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Tutor: Anders Uhlin

Political Participation in Mexico

A study regarding the influence of socioeconomic resources

Andreas Malmgren

Abstract

The government of Mexico has a rhetorical aspiration to create a more inclusive political system and has increased the level of political rights and civil liberties for its citizens significantly. That the possibility to participate from a legal and institutional perspective exists does not necessarily indicate that all individuals participate to the same extent.

The purpose of this thesis is to increase the understanding of factors that influence the individual's possibility to political participation. The research question is: in what way do the individual's levels of socioeconomic resources (education, income, employment and class) influence his/her political participation in contemporary Mexico? The author is analysing the phenomena using literature, statistics, e-mail interviews and theoretical ideas from the Civic voluntarism model.

The empirical analysis is indicating that an individual that possesses a high level of socioeconomic resources has higher political participation intensity compared to less privileged individuals. The consequence is that the majority of the political power is in the hands of an economic privileged minority. This may influence the outcome of the public policy, and the traditional power structure is likely to be maintained.

Key words: democratic consolidation, democratic deepening, Mexico, political participation, socioeconomic resources.

Characters (with spaces): 69 866.

To “Jackie Brown”

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List of Shortenings

DF - Federal District

H¹ – Hypothesis 1, Connection

H⁰ – Hypothesis 0, No Connection

NED – National Endowment for Democracy

n – The Total Number of Counts

n. s. – Not Significant

OECD – Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PAN – National Action Party

PRI – Institutional Revolutionary Party

WVS – World Value Survey

χ^2 – Chi-square

*** – Significant on the Test Level 0.1 %

** – Significant on the Test Level 1 %

* – Significant on the Test Level 5 %

Preface

During the summer of 2006 I attended a summer course in international relations at Universidad Iberoamericana, in Mexico City. Most of the students at Iberoamericana belong to economic privileged families. For me that coming from Sweden where the economic inequality levels are relatively low compared to Mexico, the contrast between the students at Iberoamericana and the economic less privileged part of the population was rather conspicuous.

I was in Mexico during the election in 2006 and experienced the political interest from the Iberoamericana students. During my time in Mexico I got the feeling that if the described level of political interest and participation intensity could be generalised over the total population of Mexico the levels of political engagement would almost certainly reach record levels. Since this is not the case in the Mexican context I started to wonder about how these economic privileged individuals are influenced by their position in the socioeconomic class structure. My general theory, based on these observations, is that individuals from the upper part of the social class structure more frequently participate in political activity than those from the lower part. These thoughts are the basis for my thesis.

Finally I want to thank all my Mexican friends for contributing to a wonderful summer in Mexico and those that have been a support for me while I have been constructing my thesis. So far nobody is mentioned, nobody is forgotten. I however do want to give a special thanks to my dear Mexican/American friend Jacqueline “Jackie Brown” Rodriguez from Los Angeles. It was her wonderful and spicy personality that made me interested in Mexico and was in fact the main reason to why I decided to travel to Mexico in the first place.

1 Introduction

The introduction is divided into three sub-chapters. First, there is a brief historical background. The reason for this is to create an understanding of the rather complex situation that the newly established democracy Mexico now is facing. Secondly, the problem regarding an unequal power distribution between individuals is described. Finally, the purpose and research question for this thesis are presented.

1.1 Historical Background

The political and economical development of Mexico was during the majority of the twentieth century structured around the ideas of the revolution in 1910. The *Institutional Revolutionary Party* (PRI) was in power position from 1929 – 2000 and had during the majority of this time little political opposition. (Ethridge, Handelman, 2004:439)

In the years before the year 2000 fundamental structural changes took place in Mexico and a combination of these factors created an opening for a democratic transition.

First, the change towards a neo-liberal economic system contributed to severe changes within the economy. The state withdrew from their controlling position over the economy and Mexico became a part of the world market. Secondly, a party system was consolidated and democracy appeared as a potential way towards a regime change. Thirdly, there was a spreading of civic-cultural movements that created a foundation for a struggle promoting increased political rights. (Olvera, 1997:111-112) The PRI era ended in 2000 when the *National Action Party* (PAN) and the party's political leader *Vincente Fox Quesada* received the political power over Mexico. (Morton, 2005:181)

1.2 Problem

The transition from an authoritarian rule to a representative democracy is a great challenge. An institutional transition does not create change in itself. The construction of democratic institutions is a short-term constitutional task but to consolidate the democratic system and ideas with the citizens is a long and continuous prerequisite (Hague, Harrop, 2004:124). One of the most essential

questions in the post-transition period is to improve the democratic quality (Harbers, 2007:38).

A democratic system requires free and voluntary democratic participation of individuals in the selection of political representation. An essential aspect is that all citizens should have an equal and adequate possibility to participate and to express their political opinion. (Dahl, 2003:169-179) In this process it is regarded to be favourable with a high level of citizen input in the democratic system. But there is a great variety in how and to what extent individuals participate in the democratic process.

The problem the author of this thesis recognises is a potential inequality regarding political power between different individuals. The individual's level of socioeconomic resources may influence his/her possibility to be an active part on the political arena and influence the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take. This potential problem may exist in all forms of political participation and may influence the outcome of the public policy. The consequence with such an inequality is that the majority of the political power is in the hands of a powerful and economic privileged minority.

According to Marcus J. Kurtz, this kind of inequality may undermine the political representativeness. According to Kurtz: “[f]or truly democratic representation to occur, the organization of interests must also be reasonably well distributed across the major social groups and cleavages of the polity”. If this distribution of influence does not exist then it is Kurtz opinion that: “politicians are likely to prove responsive only to specific, powerful minorities.” (Kurtz, 2004:267-268)

1.3 Purpose

There are a great variety of factors that influence the individual's political participation. To define these factors and investigate in what way they affect the individual's possibility to participate is of great importance. Through this thesis the author wants to contribute to this discussion. In a more abstract way, *the purpose of this thesis is to increase the understanding of factors that influence the individual's possibility to political participation*. The author will do so by carry out a case study on the context of Mexico. *More specifically, the purpose of this thesis is to verify if socioeconomic resources do affect political participation or not in the context of Mexico*. The author will do so by creating an analytical framework based on previous research and test the relevance of the ideas within this framework on the context of Mexico.

The research question is: in what way do the individual's levels of socioeconomic resources influence his/her political participation in contemporary Mexico?

When discussing socioeconomic resources the author is referring to education, income, employment and class. Mexico is an interesting context to do research in

regarding this subject because the rather high level of internal socioeconomic variations within the population.

The socioeconomic resources are most often unevenly distributed among the total population. A variation in political participation may therefore also exist between groups of individuals depending on for example age, race/ethnicity and gender. (Norris, 2002:29-31) This thesis is important because it will create an increased understanding of how socioeconomic resources influence and motivate the individual to political participation. In prolongation this understanding will be helpful when trying to achieve more inclusive political systems.

2 Theoretical Framework

First, a basis for a definition regarding the concept of political participation will be created. Secondly, previous research regarding the described research area will be presented. The previous research will be focused around the Civic voluntarism model. As an example of previous research Milbrath and Goel's multi-dimensional model regarding political participation will be presented. This chapter will act as a basis for the author's construction of an analytical framework.

2.1 Definition of Political Participation

First, it is important to define the rather complex concept of political participation. Politics could be defined as a process that is taking place in all levels of the society. Politics from a more traditional point of view is seen as a process that is happening in the public sphere and most often are connected to governmental institutions. Some of the more famous publications where such a view is used are: Almond and Verba (1963, 1989), Milbrath and Goel (1977) as well as Verba, Nie and Kim (1978).

