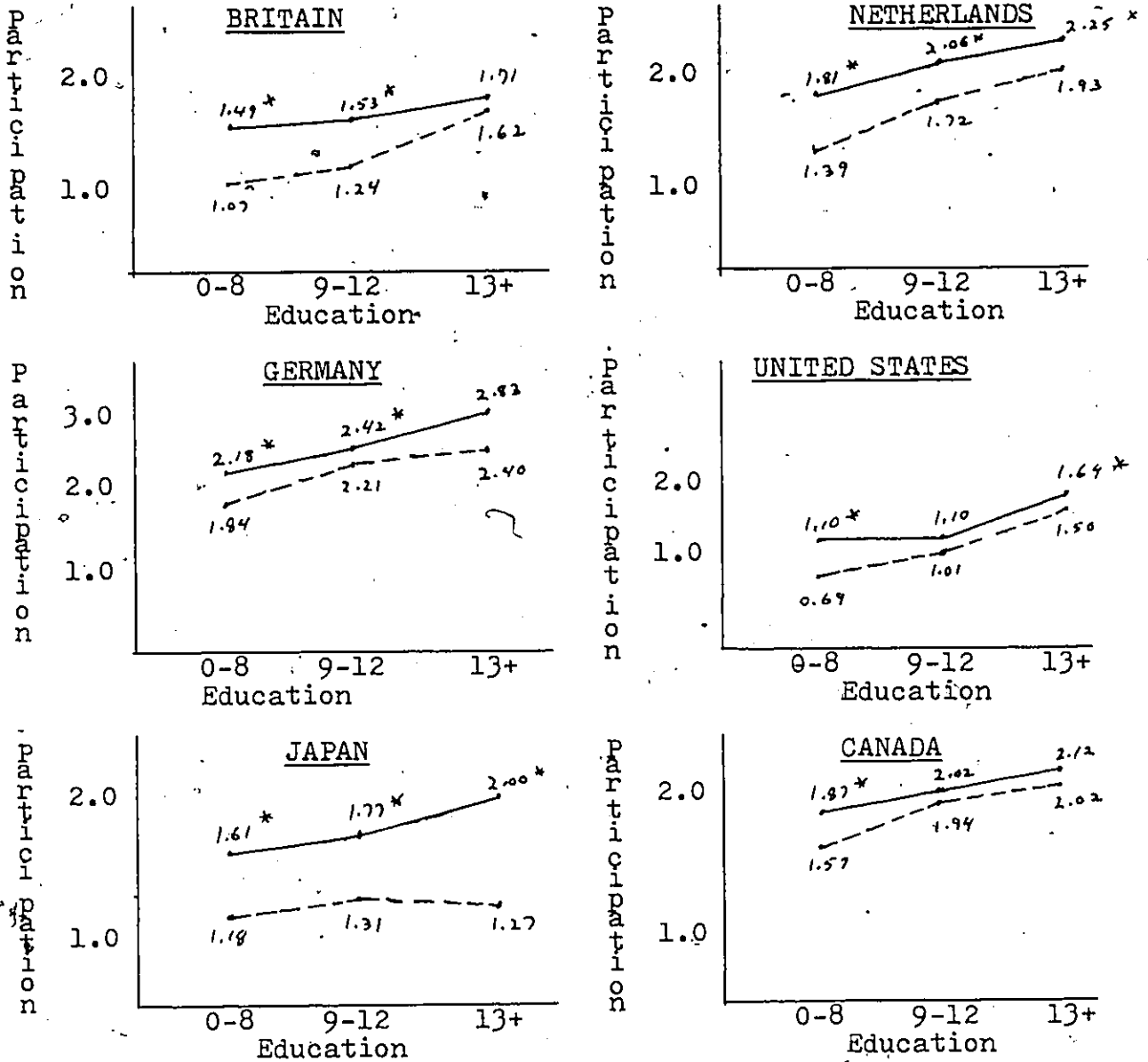
Participation mean scores for men and women by employment status



