RESEARCH

Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study
Second Literature Review

Citizenship Education:
The Political Science Perspective

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department for
education and skills
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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Context

This document presents the second annual literature review arising from the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, which will last for a total of eight years from 2001 to 2009. The review builds on the literature review conducted one year after the start of the study (Kerr *et al*., 2004). It draws heavily on research in political science which examines the relationship between education and citizenship engagement. It is framed in terms of a series of alternative or rival models, which can be used to explain why people engage in voluntary activities, and more specifically why they participate in politics. The mechanisms by which education influences participation differ between these models. So it is important to cast the net wide and consider a variety of alternative mechanism and models if the links between the citizenship core curriculum and voluntary activity are to be fully understood.

This review has the advantage of being able to test some of these links using existing longitudinal study data which is now available. This makes it possible to begin the process of evaluating the impact of citizenship education on participation and also on the civic culture of Britain. Of course, a final definitive and comprehensive study of these links will have to wait until the longitudinal surveys are complete. But at this point we are in a position to obtain initial estimates of the effects of citizenship education in schools. As the evidence below shows the impacts are highly significant and positive. We begin with a conceptual clarification of some of these issues before embarking on a review of the theoretical models of participation involving education in subsequent sections.

1.2 Definitions and Conceptions

The ultimate goal of citizenship education is to promote civic engagement and democratic involvement (Crick, 1998). But there are different views concerning the meaning of civic engagement. Some researchers see it as psychological concept defined in terms of the individual's sense of efficacy, their political knowledge and levels of interest in politics, broadly defined

(Verba *et al*., 1995). In this view the goal of education is to increase knowledge, promote citizenship interest in politics and public affairs and to reinforce the individual's sense of efficacy. Others see engagement in more sociological terms as 'people's connections with the life of their communities, not merely with politics' (Putnam, 1995: 665). In this interpretation education helps to build and develop social capital, or networks actors who are civically engaged within their communities. Yet others see it in terms of creating autonomous, rational individuals who are capable of identifying and pursuing their own political interests and articulating these in the public realm (Nie *et al.,* 1996). All of these approaches are related to each other, but they imply a focus on different variables when it comes to evaluating civic engagement. In this review we take a broad perspective and look at the effects of education on a variety of measures of engagement.

Education is both broadly and narrowly defined in the political science literature. The broad definition encompasses all types of educational achievement and can be measured in terms of the individual's qualifications or in terms of their exposure to education over time. The narrow definition concerns citizenship education more specifically. A number of countries have invested significant resources in civic education programmes designed to promote an understanding of the institutions, practices and norms of democratic government (Torney-Purta *et al.,* 1999). The literature on the effects of the broad definition of education is much more extensive than the literature on the narrow definition. But we will consider both in this review.

Given that the aim of citizenship education is to promote engagement there is a paradox to be explained in any examination of the relationship between education and participation. The paradox is that western societies have invested more and more resources into education in recent decades and at the same time they have experienced a decline in key forms of participation, particularly electoral participation. Electoral turnouts are in decline in almost all contemporary democracies when viewed over the last half-century or so (Wattenberg, 2000). *The paradox is that the growth of education has been accompanied by a near universal decline in the most important form of political participation from the point of view of democratic governance, that is voting*. This development is not confined to voting since there has also been a trend decline in trust in the institutions of government and in the strength of political parties (Dalton, 2004). These institutions are at the core of democratic

politics, so it is important to try to explain why these developments have occurred and to understand the role of education in influencing these trends. We return to this question below.

The literature review begins by describing the role of education is various models of participation and civic engagement in the political science literature. After an overview of these models, we examine the paradox of engagement described above. In a third section we estimate the relative importance of these alternative models in explaining the levels of engagement of school children in England, using data from the first of the longitudinal pupil surveys. This leads into an evaluation of the rival models of participation to determine which model, or models, gives the best account of engagement.

2. EDUCATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Recent research on political participation in Britain has examined a series of theoretical models which can be used to explain why people participate in voluntary activity in general, and more specifically why they participate in politics (Pattie, et al., 2004). At the broadest theoretical level, explanations of engagement in political science can be categorized into two types. Firstly, there are **choice-based** explanations of participation, and secondly **structural-based** explanations. The former sees citizenship engagement emerging from the choices which individuals make, and these reflect the costs and benefits of the choice situation, broadly defined. The idea is that individuals choose their levels of participation in the light of these costs and benefits and at the same time they are influenced by norms and beliefs about the rights and obligations of citizenship.

In contrast, structure-based explanations of citizenship see participation as a matter of individuals being socialised into the norms, values and behaviours of the social groups to which they belong and to those of the wider society. From this perspective individual engagement is seen as being the product of social forces and institutions, which mould behaviour and attitudes. In the case of choice theoretic accounts of citizenship, we consider two specific alternative models: cognitive engagement and general incentives. In the case of structural accounts of citizenship, we examine three alternatives: civic voluntarism, equity-fairness and the social capital model.

2.1 Defining Participation and Engagement

In a democratic society, **political participation** is a set of voluntary activities done by individuals acting alone or with others. It expresses relevant attitudes, requires various characteristics, resources or skills, and conveys information about commitments, interests and the needs of citizenship to public officials and decision-makers. As Brady observes, almost all definitions of political participation include 'four basic concepts of activities, citizenships, politics and influence (Brady, 1999, p.737). Most studies of participation have concentrated on 'conventional' activities such as voting, donating money to

organised groups, joining political parties, contacting public officials and solving community problems. But an important line of research has been concerned with explaining 'unconventional' forms of participation including marching, protesting and participating in political strikes (Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Parry *et al*., 1992). Early research on political participation in Britain found that six distinct types of political participation existed: voting, party campaigning, collective action in interest groups, contacting officials and politicians, direct action and political violence (Parry *et al*., 1992).

More recent research shows that political participation in Britain can be classified into three broad dimensions (Pattie *et al*., 2004). Firstly, there is an **individualistic** dimension, consisting of forms of participation which can be undertaken without the co-operation of others. Citizenships can buy or boycott products for ethical reasons, or they can donate money to an organisation without the help of others. These individualistic forms of participation are the dominant ones in terms of the number of people who get involved in modern Britain. The evidence suggests that many of these types of participation have been increasing over time, particularly among young people.

The second factor is a **contact** dimension of participation, involving citizenships contacting their Members of Parliament, local councillors and public officials. This is also to some extent an individualistic type of participation, but at the same time it involves agents of the state, specifically elected representatives and public officials. Very often when individuals undertake these types of activities they are pursuing private goals of various kinds; they may go to see their MP in order to seek welfare benefits, or they may contact the media in order to complain about a local planning decision which adversely affects them. But people also lobby their MPs and contact the media about matters of national political concern which they care about, so this type of participation is not all in pursuit of private benefits. Moreover, when a mass lobby of Parliament occurs this form of participation is collective rather than individualistic in character.

The third factor is a **collective action** dimension of participation. In this case citizens must join together with others in formal or informal organisations in order to engage. This involves activities like attending political meetings, becoming active in a local community group, joining and becoming active in a political party or taking part in a demonstration. The evidence shows that

these types of activities tend to go together, so that individuals who have taken part in a demonstration are also quite likely to attend political meetings, and some of them will join an interest group. Collective action of this type can be focussed on influencing the policies or the personnel of the state, in which case it can be described as political participation. But it might involve participation in a wide variety of local and national organisations such as sports clubs, religious groups and cultural organisations, which can be broadly defined as voluntary activity. In the past this kind of voluntary activity was not seen as being particularly relevant to politics, but recent research into social capital and civic engagement show that participation of this type is really quite important for sustaining civil society (Putnam, 1993; 2000).

Overall, participation can be seen as being specifically political in which case the aim is to influence the policies and agents of the state, or it can be seen as voluntary activity which is not aimed at the state, but which nonetheless influences the state via civil society. Voluntary activity helps to sustain civil society and hence supports the government and the state.

