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Who Participates Where?

Civic Participation in Voluntary Sector Organizations in the Advanced Industrial Democracies

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Abstract

Participation in voluntary sector organizations (vsos) has major implications for civil society. Extant research identifies key linkages between socio-demographic factors and vso participation. The authors extend this literature by leveraging four waves of survey data to examine how critical factors associate with individuals' participation choices in nine different vso types across the advanced industrial democracies and find substantial variation in patterns of participation. For example, gender has a substantial impact. Women are more likely to participate in humanitarian, educational, environmental, and religious vsos, whereas men are more likely to participate in labor unions, political parties, and professional and sports associations. Other factors, such as age, education, income, and macro-level cross-national factors are also important determinants of who volunteers where. The authors consider two forms of

participation – active and inactive participation – which they conceptualize as being on a continuum of intensity of participation and for which voluntary sector participants often share similar participation choices.

Keywords

voluntary sector organizations – civic participation – political parties – volunteering – membership – European and World Values Surveys

1 Introduction

While widely recognized that voluntary sector organizations (vso's) exert a marked impact on our daily lives by providing a variety of goods and services, they also strengthen civil society (Jenkinson et al. 2013; Wilson 2000). Public participation in vso's has global implications for communities ranging from education and the environment to health and welfare (Piliavin and Siegl 2007; Thoits and Hewitt 2001). Previous scholarship has advanced our understanding of the relationships between volunteers' socio-demographic characteristics and vso involvement, and in line with resource and dominant status theories it is widely recognized that individual socio-economic characteristics are important determinants of relative propensities to perform voluntary work (Smith 1994; Hodgkinson 2003; Rotolo and Wilson 2004). Some of the determinants that attract the most attention include gender, age, education, income, and religiosity (Wilson 2012).

Despite this strong theoretical foundation, previous research often examines participation measured by an outcome such as whether or to what extent an individual does or does not participate. Such an approach assumes all volunteering is similar in nature and thereby seem unlike to effectively account for critical variation that arises across different types of vso's (Gil-Lacruz et al. 2019). We posit that volunteering is not a homogenous activity, implying that volunteering for advocacy organizations is significantly dissimilar to volunteering at foodbanks, thus attracting a different type of volunteer.

Our analysis incorporates a variety of critical micro- and macro-level factors previously identified in the vso scholarship to demonstrate that the impact of these factors on voluntary sector participation vary substantially across different vso types. We also examine the impacts of these determinants for both active and inactive participation, investigating the extent to which active and

inactive participation reflect different intensities of the same underlying process. It may be reasonable to view active and inactive participation as points along a continuum of intensity of engagement rather than entirely distinct phenomena.

Our article furthers the field of voluntary sector and political research more broadly by focusing on the heterogeneity of participation and analyzing participation, active and inactive, across a range of different vso types within advanced industrial democratic states.

Our article is organized as follows. We first review the extant literature, describing the key factors that influence voluntary sector participation. We provide an overview of our research methodology, including case and data selection, descriptions of key dependent and explanatory variables, and the statistical methods used for our analysis. We then present key findings of our analyses for two participation types: (1) active participation and (2) inactive participation. After reviewing the implications of our findings in consideration of the current state of the literature, we discuss the limitations of our literature and propose next steps before concluding.

2 Literature Review

Civic engagement in vsos has been defined and operationalized in various ways. Two broad ways to categorize civic engagement are active and inactive participation. Active participation (AP) – which includes volunteering – is typically conceptualized as unpaid work for vsos with no expectation of compensation (Cnaan et al. 1996; Handy et al. 2000). Scholars have produced extensive literatures examining volunteering in vsos, both identifying a variety of crucial determinants that impact participation as well as analyzing the economic, health, and welfare benefits for participants (Handy and Sealey 2022; Plagnol and Huppert 2010).

While most vsos depend on AP to achieve their missions, many also rely on inactive participation¹ (IP). Inactive participants do not take on active roles in their organization but remain critical to the lifeblood of vsos through their

1 This distinction we draw between active and inactive participation is not only a key feature of the literature on vso participation, but is also operationalizable due to important distinctions which have been drawn in the EVS-wvs, the datasets which lie at the heart of our analyses. We thank the coordinators and contributors of these datasets for their extraordinary work. See our statistical appendix for discussion in greater detail.

contributions as members. In contrast to AP, less active forms of VSO participation have been emphasized in the civic engagement literature, popularized by Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2000) and taken up by other scholars studying social capital. For example, in constructing a civic engagement scale, Cameron (2021) considers a dynamic model that differentiates between types of participation. Taken together, an individual may choose to participate actively, inactively, or not at all, as they may face barriers that hinder this behavior, such as a lack of resources (Wilson 2000), dominant status (Smith 1994), or discrimination (Handy and Greenspan 2009).

Given the literature's emphasis on and strong theoretical foundations regarding volunteering in the VSO participation literature, we structure our review as follows. First, we examine existing literature on who is most likely to engage in AP. This examination is categorized into two overarching groups, micro-level factors that identify differences between individuals and macro-level variables that determine differences between countries. Sources for IP are less frequent but are cited when possible. We then turn to examine whether variations occur in participation in different types of VSOs.

2.1 *Micro-Level Explanations*

The extant scholarship demonstrates that one's socioeconomic characteristics contribute to the propensity to be engaged in AP or IP. While there are many studies that have been published on this topic, we focus on the most widely accepted conclusions for key determinants: gender, age, religion, education, income, and social trust.

2.1.1 Gender

There is substantial and growing interest in gender differences in volunteering patterns (Wiepking and Bekkers 2012) and in the nonprofit sector more broadly (Holgersson and Hvenmark 2023). While some find women outnumber men as volunteers, others find the reverse, and others find no difference (Musick and Wilson 2007; Wiepking et al. 2023). The impact of gender also depends on context. For example, while men seem to be more likely to volunteer than women in Germany (Helms and McKenzie 2014), the reverse appears to be true in the United States (Bureau 2023; Einolf 2011). Peter and Drobníč (2013) extend this research by considering IP and find that within European countries, gender inequality persists and varies by country. Overall, researchers agree that gender is an influential determinant, one of dominant status (Smith, 1994) that influences volunteer behavior, but findings are nuanced and context dependent.

2.1.2 Age

Literature regarding the relationship between participation and age is somewhat mixed, with some finding a limited role for age (Suter and Gmür 2018) and others suggesting an inverted U-shape relationship, underscoring the importance of life-course in explaining participation behavior (Musick and Wilson 2007; Tang et al. 2010). For example, young adults (20s to 30s) busy building careers and relationships may be less willing to volunteer than individuals in middle adulthood (late 30s to early 50s). Individuals in middle adulthood engaged in paid work and child-rearing tend to have more robust social networks, higher incomes, and thus more resources and more volunteering opportunities. The latest report from the U.S. Census Bureau (2023) supports this finding, with those between 41 and 80 years old having the highest rates of participation in comparison to younger categories. However, 16 to 19 year-olds continue to have a relatively high volunteering rate, perhaps reflecting educational requirements or for building their resumes (Handy et al. 2000).