\*Indicates mean scores for men and women are statistically different at the .05 level of significance  
 ————— men  
 - - - - - women

TABLE XIII

Participation mean scores for men  
women by education (number of years  
of school)



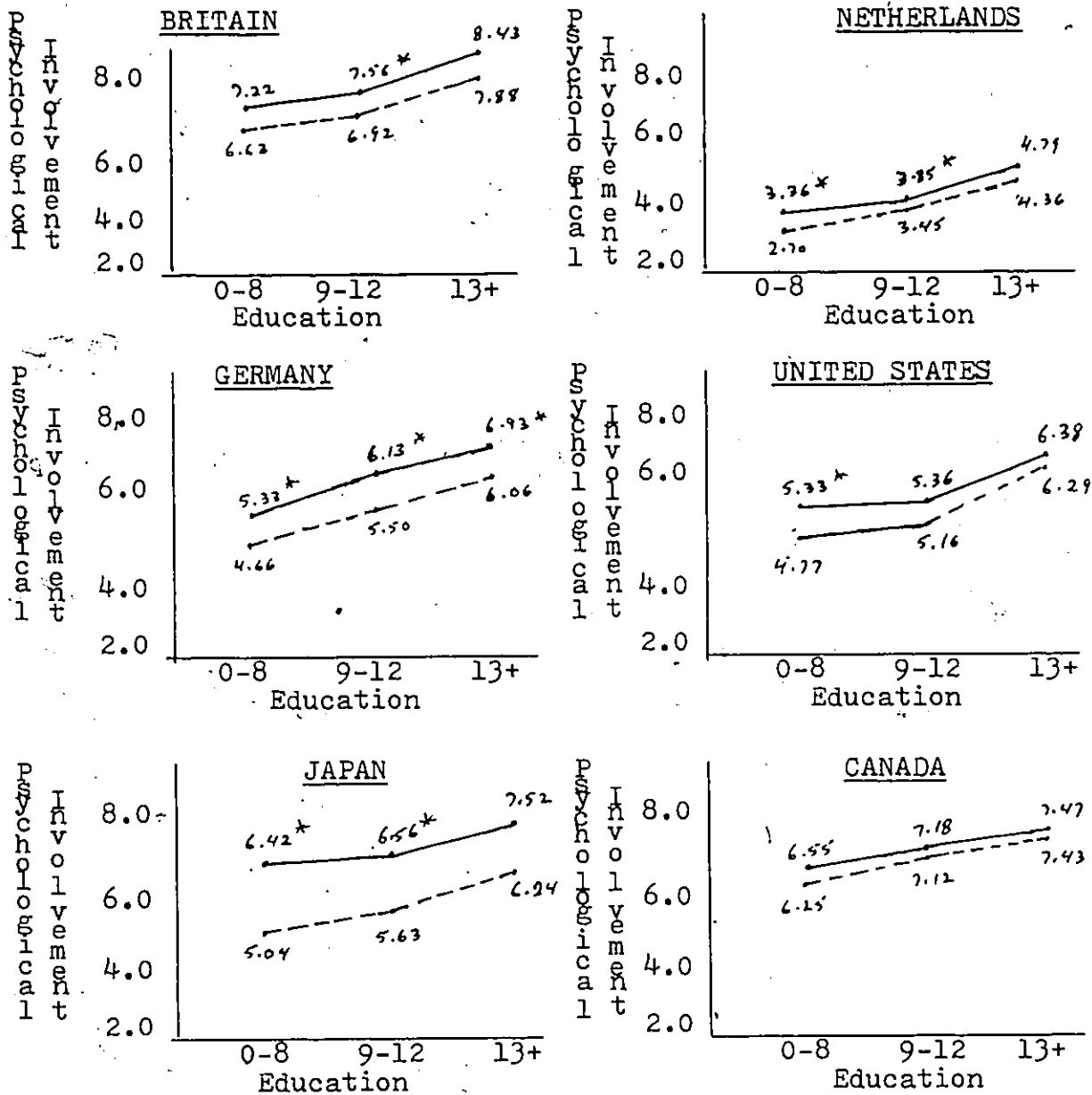
\*Indicates mean scores for men and women are statistically different at the .05 level of significance men  
women