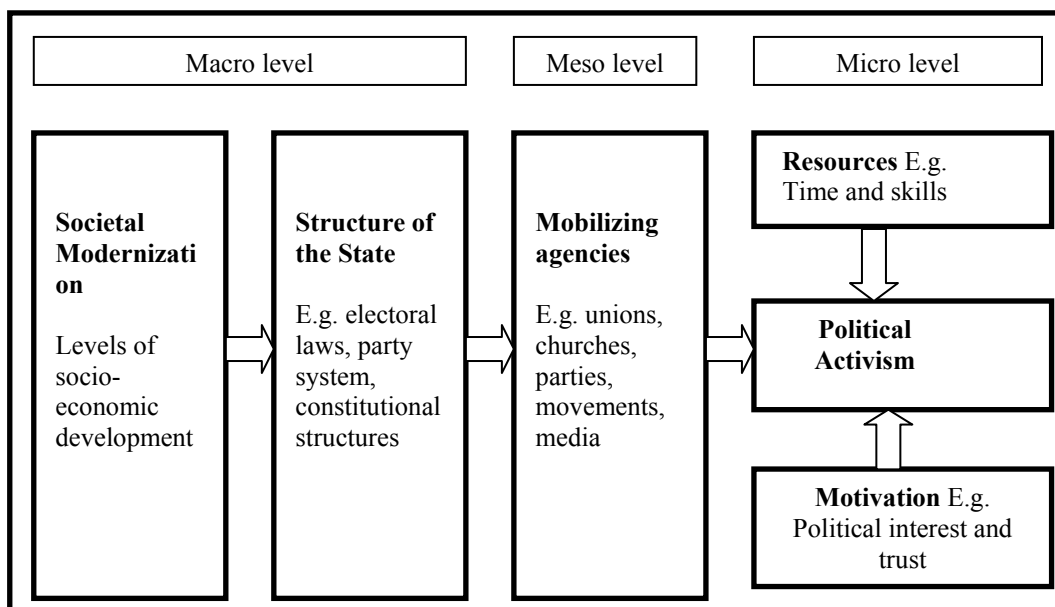
Sidney Verba, Norman H. Nie and Jae-on Kim define political participation as: "those legal activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take. [Emphasis added]" This definition focus on participation within the system from a legal sense. This excludes protests, riots, assassinations and civic violence. This definition also focus on acts by private citizens, thereby excludes citizens acting in their professional roles (government or party officials and professional lobbyists). Neither do this definition include ceremonial and support activities, actions where citizens take part by expressing support for the government (for example marching in parades or participate in ceremonial elections). An effective participation is influenced by the possibility to participate in other spheres, such as the family, school or workplace. (Verba, Nie, Kim, 1978:46-48) Such a possibility fosters civil awareness and contributes to more active citizens.

Verba, Nie and Kim's definition however focus on political participation in a more narrow sense. They refer to this participation as: "democratic participation". "[Democratic participation] *emphasizes a flow of influence upward from the masses; and, above all, it does not involve support for a preexisting unified national interest but is part of a process by which the national interest or interests are created* [Emphasis added]." (Verba, Nie, Kim, 1978:46-48)

2.2 Previous Research

Pippa Norris classify the existing research regarding political activity (political participation) into four categories depending on the focus regarding influential factors. “Modernization theories”, focus on social trends that increase demands for public participation, for example expanding opportunities for education and rising standards of living. “Institutional accounts”, focus on the structure of the state, for example electoral laws and party system. “Agency theories”, focus on the role of organizations in civic society, for example trade unions and religious groups. And finally, the “Civic voluntarism model”, that focus on how social inequality regarding resources and motivation influence political engagement. (Norris, 2002:19-31)

Norris Theoretical Framework Regarding Political Activity



Model 1 (Norris, 2002:20)

All these theoretical viewpoints are feasible alternatives when doing research regarding political participation. Depending on the purpose of this thesis the previous research described in this theoretical framework will be associated with the Civic voluntarism model, in other words, research on the micro level.

2.2.1 Civic Voluntarism Model

As discussed above, research on the micro level focus on patterns of resources that influence the individual participation intensity and participation appearance.

According to Norris, the essential idea of the Civic voluntarism model is that individuals with higher levels of socioeconomic resources more frequently are

active participants in the political process. The individual often receive political resources (time, money and civic skills) through his/her social position. Through his/her social position the individual acquires resources, receive request for engagement and build up a political orientation. The individual's educational level is the best explaining factor for the individual's participation intensity within the framework of the Civic voluntarism model. Education fosters the individual's civil awareness and political knowledge. (Norris, 2002:29-31)

According to Norris, the political motivation (political interest and trust) is also important for the individual's political engagement. The political motivation may explain the reason for political activity, for example if the individual vote as a form of patriotic support or as an aspiration to influence the outcome of the political process. Trust is related to the level of support for a democratic system as an ideal and the level of confidence in the efficacy for its institutions. It may also be related to the level of satisfaction for the governmental performance. In general, individuals that experience a higher level of trust and motivation are more likely to relocate and use his/her political resources available as an aspiration to influence the outcome of the political process. The complete opposite is also a potential possibility. In other words, feelings of distrust and alienation may generate an increased level of mobilization. (Norris, 2002:29-31)

The influence of socioeconomic factors on political engagement are supported by a variety of authors, for example Milbrath and Goel (1977), Verba, Nie and Kim (1978), Lipset (1994), Inglehart (1997).

According to *Ronald F. Inglehart* a high level of literacy might be sufficient to produce a high voting turnout but voting is not a reliable indicator regarding the level of citizen input. It may simply be a way for the political elite to justify their power position. Neither is voting in it self necessarily a sufficient way to political influence for the individual. To gain a more advanced form of political influence a higher level of participation intensity is needed. A higher level of political participation intensity demands a higher level of education as well as other forms of political resources. (Inglehart, 1997:169)

According to *Semour Martin Lipset*, individuals with a higher level of economical resources have a better possibility to receive higher levels of education. Education is an important factor for the individual in the process of becoming a successful participant in the political system. It is also more likely that individuals with a higher level of education believe in the democratic values and support a democratic system. (Lipset, 1994:38-40) According to Lipset, the variation in participation intensity within the socioeconomic class structure may be related to different degrees of conformity to the existing norms within the society. Pressure from the "middle-class norms" such as the importance of voting as a "good citizen" is likely to be less in socioeconomic groups that already experience a lower level of social status. (Lipset, 1994:208-209)

According to *Lester W. Milbrath* and *Madan Lal Goel*, social-position variables such as class do not create any given specific behaviour *per se*. But social conditions are likely to form certain personalities, beliefs and attitudes that are likely to generate a certain level of political participation. Individuals

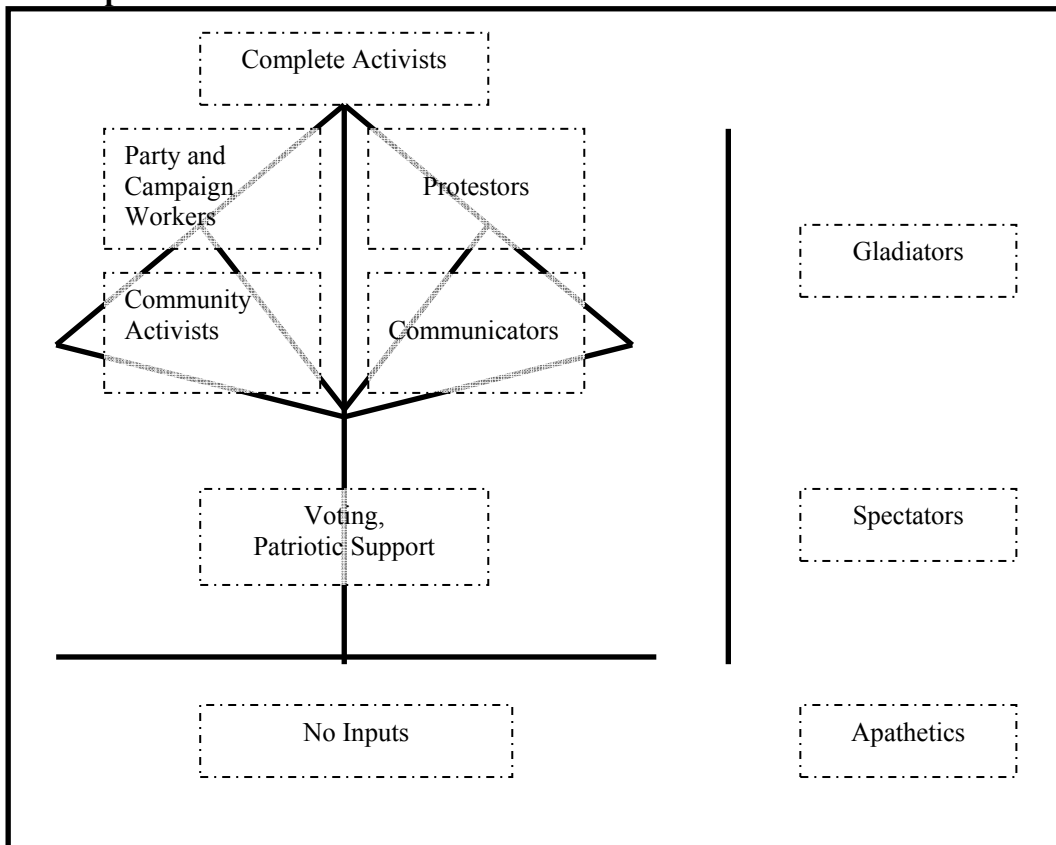
belonging to the higher class are therefore more likely to participate in politics than individuals from the lower class. (Milbrath, Goel, 1977:86-106)

According to Milbrath and Goel, the level of political participation is affected by the level of political stimuli that the individual experience. This kind of stimuli might influence the individual at an early stage of the personal development. Stimuli may also arrive from the mass media, campaign literature or political meetings at a later stage of the personal development. In either way, economic privileged individuals generally receive a higher level of stimuli than less privileged individuals. Economic privileged individuals are therefore more likely to be interested and involved in politics. It increases the quantity and quality of political knowledge, stimulate interest and create a closer attachment to political parties. (Milbrath, Goel, 1977:35-38)