2.1.3 Education

Education emerges as the most consistent and robust predictor of participation. The argument posits that education socializes individuals to engage in civic behaviors, as schools play a crucial role in instilling norms and values promoting prosocial conduct (Mtawa et al. 2021). Another theoretical explanation for the correlation between education and participation is based on both resource and dominant status theory. Education is seen as a resource which affords individuals status and capabilities making them more attractive to VSOs. Often individuals with higher education join VSOs to further social networks that enhance their status (Hustinx et al. 2010). The lack of resources available to the less educated, limit their opportunities while simultaneously painting them as less competent (Gesthuizen and Scheepers 2012). This pattern holds empirically across multiple contexts. In the U.S., only 8% of individuals with a high school diploma volunteered, compared to 15.6% of high school graduates and 38.8% with a bachelor's degree and higher (Bureau, 2023).

2.1.4 Income

Considerable evidence in the literature suggests that income matters. Individuals with greater financial resources are more likely to volunteer and become members of VSOs (Wiepking and Bekkers 2012; Wilson 2012). Higher-income people tend to pursue self-fulfillment, thus increasing the likelihood of participation. They are also more likely to be sought out by VSOs for the resources they may be able to provide, including both monetary and

in-kind donations. Positive associations between AP and income are observed in several countries, including France (Prouteau and Wolff 2006), the United Kingdom (Cozzi et al 2017), and the U.S. (Sauer 2015). However, some scholars call into question the interplay of education and income in explaining AP (Bundi and Freitag 2020).

2.1.5 Resources and Active and Inactive Participation

Recent theory that helps us to understand the connection between resources and IP and AP centres around internal and external perceptions of resources (Marrese, et al. forthcoming). This work posits that the resources which enable an individual to perform a behaviour are not objective constructs, but rather that features like gender, education, and income are internally and externally measured. Inactive participation requires less external validation and thus presents lower barriers for entry. For example, to pay for an organization membership an individual must determine that they have enough means to perform this action, but the receiving organization is unlikely to reject this payment. Alternatively, with active participation an individual must decide to perform this behaviour, and an organization must be willing accept this participation. As such, the barrier to entry varies by participation type and the extent to which one's resources must be validated by the receiving organization.

2.1.6 Summary

The factors we identify above are essential and nuanced features that influence one's propensity to participate in civic society. These factors are the basis of resource and dominant status theories of volunteering which is a core theoretical framework that explains the propensity of civic participation by individuals. At the simplest level, those with financial, educational, and social resources are more likely to participate, as well as religious individuals and those with more generalized trust. There is a vast literature supporting this model. Scholars conclude that socioeconomic factors are essential micro-level determinants contributing to the likelihood of participating in vso's (Wilson and Musick 1998; Hustinx et al. 2010).

2.2 *Macro-Level Explanations*

Scholars have also investigated the role of contextual factors. Both Hackl et al. (2012) and Gil-Lacruz et al. (2019) emphasize that individual-level characteristics only partially explain observed cross-national differences in volunteering, while Plagnol and Huppert (2010) conclude that national comparisons must consider contextual factors, such as historical background or institutional structures. As Hustinx et al. (2010: 16) note, however, "the complex question

of how the larger socio-cultural context or macrosystem impacts individual volunteering has received the least attention among scholars in the field.” We briefly review the literature on these key macro-level factors.

2.2.1 Economic Inequality

Growing inequality in advanced industrial economies has emerged as one of the twenty-first century’s most salient contemporary political issues. Particularly noteworthy is the increase in the share of national economies captured by those in the highest income echelons (Atkinson 2005; Piketty and Saez 2003; Saez and Veall 2005). These economic shifts have engendered political and social protest behavior including movements such as Occupy, aimed at advancing social and economic justice. Inequality has significant adverse consequences for various behaviors in advanced industrial democracies, including impacts on individual health and welfare (Pickett and Wilkinson, 2015), social trust (Fairbrother and Martin 2013), and support for democratic political governance (Andersen 2012) and redistributive public policies (Sealey and Andersen 2015). These consequences are often addressed through civic participation in VSOs, and public protest (Rodon and Guinjoan 2018).

Two key lines of thought predominate theoretical expectations regarding the relationship between economic inequality and civic participation. The first is a theory highlighting homogeneity and social cohesion, suggesting that as inequality increases, homogeneity, social cohesion and therefore participation will decrease. For example, Woolley (2003) finds that volunteering decreases where the gap between the rich and poor is greater, whereas Solt (2008) and Filetti and Janmaat (2018) find that a negative relationship between inequality and political participation. The second emphasizes a potential crowding out effect, such that as governments provide more social services, the need for citizens to participate in VSOs to provide comparable services decreases. Stadelmann-Steffen’s (2011) research suggest that social volunteering is lower in countries with more extensive welfare states. Likewise, Mastromatteo and Russo (2017) identify a positive relationship between actively participating in charitable organizations and income inequality, and Duquette and Hargaden (2021) indicate that, using an experimental framework, they also find that economic inequality has a negative effect on charitable giving.

2.2.2 Environmental Quality

The growing awareness of environmental quality has significantly influenced civic engagement, particularly considering pressing issues such as global warming and climate change. Participation in environmental VSOs is an expanding body of research with a focus on how individuals’ environmental

surroundings and values are closely tied to vso participation (García-Valiñas et al. 2012; Measham and Barnett 2008). Liarakou et al. (2011) find that contact with nature and the vso's mission were strong predictors of one's motivation to volunteer. Thus, it is reasonable to anticipate that the environmental quality of one's surroundings and the existence or predominance of environmental vso s may be associated with vso participation, yet few studies have examined this linkage.

2.2.3 Summary

Despite being largely overlooked in the literature, macro-level variables are also critical to our understanding a broad range of socio-political beliefs and civic engagement through vso participation.

2.3 *Participation Variation in Different vso Types*

Why do some individuals gravitate towards specific types of vsos? The primary contribution of this article is to examine the consequences of various macro- and micro-level factors on an individual's likelihood to participate in a particular type of vso. vso participation matters on multiple dimensions and its effect is diverse and depends on vso type. For example, variation in vso participation has a range of benefits for individual's health and welfare as well as their perspectives on public policy issues (Handy and Sealey 2022; Sealey and Handy 2023). As such, the potential of intentional self-sorting of participation in different vso types becomes a significant area of interest in our research.

Relatively few scholars have attempted to include a multi-dimensional view of vso participation type in civic participation research. One of the earliest attempts to create nuance between characteristics and different associations comes from Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas (2001). These authors are interested in structural factors, focusing on explaining differences between vso participation in 'old' vsos such as labor unions, political parties, and professional associations and 'new' vsos such as those related to the environment, Third World development, and women's organizations. Their findings shed light on the impacts of a range of micro- and macro-level factors. At the micro-level, they find that while age and education have no clearly discernable impact, women are more likely to support new vsos. And at the macro-level, they find that while democracy and economic development have no clear impacts, polities with higher degrees of statism have lower levels of participation, particularly in 'new' vsos.

Musick and Wilson (2007: 363) further contribute to this multi-dimensional view of volunteering by considering vsos in three general domains: service,

advocacy, and religious volunteering. Their data includes fifty-eight countries between 1999 and 2001. For each vso, they create a socio-economic profile of the participants. The average service volunteer is male, single, middle-aged, working part-time, well-educated, affluent, and frequently attending church. Advocacy volunteers differ from service volunteers only in terms of being more likely to be married and fully employed. Religious volunteers instead tend to be male, married, older aged, working part-time, well-educated, affluent, and frequent church attendees. Their main conclusion is that the socio-economic profiles across countries are similar, but this depends on the specific type of volunteering.