learned in childhood."<sup>7</sup> Anderson has shown that increased percentages of women in the work force has resulted in an increase in political activity for working women.<sup>8</sup> In Table XII we look at employment status for men and women in the six countries. In every case, employed women have higher levels of political activity than unemployed women. While employed women's activity rates are still significantly lower than men's, the fact that employment is a positive factor on female activity is notable. Men are also positively affected by employment in every country but the Netherlands. Here, employed men are less active than unemployed men but are still more active than employed women.<sup>9</sup> Generally, the data reveals that higher activity for both sexes is associated with employment.

Table XIII presents data on participation for men and women by education. In all countries but Japan increased education is associated with higher activity scores for both men and women. The British and German data reveals that men and women's scores are not significantly different for those with thirteen or more years of education. In Japan women with thirteen or more years of schooling show lower rates of activity than do women with nine to twelve years of education. However, given the small number of cases found in this upper educated group in Japan this finding must be treated with caution. The Dutch data reveal that men are significantly

TABLE XIV

Mean Psychological Involvement Scores  
for Men and Women by Education



\*Indicates mean scores for men and women are statistically different at the .05 level of significance  
 ————— men  
 ----- women

more active than women at every educational level although education does increase the activity rates of both sexes.

American data reveals no difference in activity rates of men and women among the middle educated group. However, both low and highly educated males are more active than their female counterparts. Finally, in Canada, we do find a significant difference in the rates of male and female participation for low educated people. This is notable because to this point, no difference in male/female participation rates have been found. Generally, then, increased education is associated with higher levels of political activity. The gap in the level of activity for the sexes generally gets smaller as education increases. In all countries the difference is largest at the lowest educational level and decreases in size as we move from the low to the high education category. It would appear then, that increased education has a greater effect on women's activity rates than men's. If this holds true over time, then an increase in educational levels in society as a whole, should result in a narrowing of the gap between male/female activity rates.

In Table XIV levels of psychological involvement for the sexes are broken down by education. In every case, for both men and women, increased education is positively associated with increased levels of psychological involvement. The British data reveals that only for the middle educated

group are men significantly more psychologically involved than women. At both high and low education levels no significant difference exists between the sexes in terms of psychological involvement. Germany and Japan show similar results in that men have significantly higher levels of psychological involvement at every level of education. Data for the Netherlands indicate significant differences for male/female levels of psychological involvement at the low and middle education groups. Among the highly educated, there is no difference between the sexes. In the United States, only at the low education level do significant differences exist between men and women in terms of their level of psychological involvement. Both middle and upper educated groups reveal no differences. Lastly in Canada there is no difference evident in any of the three educational groupings.

In all countries but Canada and the United States, the gap between men and women's scores of psychological involvement remains fairly constant across the education levels. While no significant difference between British men and women scores exist for low and high education groups, this is probably due to the small number of cases found in these categories rather than a reflection of similar levels of psychological involvement. The same is true in the Netherlands for the highly educated group. It appears then, that women are less psychologically involved than men at every education-



al level in Britain, Germany, Japan and the Netherlands. This is important when we remember that psychological involvement is a strong predictor of political activity in every country. In the United States, we have already noted previously that men are slightly more psychologically involved than women (see Tables VII and VIII). It appears that the disparity between men and women's scores for the low education category is the primary source of this difference. At all other levels of education men and women possess similar levels of psychological involvement. It is also notable that in the United States and Canada, the difference in the psychological involvement scores of men and women becomes smaller as educational levels increase.