2.2 Explaining Participation and Engagement

In this section we begin to examine how variations in civic engagement and participation across individuals can be explained. In reviewing theories of participation we pay particular attention to the role of education in stimulating involvement. We review a total of five different theoretical models, which have been used to explain engagement, starting with the cognitive engagement model.

2.2.1 Cognitive engagement

The first of our models is the cognitive engagement model. The argument here is that a process of cognitive mobilisation has been occurring in advanced industrial societies over the last fifty years. Dalton explains what this means in the following terms:

The public's political skills and resources – traits such as education, media exposure and political awareness – are vastly expanded since the 1950s. These trends contributed to a growth in the public's overall level of political

sophistication, through what is described as a process of cognitive mobilisation (Dalton, 2002: 19).

Cognitive mobilisation involves two separate trends. Firstly the costs of acquiring information about politics have decreased, and at the same time the public's ability to process political information has increased. Cognitive mobilisation means that more citizens have the political resources and skills allowing them to deal with the complexities of politics and to understand how decisions are made in a democratic society. Theories of cognitive mobilisation are rooted in choice conceptions of participation rather than structural conceptions. They argue that the individual's exposure to information about politics and current affairs, together with their abilities and willingness to respond to the information received, will affect their levels of engagement and activity. This rise in cognitive engagement in democracies is driven by the growth of education, particularly higher education (Dalton, 2002; 2004). As people are increasingly able to process and make sense of large amounts of political information due to their greater access to higher education and to communications technology, they become cognitively engaged.

To focus specifically on education, they are better able to acquire and process information when they are educated. They become more sophisticated users of the media, and they develop a greater interest in politics and have greater knowledge of the political system. Education involves acquiring a greater understanding of the norms and principles of democracy and a better understanding of the 'rules of the game' which make democratic politics possible (see Nie *et al*., 1996). It is important to note that such theories predict that individuals will choose to engage in politics and voluntary activity, rather than that they will actually always engage. In fact, they may engage more in certain types of activities such as protesting, while at the same time becoming less engaged in other types of activities such as voting. Since their decision to participate is influenced by their sense of efficacy, or the feeling that they can make a difference to outcomes and that the political system is responsive to their concerns, they will not necessarily become more involved in all types of activities. If some types of activity are seen as unproductive then cognitively engaged individuals will be less likely to participate in them as a consequence. In relation to young people support for this type of theoretical approach is found in Walker's (1996) analysis of the Young People's Social Attitudes

survey. Walker makes potential connections between young people's low consumption of newspapers, and their implied lack of political literacy. He suggests that this provides support for the argument that a minimum amount of knowledge is necessary for effective participation in the political and democratic process. However, it should be noted that from the perspective of this set of theories, while political knowledge is viewed as a means to an end, ultimately political knowledge is only useful if it motivates participation. If greater knowledge leads to greater dissatisfaction, and a willingness to see protest as a normal part of the political process, then political engagement is more likely to occur.

2.2.2 Rational choice

Rational choice theories of participation focus entirely on the individual and the choices that he or she makes. They have little to say about the influence of the wider society on such choices. The classic definition of rational action comes from Downs (1957) who postulates that individuals will participate, for example by voting, only if the benefits of such participation outweigh the costs. Theories of rational action therefore suggest that political action is the product of a calculus of costs and benefits. When applied to the task of explaining participation they give rise to a paradox. In so far as participation is designed to produce collective benefits, rational individuals are unlikely to get involved. Collective benefits have the characteristic that once they are provided, their use cannot be restricted to those people who campaigned to get them in the first place. Local amenities like the provision of schools and hospitals, or government spending on welfare benefits have this character. When individuals who campaigned for them are successful, the benefits of their investment of time and energy will be obtained by them, but also by individuals who played no part in obtaining such benefits in the first place. This gives individuals an incentive to free-ride on the efforts of others and not to participate.

When applied to the task of explaining voting, the rational choice model predicts that very few people will actually participate, something which is clearly at odds with the evidence. But broader forms or so-called 'soft rational choice' theories take into account a wider set of incentives other than just the policy benefits of voting to explain why people participate. One such theory, the general incentives theory of participation has been used to account for

people's involvement in high intensity forms of participation, that is forms of participation which take up a lot of time and energy (Seyd and Whiteley, 1992, 2002; Whiteley and Seyd, 2002). This wider set of incentives includes incentives derived from the process of participation itself such as the opportunity to meet like-minded people and the career benefits which might result from those interested in pursuing a political career.

Education is not a prominent variable in rational choice theories. However, Nie et al. (1996) argue that in the context of choice theories of participation education helps individuals to be more competent in making decisions. It does so in two ways; firstly, it helps people to identify and pursue their own political interests more effectively. In the absence of education they may have difficulty in understanding what is in their own interests, or in making sense of the costs and benefits of political action. Secondly, education allows people to understand the nature of democratic government and the rules of the game which underlie it. If they understand how the system works, they have a better capacity to choose and to operate effectively in politics. So the key variable which explains the importance of education in rational choice theories of engagement, is political knowledge. Political knowledge enables the actor to make more informed choices.

2.2.3 Civic voluntarism

The civic voluntarism model is the most widely researched model in the empirical analysis of political participation (Verba *et al*., 1995). It is essentially a structural theory of participation which argues that people get involved if they have the resources, and to a lesser extent the motivation to do so. Resources refer to things like education, social class, family income, and leisure time. The core idea is that such resources facilitate their involvement and make them better able to participate than individuals who lack these resources. In addition, motivations for involvement such as the individual's level of interest in politics are important, but these are seen as being derivative of resources. Thus individuals with more resources will tend to be more motivated to participate as well. A third factor in the civic voluntarism model is mobilisation. This refers to the extent to which people can be induced to participate by others. If people are embedded in their communities with many social ties they are more likely to get involved, when asked to by others, than individuals with few social ties.

The central ideas of the civic voluntarism model of participation are captured in the following quotation

> *"We focus on three factors to account for political activity. We suggested earlier that one helpful way to understand the three factors is to invert the usual question and ask instead why people do not become political activists. Three answers come to mind: because they can't; because they don't want to; or because nobody asked. In other words people may be inactive because they lack resources, because they lack psychological engagement with politics, or because they are outside of the recruitment networks that bring people into politics"* (Verba, et al. 1995: 269).

The authors define the resources aspect of this, in terms of: time, money and civic skills (Verba, *et al.*, 1995: 271). Education plays a particularly important role in the civic voluntarism theory since it is regarded as a key resource, particularly in the United States. Education is an asset which people can acquire in order to make them effective participants. It enhances their civic skills enabling them to be a more effective citizens than the uneducated. Similarly, it is likely to give them self-confidence and a greater sense of efficacy, all of which will promote their involvement.

It can be seen that the civic voluntarism model is primarily a structural model of participation, rather than a choice model. It gives an account of participation in terms of the individual's social characteristics, rather than in terms of the choices which they make about involvement.

2.2.4 Equity fairness

Equity Fairness theories of participation are also structural theories since they emphasise the role of the social structure in motivating people to engage. This type of theory suggests that people's attitudes and behaviour can only be understood in relation to the groups they belong to. As a member of various groups the individual has expectations about how the economy and political system should operate to deliver his or her needs. In other words they have expectations about receiving equitable treatment in comparison with others and a generalised sense of fairness about how the system should treat them. Individuals evaluate how equitably they are treated in relation to members of reference groups (the groups who they feel a sense of affinity to or rivalry towards). The bigger the gap between expectations of treatment and

evaluations of actual treatment the more relatively deprived individuals will feel, and this in turn can produce protest behaviour.