The importance of differentiating between vso types to draw conclusions on volunteering has become more common in recent years. For example, Gil-Lacruz et al. (2017) aggregate vso types into four domains: (1) social awareness, (2) professional and political activities, (3) education and leisure, and (4) social justice organizations while Bundi and Freitag (2020) use two different categories for the association type: solidarity Putnam groups (such as sport and community organizations) and non-solidarity Olson groups (such as union and professional organizations). Both papers find that determinants vary strongly between the types of associations with Bundi and Freitag emphasizing divergent findings for the association between economic hardship and volunteering.

In addition to individual-level differences, Gil-Lacruz et al. find significant differences by examining several variables at an aggregate level, demonstrating differences arising from macro-level social factors such as confidence in public institutions and the size of residential areas. Lastly, Meijeren et al. (2023) consider five different areas of vsos in the Netherlands and find that education and subjective health are the most consistent indicators for most association types, but also emphasize the importance of distinguishing between different associations. Given the varying settings and outcomes of these models, the leading conclusion remains: the type of vso has a significant impact on conclusions regarding important associated characteristics.

3 Theoretical Framework

The research question which lies at the heart of our research is: Who volunteers where? By this, we mean to ask: How do the key individual-level determinants which are known to impact vso participation help to explain variations in the types of vsos where different types of individuals participate? We separate our discussions into micro- and macro-level theories.

3.1 *Micro-Level Explanations*

3.1.1 Gender

We begin by considering gender. Musick and Wilson's (2007) volume presents a comprehensive discussion of differences in gendered VSO participation, focusing on the impacts of gendered socialization and patriarchal structures. While women tend to be more likely to express prosocial attitudes, to be caring and empathetic, and to value caring for others, men are more likely to think instrumentally and be more opportunistic, and their volunteering is more likely to be an extension of the work that they do in the workplace. This does not necessarily imply that women are any more or less likely to volunteer than men *per se*, but rather that *where* they choose to participate is critical. A range of gender-specific findings arise from country-specific analyses, which indicate that women were more likely to volunteer for health, education, cultural and religious VSOs whereas men are more likely to volunteer for sports associations or work-related activities.

These findings align with research on specific types of VSOs, such as unions or political parties. Further research indicates that across the advanced industrial democracies, save for more recently in some Nordic countries, men are more likely to belong to unions (Riley 1997; Ledwith 2012). While the research on participation in political parties is less robust – particularly with respect to gender, political party research tends to be much more concentrated on political representation and party identification – it is generally recognized that men tend to have higher levels of political interest, knowledge,² and participation (Van Deth 2000; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 2001; Inglehart and Norris 2003) which seem likely to be associated with participation in political parties. Likewise, research on political party membership in Denmark, Norway, and Germany indicates that men substantially outnumber women (Heidar and Pedersen 2006; Hoffmann and Springer 2019).

Interestingly, despite that these findings do not line up particularly well with Musick and Wilson's distinction between service and advocacy groups³ – a finding that they acknowledge (2007: 183–4) – they do seem to line up quite

2 Note, however, that Dolan (2011) finds that men are generally only more knowledgeable regarding traditional political knowledge questions such as identifying the House Speaker or which party holds the majority in the House, whereas there is no statistically significant difference between men and women on gender-specific questions such as naming a woman member of Congress, the percentage of women in Congress, the number of women Supreme Court Justices, or the gender of their two Senators.

3 Note that we initially discuss Musick and Wilson's (2007) distinction between service, advocacy, and religious VSOs in the last paragraph of page 11.

well with Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas's distinction between 'old' social movements such as labor unions, political parties, and professional associations and 'new' social movements such as environmental, Third World developmental, and women's organizations. This theoretical perspective aligns particularly well with Musick and Wilson's emphasis on structural explanation, given that older organizations would have been exposed to more prolonged institutional structuring which would thereby be more likely to institutional patriarchal systems. We thus hypothesize:

H₁: Women are more likely to participate in newer vso's that emphasize more prosocial and caring objectives, while men are more likely to participate in older vso's that are more self-interestedly oriented.

3.1.2 Age

As discussed above, previous research finds various impacts for the role of age. We believe that these varying results may be a result of a lack of distinction between the location of volunteering. We believe that age will have a range of different impacts. For instance, in line with our reasoning regarding 'old' and 'new' social movements, we posit that older respondents are more likely to participate with old social movements and younger respondents are more likely to participate with young social movements.

H₂: Younger respondents are more likely to participate in newer vso's types, while older respondents are more likely to participate in older vso that are more self-interestedly oriented.

That said, we also think that life-cycle effects will be important. For instance, we anticipate that younger respondents will be more likely to be involved in sports associations and with educational institutions, whereas middle-aged individuals will be more likely to participate with work organizations such as professional associations and labor unions, whereas participation in these types of institutions will decrease amongst seniors as they retire and withdraw from the labor market.

H₃: Younger respondents are more likely to participate in sports associations and educational institutions, and middle-aged respondents are more likely to participate in work organizations such as professional associations and labor unions whereas older respondents are least likely to participate with these vso types.

3.1.3 Education, Income, and Employment

We next consider employment, education, and income. For our theoretical framework for these factors, we call on both resource theory and net cost theory.

Resource theory, one of the most predominant theories in the analysis of voluntary sector behavior, argues straightforwardly that those who have more resources are more likely to volunteer.⁴ Whereas net cost theory (Handy et al. 2000), developed from one of the underlying theoretical explanations for why not all volunteering is the same offered by Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996), is founded on the principle that the total cost (C) that volunteers incur must be less than the sum of both private, personal benefits (B_1) as well as the public benefits to others that are valued by the volunteer (B_2).⁵

To explain different propensities to participate in different types of vso's, it is important to realize that *ceteris paribus* the amount of these three factors: cost (C), personal benefits (B_1) and public benefits (B_2), varies depending on the characteristics of different individuals. These costs will depend critically on levels and types of resources. Take education, for example. Relative to those with lower levels of education, clearly those who have higher levels of education will have greater resources, and therefore lower associated costs (C) for particular types of vso's such as professional associations and educational institutions. This leads us to the following hypothesis:

H₄: Those with higher education levels are more likely to participate with vso types for which they have lower costs relative to those with lower education levels, such as professional associations and educational institutions.

For those with greater incomes, the effect is less clear. We expect the impact to depend on the relative value of personal benefits (B_1) and public benefits (B_2). On the one hand, those with greater incomes may be the types of people that generally tend to place greater value on personal benefits, in which case we would expect those with greater incomes to prefer participating in vso's that confer greater personal benefits (B_1). These would correspond to the old social

4 Note that the resource theory model generally used in the analysis of voluntary sector behaviour dovetails nicely with Brady, Verba, and Schlozman's (1995) resource model of political participation.

5 In addition to Handy et al. (2000), see Handy and Sealey (2022) for an additional application and elaboration of net cost theory.

movement vso types favoured by men. On the other hand, because those with greater incomes already have greater personal benefits (B_1) they may instead prefer to participate in vso s with greater public benefits (B_2). These would correspond to the new social movement vso types that are favoured by women. Overall, however, we expect B_1 to dominate B_2 , such that:

H_5 : Those with higher income levels are more likely to participate with vso types which confer greater personal benefits (B_1) – i.e. old social movement vso types preferred by men – rather than new social movement vso types which greater public benefits (B_2) – i.e. vso types preferred by women.