Participation mean scores by sex for young, middle and old age groups are presented in Table XV. In every country but Canada, there are significant differences in the participation rates of the sexes for every age group. Men have consistently higher scores. The British data reveal that participation rates for both sexes are curvilinear over the life cycle. Participation rates rise to middle age and then decline as the respondent gets older. The difference in activity rates is at its largest for the middle age group while at the young and old levels, the differences between the sexes is about the same.

In Germany, the data reveal that both men and women are

at their highest levels of activity in the youngest age group. Both sexes show declining activity rates for middle and old age. The gap between male/female levels of activity is about the same for middle and old age groups while in the youngest group the difference between the sexes is the smallest.

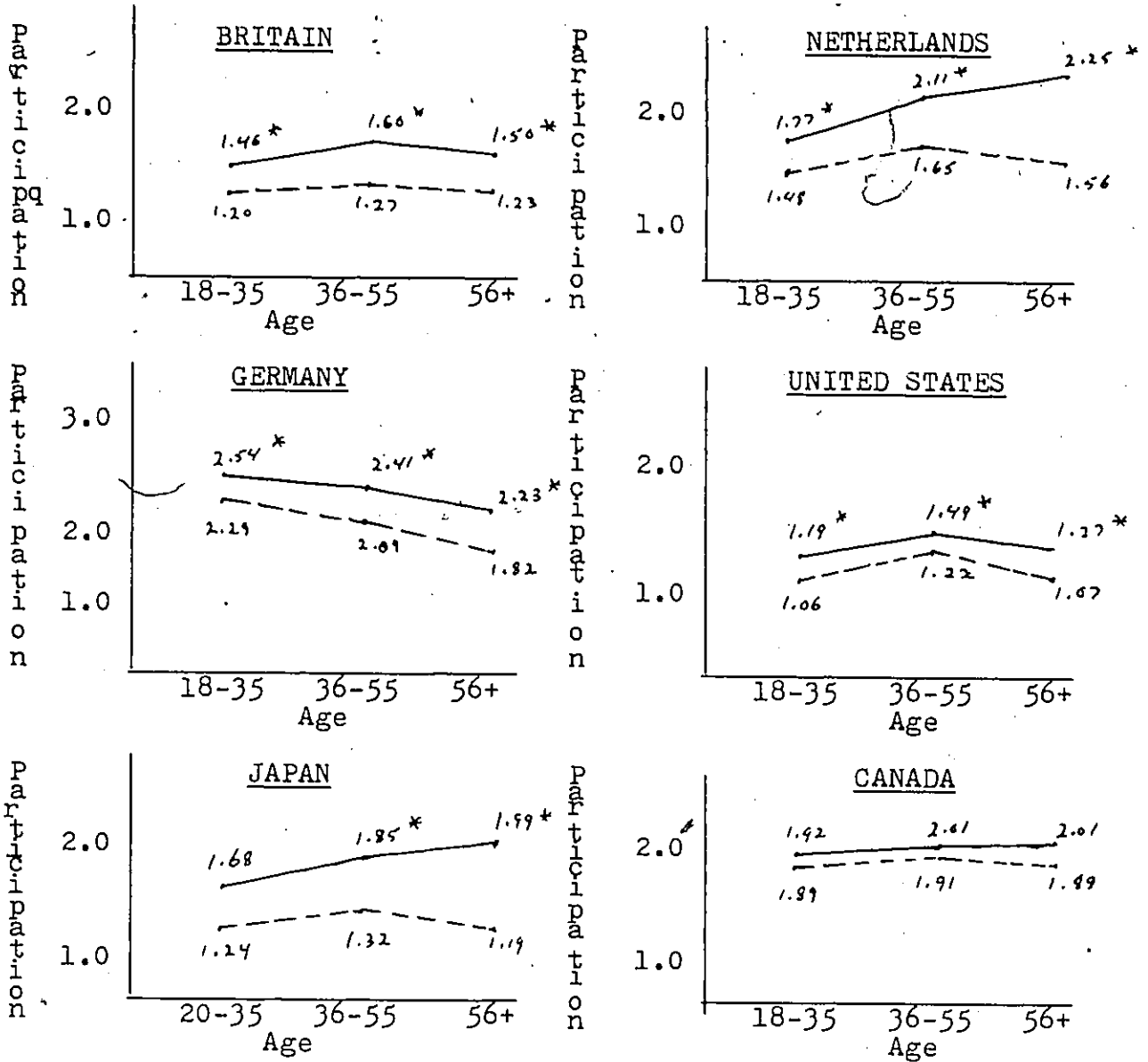
In Japan, we find that political activity for men increases with age. For women, however, the data reveal a curvilinear situation as found previously in Britain. In terms of the gap between the sexes, the smallest difference exists for the youngest age groups while the gap increases in size as age increases.