2.2.2 Milbrath and Goel's Model Regarding Political Participation

Milbrath and Goel developed a model regarding political participation. From the beginning the model was one-dimensional. They divide citizens into three different groups. The model was based on a pyramidal structure depending on the individual's political participation intensity. It is only a minority of the citizens that participate in the political debate to any further extent: referred to as "gladiators". For most citizens voting in the public elections is their only variation of political activity: these are called "spectators". More common than active participation is no participation at all, these individuals do not vote neither do they follow the political debate: referred to as "apathetics". The authors elaborated the one-dimensional model into a multi-dimensional model that involved not only the political participation intensity but also different variations of activism. Milbrath and Goel recognized five variations of gladiators. (Milbrath, Goel, 1977:11-21)

Milbrath and Goel's Multi-dimensional Model Regarding Political Participation



Model 2 (Milbrath, Goel, 1977:21)

“Voting” is for the spectators more an act of loyalty to the political system than an aspiration of influencing the political outcome. The spectator wants to live up to the common social norm and his/her own definition of a good citizen. Voting require a relatively low level of information and motivation compared to more advanced activism. “Communicators” use such activism as sending messages of support or dislike to political leaders or newspapers. It also involves engagement in political discussions. “Community activists” are individuals that construct groups or work within pre-existing groups or organizations. It also involves individuals that interact with and try to influence public officials with the aspiration to influence their actions. “Protestors” try to influence public officials through joining street demonstrations, attend protest meetings or protest marches. This group may also use more unconventional methods such as riots if they feel that it is necessary. “Party and campaign workers” take an active part in the political campaign activities. It may also involve joining alternative groups or organizations outside of party politics. (Milbrath, Goel, 1977:11-21)

These different variations of activism are not separated behaviours. Individuals may use different constellations of activism in their aspiration to gain political influence. Individuals that take part in all these forms of activism are referred to as complete activists. (Milbrath, Goel, 1977:11-21)

3 Method

The methodological chapter is divided into three different sub-chapters. First, the choice of methodology will be discussed. Secondly, there will be a discussion regarding critique of the sources and how to achieve a high level of validity and reliability. Finally, the author will construct an analytical framework that will be used to analyze the influence of socioeconomic resources on political participation in Mexico.

3.1 Choice of Methodology

In this thesis the author will use both primary and secondary material. The author will triangulate the area of research by using three variations of methodology: literature, statistics and e-mail interviews. Both quantitative and qualitative material will be used. It is the author's opinion that separately these methods could not reach the purpose to the full extent. The multifaceted methodology will however make it possible to observe the research problem from different perspectives.

Relevant literature that discusses the described area of research will be used. The literature will create an understanding of Mexico's struggle towards political deepening and a more inclusive political system. It will also give an understanding of how socioeconomic resources affect the individual's political participation.

Statistical data will be used to test the level of connection between socioeconomic resources and political participation. The independent variables: income level, educational level and class identity will be used as examples of socioeconomic resources. The socioeconomic resources will be tested against the dependent variables: signing petitions, attending lawful demonstrations, joining boycotts and interest in politics. In this thesis, the connection will be tested using crosstabulations and Pearson's chi-square (X^2) test.

The main idea behind a calculation of a X^2 value for a crosstabulation is to calculate the variation between the observed and expected frequencies in each cell. The expected count is a random division (no connection at all). (Esaiasson, et al., 2003:394-395) In X^2 tests the connection between two factors usually are tested on a 0.1 % (***) , 1 % (**) or 5 % (*) significance level. (Körner, Wahlgren, 2000:187) In this thesis, any of these levels will be accepted as a connection. If no statistical connection are acknowledged the variables are referred to as not significant (n. s.). The statistical tests will give an indication

regarding to what extent socioeconomic resources influence the individual's political participation in the context of Mexican. The statistical data used in this thesis are secondary statistical data from the World Value survey (WVS)¹ year 2000, which is the most recent yearly data available for download at the WVS homepage.

E-mail interviews with political gladiators are used to create an increased understanding for why individuals decide to participate. The author has a pre-understanding that the interviewees belong to the economic privileged part of the population regarding access to education and that they have been involved in political activity in one way or the other.

When using e-mail interviews the interviewee has time to reconsider and give well thought-out answers, which is positive in general. It might however generate more politically correct answers. It is arguable to say that face-to-face interviews would have been more rewarding.

In a face-to-face interview the researcher has more possibilities to use follow-up questions as well as to observe the individuals behaviour during the interviews. (Esaiasson, et al., 2003:279-302) The author however believes that interviews through e-mail will be adequate in this thesis, mainly because the interviews are used as a complement to the literature and statistical material. Also, if the author believes that it is necessary to carry out follow-up-questions this will be carried out.

The real name of the interviewees will not be published in this thesis. It is the author's opinion that the benefit for the reader to have this information is not in proportion to the risk that the interviewees will moderate their answers knowing that their names will be published. Questions regarding the individual's position in the social class structure and education have been asked instead² since the author believes that is more interesting in this case.

The interviewees are all young females from Mexico City. They are currently studying at the university, where they expect to complete a master's degree or a Ph.D. The interviewees describe themselves as belonging to the upper middle class. (1*, 2*, 3*, E-mail-interview)

3.2 Critique of Sources and Indicators

Critic of sources is used to, through critical examination, establish if the content of a source is reliable or not. Usually four variations of critique of sources are used. *Authenticity*: this variation is especially important when using historical documents (this variation of critic of sources is therefore not that essential in this

¹ "The World Values Survey is a worldwide investigation of sociocultural and political change" (1*, World Value Survey). Statistical data are available for download at the WVS homepage.

² For more information see appendix 3.

thesis). *Independence*: this variation is foremost about if the source used is a primary or secondary source. Primary sources are often seen as more reliable than secondary sources since it might be difficult to find out the actual origin of a secondary source. *Contemporaneousness*: this variation is about how close in time the source is to the actual event that is being studied. And finally, *tendency*: when talking about this last variation it is important to be aware of that a source might have a specific tendency that influences the result. (Esaiasson, et al., 2003:303-316) How something is described in a source is most often affected by the personal preferences of the specific author. We are all more or less affected by the cultural context that we interact in. It is therefore not possible to be completely un-partial.

Regarding independence, the interviews are primary material. Regarding the secondary material, the author of this thesis has used sources that are as reliable as possible from this point of view and as reliable as possible from the other viewpoints. Concerning contemporaneousness, the author of this thesis has primarily used empirical sources that have been constructed during the Mexican transition and post-transition period. The interviews contribute with an even more up to date view from the context of Mexico. Regarding tendency, the author of this thesis has used sources that have as low level of tendency as possible. The fact that the interviewees are not randomly chosen could be criticized from this point of view. The author has however no aspirations that these individuals are representative for the population as a whole. The interviewees are instead used to create a deeper understanding of why individuals decide to participate from the political gladiator's point of view.

Within science the concepts of validity and reliability are often used. Validity is referring to that a thesis is measuring what the author is trying to measure. Reliability is referring to that a thesis is measuring what the author is trying to measure precisely. (Lundquist, 1993:99) With a high level of reliability and validity following studies with the identical starting-point will come to similar conclusions.

Regarding the validity, in this specific thesis it exists a natural starting point when it comes to the time frame because it is political participation in the Mexican transition and post-transition period that is being studied. The author of this thesis has also created a basis for a specific definition of political participation. The level of validity will be increased by the creation of an analytical framework. Regarding reliability, by having the four variations of critique of sources in mind the author of this thesis has used empirical sources that will create a high level of reliability.