For employment status. Resource theory provides a straightforward prediction about general levels of participation. Because *ceteris paribus* the unemployed clearly have lower levels of resources, resource theory would suggest that the unemployed would have lower levels of participation across all vso types. With respect to which types of vso participation will be most impacted, again we look to the relative value of personal benefits (B_1) and public benefits (B_2). In this case we again expect the relative values of these two benefits to be unambiguous, such that relative to the employed we expect the unemployed to unambiguously prefer personal benefits (B_1) to public benefits (B_2). We therefore hypothesize:

H_6 : The unemployed are less likely to participate in vso s than the employed, and the unemployed are relatively more likely to participate with vso types which confer greater personal benefits (B_1) – i.e. vso types preferred by men – whereas the employed are relatively more likely to participate with vso types which greater public benefits (B_2) – i.e. vso types preferred by women.

3.2 *Macro-Level Explanations*

3.2.1 Economic Inequality

As indicated in our preceding literature review, there are two key theoretical perspectives regarding the relationship between economic inequality and civic participation. Social cohesion theory suggests more inequality will imply that participation will decrease, whereas crowding out theory recommends anticipating a that greater inequality will result in increased participation. This suggests the following final hypothesis:

H₇: Where social cohesion theory dominates, inequality will have a negative impact on participation, whereas where the crowding out effect dominates, inequality will have a positive effect on participation.

3.2.2 Environmental Quality

Our hypothesis for the impact of environmental quality again draws on Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas's distinction between 'new' and 'old' social movements. We anticipate that countries with better environmental standards will generally be populated by citizenries with comparatively greater interest in the concerns raised by new social movements, whereas countries with less stringent environmental standards will be more likely to be populated by citizenries with comparatively greater interest in old social movement issues.

H₈: Higher environmental standards will be associated with comparatively greater participation in new social movement vso's, and comparatively lower participation in old social movement vso's.

4 Research Contribution

Our article advances the current literature as follows. First, we merge data from both the wvs and evs, as these two surveys include a comparable range of vso's. We also employ granularized vso categories, maintaining nine distinct groups, enabling us to identify differences between the impacts of different factors in the choice of vso type. In addition, we draw on theories recommended by the literature to develop robust theories examine the impacts of distinct micro- and macro-level factors, merging external data sources with our micro-level data to examine the impacts of these additional factors. Finally, we examine the impacts of both active and inactive participation, recognizing that these are on a continuum and that factors that impact active participation are also likely to affect inactive participation. By further developing our analyses in these respects, we identify a range of essential insights not previously identified in the scholarship.

5 Methodology

Having considered a range of important factors discussed in the preceding scholarship, this section of the article outlines the empirical approach we use to evaluate the impacts of these key factors on active and inactive participation

for different types of vso's. We first describe our case selection and data, and then follow with a discussion of methods and modelling strategies.

5.1 *Case Selection and Data*

Our case selection approach comprises data for the eighteen advanced industrial states that have been continuously democratic since the end of the Second World War: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. By selecting cases that are in many respects highly comparable, we limit the impacts of a range of potentially significant covariates. These countries have been a common focal point of research in the fields of political economy and vso participation (Esping-Andersen 1990; Handy and Sealey 2022; Huber and Stephens 2014; Korpi and Palme 1998; Sealey and Handy 2023).

For our micro-level data, we use the third through sixth waves of the European and World Values Survey (EVS-WVS) data for these 18 countries.⁶ The available data for these 18 countries through these four waves include 55 different surveys for a total of 66,754 respondents from surveys ranging from the mid-1990s to the 2010s. These survey data include a broad range of question types, including both active and inactive vso participation and key micro-level factors such as gender, age, education, and income. These data have been used in several research projects investigating citizens' vso participation (Curtis et al. 1992; Hackl et al. 2012; Handy and Sealey 2022; Ruiter and De Graaf 2006; Sealey and Handy 2023).

5.2 *Dependent Variable: vso Type*

The EVS-WVS include distinct measures of active and inactive participation. In some waves, respondents are asked whether they were active or inactive members of various types of vso's, whereas in others, respondents are asked if they did unpaid work for or belonged to a vso. We classify responses where respondents indicate that they were active members or did unpaid work as 'active participants' (AP) and those where they indicate that they were inactive members or belonged to but did not volunteer for a vso type as 'inactive participants' (IP).

Although the set of vso's in each wave is not identical, each wave contains questions for a series of comparable types of vso's. In total, we use nine dichotomous variables that indicate whether survey respondents have participated

⁶ We do not use the first and second waves because these waves have important differences in the collection of the dependent variable of our analysis.

with the following vso types: (1) sports and (2) professional associations, (3) religious institutions, (4) political parties, (5) educational institutions, (6) environmental organizations, (7) human rights and humanitarian organizations, (8) labor unions, and (9) other vsos. This dependent variable is in many respects comparable to a standard multinomial variable, save for that these options are not mutually exclusive. As such, the dependent variable may include many rather than one unique positive response option, as is the case with a typical multinomial variable.

5.3 *Independent Variables*

We account for both micro- and macro-level variations between survey participants. Our core micro-level explanatory variables have been broadly identified from the literature on volunteering behavior. These include:

- Gender (coded 1 for women and 0 for men);
- Employment status (1 for unemployed and 0 for other);
- Education (four-category variable: high school not completed, high school completed, some post-secondary, and completed university);
- Income (five-category variable: low, medium-low, medium, medium-high, and high);
- Religion (four-category variable: Protestant, Catholic, Other, and Not Religious);
- Age (four-category variable: 18–29, 30–44, 45–64, and 65+); and
- Social Trust (1 for more trust and 0 for less trust).

We use a multiple imputation strategy ($m=5$) to account for missing micro-level data. To avoid imputing values for our dependent variable, we drop observations with missing data on any of the eight vso types, excluding the ‘other’ category. Following standard practice, we imputed the missing values for the six micro-level explanatory variables. Of these, the greatest extent of missingness is for income, as is common in public opinion surveys.

In addition to these micro-level explanations, we include a series of key macro-level factors that examine the importance of differences in national contexts. Restricting our analysis to the advanced industrial democracies allows us to mitigate the impacts of variables that may be more consequential in broader cross-national analyses. We focus on four socio-political issues: climate change, economic inequality, economic development, and gender equality. These variables represent salient policy questions for the advanced industrial democracies, and differences in these measures reflect essential differences in citizens’ aggregate policy perspectives which may have significant consequences for their choice of vsos.

Our measure for climate change focuses on environmental responsibility as measured by per capita carbon dioxide emissions, which we draw from the World Bank. Previous studies use this measure as a proxy for responsible environmental behavior (Hoffmann et al. 2005; Talukdar and Meisner 2001). For economic inequality, we use Solt's standardized Gini coefficients (Solt 2009). We use the natural log of real GDP per capita data from the Penn World tables to measure economic development. For gender equality, we focus on political elite representation, using the proportion of a country's legislature that includes women, as given our focus on the advanced industrial democracies, other gender differences more applicable for more broad-based comparative analyses such as literacy rates may be comparatively modest. Our measure of political elite representation combines data from the Women in Parliament, 1945–2003 cross-national data set, with data from the World Bank.

5.4 *Methods and Models*

Our empirical approach employs a mixed effects regression modelling strategy. Our principal statistical analyses use mixed effects logistic regression models that estimate fit using restricted maximum likelihood. Mixed effects models are preferable to so-called 'completely pooled' models because the latter – which do not include random effects – do not control for between-group heterogeneity and thereby are less efficient than models that do (Gelman and Hill 2006; Pinheiro and Bates 2000). Mixed effects models are thereby more effective, accounting for potential systematic between-group differences rather than assuming that an individual's group membership is irrelevant. Our models account for the clustering of individuals within the previously specified 55 space-time contexts by specifying a random intercept for each survey.