The Netherlands data is similar to those for Japan. Women's activity is again curvilinear reaching its highest point at middle age and declining in the older age groups. Men have an increasing rate of activity as they age although the most sizeable increase in activity rates is found moving from young to middle age. As in Japan, the difference in activity rates for the sexes is at its smallest for the young age group and gets increasingly larger as one moves through the life cycle.

The United States distribution is similar to that of Britain. For both men and women, political activity distributed over age is curvilinear. The most active group of respondents for both men and women are found in the middle age group. In terms of the gap between the sexes, it is at its

TABLE XV

Participation mean scores for men and women by age



\*Indicates mean scores for men and women are statistically different at the .05 level of significance        men        women

smallest for the young, increases to its largest difference at middle age and declines slightly in the old age category. No significant difference in male/female participation rates exist across the age group in Canada.

In all countries, women are most active in the 36 to 55 year old age group with the exception of Germany. The data is consistent with the life-cycle explanations of political activity.<sup>10</sup> Participation has been found to start at low levels for the young, rise to its highest level during the middle age years and decline in later life. This explanation is applicable for men's activity in the United States and Britain. For men in Japan and the Netherlands, activity rates increase rather than decrease for the oldest group of respondents.

Generational effects may come into importance here. The youngest group of respondents shows the smallest difference in male/female activity rates. Because of the impact of the women's movement in the 1960's and 70's, it may be that younger women are becoming more politically active than were young women in previous generations. Thus, if this gap remains small through the life-cycle, the net result will be a narrowing of the differences in male/female participation. This young generation of females may demonstrate lasting effects of the feminist movement which, in the long run may manifest itself in greater involvement for women in political life.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to examine male/female activity rates in the six countries looking specifically for differences in levels of activity and trying to explain these differences. The analysis began by analyzing the individual components of the participation variable by sex. In the non-North American countries significantly lower scores for women were found in every activity other than voting. (German women also vote less than men). Canadian and American women are less likely to influence another person's vote - the only activity in which significantly different scores for the sexes was found. The summary participation variable reflected the lower women's scores in every country but Canada.

The path analysis revealed that some of the difference in male/female activity rates could be attributed to different attitude levels held by the sexes. Men are consistently more psychologically involved than women. Differing education levels in Britain and Holland further added to the indirect effects of sex. However, the difference in psychological involvement levels and education only partially explained the disparity in male/female participation rates.

In the last section of this chapter, the data revealed that women with large families have lower activity rates than women with only one or two children. Being employed had a positive influence on women's activity rates, but did not

bring them up to the level of men. Education was found to have positive effects on both participation levels and levels of psychological involvement. Increasing educational levels revealed a narrowing of the gap in participation rates for men and women. For psychological involvement, increased education lead to higher scores for both sexes, but the gap between them remains fairly constant for all educational levels. This is important because psychological involvement is such a strong determinant of political activity. The results indicate that education by itself, does not lead to an equal attitudinal level for the sexes. The data for age and participation revealed that in most countries women's levels of political participation increased moving from young to middle age and declined with old age. Men's scores generally followed the same pattern except in Japan and the Netherlands where the oldest age group had the highest activity scores.<sup>11</sup>

In sum, the analysis has demonstrated persistent differences in male/female activity. Indeed, only part of these differences can be explained by differing levels of psychological involvement and education. While variables such as employment status, and education do produce positive results in terms of women's activity, they do not raise women's scores to parity with those of men. The analysis, then has generally given some insight into factors which influence male/female participation. However, there is much left to explain.