3.3 Analytical Framework

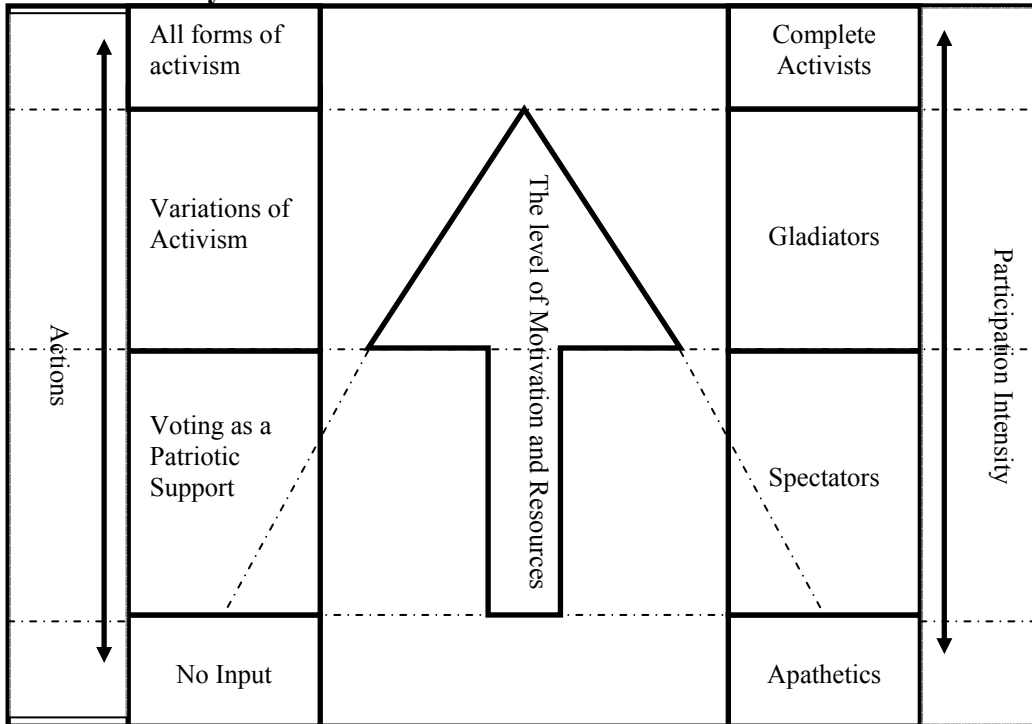
The analytical framework is used to describe how the theoretical framework will be implemented in the specific thesis in a more concrete way. In this thesis the definition of political participation presented by Verba, Nie and Kim will be used.

Political participation is: *“those legal activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take. [Emphasis added]”* (Verba, Nie, Kim, 1978:46-48)

There are however two exceptions from their definition. First, they do not make any distinction between legal protests and illegal protests. They simply use the word protests and note that it is excluded from their definition. In this thesis legal protests are included. Secondly, the authors exclude all forms of ceremonial and support activities in their definition. In this thesis such activities will be included if it is interpreted by the author of this thesis that they are used in aspiration to influence governmental personnel in accordance to the definition of political participation presented above. According to the author of this thesis it is possible to use ceremonial or support activities as a way to influence the governmental personnel. Furthermore the basic variations of activism presented by Milbrath and Goel will be used in this thesis (voters, communicators, community activists, protestors and party and campaign workers). Under condition that that the political activism works within the definition of political participation presented above.

The model of the analytical framework is constructed by ideas from Milbrath and Goel's one-dimensional and multi-dimensional models regarding political participation as well as Norris' theoretical framework regarding political activity on the micro level. On the right side of the model the different stages of participation intensity are described, from apathetics to complete activists. On the left side the different variations of activism connected to the participation intensity are presented, from no inputs at all to all forms of activism. In the centre of this model the pyramidal power structure, from Milbrath and Goel's one-dimensional model, are made visible in form of an arrow. The arrow represents that the level of motivation and resources influence the individual to move within the pyramidal power structure, from being an apathetic to becoming a complete activist.

Model of Analytical Framework



Model 3

The reader should have this model close in mind when reading the remaining part of this thesis. With the implementation of this analytical framework on the context of Mexico the author of this thesis will create a basis for achieving the purpose of this thesis and answer the research question. In the empirical analysis this model will primarily act as an underlying source for understanding. The model will in the conclusion be discussed from the Mexican context.

4 Empirical Analysis

There will be a rather broad starting point in the empirical discussion when discussing the level of economic inequality and democratic freedom in Mexico. Secondly, a discussion concerning the government's aspiration to increase the level of citizen input. Thirdly, a discussion regarding the variation in political participation between economic privileged and less privileged individuals will be presented.

Fourthly, statistical tests will be made regarding the influence of income level, educational level and class identity. Finally, the result from the interviews with political activists will be presented. The empirical discussion will act as a basis for a conclusion.

4.1 The Level of Economic Inequality and Democratic Freedom

Mexico is now regarded as a “free” democratic system and was 2006 given the rank of 2.0, according to the *Freedom House* system³ when it comes to both political rights and civil liberties. (1*, 2*, 3*, Freedom House) Mexico has increased the level of political rights and civil liberties for its citizens significant. Mexico has according to the Freedom House system increased its level of democracy continuously from the rank of 4.0 (1994) – 3.5 (1997) – 2.5 (2000) – 2.0 (2003). It was first in 2003 that Mexico was regarded as a “free” system by the Freedom House standard. (1*, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance)

In 2001, the then president Fox received the Annual Democracy Award from the *National Endowment for Democracy* (NED)⁴ at Capitol Hill, USA. (2*, National Endowment for Democracy) The award was heralded for a “successful ‘transition’ to democracy” following the elections in 2000. (Morton, 2005:181)

According to *Adam David Morton* the democratic transition and consolidation has been problematic. It is arguable to say that the election in 2000 had not ensured “either democratic ‘transition’ and/or ‘consolidation’ in Mexico.” (Morton, 2005:181) That the democratic consolidation has been problematic in Mexico is also discussed by *Imke Harbers*. (Harbers, 2007)

³ 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free rating. (2*, 3*, Freedom House)

⁴ NED is an organization that works to: “strengthen democratic institutions around the world through nongovernmental efforts.” (1*, National Endowment for Democracy)

Variations in political participation may occur in all nation states. In the introduction to this thesis it was stated that Mexico is an interesting context to do research in regarding the described area of research because of the rather high level of internal socioeconomic variations. If Mexico is a nation state with a high level of social inequality or not is not an absolute truth, it depends on what nation states the inequality levels are compared with.

If comparing Mexico with the other 29 membership countries in the *Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*⁵, Mexico is the country with the highest level of economic inequality (1*, *2, *3, Human Development Report). The level of inequality is also varying greatly within Mexico between different regions. One reason for this is that the main economic activities are taking place in the metropolitan zones of Mexico. In the rural areas, dominated by agricultural production the economic activity are rather low. A nation state that has a high level of inequality tends to generate structures and institutions that are exclusive for a large part of the population. (Gordon, 1997) This unequal distribution of resources is affecting the political participation between different regions and different individuals within Mexico.

In the southern region of Mexico (most notably the state of Chiapas) the economic inequality levels are the highest. It is most often individuals coming from indigenous groups that experience the lowest level of economic and socioeconomic resources. (Lopez, 2005:78-86) Since the socioeconomic resources are unevenly distributed, different individuals have different possibilities to use the democratic system available. The rather high level of economic inequality might be one possible reason for why Mexico has not reached democratic consolidation and inclusion to its full extent.

4.2 Government Aspirations Regarding Democratic Deepening and Inclusion

In the initial part of the post-transition period it is important to address the question regarding how to improve the democratic quality. This calls for a democratic deepening, which requires an opening of the political system to all citizens, in other words, to create a more inclusive political system. (Harbers, 2007:38-41) Exclusion may be based on for example poverty and an inclusion referring to that all citizens should have equal possibilities to political participation.

The trend in Mexico is that the government is introducing measures to decrease the concentration of political power. The government is now releasing a

⁵ The OECD is constructed by 30 countries that share a “commitment to democratic government and the market economy.” The organization promotes democratic development and deepening in the world. (1*, 2*, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development)

part of the political power to the citizens. (Avritzer, 2002:165-170) Harbers is discussing this from the context of the *Federal District* (DF), Mexico City. Several projects with the aim to increase the level of citizen input have been introduced in the transition and post-transition period.

According to Harbers the government's rhetorical aspiration to increase citizen participation in DF has failed regarding five major concerns. First, the citizens have, to some extent, a possibility to express complaints and demands but there is a low level of insight in the actual policy making process. Secondly, there is no continual political participation in the policy process and also a low level of involvement from organized civil society. Thirdly, citizens are most often treated as consumers of public services instead of participants in the policy making process. (Harbers, 2007:52-56) This may indicate that the members of the government do not really try to live up to or have the possibility to live up to the rhetorical aspirations regarding democratic inclusion.

Fourthly, there is a low level of face-to-face interaction. The government does not promote any actual political debate among the citizens (Harbers, 2007:52-56). As discussed in the introduction, political debate among citizens even if it takes place in other spheres of the society than the strictly political, fosters political participation and citizen awareness.

Finally, when discussing inclusion the government emphasizes on a direct connection between the political leaders and the citizen instead of any real deliberation. These problems with a lack of inclusion partly depend on distrust for the government and its institutions. Citizens are to some extent mobilized in both the public and civic sphere but they do not take actual control in politics. (Harbers, 2007:52-56) It is therefore not possible to say that any real democratic deepening is achieved.

As discussed above, Mexico is now regarded as a "free" democratic system and the government has implemented several programs to increase the level of citizen participation. That the possibility to participate from a legal and institutional perspective exists does not necessarily indicate that all individuals participate to similar extent. Individuals might still have different interests and different possibilities to use the democratic possibilities available.