Although this theory has been used primarily to explain unorthodox forms of participation, particularly protest behaviour (see Runciman, 1965; Gurr, 1970; Muller, 1979), it can help to explain more orthodox forms of participation such as voting (Clarke *et al*., 2004). Thus individuals may be motivated to turn out and vote for the opposition parties if they feel that the government is treating them unfairly. Groups and individuals who feel marginalized, but otherwise lack the sense of efficacy, skills or resources necessary to influence the political process may choose to act on these grounds.

Young people may indeed fit into this group, for as Hackett (1998) suggests, one of the key barriers to increased youth participation in politics is the lack of structures for their participation and a lack of confidence to enter into established structures. Indeed, she argues that the cornerstone to young people's active participation in a variety of political and non-political arenas lies in building up their confidence to participate: 'The process of enabling young people to tap their own power and abilities is essential to facilitating their participation' (ibid., p.85).

Like in the civic voluntarism model, education plays an important role in this theory since it is an asset, which may serve to reduce the individual's sense of relative deprivation. The educated generally have more resources and higher incomes than the uneducated. Consequently, education has the potential for reducing the sense of relative deprivation arising from the gap between expectations and experience. However, education also raises the individual's expectations, and for some people the sense of relative deprivation may increase if their expectations run ahead of their experiences.

2.2.5 Social capital

The third and final structural model of engagement is the social capital model. There is some debate about the definition and meaning of social capital, but Putnam defines it as "features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions" (1993: 167). Coleman, however, sees social capital as a set of obligations and expectations on the one hand and a set of information

channels linking citizens with each other on the other hand (1988). For him social interaction generates credit slips of obligations and norms of reciprocation, and in an environment in which individuals can trust others, these credit slips can be utilised by third parties to solve collective action problems.

The core idea of social capital theory is that if individuals can be persuaded to trust each other and to work together to solve common problems then society will be much better off as a consequence. In this sense social capital is like any other type of capital, and can be used to make society more productive and the economy more efficient. Just as financial capital can be invested in order to promote economic growth, and human capital or education can be used to promote productivity, then social capital can be used to achieve similar objectives.

For most writers trust is the key indicator of social capital (Fukuyama, 1995: Putnam, 1993, 2000; Brehm and Rahn, 1997; Van Deth, *et al.,*1999). Trust is important because it allows individuals to move beyond their own immediate family or communities and engage in cooperative activities with others who they do not know. More generally, trust will give people an incentive to participate, since they will expect that their involvement in cooperative activities will bring rewards. According to a community in which social networks are strong is at a distinct advantage over communities whose members have few ties and little in common. Taking part in a range of local groups and societies in a locality therefore helps to foster a sense of trust. In turn, such trust helps to facilitate local political and economic life. Put simply, Putnam argues that communities or neighbourhoods in which the majority of individuals engage actively and frequently in social and voluntary activities are more likely to be trusting, well-governed, affluent and successful (see also Knack and Keefer, 1997; Hall, 1999; Whiteley, 2000).

Putnam (1993) is careful to distinguish between associational activity and political activity. Getting to know other people in a neighbourhood and interacting with them on a voluntary basis is the key to developing broad levels of trust. Political activism is positively correlated with trust and, in turn, trust is positively correlated with active communities. In later developments of this thesis Putnam (1995, 2000) highlights the role that television watching has played in undermining community life and social

capital in recent decades. Using the decline of membership in American bowling leagues in the post-war period as evidence, Putnam (1995) claims that American citizens are increasingly 'bowling alone'.

Just as in the civic voluntarism and equity-fairness theories, social capital theory sees education as a resource. In addition, education is also seen as an outcome resulting from the creation of social capital as much as an input into it. Thus communities with high levels of voluntary activity and trust, will very likely be communities with high levels of educational attainment (Whiteley, 2004). On the other hand it makes more sense to see education interacting with social trust to produce benign outcomes. There is evidence to suggest that more highly educated people are more likely to be trusting, perhaps because they interact with people who are more trustworthy (Pattie *et al*., 2004). This means that education can influence social capital while at the same time social capital influences education. As a consequence an intervention, which involves improving educational attainment can nudge forward this benign cycle of interactions.

It is clear from this brief review of alternative models of engagement that education plays an important role in explaining involvement and does so in different ways. As we have seen education is a resource, which individuals can utilise to enable them to effectively participate. Education provides political knowledge, which helps them to be cognitively mobilised. Education promotes efficacy and in many cases stimulates an interest in voluntary activity and this stimulates further involvement. Education appears to interact with trust, and so may stimulate social ties and interpersonal co-operation within communities, which in turn promotes participation. So it is a prominent variable in most of these accounts. This brings us back to the earlier paradox: if education has increased in most democratic industrial societies why has some forms of participation, notably voting, decreased in these societies? We consider this issue next.

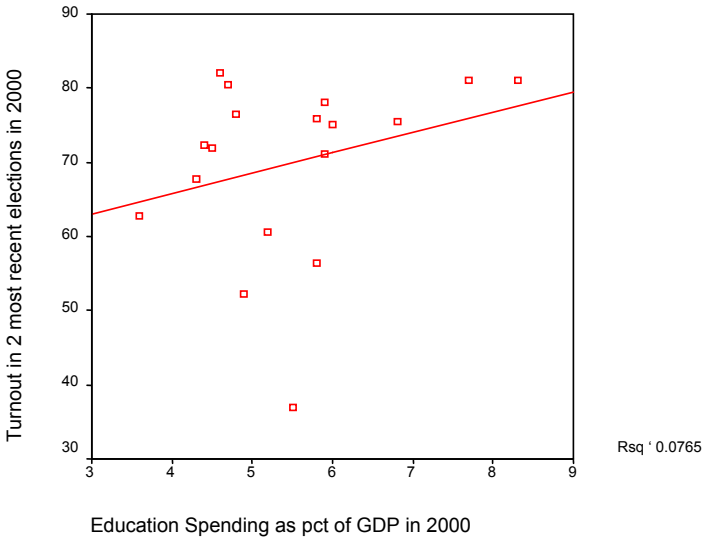
2.3 The Paradox of Engagement and Education

If education generally promotes engagement, then we would expect to observe a rise in participation following the tremendous increase in educational opportunities which has occurred in most advanced industrial societies in recent years. We know from a lot of literature that at the level of the

individual, education has a positive impact on engagement. But this need not be true at the aggregate level. The well-known ecological fallacy (Robinson, 1950) argues that associations between variables at the individual level may not exist at the aggregate level, and vice versa. Table 1 shows the relationship between electoral turnout and investment in education in eighteen advanced industrial countries in the year 2000. The regression relationship between the two variables appears in the diagram and although it shows a modest upward slope, the R-squared statistic reveals that there is no significant relationship between these variables. At this aggregate level there appears to be no relationship between educational investment and electoral participation.

How might this finding be explained? There are two possible explanations of these patterns. The first is that general educational investment may be too broad a category to examine. If we want to see a relationship between education and engagement we should look at civic education rather than education in general. This interpretation is not really consistent with the civic voluntarism model discussed earlier, which emphasises education as a general asset or resource for enhancing engagement. So it is not clear how relevant this explanation is in practice.

Figure 1. Investment in Education and Turnout in Recent Elections in Advanced Industrial Democracies



(Source: Wattenberg, 2000 and UNESCO Website)

The second explanation derives from work by Norman Nie and his collaborators (Nie *et al*., 1996). The argument is that educational investment has two distinct effects on individual citizens. Firstly, it develops knowledge and cognitive skills in the way described earlier. But there is a second route, which relates to social networks. The highly educated are more likely to be linked to wider social networks, which act as a resource that can improve their life chances in much the same way as is described in the social capital model. This type of benefit is a *positional* good, and the economist Lester Thurow who coined the term explains what this means:

As the supply of educated labor increases, individuals find that they must improve their educational level simply to defend their current income position…*In effect, education becomes a defensive expenditure necessary to protect one's market share.* The larger the class of educated labor and the more rapidly it grows, the more such defensive expenditures become imperative (Thurow, 1972: 78).