Our modelling strategy aligns with the nature of our dependent variable: vso participation type. Survey respondents were asked to identify for which of nine different vso types they participated, and naturally were allowed to include more than one response option. Thus, our model is comparable to a multinomial logistic regression but modified to account for the inclusion of multiple positive response options across the several dependent variable categories. To perform these analyses, we stack the available data and use a logistic regression model with interaction terms between each of our explanatory variables and the vso types. The interaction terms estimate the differences between the base category of analysis, thereby allowing us to calculate predicted probabilities for participation by each group for each vso type.

To understand the impact of our explanatory variables, we compare each predicted probability to the baseline comparison group and then calculate the

percentage difference in the likelihood of participating for each of the nine vso types. For instance, considering gender, from the estimates, we calculate the predicted probabilities of women and men, respectively, participating in each of the nine vso types. We then calculate the percentage increase or decrease in the likelihood of both AP and IP for each of the nine types of vsos from these predicted probabilities. In the empirical analysis section that follows, we include a series of figures which report these percentage increases or decreases in the comparative likelihood of one group participating with a particular type of vso relative to a base group of comparison expressed in terms of the percentage difference in likelihood as indicated on the y-axis of each figure. For instance, for gender, the y-axis indicates that the relevant figure expresses the percentage difference in the likelihood of a woman participating with a particular vso type relative to a man. Values greater than the 0% likelihood line indicate that women are more likely to participate with a given vso type, whereas values less than the 0% likelihood line indicate that women are less likely to participate with a particular type of vso. We also include 95% confidence intervals in our figures, with statistically significant results being identifiable if the confidence interval does not straddle the 0% likelihood line.

As such, we note that our estimates for all explanatory variables for the nine vso types were simultaneously estimated in one model for each of the two vso participation types. The figures below are presented separately for simplicity and to allow for comparability between the estimates of the percentage changes in the likelihood of volunteering between different vso types and each of the explanatory variables considered.

6 Empirical Analysis

6.1 *Micro-Level Factors*

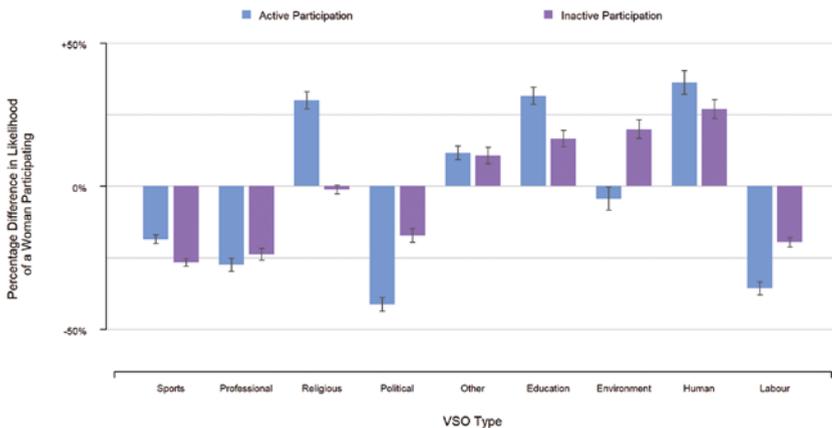
6.1.1 Gender

We present the estimated impacts of gender on vso participation below. On the x-axis, we list each of the nine types of vsos. The y-axis presents the estimated percentage change in the likelihood of a woman participating in these nine vso types compared to the reference level of 'male.' This graphic is centered on 0%, which would indicate no estimated difference between men and women participating in each vso type. We present the two types of participation in different colors: AP in blue and IP in purple. Each estimated impact also includes a confidence interval, such that if the confidence interval does

not straddle the 0% line, then the difference is statistically significant at the generally accepted 0.05 level of significance.

For example, Figure 1 indicates that women are less likely to both actively and inactively participate with sports associations. Because the level of inactive participation is very close to the -25% line, this indicates that with respect to IP with sports associations, women are about 25% less likely to participate than the men with this type of vso.

Figure 1 demonstrates that overall, gender does not have a single, consistent effect on vso participation, but this lack of an overall trend masks a range of marked differences which line up quite well with H_1 . As hypothesized, women are substantially less likely to participate in 'old' social movement vsos including professional associations, political parties, and labor unions, as well as sports associations which in many instances may also seem likely to be subject to patriarchal organizational structures. Conversely, women are more likely than men to participate in educational institutions and humanitarian or human rights vsos, as well as to participate inactively with environmental organizations. The one vso type that does not seem to apply is religious institutions. While IP seems to be about equally likely for men and women, women are considerably more likely to AP with religious institutions than men. But overall, these findings provide strong evidence in support of H_1 . Women are more likely to participate in newer vsos that emphasize more prosocial and caring objectives, while men are more likely to participate in older vsos that reflect more self-interestedly orientations.



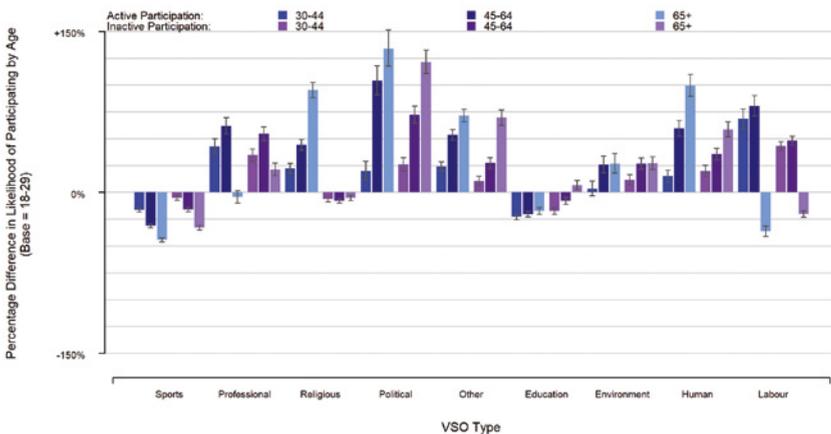
Note: 95% confidence intervals included for each estimate.

FIGURE 1 Gender and participation by vso type
EVS-WVS DATA, WAVES 3, 4, 5, AND 6

6.1.2 Age

Figure 2 presents the estimated impacts of age on vso participation. For each vso type, the estimates for AP are presented in blue and IP in purple. In the case of age, there are three estimates for each. These estimates represent different age categories relative to the base level. The base category for comparison is young adults (18–34), with each of the successive estimates representing medium-aged adults (35–49), older adults (50–64), and seniors (65+), respectively. Considering the first vso type of Figure 2 – sports associations – the three blues lines at the beginning of this figure suggest that medium-aged adults, older adults, and seniors are successively *less* likely to participate actively in sports associations than young adults. Likewise, the purple lines suggest the same holds for IP.

While the overall trend indicates that age generally increases the propensity to volunteer, there is considerable variation in the extent of the estimated effects across vso types and a range of noteworthy exceptions exist. There is substantial evidence in favour of both H_2 and H_3 . For example, in support of H_2 , older adults are generally much more likely to participate in old social movement vsos such as political parties, professional associations, and labor unions, whereas the impact of age for new social movement vsos like educational and environmental organizations is either comparatively very small or reversed. For both professional associations and labor unions, however, participation clearly drops off for seniors as they move out of the labor market and into retirement, evidence of the life-cycle effects anticipated by H_3 . Likewise,



Note: 95% confidence intervals included for each estimate.