4.3 Variations in Political Participation between Economic Privileged and Less Privileged Individuals

Traditionally the political system in Mexico has been dominated by an economic privileged and powerful minority. (Gordon, 1997) Individuals belonging to economic less privileged groups generally have a rather low level of political representation in the political system also in the modern Mexico. Individuals belonging to these economic less privileged groups generally experience a low level of socioeconomic resources and have difficulties to participate in the traditional party system. Collective mobilization in the civic sphere is however a

way towards empowerment for economic less privileged groups. (Lopez, 2005, Fox, 1996)

According to *Linda Lopez*, in the poor district of Chiapas, political engagement is stimulated by the “failure of the Mexican government” to ratify policies that are beneficial for indigenous people, women and individuals from the lower part of the social class structure. Through these actions individuals from economic less privileged groups have the possibility to seek governmental responsibility and awareness for basic human rights. Various peaceful networks in the region working in the civic sphere have been included and had influence in the struggle for governmental accountability. Such networks include: human rights organizations, labour organizations, universities and religious groups. In these groups individuals that traditionally experience a rather low level of political influence has increased their participation intensity. (Lopez, 2005:77-85)

As discussed above, the governmental institutions are dominated by economic privileged individuals. It is more likely that an individual with a high level of economic and socioeconomic resources become a political gladiator. Groups and organizations outside the traditional party system could however be seen as an alternative way towards empowerment for individuals with a low level of socioeconomic resources. The civic sphere contributes with somewhat of a possibility for less privileged individuals to become political gladiators. These are individuals that according to the theoretical framework usually become political apathetic or spectators.

4.4 The Influence of the Individual’s Educational Level on his/her Political Participation

The independent variable, the individual’s educational level⁶, is tested against four variables connected to political participation. The dependent variables used regarding the individual’s participation are interest in politics, joining boycotts, attending lawful demonstrations and signing petitions⁷. In this thesis the educational level is re-divided into four categories: (1) low, (2) middle/low, (3) middle/high and (4) high.

According to the theoretical framework, the individual’s educational level is the best available explaining factor for the level of participation intensity within the framework of the Civic voluntarism model. Education fosters the individual’s civil awareness and political knowledge. (Norris, 2002:29-31)

⁶ In this thesis, the nine country specific categories used in the WVS are re-divided as following: 1–3 =Low, 4–5 =middle/low, 6-7 = middle/high and 8-9 = High. For more information see appendix 4.

⁷ For more information see appendix 4.

H^0 , there is no connection between the individual's educational level and his/her political participation.

H^1 , there is a connection between the individual's educational level and his/her political participation.

4.4.1 The Individual's Educational Level * Interest in Politics

Crosstabulation, Educational Level * Interest in Politics

		Interest in politics			
		Very	Some-what	Not very	Not at all
Educational level	Upper	17.1	29.6	-10.3	-36.4
	Middle/high	-0.7	14.8	6	-20.1
	Middle/low	-11	2.6	18	-9.5
	Lower	-5.4	-46.9	-13.7	66

Model 4 (1*, World Value Survey) n=1506

The numbers that are presented in the crosstabulation are the variation between the actual count (number of individuals in each cell) and an expected count (a random division)⁸.

Using Pearson's X^2 model, with test on the 0.1 % level H^0 can be discarded, significance 0,000 (***). The conclusion from this test is that there is a high level of connection between the individual's educational level and his/her interest in politics. There is a connection with 99.9 % accuracy, because $0,000 < 0,001$.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, it is possible to see that there are more individuals with a high level of education than expected that are very interested in politics. In the same category for individuals with a low and middle/low level of income there are fewer individuals than expected. On the other hand, there are fewer individuals than expected with a high level of education that are not at all interested in politics. In the same category for individuals with a low level of education there are more individuals than expected. The overall tendency is that an individual that possesses a higher level of education has a higher interest in politics than a less privileged individual.

⁸ For more information see appendix 1.

4.4.2 The Individual's Educational Level * Signing Petitions

*Using Pearson's X^2 model, with test on the 0.1 % level H^0 can be discarded, significance 0,000 (***)*. The conclusion from this test is that there is a high level of connection between the individual's educational level and his/her political participation in the form of signing petitions. There is a connection with 99.9 % accuracy.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, the trend is similar as in the test between educational level and interest in politics⁹.

4.4.3 The Individual's Educational Level * Joining Boycotts

*Using Pearson's X^2 model, with test on the 0.1 % level H^0 can be discarded, significance 0,000 (***)*. The conclusion from this test is that there is a high level of connection between the individual's educational level and his/her political participation in the form of joining boycotts. There is a connection with 99.9 % accuracy.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, the trend is similar as in the test between educational level and interest in politics¹⁰.

4.4.4 The Individual's Educational Level * Attending Lawful Demonstrations

*Using Pearson's X^2 model, with test on the 0.1 % level H^0 can be discarded, significance 0,000 (***)*. The conclusion from this test is that there is a high level of connection between the individual's educational level and his/her political participation in the form of attending lawful demonstrations. There is a connection with 99.9 % accuracy.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, the trend is similar as in the test between educational level and interest in politics¹¹.

4.5 The Influence of the Individual's Class Identity on his/her Political Participation

The independent variable, the individual's class identity¹², is tested against four variables connected to political participation. The dependent variables used

⁹ For more information see appendix 1.

¹⁰ For more information see appendix 1.

¹¹ For more information see appendix 1.

regarding the individual's participation are interest in politics, joining boycotts, attending lawful demonstrations and signing petitions.

In the WVS the individual's class belonging are asked as a subjective question. It is the interviewee's interpretation of his/her own class belonging that is tested. In this thesis the concept of class is re-divided into three categories: (1) upper class, (2) middle class and (3) lower class.

In the theoretical framework it was stated that the individual's political participation is influenced by his/her class belonging in the way that it generates certain personalities, beliefs, and attitudes that are likely to generate certain level of political participation. (Goel, Milbrath, 1977:86-106) Also, the individual's participation may be influenced by his/her self-definition in the social class structure. (Lipset, 1994:208-209)

H^0 , there is no connection between the individual's class identity and his/her political participation.

H^1 , there is a connection between the individual's class identity and his/her political participation.

4.5.1 The Individual's Class Identity * Interest in Politics

Crosstabulation, Class Identity * Interest in Politics

		Interest in politics			
		Very	Some-what	Not very	Not at all
Class	Upper	2.8	41.9	-9	-35.7
	Middle	2.8	7.3	14.2	-24.4
	Lower	-5.6	-49.2	-5.2	60

Model 5 (1*, World Value Survey) n=1369

The numbers that are presented in the crosstabulation are the variation between the actual count and an expected count¹³.

Using Pearson's X^2 model, with test on the 0.1 % level H^0 can be discarded, significance 0,000 (***)). The conclusion from this test is that there is a high level of connection between the individual's class identity and his/her interest in politics. There is a connection with 99.9 % accuracy.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, it is possible to see that there are more individuals from the upper and middle class than expected that are very

¹² In this thesis, the five categories used in the WVS are re-divided as following: 1-2 = upper class, 3 = middle class and 4-5 = lower class. For more information see appendix 4.

¹³ For more information see appendix 1.

interested in politics. In the same category for individuals from the lower class there are fewer individuals than expected. On the other hand, there are fewer individuals than expected from the upper class that are not at all interested in politics. In the same category for individuals from the lower class there are more individuals than expected. The overall tendency is that an individual with a higher class has a higher interest in politics than a less privileged individual.

4.5.2 The Individual's Class Identity * Signing Petitions

Using Pearson's X^2 model, with test on the 0.1 % level H^0 can be discarded, significance 0,000 (***)). The conclusion from this test is that there is a high level of connection between the individual's class identity and his/her political participation in the form of signing petitions. There is a connection with 99.9 % accuracy.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, the trend is similar as in the test between class identity and interest in politics¹⁴.

4.5.3 The Individual's Class Identity * Joining Boycotts

Crosstabulation, Class Identity * Joining Boycotts

		Joining boycotts		
		Have Done	Might do	Would never do
Class	Upper	-1.1	18.1	-17
	Middle	5.1	7.5	-12.6
	Lower	-4	-25.6	29.6

Model 6 (1*, World Value Survey) n=1186

The numbers that are presented in the crosstabulation are the variation between the actual count and an expected count¹⁵.

Using Pearson's X^2 model, with test on the 0.1 % level H^0 can be discarded, significance 0,000 (***)). The conclusion from this test is that there is a high level of connection between the individual's class identity and his/her political participation in the form of joining boycotts. There is a connection with 99.9 % accuracy.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, there are fewer individuals than expected from both the upper and lower class that has joined a boycott. Instead individuals from the middle class used this alternative more frequently

¹⁴ For more information see appendix 1.