Following through the logic of this argument, if everyone improves their educational attainment at the same time, this will not necessarily bring benefits to any one individual because the supply of such benefits is more or less fixed by the nature of the political system. In the political system governmental

responsiveness to the competing claims for benefits from their citizenships is a scarce good. If more and more individuals make demands on the system, it will not increase the supply of benefits because of a limited capacity to process and accept such demands. As Nie et al explain:

Despite a dramatic increase in the numbers of citizenship voices in the population, the number of national legislative offices that can listen is fixed… When all take part is some form of activity or engagement, the effect on the intended target (government or representatives) is diminished. (Nie *et al.,* 1996: 102).

The competitive nature of democratic government means that conflict between competing claims is a necessary condition for democracy to function. This restricts the benefits accruing to a more educated and engaged population. In this situation the only way that individuals can benefit is if they improve their own educational resources at a time when most other people are not doing so. In this way a general improvement in educational standards over time does not necessarily translate into more participation. This may even explain declining participation in elections if there is a widespread feeling that governments do not deliver on their promises. So the improvements in civic engagement, which might be expected to arise from investing in education are inhibited by other factors which offset these effects.

This is not of course an argument for reducing educational investment in society, since a decline in such investment may well accelerate the decline in participation. However, it does draw attention to the need to be more specific about what types of education have an impact on participation and what types do not. Following this point, it is interesting to focus in on the effects of civic education on engagement, and this is done in the next section.

3. CIVIC EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

There is an extensive literature on the effectiveness of school-based civic education programmes on their target populations of children and young adults (Morduchowicz, *et al.,* 1996; Niemi and Junn, 1998; Jennings and Niemi, 1974; Ichilov, 1990; Slomcynski and Shabad, 1999; Torney-Purta *et al.,* 2001). In recent years this has been complemented by an emerging literature on the impact of adult civic education programmes on participation in newly emerging and existing democracies (Bratton *et al.,* 1999; Finkel, 2002; Milner, 2002).

The evidence in this area is conflicting and open to different interpretations. Niemi and Judd (1998) examine, in particular, the relationship between civic education and political knowledge. They write:

> *Studies conducted from the mid-1960s on concerning what impact high school classes in American government and civics have on political knowledge have, for the most part, found that there is little or none* (Niemi and Judd, 1998: 3).

Their own research is based on the 1988 US National Assessment of Educational Progress survey data, which has a wealth of questions focusing specifically on political knowledge. After reviewing the extensive evidence in this field, their own analysis demonstrates significant, though modest, effects of civic education on knowledge among American students.

The evidence, taken as a whole, shows that formal education is the most powerful factor in differentiating those who know more about politics from those who know less. Citizens who spend more years in school know a lot more about politics than those who leave school early. What is unclear, however, is what components of formal education make individuals knowledgeable. A major report published in 1966 by the sociologist James Coleman provided a comprehensive review of the findings in this area, but it could not pinpoint the specific educational experiences which contributed to student achievement (see Coleman, 1966).

Some people have argued that it is not education as such, but the selection bias which leads more intelligent and motivated students to stay on in school which matters. In this view political knowledge is the product of screening rather than the educational curriculum (Luskin, 1990). It is argued that proper controls for other factors in a multivariate model of the effects of civic education, such as interest in politics and social status, would eliminate the relationship between education and knowledge. In other words education may be taking credit for the impact of other factors. Smith came to the same conclusion when he found that 'those who went on to higher education were more knowledgeable in the beginning' (Smith, 1989: 218). The implication of this is that civic education makes little difference.

The lack of an apparent link, or a weak link, between civic education and political knowledge in the United States may be explained by a number of factors. Firstly, there is the problem of linking exposure to particular educational topics to outcomes such as participation. This is very difficult because of the complexity of the links involved. As is well known, political education can take place in history classes, in literature classes, in religious education classes and so on. Many parts of the school curriculum are potential sources of education about politics and government. So it may be difficult to identify a direct link between civic education and knowledge.

Secondly, classroom procedures and the school culture also play a very important role in the learning process. What has been described as the 'hidden curriculum' may itself be responsible for developing political attitudes and knowledge among students. More generally, the context in which education takes place is very important. This includes factors like the method of interaction in the classroom, with an open and interactive environment being more effective than a closed hierarchical environment (Wilen and White, 1991). The school climate is significant as well with a more open and democratic structure fostering participation among the pupils (Jennings, *et al.,* 1974; Ehman, 1980; Leming, 1985).

Thirdly, knowledge of politics and government are acquired outside the school. The extent to which the subject is discussed in the home can clearly have a formative influence, which can interact with the school environment (Almond and Verba, 1963). Families, like schools, have different modes of decision-making and these can influence pupils attitudes to wider issues of

politics and government. A pupil from a family in which the members take an active interest in current affairs is likely to be more open to influence by civic education than a pupil from a family in which politics and government are never discussed.

A fourth point is that many American studies focus excessively on political knowledge and play down the importance of other factors in civic engagement such as voluntary activity, feelings of trust and efficacy and other broad indicators. When these are taken into account, then the impact of citizenship education in schools may be more significant than knowledge alone can measure. However, the emphasis in the US literature that the impact of civic education should be evaluated as part of a properly specified model of the determinants of engagement is important. It could be very misleading just to examine bivariate relationships between education and engagement, which failed to take into account other factors.

The findings in the American literature of non-existent or weak links between education and knowledge have been challenged by evidence from outside of the United States. The most comprehensive analysis of the effects of civic education on school-aged adolescents based on comparable surveys in a diverse set of countries is the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) project on Civic Education (Torney-Purta *et al.,* 2001; see Kerr, *et al.,* 2002 for discussion of English results). This is a comparative education association of nearly 60 member countries with its headquarters in Amsterdam. The study aimed to provide insight into processes of political socialisation and the effects of education on adult participation in a range of countries. In the event, the study contains measures of political knowledge, indicators of political attitudes, measures of social norms in relation to participation, as well as data on the school experiences of respondents. In the following sections we outline the design of the study and examine some of the findings.

3.1 The Research Design of the IEA Study

In the early 1990s the IEA began to conceptualise the subject matter of civic education with the aim of developing a survey instrument to be used cross-nationally. Case studies of civic related education of 14 year olds were formulated within each participating nation (Torney-Purta *et al.,* 1999). A

considerable degree of agreement was achieved in the participating member states about the nature and content of civic education. It was thought that civic education should encompass knowledge about democracy, trust in government, a sense of engagement and a willingness to participate, and attitudes to the rights of various groups along with a number of other topics. The core ideas locate the individual in a nexus of public discourse about the goals, values and practices of civil society, with the aim of education promoting greater political awareness and civic engagement. So the scope of the study and the definition of civic engagement is cast more broadly than in many of the American studies.

The research instrument concentrated on three core domains: firstly, **Democracy, Democratic Institutions and Citizenship**; secondly, **National Identity and International Relations**; and thirdly, **Social Cohesion and Diversity**. These domains were translated into a framework for survey analysis and testing, which could be used in a comparative context. The measuring instrument contained indicators of concepts of democracy, conceptions of what constituted good citizenship, measures of the social and economic responsibilities of government, and items measuring participation in various civic and political behaviours. It was developed over a five-year period involving research co-ordinators from more than 20 countries. The test and survey were administered in 1999 to nationally representative samples of 14-year old students in 23 European countries, together with five additional non-European states. The survey instrument mixes factual questions with measures of concepts of democracy, concepts of the good adult citizen, and concepts of the responsibilities of government. The overall aim was to get an in-depth series of measures of knowledge, understanding and engagement of adolescents in the participant countries.