FIGURE 2 Age and participation by vso type

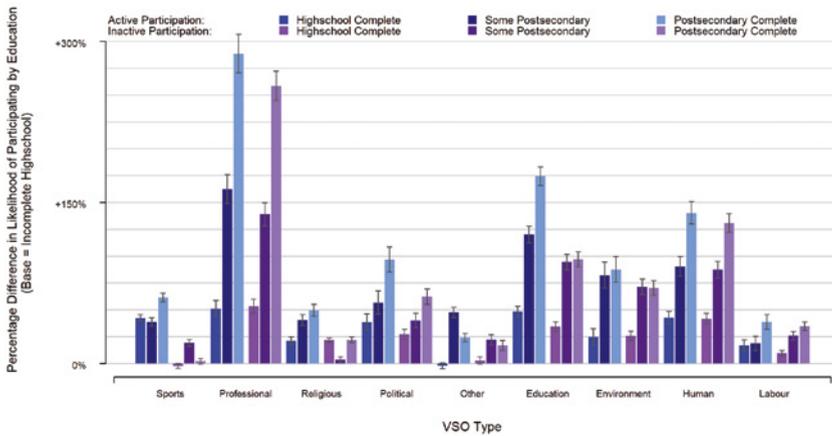
EVS-WVS DATA, WAVES 3, 4, 5, AND 6

participation in sports associations clearly diminishes across each of the age categories as older adults generally become less and less physically active.

The one clearly instance in which the anticipated effects are not observed is for human rights and humanitarian organizations. Whereas we expected younger adults to be comparatively more likely to participate in this type of vso, the evidence suggests that participation increases across each of the age categories.

6.1.3 Education

Figure 3 presents the estimated impacts of education on vso participation. In this case, the base comparison group includes those with the lowest levels of education – not completing high-school – with effects estimated from left to right for those with higher levels of education: (1) high-school completion, (2) some post-secondary completion, and (3) university completion.



Note: 95% confidence intervals included for each estimate.

FIGURE 3 Education and participation by vso type
EVS-WVS DATA, WAVES 3, 4, 5, AND 6

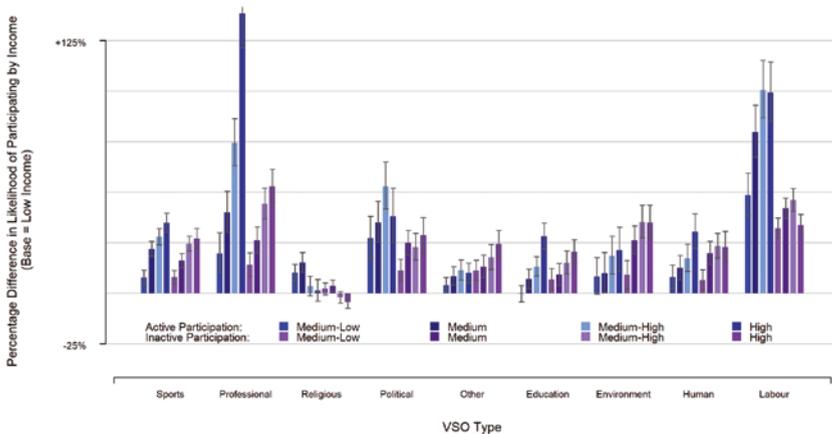
Consistent with resource theory, the overall trend demonstrated in Figure 3 indicates that more educated adults are more likely to participate – both actively and inactively – across a broad range of vso types. These findings also align with the predictions we derive from net cost theory in H_4 . While those with higher levels of education are more likely to participate in most vso types, the strongest effects are found for vso types where the more educated are most likely to have a comparative advantage, such as in professional associations and educational institutions. In particular, note the contrast between

the difference between participation in professional associations and labor unions. Whereas for age and gender, the impacts on participation for both of these vso types were virtually identical, the impact of education for these two vso types could not be further apart. The more educated also seem to be notably more likely to participate in environmental and human rights organizations than their less educated counterparts.

6.1.4 Income

Figure 4 presents the estimated impacts of income on vso participation. This figure is highly comparable to Figure 4 for education, both in method and substance. The comparison group is the lowest income level, with each bar indicating successively higher income levels. There are four comparison groups relative to the base level.

As with age and education, there is a clear overall trend. Again, in line with resource theory, those with higher incomes are more likely to participate. The only case where this pattern does not hold is for religious vsos – particularly concerning IP – where income seems to play no role. Again, however, there is marked variation in the extent of the impact of income across different vso types. There is again market support for H_5 suggested by net cost theory; comparatively, the impacts of income will be greatest for old social movement vsos and weakest for new social movement vsos. The greatest impact of income is for professional associations, labor unions, and political parties. This again



Note: 95% confidence intervals included for each estimate.

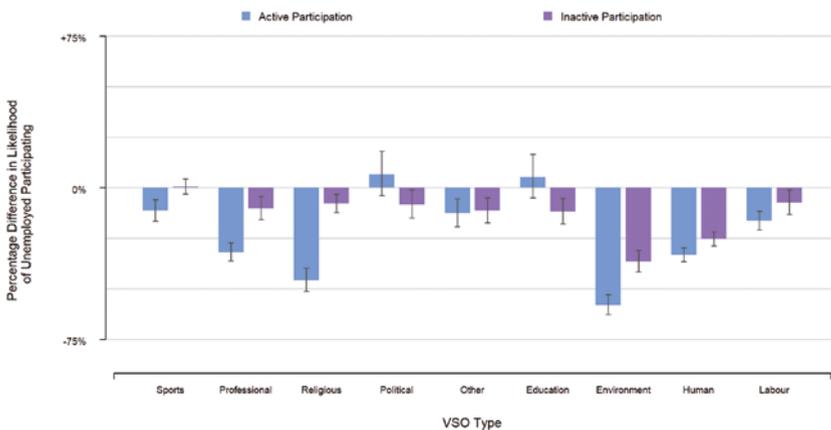
FIGURE 4 Income and participation by vso type
EVS-WVS DATA, WAVES 3, 4, 5, AND

stands in marked contrast to the impact of education, in which the impact for professional associations and labor unions were so different. Whereas for the new social movement vso's, the impacts of income are all comparatively quite modest.

6.1.5 Unemployment

Figure 5 presents the estimated impacts of unemployment on vso participation. Without exception, all of the estimated effects are either not statistically significant or are in a downward direction, indicating that unemployment clearly decreases vso participation.

The variation again supports H_6 , the hypothesis supported by net cost theory. Here, the hypothesis is the inverse of H_5 , such that we anticipate that the decreases will be comparatively greater for new social movement vso's and comparatively modest for old social movement vso's. In line with this hypothesis, the decrease in participation in political parties, labor unions, and professional associations is more modest than for environmental and humanitarian organizations, though the difference between humanitarian organizations and professional associations is not statistically significant. One clear case that does not align with expectations is participation in education institutions which appears not to be at all impacted by unemployment, perhaps because the unemployed are more likely to be attending educational institutions for reskilling and retraining. Interestingly, the negative impact on AP for religious institutions is striking and remarkable.



Note: 95% confidence intervals included for each estimate.

FIGURE 5 Unemployment and participation by vso type
EVS-WVS DATA, WAVES 3, 4, 5, AND 6

6.1.6 Other Micro-Level Factors

Our analyses investigated the impacts of two other micro-level factors: religion and social trust.