¹⁵ For more information see appendix 1.

than expected. On the other hand, there are fewer individuals than expected from the upper class that would never join a boycott. In the same category for individuals from the lower class there are more individuals than expected.

4.5.4 The Individual's Class Identity * Attending Lawful Demonstrations

Crosstabulation, Class Identity * Attending Lawful Demonstrations

		Attending lawful demonstrations		
		Have Done	Might do	Would never do
Class	Upper	1.8	0.4	-2.1
	Middle	3.8	6.4	-10.1
	Lower	-5.5	-6.7	12.3

Model 7 (1*, World Value Survey) n=1292

The numbers that are presented in the crosstabulation are the variation between the actual count and an expected count¹⁶.

Using Pearson's X^2 model with test on the 5 % level, H^1 can be discarded. The significance between these variables is 0,334 (n. s.). The conclusion from this test is that there is no connection between the individual's income level and his/her political participation in the form of joining boycotts. There is at least no connection that can be acknowledged with 95 % accuracy, because $0.334 > 0.050$.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, it is possible to see that there are more individuals from the upper and middle class than expected that have attended a lawful demonstration. In the same category for individuals from the lower class there are fewer individuals than expected. On the other hand, there are fewer individuals than expected from the upper and middle class that would never attend a lawful demonstration. In the same category for individuals from the lower class there are more individuals than expected.

4.6 The Influence of the Individual's Income Level on his/her Political Participation

The independent variable, income level¹⁷, is tested against four variables connected to political participation. The dependent variables used regarding the

¹⁶ For more information see appendix 1.

¹⁷ In this thesis, the ten country specific categories used in the WVS are re-divided as following: 1-3 = low, 4-7 = middle, 8-10 = High. For more information see appendix 4.

individual's participation are interest in politics, joining boycotts, attending lawful demonstrations and signing petitions. In this thesis the income level is re-divided into three categories: (1) low, (2) middle and (4) high.

The individual's participation is influenced by income level in the way that individuals coming from families with a higher level of economic resources have better possibilities to receive higher education as well as other political resources.

H^0 , there is no connection between the individual's income level and his/her political participation.

H^1 , there is a connection between the individual's income level and his/her political participation.

4.6.1 The Individual's Income Level * Interest in Politics

Crosstabulation, Income Level * Interest in Politics

Income level	Interest in politics			
	Very	Some-what	Not very	Not at all
High	1.9	30.2	-5.6	-26.5
Middle	-0.8	-7.8	9	-0.4
Low	-1.1	-22.4	-3.4	26.9

Model 8 (1*, World Value Survey) n=1194

The numbers that are presented in the crosstabulation are the variation between the actual count and an expected count¹⁸.

Using Pearson's X^2 model, with test on the 0.1 % level H^0 can be discarded, significance 0,000 (***) . The conclusion from this test is that there is a high level of connection between the individual's income level and his/her interest in politics. There is a connection with 99.9 % accuracy.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, it is possible to see that there are more individuals with a high level of income than expected that have answered that they are very interested in politics. In the same category for individuals with a low level of income there are fewer individuals than expected. On the other hand, there are fewer individuals than expected with a high level of income that are not at all interested in politics. In the same category for individuals with a low level of income there are more individuals than expected. The overall tendency is that an individual with a higher income level has a higher interest in politics than a less privileged individual.

¹⁸ For more information see appendix 1.

4.6.2 The Individual's Income Level * Signing Petitions

Using Pearson's X^2 model, with test on the 0.1 % level H^0 can be discarded, significance 0,000 (***). The conclusion from this test is that there is a high level of connection between the individual's income level and his/her political participation in the form of signing petitions. There exists a connection with 99.9 % accuracy.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, the trend is similar as in the test between class identity and interest in politics¹⁹.

4.6.3 The Individual's Income Level * Joining Boycotts

Crosstabulation, Income Level * Joining Boycotts

		Joining boycotts		
		Have done	Might do	Would never do
Income	High	1.4	6.2	-7.6
	Middle	-1.2	-7.2	8.4
	Low	-0.2	0.9	-0.8

Model 9 (1*, World Value Survey) n=1040

The numbers that are presented in the crosstabulation are the variation between the actual count and an expected count²⁰.

Using Pearson's X^2 model with test on the 5 % level, H^1 can be discarded. The significance between these variables is 0,730 (n. s.). The conclusion from this test is that there is no connection between the individual's income level and his/her political participation in the form of joining boycotts. There is at least no connection that can be acknowledged with 95 % accuracy, because $0.731 > 0.050$.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, it is possible to see that there are more individuals with a high level of income than expected that have answered that they have attended a boycott. In the same category for individuals with a low and middle level of income there are fewer individuals than expected. On the other hand, there are fewer individuals with both a high and low level of income that would never join a boycott. Instead individuals from the middle group used this alternative more frequently than expected.

¹⁹ For more information see appendix 1.

²⁰ For more information see appendix 1.

4.6.4 The Individual's Income Level * Attending Lawful Demonstrations

Crosstabulation, Income Level * Attending Lawful Demonstrations

		Attending Lawful Demonstrations		
		Have done	Might do	Would never do
Income	High	5.1	3.4	-8.6
	Middle	0.3	3.7	-4
	Low	-5.4	-7.1	12.5

Model 10 (1*, World Value Survey) n=1126

The numbers that are presented in the crosstabulation are the variation between the actual count and an expected count²¹.

Using Pearson's X^2 model with test on the 5 % level, H^1 can be discarded. The significance between these variables is 0,151 (n. s.). The conclusion from this test is that there is no connection between the individual's income level and his/her political participation in the form of joining boycotts. There is at least no connection that can be acknowledged with 95 % accuracy, because $0.151 > 0.050$.

Analysing the crosstabulation without a X^2 test, it is possible to see that there are more individuals with a high level of income than expected that has attended a lawful demonstration. In the same category for individuals with a low level of income there are fewer individuals than expected. On the other hand, there are fewer individuals than expected with a high level of income that would never attend a lawful demonstration. In the same category for individuals with a low level of income there are more individuals than expected. The overall tendency is that an individual with a high income level has higher participation intensity than a less privileged individual.

4.7 Summary of the Statistical Tests

The statistical tests give support for a connection between the individual's socioeconomic resources and his/her political participation intensity. All the independent variables have some kind of connection with the dependent variables tested.

Analysing the level of significance, education has the highest level of statistical connection. The individual's educational level had a *** significance in all four statistical tests, class identity in three tests and income level in two.

²¹ For more information see appendix 1.

The statistical tests gave some conspicuous result regarding the socioeconomic resources and joining boycotts. The result might be affected by the low number of respondents that has joined a boycott. According to the statistical rules, no cell should have a minimum expected value less than five. In these tests 0 cells have an expected count less than 5 but the minimum expected count was generally rather low. With a low level of counts the risk increases that the respondents are not representative for the population as a whole.

In some tests the middle groups have the strongest connection but the general tendency is that individuals with a high level of socioeconomic resources also have higher participation intensity. This indicates that the ideas within the Civic voluntarism model are possible explaining factors for the individual's participation intensity in the context of Mexico. Individuals with a high level of socioeconomic resources could more frequently be referred to as political gladiators. On the other hand, less privileged individuals do not participate to the same extent and could more frequently be referred to as political apathetics of spectators.

4.8 Political Participation from the Political Gladiator's Point of View

Interviewee number one and two voted in the last election but interviewee number two did not. They however all use different variations of activism with the aim to influence governmental personnel and/or the actions they take. The interviewees could therefore be described as political gladiators. (1*, 2*, 3*, E-mail interview)

When interviewee number one answered the question: if the interviewee's position in the social class structure has influenced her level of political participation. The interviewee proclaimed that: "I am aware of politics and how they work because my social class position [upper middle class] has made it possible for me to get an education and access to information, this does not happen in all levels of society in Mexico." (1*, E-mail interview) When interviewee number two answered the same question she proclaimed that: "[t]he fact that I had the opportunity, from my parents, to pay my private education (primary, secondary and superior) has opened me the doors to realize that political and social participation is fundamentally important in any society." (2*, E-mail interview)

When interviewee number one answered what the main reasons were for her political involvement was: the interviewee answered that the most important reason for her political involvement is to make sure that things are done in the right way, for example trying to counteract laws and attitudes that she believes are unjust. "[especially] to those least taken in account by [the] own government and society: those who need it the most." (1*, E-mail interview)

All interviewees feel that they direct or indirect have been encouraged to get involved in political activity by their family, schools and political parties. (1*, 2*, 3*, E-mail interview)

These are a kind of stimuli that according to the Civic voluntarism model more frequently take place in the upper classes. This kind of stimuli encourages the individual to engage in political activity. In other words, it influences the individual to become a political gladiator. Individuals that do not experience this kind of stimuli are more likely to become political apathetics or spectators.