3.1.1 Key findings from the IEA study

Findings from this comprehensive study were published in Torney-Purta *et al*., 2001). At the core of the survey was a 38-item test of civic knowledge and there were significant variations in performance on this scale across the sample of countries. Among the countries with a high knowledge performance were three post-communist countries, the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. But four post-communist countries produced below average performances, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania. A similar diversity existed in Western European countries with Finland, Greece, Italy

and Norway above the international mean and Portugal and Belgium below it. Denmark, Germany, England, Sweden and Switzerland had scores which did not differ from the mean.

Scores for the subfields of knowledge of Democratic Principles produced slightly different patterns of performance across countries in comparison with the overall scores. In this case Australia, England, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States scored at or above the international mean on skills in interpreting political information, but below the mean on knowledge of the fundamental concepts of democracy. This pattern was reversed in the three post-communist countries, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia. In this case the students performed above the international mean on knowledge of democratic principles and at the mean on skills in interpreting political information.

The analysis focused on trying to identify factors associated with higher civic knowledge in each of the participating countries. Measures of home educational resources and expectations for the number of years of higher education were the most powerful predictors of total civic knowledge in all of the countries. It found that a peer culture that undervalues educational activities and involves students hanging out with friends outside the home is associated with lower civic knowledge. On the other hand participation in school councils was a positive predictor of knowledge in many of the sample countries. A teaching style involving discussions by teachers and students in an open way is important for fostering civic knowledge in about two-thirds of the countries. This finding clearly has implications for educational practice in this area.

In relation to norms of good citizenship most respondents believed that citizenships should vote and obey the law. But generally, they were more supportive of unconventional forms of political activities involving social movements than conventional political activities such as party membership. A scale of ratings of the importance for adult citizens of voting, discussing political issues and joining political parties was created. Southern European countries such as Greece, Italy and Portugal scored highly on this scale, whereas a number of northern European countries such as Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Norway and Sweden scored below the international mean. This suggests that young people in these southern European countries have

more of an attachment to conventional forms of participation than their counterparts in Northern Europe.

An analysis of the factors, which predict voting behaviour was undertaken. This suggested that civic knowledge and the extent to which elections and voting were emphasized in classes and in the curriculum were both significant predictors of willingness to turn out and vote. This is fairly clear evidence that civic education in schools can promote electoral participation. In this sense this comprehensive comparative study overturns the early American research which suggested little or no effects. But how does the link between education and engagement work in practice? We examine this next.

3.1.2 How civic education works

We have seen that education, broadly defined, influences civic engagement in a variety of different ways, depending upon the model of engagement under consideration. Turning more specifically to the question of civic education it is interesting to examine the mechanisms by which this might impact civic engagement. The literature suggests three different kinds of influences that transmit education to civic engagement and participation. The influences are direct, indirect and conditional (Finkel, 2002).

The direct effects come about as individuals are exposed to participatory appeals embedded in the civic education curriculum, as well as to behavioural cues from teachers and any volunteers that students might come into contact with in the course of their studies (Finkel and Opp, 1991; McAdam and Paulsen, 1993; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). The indirect effects arise as training in democracy influences attitudes, values and perceptions which subsequently feed into participation. A wealth of research shows that engagement in voluntary activity which is promoted by civic education can in turn influence feelings of trust, efficacy and civic skills which subsequently feedback to influence adult participation (Booth and Richards, 1998; Pollack, 1982, Putnam, 1993). The conditional effects are those depending on a particular student's life experiences and also on variables relating to their demographic characteristics. Those with a predisposition to be engaged, for example, perhaps as a result of a family history of participation, are more likely to be influenced by the curriculum than those without such experiences.

Much research in social psychology suggests that a significant source of attitudinal and behavioural change is role playing behaviour within groups as individuals acquire the attitudes consistent with the behaviours they are acting out (Fishbein and Azjen, 1975; Zimbardo and Leippe, 1991). Individuals develop participatory skills through group involvement and practice and subsequently learn how to transmit these skills outside the group setting (Leighley, 1996; Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995). Thus civic education programmes, which adopt a more active methodology for instructing participants will have a greater impact on individual participation than lecture based instruction. In other words these direct, indirect and contingent effects are all influenced by teaching style and the methodological approach adopted in the classroom.

A final point is that the precise mechanism by which these effects are obtained depend on the various models discussed in section two. If it is the case, for example, that the civic voluntarism model provides the best account of participation then resource measures and indicators of motivation and mobilisation will be the key mechanisms for translating the curriculum into engagement. If, on the other hand, the rival models are more important for understanding engagement than civic voluntarism then resource and motivational issues will be of lesser importance. A third possibility is that both models, and indeed additional models, are relevant also and this would imply the existence of diverse linkages between education and engagement. This means that in order to understand the effectiveness of the current curriculum in promoting engagement, it is necessary to evaluate the extent to which one or other of the rival models examined in section two explain participation.

4. WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

The first round of the longitudinal surveys went into the field in 2002, so we are in a position to get some preliminary evidence on the effects of citizenship education in the school curriculum from the first round of the survey data. A full analysis will have to await further data from the panel surveys, so this is a preliminary look at the results. Furthermore we will not attempt to test all five models discussed earlier. Rather we will look at two of them, the **cognitive engagement** and **civic voluntarism** models. The first is an example of a choice model of participation and the second an example of a structural model. Arguably, the cognitive engagement model is most directly linked to education, since it emphasises the mobilising character of educational experiences. But the interesting question is whether or not the hypothesis that education has a direct impact on engagement is supported within the context of a properly specified model of engagement. Having described the theoretical ideas behind these models in section two we translate those ideas into specific variables, which can be used to operationalise the models. The analysis will use data from the 2002 year 7 longitudinal survey of school students.

The starting point of any analysis is to specify clearly what we are trying to explain, or putting it in the language of multiple regression analysis, the dependent variables in the models of engagement. We will discuss these first before examining the models themselves.

4.1 What We Are Trying to Explain

One important indicator of engagement in the Year 7 pupil survey is student involvement in voluntary organisations. This views participation in rather general terms, but it does focus on collective activity. Students were asked about their participation in a range of voluntary organisations both within and outside the school and their responses to these questions appear in Table 1.

Table 1. The Percentage of Students Taking Part in Different Voluntary Organisations

	In School	Out of School
Environmental Group	14	17
Sports Club or Team	68	63
Political Club	4	5
Debating Club	5	3
School/Student Council	17	0
Computer Club	24	9
Art, Drama or Music Club	43	24
Human Rights Group	3	3
Religious Group	5	11
Youth Club	3	38
Student Union	3	3

Not surprisingly, sports organisations head the list of organisations followed by arts, drama and music clubs. Quite a few students are involved in computer clubs and just under one in five participate in the student council. Beyond that are organisations which attract relatively small minorities of the students, including political clubs, the debating society, human rights clubs and youth clubs. Overall, the evidence in Table 1 suggests that students are involved in a broad range of voluntary organisations both inside the school and outside. Not surprisingly, they appear to be more likely to get involved in organisations inside the school than outside, but there are nonetheless significant numbers of students who get involved in voluntary organisations in the wider community. Before undertaking any further analysis of these measures it is important to try to investigate if these activities can be combine into one or more overall scales. The issue here is to determine if there is an association between different types of activities. For example, is it the case that students who are involved in the debating society tend to also get involved in the student council? Or are these activities relatively discrete, in the sense that a student who is involved with one may not be involved in any others?

A preliminary factor analysis of the variables was conducted and this revealed that some of the variables were highly related to a single participation scale whereas others were much less prominent in relation to that scale. Thus it appears that pupils involved in the debating club are also quite likely to be involved in the student union. On the other hand pupils involved in sports

clubs do not generally participate in the student union. Following, standard methodological practice we include items in the analysis with loadings of 0.40 or more on the scale. The results of this exercise appear in Table 2.