## FOOTNOTES

1. There is a great deal of literature documenting lower female activity rates. For Example:  
M. Duverger, The Political Role of Women (Paris: Unesco, 1955); G. Almond and S. Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton University Press, Princeton: 1963), p. 177 - 178; R. Lane, Political Life, p. 209 - 216; S. Verba, N. Nie, J. Kim, Participation and Political Equality (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1978), Chp 12.
2. S. Verba and N. Nie, Participation in American (Harper & Row, New York, 1972), p. 125 - 127.
3. IBID, p. 340.
4. H. Holter, Sex Roles and Social Structure (Universitets' for Laget, Oslo, 1970), p. 46.
5. This finding may be due to age. Most people with no children are probably in the youngest age category. Young people generally tend to be low participators.
6. H. Holter, OP CIT., p. 13.
7. K. Anderson, "Working Women and Political Participation" in American Journal of Political Science, August, 1975, p. 441.
8. IBID, p. 444.
9. The higher score for unemployed men as compared to employed men in the Netherlands may be an anomaly. There are a relatively small number of cases in this category and thus this finding may not reflect the real situation, especially given the fact that in every other country unemployed men are less active than employed men.
10. See S. Verba and N. Nie, Participation in America p. 138 - 148, also R. Lane, Political Life, p. 219.
11. Subsequent analysis has indicated that both employment status and number of children have direct effects on participation when age, education and sex are controlled.

Chapter Five

CONCLUSION



In the introductory chapter, we stated that this paper had two main areas of focus - first, an examination of electoral participation and its correlates in six countries; and secondly, the investigation of male/female differences in electoral activity. The analysis began with a comparison of similar activities across the countries. Here we expected to find some variation in the percentages of respondents engaged in similar activities in each country due to the different cultural and political characteristics inherent in each country. While conceptually, these activities are of equal difficulty, in practise, these individual activities may vary in difficulty due to the structure of the political system and the acceptability of specific acts as legitimate forms of electoral activity. For example, the data reveals that Americans have a lower percentage of people who vote than all other countries in the study. This is due to the structure of the American political system which requires individuals to register in order to be eligible to vote. Thus, voting becomes, comparatively a more demanding political activity in the United States than in the other countries studied in this paper. Similarly, in the United States and Britain, we noted that attending political meetings was done only by the most highly involved partisans while in the other countries a larger segment of society engages in this activity. Finally, the data indicates that influencing others vote is an activity which is most wide-

spread in the North American societies, particularly in the United States. This activity has gained more acceptance as a legitimate electoral act here, than in the non-North American societies where smaller percentages of respondents are involved in this activity.

While variations in individual activities across country were evident, it is also true that a common form for electoral participatory items formed Guttman scales. Thus, the properties of cumulativeness and unidimensionality apply. The activities measured here are all part of a single underlying phenomena i.e., electoral activity. Furthermore, those respondents who engage in the most difficult activities are also likely to be involved in the activities which are easier. This common character of electoral participation is important for two reasons. First, similar techniques can be employed in various countries in order to obtain valid measures of electoral participation. Secondly, because this same approach may be used in measuring participation in different countries, the establishment of comparable measures is facilitated, thus aiding cross-national analysis. Therefore if one is interested in participation in countries as culturally diverse as, for example, Japan and the Netherlands, a common approach may be used.