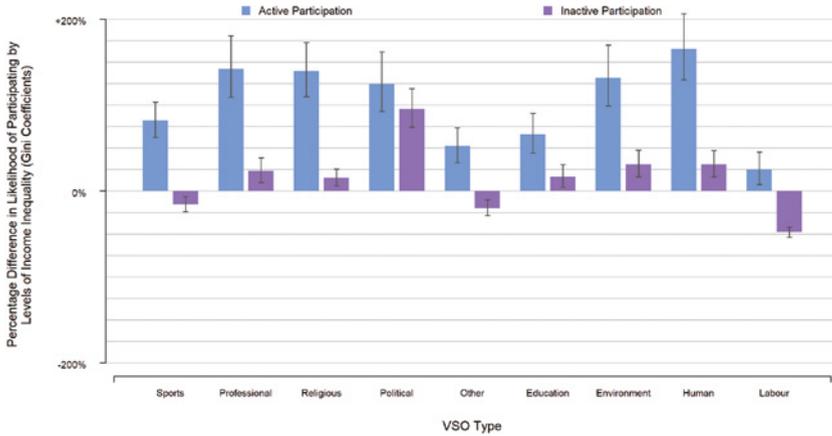
For the first of these features, perhaps the most striking finding is that religion appears to have very few consequences for most forms of VSO participation. Aside from the impact on participation in religious institutions, most estimated effects are small and statistically insignificant. This finding echoes many others in the literature which reflect the idea that although the religious are more likely to participate, this impact is almost entirely attributable to the fact that the religious are more likely to participate with religious institutions, and not with respect to participation more broadly. With respect to different types of religions, the most marked finding is that those of “other” faiths are almost twice as likely to AP in religious VSOs than both their Protestant and Catholic counterparts.

With respect to social trust, we find that more social trust tends to be associated with higher levels of participation. This trend is similar but less marked when considering IP. There are exceptions to this general observation, however. IP in sports VSOs shows no significant relationship with social trust, and IPs of religious organizations are more trusting than their counterparts, in contrast to AP, which appears to have no significant relationship with social trust.

6.2 *Macro-Level Factors*

6.2.1 Economic Inequality

Figure 6 presents the estimated impacts of economic inequality on VSO participation. The evidence indicates that participation is generally higher in countries with higher levels of inequality. These findings seemingly provide counterevidence against of social cohesion theory which predicts that inequality have a negative impact on participation, as greater levels of social cohesion in more egalitarian societies engenders greater levels of participation. Rather, inequality seems to trigger greater level of participation, particularly with respect to AP although with much more muted evidence with respect to IP. There is some evidence in favour of substitution theory. For instance, the fact that levels of AP are substantially greater in more inegalitarian countries seems to align with substitution theory, given that AP is a more costly for of participation but concomitantly more likely to result in a more tangible change. And many of the VSO types where the impact of inequality is greatest – including humanitarian, environmental, religious, and even political VSOs seem as



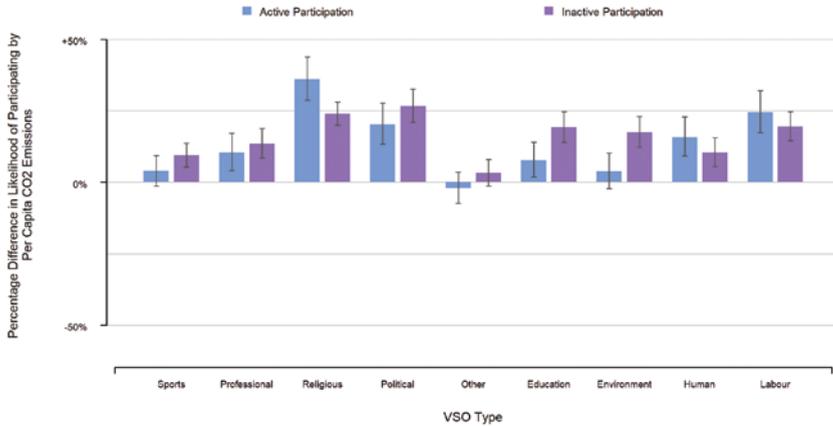
Note: 95% confidence intervals included for each estimate.
 FIGURE 6 Economic inequality and participation by vso type
 EVS-WVS DATA, WAVES 3, 4, 5, AND 6

though they may be locations for volunteering that may be able to effect positive change where governments have failed to provide optimal or preferred levels of public goods. However, the estimated effect of inequality on professional associations is the second highest across all nine vso types, and a professional vso seems to be the one of the least efficacious vso types for providing public goods given that the benefits proffered by professional associations typically only benefit its members.

As a result, we conclude that while the evidence is contrary to social cohesion theory, it is only partly consistent with substitution effect theory.

6.2.2 Carbon Dioxide Emissions

The estimated impact of CO₂ emissions on vso participation is presented in Figure 7. Overall, the results for AP provide some evidence in support for H_8 , such that higher environmental standards are associated with comparatively greater participation in new social movement vsos, and lower environmental standards are associated with greater participation in old social movement vso s. Here, the measure we use is CO₂ emissions, which corresponds to lower environmental standards. Where CO₂ emissions are greater, there appears to be more AP in old social movement vsos such as labor unions and political parties and comparatively less AP in educational institutions and environmental organizations. The results do not hold consistently across all vso types,



Note: 95% confidence intervals included for each estimate.

FIGURE 7 CO₂ emissions and participation by vso type
EVS-WVS DATA, WAVES 3, 4, 5, AND 6

however, as the estimated impact of CO₂ emissions on AP in humanitarian organizations is greater than for professional associations, and there does not appear to be a particularly discernible pattern for IP save that the estimated effects of CO₂ emissions are generally greater for old social movement vso types. Overall, while there is some evidence in support of H_8 , broadly speaking the evidence is not particularly strong.

6.2.3 Other Macro-Level Factors

Our analyses also investigated the impacts of two other micro-level factors: GDP per capita and gender equality as measured by women's representation in national parliaments.

Broadly speaking, the estimated effects of variations in GDP per capita on voluntary sector behavior are modest and in most cases statistically insignificant. There is some modest evidence in some cases, but overall our findings in this respect are not particularly strong. This finding is perhaps unsurprising given that that our research focuses on the advanced industrial democracies such that variations in economic development are relatively modest.

The general trend for gender equality is that in countries with higher proportions of women elected to national legislatures, AP tends to be higher for most vso types. There is some variation in the estimated extent of the impact, with religious, human, and labor vsos having the greatest impact and 'other' and professional vsos having the least.

7 Discussion

7.1 *Principal Findings*

Our research provides one of the first attempts to disentangle the impacts of key micro- and macro-level factors on selection into a broad range of different types of VSOs for both AP and IP. Uncovering patterns between these facets contributes to existing knowledge in voluntary sector research and feeds into larger conversations surrounding volunteer antecedents, current recruitment, and future retention across VSOs.

Our results contribute by providing insight into the literature surrounding socioeconomic factors and macro-contexts. Preceding research regarding the influence of gender on participation has not reached a consensus. Our findings offer a plausible explanation: while participation is often highly gendered, it depends crucially on the type of VSO considered. Women are substantially more likely to participate, both actively and inactively, in some VSO but are much less likely to participate in others. The literature has mixed conclusions for age, with the relation between age and volunteering often being conceived of as an inverted U-shape with substantial emphasis on life-course events. Our results both confirm and differ from this notion. For instance, a U-shaped pattern understandably plays out for participation in professional associations and labor unions as older participants retire from the labor market. We also find that some types of participation increase with age, however, as seniors are significantly more likely to participate in religious institutions, political parties, and humanitarian organizations. Our findings reiterate widely accepted understandings for employment, education, and income: participation is positively and significantly associated with these features. But we demonstrate that net cost theory provides important insights regarding the extent to which these characteristics influence participation.