The analysis reveals a single factor or scale underlying the activities, which explains 42 per cent of the variance in the data. There is clear evidence of a structure to these activities, with the data suggesting that students who participate in political activities in school are quite likely to be involved in the debating society, in a human rights group and in the student union. The factor scores from this analysis make up the *internal activities* variable.

Table 2. Factor Analysis of In-School Activities

Factor Matrix	**Factor 1**
Political Activities in School	.508
Debating	.500
Human rights	.616
Religious Activities	.486
Student Union	.519

Maximum Likelihood Estimation

In the case of external activities a preliminary analysis indicated that there are three or more dimensions underlying the data. So external activities are more diverse than internal activities. In order to simplify the analysis we concentrate on the five measures which are highly loaded on the scale in Table 3. Again, these suggest that pupils who are politically active outside of school are also quite likely to be involved in debating, environmental groups and student union activities which also take place outside of the school. The factor scores from this analysis make up the external *activities* variable which explains 40 per cent of the variance in the data.

Table 3 Factor Analysis of Out of School Activities

Factor Matrix[a]	Factor 1
Environmental Activities	.307
Political Activities	.593
Debating	.605
Human rights	.573
Student Union Activities	.402

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood

a. 1 factors extracted. 3 iterations required

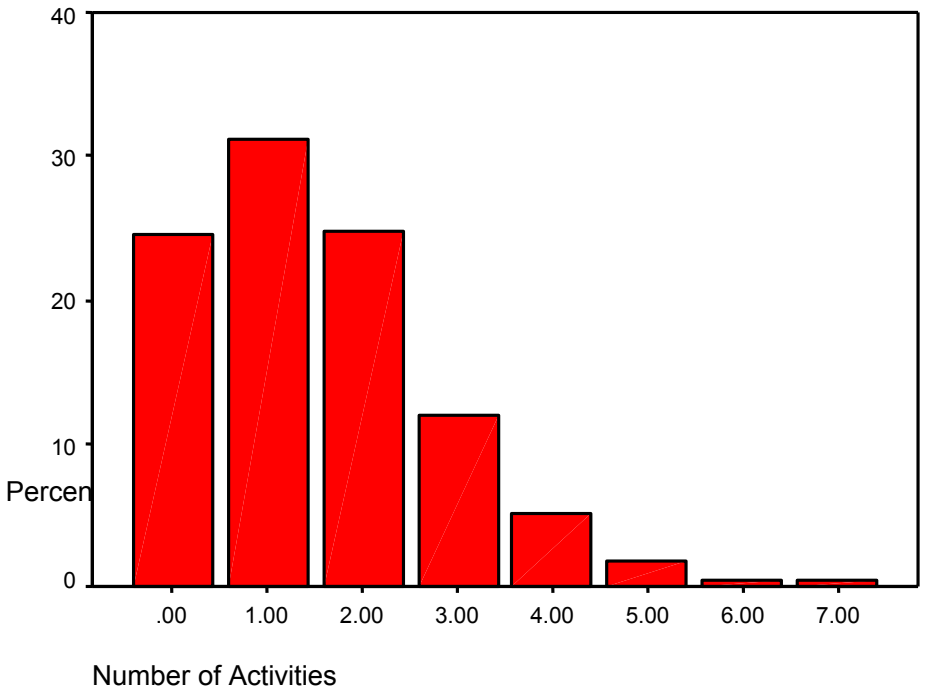
Organisational involvement is an important part of civic engagement, but it is far from being the whole story. A small battery of questions in the survey asked about participation in various activities, not necessarily directly linked to organisational membership, and the responses to these questions appear in Table 4.

Table 4. Percentages of Students Involved in Various School Activities

Percentages stating that they had done this	%
Electing school or class council members	60
Helping in the local community	24
Working for the school newspaper	15
Raising money for good causes	76
Mock elections	9
Student exchange programme to another country	6
Counselling or mentoring other students	10

Table 4 shows that a majority of students were involved in school or class council elections and about a quarter had helped out in the community. Some three-quarters had participated in raising money for good causes and about one in ten were involved in counselling or mentoring other students. Thus there is a fair amount of voluntary activity going on in the schools in the sample. To analyse variations in such activities we can construct a cumulative scale, which gives each student a score varying from 0 to 7, depending on the number of activities they undertake. This is the *activism* scale used in subsequent analysis.

Figure 2. The Activism Scale



The distribution of responses on the Activism scale appears in Figure 2. It shows that the modal number of activities was 1, with the mean being 1.5 activities. A very small number of highly active students were involved in five or more of the activities. These three scales are the basis of the subsequent analysis. We will use the cognitive engagement and civic voluntarism models of participation to try to explain variations in activism rates across pupils captured by these three variables.

4.1.2 Applying the cognitive engagement model

It will be recalled from section two that the core idea of cognitive engagement theory is that participation depends on the individual's access to information and on their ability and willingness to use that information to make informed choices. Viewed from the perspective of the history of citizenship, cognitively engaged individuals are close to the classical Greek conceptions of the good citizenship. The classical citizen is an informed member of the polis, who fully participates in politics and understand the complexities of government. Cognitive mobilisation produces individuals who have an interest in politics

and in civic affairs, are politically knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of the norms and principles of democracy.

The cognitively engaged citizen is likely to be influenced by the performance of the state in delivering the costs and benefits of citizenship. This means that cognitively engaged citizens are critical citizens (Norris *et al*., 2000). By implication their perception that the state may be failing to deliver is likely to mobilise them to participate in unorthodox ways, for example, by protesting. It may also reduce their willingness to acknowledge the obligations of citizenship, if they feel that they are not receiving the benefits. The core concepts or key variables in the cognitive engagement model are educational attainment, media consumption, interest in politics, political knowledge, and policy satisfaction (see Pattie *et al*., 2004).

Education is typically measured in terms of whether individuals have more than the minimum levels of education, in particular if they have higher education. Media consumption refers to their use of the media to acquire information about politics and public affairs. Political interest is defined in terms of their motivation to follow the activities of government and to understand policy-making. Political knowledge is about their understanding of the way the system works and about policy information which is relevant to making a decision about participation. In the present analysis, the model implies that pupils who are cognitively engaged will be more active citizens as a consequence. Table 5 spells out the concepts underlying each of the variables in the model, and includes a list of the indicators in the longitudinal pupil survey, which can be used to explain cognitive engagement.

Table 5. The Concepts and Questions in the Survey relating to Cognitive Engagement Theory

Theory	Concept	Question in the Student Survey
Cognitive Engagement	Interest in Politics	Q 27 battery
	Educational Performance	Q 7 battery
	Political Knowledge	Q 11 battery
	Media Exposure	Q5a,Q5b,Q6
	School satisfaction/dissatisfaction	Q8 battery

We can use these various measures as predictor variables in a regression model of the internal, external activities scales, as well as the activism scale. The expectations of effects in the model are set out in Table 6.

Table 6. The Hypotheses from Cognitive Engagement Theory

Concept	Question in the Student Survey	Effects on participation measures
Interest in Politics	Q 27 battery	High interest promotes participation
Educational Performance	Q 7 battery	Learning about citizenship topics promotes participation
Political Knowledge	Q 11 battery	Knowledge promotes participation
Media Exposure	Q6 battery	Exposure to news promotes participation
School satisfaction/dissatisfaction	Q8 battery	Perception that the school encourages involvement promotes participation

Turning to the task of defining more precisely the measures in Table 6, we begin with the indicators of interest in politics. The responses to this battery of questions appear in Table 7.