The level of participation was comparable across the four countries with similar activities. We found that Canada

had the highest scores on the participation scale, followed by the Netherlands, Japan and Great Britain. The lack of comparable data impeded the comparison of United States and German scores with those of the other four countries. However, based on previous literature and the data that we do have, one would expect that United States level of electoral involvement would rank close to that of Canada's. On the other hand, we would expect German scores to rank among the lowest of our six countries based on the results of the analysis of the activities that were available.

Electoral participation is dependent on attitudinal, socioeconomic and demographic variables. The choice of the independent variables was based on the premise that each of these variables would, potentially, have some effect on participation in each country. What was desired then was predictors that could be compared cross-nationally. At the same time, it must be noted that there are factors which weigh on participation in some countries that are not included in this set of predictors. For example, regionalism in Canada<sup>1</sup> and religion in Holland<sup>2</sup> have been shown to have an effect on political activity in those countries. Variables such as these were excluded from our analysis because they were specific only to certain countries. Our approach, then was to use as predictors, variables which would have some applicability in all of these countries. This facilitates the comparison of factors across countries.

The variance in electoral participation explained differs across country. In the Netherlands, fully 32% of the variance in participation was explained while only 16% of the variance in Canadian electoral involvement was explained. Clearly, then, the applicability of this set of predictors is not uniform. The independent predictors have varying importance for each country.

Of the independent variables, the attitudinal variables are the best predictors of activity in each country. Particularly important is political interest, which is the strongest determinant of political activity in all six countries. The socioeconomic predictors are most important in the United States and Holland while in Canada and Japan their impact is minor. Verba et al suggests that group-based forces "can modify the participation pattern that one would have if only individual forces were operating."<sup>3</sup> Thus, parties and organizations may tend to raise the level of political activity for those who would normally be low participators. If individual resources were the only determinant of political activity, then those high in socioeconomic status would be the most actively involved. In the United States, individual resources are an important factor in determining levels of political activity. In other countries, these resources have less significance.

The demographic variables have only weak effects on

political activity. Generally, the data supported the decline of community model with regards to urban-rural participation levels - that is rural dwellers are slightly more active than urban residents. The data also indicated that political activity was slightly higher for older respondents than young people. Of the demographic variables, the results concerning sex are most interesting. Males are more politically active than females in every country but Canada. In Japan the difference is particularly large. Here sex is second in importance to political interest as a determinant of political activity. Because of these facts, a more thorough investigation of male/female differences in political activity was undertaken in the fourth chapter of this paper.

The analysis of the individual activities revealed significantly lower scores in all activities other than voting for women in the non-North American countries. In both Canada and the United States, significantly lower scores for women were found only in influencing others vote. This supports the general assumption that women are less aggressive than men and less likely to engage in direct confrontations. In the non-North American societies, particularly Japan, the perserverance of traditional norms which frown on women in political life, probably contributes to the lower activity rates of women found in these countries. The fact that women vote as much as do men is more likely a reflection of a sense

of civic duty rather than a genuine effort to become involved in politics. It is obvious that in these countries, women are less active than men in activities which require much effort. However, it is difficult to determine if this is a result of women's own inhibitions or rather a function of societal and institutional norms which may exclude women from the political arena.<sup>4</sup>

The results of the path analysis indicate two main points regarding women's participation. First, in every country but Canada, women are less psychologically involved than men in politics. That is, they hold less positive attitudes towards political matters. Given the fact that psychological involvement is a strong determinant of political activity, some of the reason why women are less active is explained here. Secondly, in every country but Canada, some unexplained differences in male/female participation remains. Even when psychological involvement and education are taken into account, men are still more active than women. Obviously, the model we use, is lacking in its ability to fully explain the lower level of female activity.

Some other variables were examined for their effects on male/female participation. Employment has a positive effect on female participation in all countries as does education. Education also produces higher levels of psychological involvement for both males and females. Women with larger families

(3 or more children) tend to be less active than women with small families. Here the burden of caring for children may limit the time available for activities outside the family domain. These variables all relate positively to increased women's participation but this analysis still does not tell how much effect the variables may have in explaining the differences between the sexes. The incorporation of these variables into a participatory model may lead to a greater explanation of women's participation than the model we have used.