5 Conclusion

When concluding, it is important to have the specific research question close in mind. The research question that is: in what way do the individual's levels of socioeconomic resources influence his/her political participation in contemporary Mexico? To answer this question the result regarding the problem will be discussed from the different methodological perspectives.

The overall tendency in Mexico is that the government of Mexico has increased the level of democratic freedom for its citizens. Mexico is now regarded as a “free” democratic system according to the Freedom House system. It has however been kind of problematic to deepen the democracy and to achieve any extensive increase in citizen input on a broad voluntary basis. The government is trying to achieve an increased level of citizen input in the political system as well as a more inclusive political system (at least according to the rhetorical statements).

Most of the programs implemented have not reached the expected effect. The programs that have been implemented have not achieved any extensive increase regarding citizen input. From this discussion it is possible to draw the conclusion that a “free” democratic system is not necessarily a reliable indicator of democratic participation on a broad voluntary basis, at least not within the traditional political system.

According to the Civic voluntarism model it is more likely that individuals that experience a high level of socioeconomic resources have resources, interest and receive stimuli to participate in political activity. A privileged individual have a higher level of socioeconomic resources available and more frequently relocate his/her resources available with the aspiration to influence the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take.

The literature used in the empirical analysis is indicating a rather ambiguous trend. The literature gives a rather clear indication that economic privileged individuals participate to a greater extent within the traditional political system. An alternative point of view is however that economic less privileged individuals that experience a low level of socioeconomic resources instead use their resources available to participate in alternative forms of political participation, for example through organizations and actions in the civic sphere. In the Mexican context the civic spheres could therefore be interpreted as an important arena for political participation and empowerment for individuals lacking adequate resources to participate in the traditional political system.

These ideas are however not a contradiction to the ideas within the Civic voluntarism model. According to Norris, Even if the individual does not have adequate resources for participation he/she might still has motivation and interest

to participate. Less privileged individuals might be motivated to participate by feelings of distrust and alienation.

If the literature gives an ambiguous trend the statistical tests are giving a rather clear indication that an individual that has a higher level of socioeconomic resources also has a higher level of political participation intensity. All the independent variables indicated a connection with the individual's level of political participation. Most of the tests indicated a strong statistical connection, six of nine tests indicated a connection with a *** significance. Also, if analysing the crosstabulations without a X^2 test a connection can be acknowledged, even if the connection is rather vague in some tests.

In some occasions the result was rather conspicuous. In some tests the middle group has a stronger connection. Compared to interest in politics and signing petitions, the statistical tests indicate that the individual's willingness to join boycotts and attend lawful demonstrations are not that close connected to his/her level of socioeconomic resources. A possible reason might be that such a political activity is less connected to governmental institutions than for example signing petitions which indicate a relatively high level of connection. The empirical analysis is indication that less privileged individuals might feel distrust for the governmental institutions. They might therefore be less willing to get involved in political activities connected to these institutions. In the case of joining boycotts, the result might also be an affect of the low level of individuals that has attended a boycott. 0 cells had an expected value less than 5 but the result might still be affected by the low level of counts.

All together, even if some statistical tests gave the result not significant and some tests indicated that the middle group has higher participation intensity the general trend is rather clear. The general trend is that the statistical tests support the main ideas within analytical framework.

This meaning that an individual that has a higher level of socioeconomic resources also has a higher level of political participation intensity compared to an individual with a low level of socioeconomic resources. Since the statistical tests are not solely connected to the traditional political system this indicate that economic privileged individuals have a higher level of political participation intensity in the traditional political system as well as actions in the civic sphere. However, this does not exclude the idea that the civic sphere is an important arena towards some form of influence for less privileged individuals. The variation between economic privileged and less privileged individuals might have been higher if the statistical tests solely were connected to political participation within the governmental institutions.

The interviewees might not be representative for the population as a whole but are still supporting the ideas within the analytical framework. The interviewees feel that their social position in an indirect way has influenced them to get involved in political activity. They are foremost discussing the influence and stimuli from their education, but also families and political parties. Through their schools they have developed a political interest and been contacted by political parties.

Interviewee number one gave indications that she has an aspiration to use her political involvement to promote rights for less privileged individuals. This gives a rather positive view of the consequences of an exclusive political system. This might however simply be an example of those politically correct answers, discussed in 3.1.

In general, the individual's level of socioeconomic resources both influences the individual's political interest and on his/her participation intensity. The empirical analysis indicates that individuals with a lower level of socioeconomic resources lack adequate resources to participate, particularly in the traditional political system. Less privileged individuals however have possibilities to gain political influence, to some extent, through organizations and political actions in the civic sphere.

The statistical tests are indicating that individuals with a higher level of socioeconomic resources use such forms as signing petitions to a considerable higher extent. The level of connection is however lower when it comes to political activity in the form of attending lawful demonstrations. The reason for this might be that signing petitions are a form of action closer attached to governmental institutions. These institutions are dominated by economic privileged individuals, at the same time as less privileged individuals might feel a higher level of distrust for these institutions.

All together, the empirical analysis is indicating that privileged individuals more frequently relocate his/her political resources with the aspiration to influence the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take.

If having the model of the analytical framework in mind, the individual's level of socioeconomic resources that were presented in the form of an arrow in the middle of the analytical model influence the individual's participation intensity. The participation intensity was presented on the right side of the model. In the Mexican context it is more likely that an individual that has a high level of resources become a political gladiator. It is more likely that these individuals have a higher level of interest in politics, and also, have political resources that can be used for participation. All together, it is more common that these individuals use different variations of political activism with the aspiration to gain political influence and far more common that these individuals become complete activists.

The tendency is the opposite for less privileged individuals. It is more common that individuals that have a low level of socioeconomic resources become political apatetics or spectators.

In the Mexican context less privileged individuals have somewhat of a possibility to gain political influence and personal empowerment in the civic sphere. Less privileged individuals may be motivated to participate by feelings of alienation and distrust instead of a high level of social status and political stimuli.

The empirical analysis is indicating that the government does not really include organizations from the civic sphere in the political discussion. If these less privileged individuals gain any real influence is therefore unclear. A large portion of the political power exists within the framework of the traditional political

system. Since individuals that participate more frequently in political activity receive a higher level of influence over the creation of the public policy.

A large portion of the political power is still in the hands of a powerful minority because their domination of the governmental institutions. The outcome of governmental decisions is therefore likely to be favourable to powerful and economic privileged minorities.

Since a large portion of the political power still is in the hands of a powerful minority the traditional power structure is likely to be maintained. It is the author's opinion that the risk for this to occur is higher in a country with a newly established democracy and a high level of economic inequality. The inequality level affects for example the individual's educational level that in turn affects the individual's political participation. Also, in a newly established democracy the democratic values and ideas of voluntary public participation might not be totally consolidated with the citizens.

Organizations in the civic sphere that are influenced by other groups of individuals increase the multiplicity and representativeness of the political decisions to some extent. It is however the author's opinion that these individuals, in general, do not choose to participate outside the traditional political system because they believe that it is the most efficient way towards individual empowerment. It is rather a last solution when the individual do not have the possibility to compete and receive any real influence in the traditional political system.

To change the overall power structure a higher level of general representativeness in the political parties and governmental institutions would be favourable. If this occurs within the existing parties or by the creation of new parties with a specific agenda to increase the level of representativeness is probably of less importance. Also, the government should make an effort to incorporate the civic sphere more effectively in the political discussion. An increase in the multiplicity of ideas would probably increase the less privileged individuals' general confidence in the governmental institutions. In the future, this might influence less privileged individuals to take a more active part in the political process.

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Appendix 1, Crosstabulations

The numbers that are made visible in these crosstabulations are the actual count and the expected count. The expected count is a random division, the number of people that would have answered in a specific way if there were no connection what so ever. The expected counts are presented with a decimal point.