Table 7. Indicators of Interest in Politics (Q27 battery)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
None of my friends are interested in politics	18	27	37	11	7
I am too busy to worry about politics	15	25	35	18	7
I often discuss politics with other people	3	8	23	32	34
Politics makes no difference to people my age	15	24	38	15	9
Politics has an impact on everything we do	7	22	44	16	11
I am very interested in Politics	3	7	25	28	37
I know less about politics than most people my age	11	18	43	18	10
Sometimes politics seems so complicated I cannot understand it	20	33	31	9	7

The indicators in Table 7 suggest that only a minority of students are interested in politics. Thus 45 per cent of the respondents thought that none of their friends were interested in politics, and almost 40 per cent thought that politics made no difference to people of their age. However, there is a minority of students who discuss politics with others and who are also interested in politics. Nearly three out of ten disagreed with the proposition that politics makes no difference, and around a quarter disagreed that they are too busy to be bothered with politics.

As before, a preliminary factor analysis identified the key variables, which are related to an underlying scale or factor measuring interest in politics. Variables with loadings less that 0.40 on this scale were excluded, and the resulting factor analysis of the indicators appears in Table 8. The analysis explains 51 per cent of the variance in the data and shows that pupils who are very interested in politics tend to discuss it with friends, and tend to disagree with the proposition that friends are not interested.

Table 8. The Factor Structure of Interest in Politics

Factor Matrix[a]	Factor 1
Friends not interested in Politics	-.481
Too busy to worry about Politics	-.549
Often discuss Politics	.593
Very interested in Politics	.714

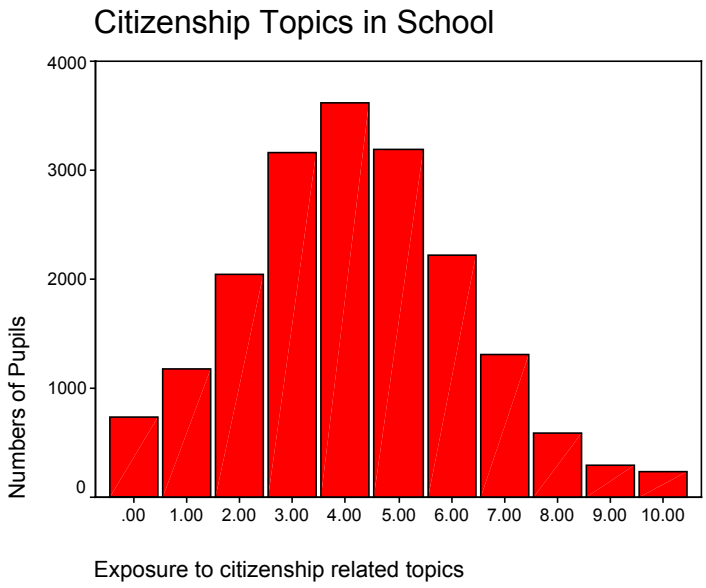
The second predictor in the cognitive engagement model speaks directly to the question of civic education, since it measures the extent to which students have learned about citizenship in school. This is not a direct indicator of the impact of the citizenship curriculum, since pupils were asked to indicate if they had learned about these things in any of the lessons they attended. But as Table 9 shows, clear majorities of students perceive that they had learned about rights and responsibilities, about law and order and about different cultures and ethnic groups in the course of their studies. Rather fewer perceived that they had learned about voluntary groups, the media or about conflict resolution. Very few felt they had learned about the economy and business. Responses to the items in Table 9 are cumulated into a *Citizenship Education* scale, which is important indicator of the impact of such education in the school as a whole. If a student had learned about all ten items then he or she would score ten on this scale, and if they had learned about none of them they would score zero.

Table 9. Citizenship Topics Students Perceive They Have Learned

Percentage saying They Have Learned About the Topic	%
Rights and Responsibilities	72
Laws, Crime and Punishment	59
Different Cultures and Ethnic Groups	52
Parliament, Voting and Elections	32
The Economy and Business	14
Voluntary Groups	27
Resolving Conflict	24
The media	23
The Global Community and International Organisations	34
The Environment	80

The overall scale of perceptions of exposure to citizenship topics appears in Figure 3.

Figure 3



It is apparent from Figure 3 that there are wide variations in pupil's perceptions of citizenship education in their schools. The modal category of items was 4, with the distribution of responses being slightly skewed to the left. Few acknowledge being exposed to all ten topics.

In addition to exposure to citizenship related topics, pupils were asked another question relating to citizenship education. The question was: 'Are you taught about citizenship in school?' Responses to this question appear in Figure 4 and show that a significant proportion of pupils either did not know or did not perceive that they were being taught citizenship. In a sense it does not matter greatly if pupils of that age cannot describe the topics listed in Table 9 as citizenship studies. But it is nonetheless interesting that almost four out of ten pupils did not perceive that they were studying citizenship.

Figure 4

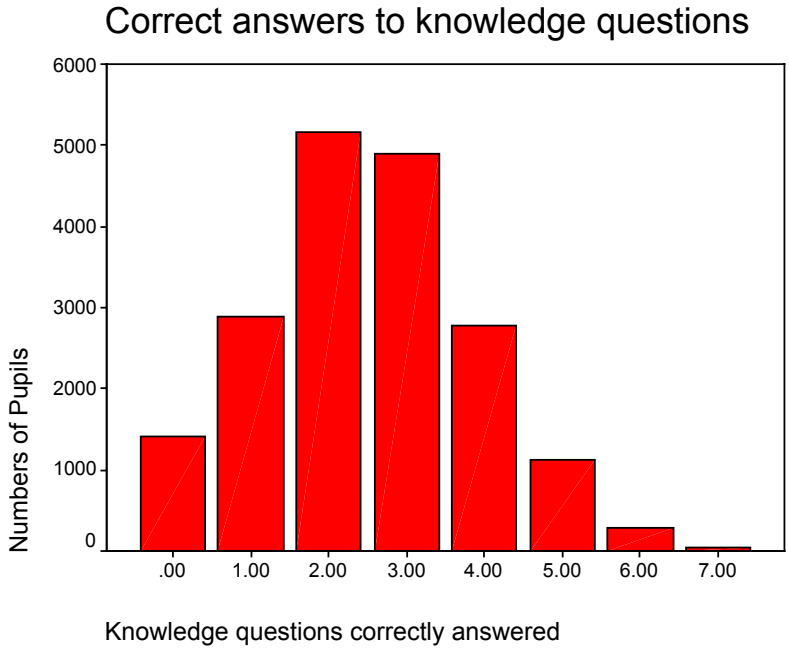
The political knowledge battery of questions is arguably at the heart of citizenship education, and as Table 10 shows there are wide variations in the number of correct answers provided across the sample. Students appeared confident in answering the question about the minimum voting age and also about the minimum age for buying cigarettes. But they were much less knowledgeable about the other items in the scale. The responses were cumulated into a *political knowledge* scale for use in the analysis.

Table 10. Political Knowledge

Percentage Giving the Correct Answer	%
Local Governments are responsible for writing local newspapers	44
The minimum Voting Age is 18	80
Countries that join the European Union must be democracies	14
The main purpose of the United Nations is to decide where countries boundaries should be	23
Britain has separate elections for the European Parliament and the British Parliament	37
It is illegal to buy cigarettes before the age of 18	55
Members of Parliament are elected to the House of Commons using a system of proportional representation	10

A pupil getting all of the answers wrong or indicating that they did not know the answer would score zero on this scale. A pupil getting all of the answers correct would score seven on the scale. The distribution of correct answers to these questions appears in Figure 5. When it is recalled that pure guesswork should ensure that half of the answers are correct, this shows a distinct lack of political knowledge among many pupils in the sample.