Our study also considers macro-level variables drawn from various sources. Findings in the literature for these types of dimensions are sparser than for micro-level conclusions. Our analysis finds that greater economic inequalities and less responsible environmental behavior tend to be associated with increased participation, with economic inequality overall having the greatest impact on AP amongst the macro-level factors that we examine. Overall, these findings seem to support the ‘crowding out’ rather than the ‘social cohesion’ perspective. For example, in contrast, Solt (2008) finds that greater inequality reduces rather than increases political engagement, perhaps because factors that shape political participation operate differently than for VSO participation. Further analysis to reconcile these findings more broadly may be a promising avenue for further research.

A few studies have presented research around vso categories and their relationship to important explanatory variables. While these studies do not reach the level of detail of our analyses, they provide a suitable base for comparison. Musick and Wilson (2007) find that differentiating between vso areas reveals differences in dimensions of marriage status and age. At a high level, this is similar to our conclusions; education and income are consistently positively associated independent of the vso type. Gil-Lacruz et al. (2017) reiterate these general conclusions while also emphasizing the importance of macro-social factors.

An important difference between ours and the preceding literature is our inclusion of IP as well as AP. Here, our most common finding is with respect to degree: the associations between our key explanatory factors tend to be stronger for AP than for IP. This is not always the case. For instance, women are more likely to be APs in religious organizations and IPs in environmental organizations, whereas conversely there are no apparent differences regarding IP in these vso.s. Likewise, the older tend to be more likely to AP in religious institutions, while IP is not impacted by age. For environmental and other vso.s, income tends to have a greater impact on IP than AP. The general trend, however, is clearly that the impacts of factors are greater than for AP than IP. This aligns with our view that AP and IP can often be conceptualized as being on a continuum of intensity of participation which similar factors can explain by and large for both kinds of participation. If it is reasonable to expect that AP is more costly to participants in terms of resources, then it is reasonable that we would find that the impacts of factors are often greater for AP than IP.

More specifically, variables associated with resource mobilization – such as education and income – are consistently predicted by both forms of participation, while net cost considerations suggest that for these factors AP is more strongly associated than IP for participation with most vso types. From this perspective, both AP and IP may share common causal roots, but active engagement may require higher thresholds of these resources or stronger motivational cues. For example, people with resources and higher levels of trust may likely cross from passive to active roles, as AP implies higher perceived benefits or lower perceived costs.

Our approach of maintaining distinct rather than combining the nine vso types also un.masks considerable between-vso type variation. For instance, our research indicates that while in some instances there are clear advantages in theoretical alignments between ‘old’ and ‘new’ social movements, there are also a range of important differences in participation between professional associations, political parties, and labor unions, particularly with respect to age, and education. Similarly, there seem to be several key differences in impacts of characteristics on participation in sports and education vso.s.

Finally, we briefly draw attention to our use of a model that simultaneously estimates impacts on participation while allowing for survey respondents to concurrently indicate multiple positive response options across the nine types of vso's. Although multinomial logit models that allow for the estimation of dependent variables in which only mutually exclusive response options may be included are common across a broad range of academic fields, much less attention has been given to developing models that allow respondents to simultaneously select more than one response option.

7.2 *Research Limitations and Next Steps*

Our research recommends several avenues for future contributions. Our results utilize data from eighteen countries across four survey waves. Future research could consider investigating the same patterns of behavior outside the scope of the advanced industrialized democracies or on other subsets. Doing so could increase the number of countries included in the analysis, thereby increasing the macro-level sample size and thereby allowing for flexibility in the scope of potentially relevant macro-level explanatory variables. One could also increase the scope of micro-level explanatory variables used in the current analysis. Our research has primarily focused on factors associated with a resource-based theory of volunteering which suggests that those with more education and financial resources are more likely to engage in vso participation. There is also considerable research that examines altruistic motives for participation (Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen 1991; Konrath and Handy 2018; Musick and Wilson 2007). This may allow for more detailed data analytics that provide further insights into individuals' vso engagement.

The technical rigor and survey-based data of the project also present several challenges that call for the development of future work. Employing a mixed effects regression modelling strategy with non-exclusive multiple choice dependent variables required heavy computing power due to the generalized linear multi-level model and stacked data. Additionally, we rely on self-reported responses for vso engagement, which may be influenced by social desirability effects. Future research could continue to develop the modelling strategy and work to validate results using different datasets.

8 Conclusion

Our results show considerable variation in who participates and their choice of the vso. This choice dimension is essential in understanding current trends within civil society. Gender, age, education, and income are all important micro-level determinants in both AP and IP for a broad range of vsos. But the

ways and extents to which these factors play out differs markedly for different vso types.

Integrating insights from Old and New Social Movement Theory may clarify why certain individuals move from passive affiliation to active involvement. Old movements often relied on material incentives and structural grievances, aligning closely with resource and cost explanations. In contrast, “new” movements emphasize post-materialist values, collective identity, and expressive motivations, which can lower perceived participation costs and heighten intrinsic rewards. Consequently, active participants may not only have greater resources but also stronger ideological or identity-based motivations. These dynamics suggest that while both active and inactive participation share common determinants, the shift to active engagement may be shaped by both resource thresholds and values. While we do not include corresponding measures in our current research, these ideas may be worthy of additional investigation in further research.

Women are more likely to participate in educational and humanitarian vso s, while men are more likely to participate in sports and professional vso s. Conversely, the impacts of age, education, and income are much more consistent, with older, more educated, and richer adults being more likely to participate. Seniors are much more likely to participate in religious and humanitarian vso s and political parties, than younger adults. The more highly educated are more likely to participate in professional, educational, and humanitarian vso s and political parties. Those with higher incomes being particularly prone to participate in professional vso s, political parties, and labor unions. Consistent with the socio-demographic factors we consider, social trust shows a dominant trend in which more trusting individuals are significantly more likely to participate in all vso types. The only exception to this trend is IP in sports vso s and AP in religious vso s, which both show no significant difference with respect to trust. These results broadly align with expectations developed from resource and dominant status theory, distinctions between ‘old’ and ‘new’ social movements, as well as net cost theory.

With respect to macro-level factors, environmental policy and income inequality appear to have significant relationships. The relationship with CO₂ emissions is generally modest, with the strongest effects being for religious institutions, political parties, and labor unions. Whereas economic *inequality* is broadly positively related to AP, particularly for professional, religious, political, environmental, and humanitarian vso s. This research shows that an individual’s identity and resources influence their involvement in specific vso s.

Overall, our research provides clear and substantial evidence that the most important determinants of voluntary sector participation vary substantially depending on both the type of vso and the type of participation. As such, our results contribute a markedly more nuanced and detailed understanding of volunteer antecedents and present new areas ready for future research.

Online Methodological Repository

Our analytics were completed using Stata. The data and code on which our conclusions rely have been made available to readers in an online repository accessible via the following DOI link: www.doi.org/10.3886/E244983V1. In addition, we have also developed a methodological appendix which includes a range of details regarding the data, construction of our measures of AP and IP, as well as some additional results not discussed above. The methodological appendix is also available via the online repository.

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