Crosstabulation, Educational Level * Interest in Politics

		Interest in politics				
		Very	Some- what	Not very	Not at all	Total
Educational level	Upper	40 22.9	110 80.4	90 100.3	45 81.4	285 285.0
	Middle/high	21 21.7	91 76.2	101 95.0	57 77.1	270 270.0
	Middle/low	15 26.0	94 91.4	132 114.0	83 92.5	324 324.0
	Lower	45 50.4	130 176.9	207 220.7	245 179.0	627 627.0
	Total	121 121.0	425 425.0	530 530.0	430 430.0	1506 1506.0

Model 11 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Educational Level * Signing Petitions

		Signing Petitions			
		Have done	Might do	Would never do	Total
Educational level	High	104 52.4	125 109.7	48 114.8	277 277.0
	Middle/high	44 48.5	121 101.4	91 106.1	256 256.0
	Middle/low	39 56.2	129 117.7	129 123.1	297 297.0
	Low	72 101.9	167 213.2	299 223.0	538 538.0
	Total	259 259.0	542 542.0	567 567.0	1368 1368.0

Model 12 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Educational Level * Joining Boycotts

		Joining boycotts			
Educational level		Have done	Might do	Would never do	Total
	High	13 6.5	71 50.8	186 212.6	270 270.0
	Middle/high	5 6.1	52 47.4	195 198.5	252 252.0
	Middle/low	6 6.7	55 52.2	216 218.1	277 277.0
	Low	7 11.6	63 90.6	411 378.8	481 481.0
	Total	31 31.0	241 241.0	1008 1008.0	1280 1280.0

Model 13 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Educational Level * Attending Lawful Demonstrations

		Attending lawful demonstrations			
Educational level		Have done	Might do	Would never do	Total
	High	22 11.9	54 32.4	207 238.7	283 283.0
	Middle/high	11 11.0	30 29.7	219 219.3	260 260.0
	Middle/low	9 12.8	30 34.8	265 256.4	304 304.0
	Low	17 23.3	46 63.1	489 465.6	552 552.0
	Total	59 59.0	160 160.0	1180 1180.0	1399 1399.0

Model 14 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Class Identity * Interest in Politics

		Interest in politics				
Class identity		Very	Some-what	Not very	Not at all	Total
	Upper	28 25.2	131 89.1	103 112.0	46 81.7	308 308.0
	Middle	48 45.2	167 159.7	215 200.8	122 146.4	552 552.0
	Lower	36 41.6	98 147.2	180 185.2	195 135.0	509 509.0
	Total	112 112.0	396 396.0	498 498.0	363 363.0	1369 1369.0

Model 15 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Class Identity * Signing Petitions

		Signing petitions			
Class identity		Have Done	Might do	Would never do	Total
	Upper	69 60.0	155 121.7	81 123.3	305 305.0
	Middle	107 103.3	213 209.4	205 212.3	525 525.0
	Lower	73 85.8	137 173.9	226 176.3	436 436.0
	Total	249 249.0	505 505.0	512 512.0	1266 1266.0

Model 16 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Class Identity * Joining Boycotts

		Joining boycotts			
Class identity		Have Done	Might do	Would never do	Total
	Upper	6 7,1	75 56.9	210 227.0	291 291.0
	Middle	17 11,9	103 95.5	368 380.6	488 488,0
	Lower	6 10,0	54 79.6	347 317.4	407 407.0
	Total	29 29,0	232 232.0	925 925.0	1186 1186.0

Model 17 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Class Identity * Attending Lawful Demonstrations

		Attending lawful demonstrations			
Class identity		Have Done	Might do	Would never do	Total
	Upper	15 13.2	36 35.6	254 256.1	305 305.0
	Middle	27 23.2	69 62.6	440 450.1	536 536.0
	Lower	14 19.5	46 52.7	391 378.7	451 451.0
	Total	56 56.0	151 151.0	1085 1085.0	1292 1292.0

Model 18 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Income Level * Interest in Politics

		Interest in politics				
Income level		Very	Some- what	Not very	Not at all	Total
	High	28 26.1	125 94.8	110 115.6	55 81.5	318 318.0
	Middle	41 41.8	144 151.8	194 185.0	130 130.4	509 509.0
	Low	29 30.1	87 109.4	130 133.4	121 94.1	367 367.0
	Total	98 98.0	356 356.0	434 434.0	306 306.0	1194 1194.0

Model 19 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Income Level * Signing Petitions

		Signing petitions			
Income level		Have done	Might do	Would never do	Total
	High	91 59.5	127 127.0	89 120.6	307 307.0
	Middle	79 93.3	222 199.3	181 189.3	482 482.0
	Low	44 61.2	108 130.7	164 124.1	316 316.0
	Total	214 214.0	457 457.0	434 434.0	1105 1105.0

Model 20 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Income Level * Joining Boycotts

		Joining boycotts			
Income level		Have done	Might do	Would never do	Total
	High	9 7.6	69 62.8	227 234.6	287 287.0
	Middle	10 11.2	85 92.2	353 344.6	448 448.0
	Low	7 7.2	60 59.1	220 220.8	305 305.0
	Total	26 26.0	214 214.0	800 800.0	1040 1040.0

Model 21 (1*, World Value Survey)

Crosstabulation, Income Level * Attending Lawful Demonstrations

		Attending Lawful Demonstrations			
		Have done	Might do	Would never do	Total
Income Level	High	19 13.9	40 36.6	253 261.6	312 312.0
	Middle	22 21.7	61 57.3	406 410.0	489 489.0
	Low	9 14.4	31 38.1	285 272.5	325 325.0
	Total	50 50.0	132 132.0	944 944.0	1126 1126.0

Model 22 (1*, World Value Survey)

Appendix 2, Following Letter for the Interviews



LUND
UNIVERSITY
Department of Political Science

Hello!

My name is Andreas C. R. Malmgren and I am studying my master in Political Science at University of Lund in Sweden. I am writing my thesis regarding in what way the individual's level of socioeconomic resources influence him/her to get involved in political activity in the context of Mexico. In my thesis political participation is defined as actions by the individual that direct or indirect are aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take.

I would be grateful if *you* would help me in my research. *Your participation is important* for me, through answering these questions *you* will help me to get a deeper understanding for the underlying factors for political involvement. I will not publish your name in the thesis so write as open and honest as possible.

You are welcome to use as much room as you need to answer these questions. When you have answered the question, please send the answers to my e-mail address.

If you have any questions regarding my thesis or the questions please contact me on this e-mail address: stv07ama@student.lu.se

Thank you in advance

Andreas C. R. Malmgren

Appendix 3, Questionnaire for the Interviews

1) What is the highest level of education that you expect to complete?

2) People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to a social class, what social class would you describe yourself belonging to:

1. Upper class
 2. Upper middle class
 3. Lower middle class
 4. Working class
 5. Lower class
-

3) Did you vote in the last election?

1. Yes
 2. No
-

4) Have you ever been involved in any of these variations of political participation below?

4a) Have you been involved in any political party or their campaign?

1. Yes
2. No

4b) Have you ever been an active or passive member of any civil group or organisation that direct or indirect aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take?

1. Yes
2. No

4c) Have you ever attended any lawful demonstrations or protest that direct or indirect aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take?

1. Yes
2. No

4d) Have you ever sent any messages of support or dislike to political leaders or newspapers, or been involved in a political discussion that direct or indirect aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take?

1. Yes
2. No

5) Indicate how important politics is in your life. Would you say it is:

1. Very important
2. Rather important
3. Not very important
4. Not at all important

5b) Is there anything specific that has influenced your level of political interest?

6) What are the main reasons for your political involvement?

7) Have you ever been encouraged to participate in political activities, in that case by whom and in what way?

8) Do you believe that your position in the social class structure has influenced you to participate in political activities in any way, in that case how?

Thank you for your participation

Appendix 4, Information Regarding the Questionnaire and Categories in the WVS

Educational Level

The question used in the WVS regarding the individual's educational level (V226) is: "[w]hat is the highest educational level that you have attained?" Students answer with the highest level he/she expects to complete. The nine categories used in the WVS are: (1) no formal education, (2) incomplete primary school, (3) complete primary school, (4) incomplete secondary school (technical vocational type), (5) complete secondary school (technical vocational type), (6) incomplete secondary school (university preparatory type), (7) complete secondary school (university preparatory type), (8) some university without degree and (9) university with degree. (1*, World Value Survey)

Class Identity

The question used in the WVS regarding the individual's educational level (V235) is: "[p]eople sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the working class, the middle class, or the upper or lower class. Would you describe yourself as belonging to the:" The five categories used in the WVS are: (1) upper class, (2) upper middle class, (3) lower middle class, (4) working class and (5) Lower class. (1*, World Value Survey)

Income Level

The question used in the WVS regarding income level (V236cs) is: "[h]ere is a scale of incomes. We would like to know in what group your household is, counting all wages, salaries, pensions and other incomes that come in. Just give the letter of the group your household falls into, before taxes and deductions." The categories used in the Mexican part of the WVS are (pesos/month): (1) 0 – 500, (2) 501 – 1000, (3) 1001-1300, (4) 1301-1600, (5) 1601-2000, (6) 2001-3000, (7) 3001-4000, (8) 4001-6000, (9) 6001-8000, (10) more than 8000. (1*, World Value Survey)

Political Actions (Signing Petitions, Attending Boycotts and attending Lawful Demonstrations)

The questions used in the WVS regarding the variations of political participation used in this thesis (V134, V135, V136) are: "Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some different forms of political actions that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, weather you have actually done any of these things, weather you might do it or would never, under any circumstances, do it." (1*, World Value Survey)

Political Interest

The question used in the WVS regarding the individual's political interest (V133) is: "[h]ow interested would you say you are in politics?" The categories used in the WVS are: very interested, somewhat interested, not very interested and not at all interested. (1*, World Value Survey)