One of the major problems encountered in preparing this paper was the lack of comparable questions across country. In many instances similar questions were either not asked or were asked in such a manner as to make equivalence difficult. Another problem was that similar questions were coded differently adding further difficulty to the construction of equivalent measures. Survey question and coding are the prerogative of the principal investigators whose main function is to deal with situations in their own national context. However, it is not unreasonable to think that questions and coding could be applied in such a way as to meet both the national focus of an election survey while still facilitating cross-national comparison. Some standardization of questions would greatly aid research in this area. The problem of equivalence of measure from nation to nation is also

relevant here. In cross-national studies, functional rather than full equivalence is sought by investigators. This means that "the same variable may be indexed by a variety of items, and different items may be the most appropriate indicators in different settings."<sup>5</sup> Thus, when different variables are used, it must be determined that both these variables are measures of a similar general dimension or phenomena. In the end, the determinant is that one variable is functionally equivalent to another is at the discretion of the researcher.

From a conceptual standpoint, the use of American developed models in non-American countries must be approached with some reserve. The data indicated that individual socioeconomic resources are more important in the United States than in any of the other countries studied here. This is not surprising given the fact that individualism is more widely espoused in America than in any other country. However, when looking at participation in many other countries, an approach which includes an examination of group norms and stimuli would probably add much to the explanations of political activity in these countries.

With regards to sex, new theories of male/female participation must be developed. The analysis used here and analyses employed in other studies have failed to completely explain why females are underparticipants. Further studies need to be conducted on male/female relationships both within



and outside the family, dealing with power and decision-making processes. Given the fact that women are generally less psychologically involved in politics than men, more research of male/female socialization is needed. Another aspect which deserves study, is the effects of the increasing number of women in the work force. The data has indicated that being employed is a positive factor of political involvement for both men and women. As more women enter the work force and gain positions of authority, the result may be a rise in the level of women's activity rates. All of these areas deserve further attention from social scientists.

Finally, for those interested in male/female participation, a good place to start investigations might be in Canada. Why is it that no differences are found here? Indeed, one might well expect differences. Canadian women received the right to vote at about the same time as American and British women. Our political culture is similar to that of both the United States and Britain. There is no greater abundance of women in the political elites to serve as role models than in other countries. Yet, despite these facts, Canadian women are as active in electoral politics as are men. If some reasons were found to explain this situation, then, possibly, they could be used to explain the lack of equal involvement in other countries.

Political participation is an essential part of demo-

cracy. It is hoped that this study has given some understanding into both the nature of political participation and the factors which determine it in the six democracies which were the subject of this investigation. For the problem of male/female differences in political activity, some insight has been achieved regarding the disparity between the sexes and some of the causes of this disparity. Still, many unanswered questions remain in this area. While no proponent of democracy would rationally deny that a group which encompasses over fifty per cent of the population in most countries should be denied equal participation in the political process, the recognition of the obstacles which impede equal involvement for women and the problem of overcoming these obstacles is another matter.

FOOTNOTES

1. M. Burke, Political Participation in Canadian National and Provincial Elections: An Analysis of Regional Effects (M.A. Thesis, University of Windsor, 1976).
2. S. Verba, N. Nie, J. Kim, Participation and Political Equality (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1978), p. 199.
3. IBID, p. 19.
4. S. Verba, N. Nie, J. Kim, / OP CIT., p. 267 - 268.
5. IBID, p: 36. †

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VITA AUCTORIS

The author was born on January 22, 1948 in Sarnia, Ontario. Attended elementary school in Corunna, Ontario, and secondary school in Sarnia, Ontario. He completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in May, 1977 at the University of Windsor. The author entered the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Windsor in the fall of 1977. While working towards his Master of Arts degree in Political Science he was a teaching assistant for an undergraduate course in statistics and Canadian government. Graduation is expected in the Autumn of 1979.