Figure 5



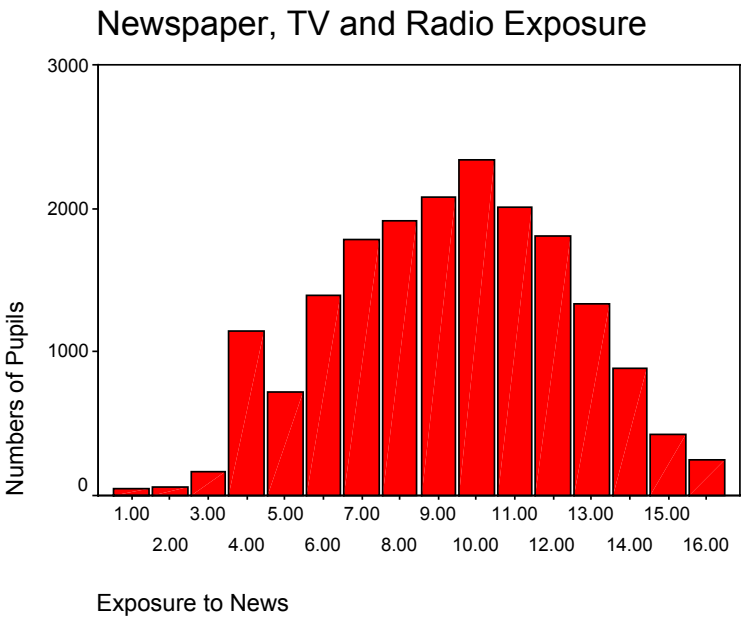
Turning next to the media exposure variable, for the purpose of modelling participation it is best to focus on exposure to news rather than to the media in general. As the responses in Table 11 indicate, students are not heavy news media users, but there is nonetheless a sizeable minority who read newspapers or watch television or listen to the radio for news. These responses are cumulated into a scale which measures *media exposure*.

Table 11. Exposure to the Media

	Never	Rarely/ Once a month	Sometimes/ Once a week	Often/ Most Days
Read stories in the newspapers about Britain	27	28	30	14
Read stories in the newspapers about other countries	32	32	24	11
Watch the news on TV	12	17	32	38
Listen to the news on Radio	39	22	22	17

The information in Table 11 is cumulated into an overall scale in the following way: Students who are exposed often or most days score 4, and students who are never exposed at all score 1, so that the scale would run from 4 to 16 in the absence of non-respondents. Since there are a few non-respondents to some questions the scale actually runs from 1 to 16. It can be seen in Figure 6 that exposure to news in the media is very varied in the sample, with the modal category being 10. This indicates that the average pupil is exposed to news in the electronic or print media at least once a week or more.

Figure 6



The final scale in the cognitive engagement model captures the critical citizenship aspect of engagement. The issue here is whether or not the opportunity structures created by the school are likely to promote or inhibit participation. The battery of items which measure the student's perceptions of these structures appear in Table 12.

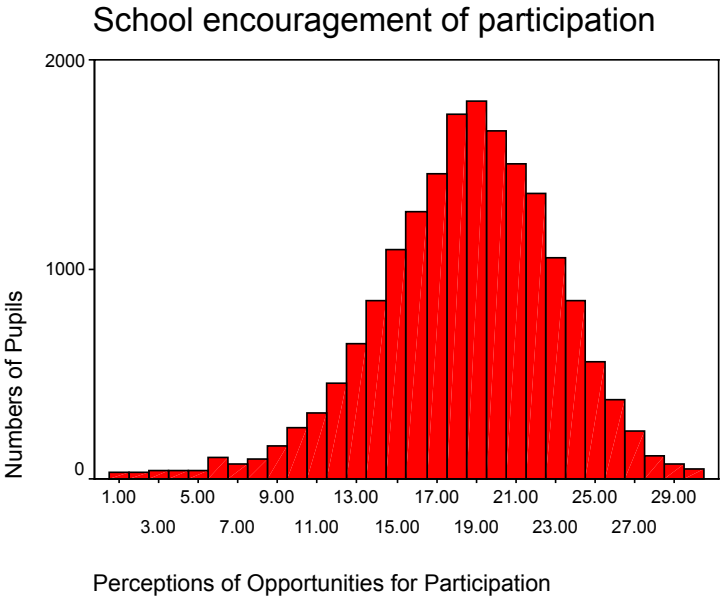
The evidence in this table is that quite a lot of students feel that there are opportunities for involvement in their schools. More than two-thirds of respondents felt that they had at least some say in how the school is organised and run, and around three-quarters felt that students were consulted about school rules. The exception is student involvement in planning the teaching, where most students thought that there was very little involvement. Responses to these items were cumulated into an *opportunity structures* scale for use in the model.

Table 12. Student Perceptions of Opportunity Structures in Schools

	Not at All	Not much	Some	Quite a bit	A lot
Do student have a say in how your school is organised and run?	11	22	31	26	11
Do students have opportunities to be involved in your school?	11	13	23	28	24
Are students consulted about school rules and policies?	11	16	26	24	24
Are students involved in planning the teaching?	45	29	15	7	4
Do you discuss how to work during lessons?	9	16	25	26	25
Do students have influence when they work together?	5	8	26	28	33

If a student indicated that there were a lot of opportunities to participate in relation to all six items, then they would score 30. If they thought that there were no opportunities at all to participate on these items they would score 6. The distribution of scores on the opportunity structures scale appears in Figure 7 and shows wide variations in pupil's perceptions that the schools encourage participation. A few scores below 6 are attributed to missing values. The distribution is skewed somewhat towards the high end of the scale, indicating that most pupils perceived that opportunities for participation in their schools existed.

Figure 7



4.1.3 Applying the civic voluntarism model

Turning next to the civic voluntarism model, as we suggested earlier, the core idea of this model is that individuals with resources are more likely to participate than individuals who lack such resources. Resources refer to things like social class, educational attainment and income. Such resources tend to be positively associated with motivations to participate and these have an independent influence on engagement. The links between the pupils survey and the concepts in this model are set out in Table 13. Motivations to participate in Table 13 come from things like the individual's sense of efficacy, or the feeling that they can make a difference to the political system and change it for the better. They also include interest in politics, a measure shared with the cognitive engagement model. The third important factor in the civic voluntarism model is mobilisation, or the extent to which individuals have been asked to participate by others. Mobilisation is a common way in which individuals become engaged.

Table 13. The Concepts and Measures Relating to Civic Voluntarism Theory

Theory	Concept	Question in the Student Survey
Civic Voluntarism	Parental Educational Resources	Q16 battery
	Student Anticipated Educational Resources	Q14
	Fathers Occupational Status	Q19
	Parents Cultural Resources	Q17
	Interest in Politics	Q27 battery
	Efficacy	Q31 battery
	Mobilisation	Q1c

Table 14 contains the expectations about relationships between the predictor variables and civic engagement in the civic voluntarism model.

Table 14. The Hypotheses from Civic Voluntarism Theory

Concept	Question in the Student Survey	Effects on Participation Measures
Parental Educational Resources	Q16 battery	High parental education promotes participation
Student Anticipated Educational Resources	Q14	High anticipated education promotes participation
Fathers Occupational Status	Q19	High parental occupational status promotes participation
Parents Cultural Resources	Q17	High cultural resources promote participation
Interest in Politics	Q27 battery	High interest promotes participation
Efficacy	Q31 battery	A strong sense of efficacy promotes participation
Mobilisation	Q1c	Mobilisation promotes participation

The first item in Table 14 is the parental educational resources battery. Students were asked about the educational achievement of their parents, and clearly, parents who had experience of higher education are more likely to have the resources to promote pupil involvement than parents who left school at the minimum age. Table 15 contains the responses to the question about

parental participation in education. Clearly, there are many pupils who have no idea what their parents educational experiences were, so it is wise to treat this measure with care. On the other hand those pupils who think that their parent stayed on in the sixth form or went to university are unlikely to be wrong about this, so the variable conveys useful information about the resources provided by the educational experience of parents. When used as a predictor in the civic voluntarism model, the variable is recoded so that pupils who think that their parents were in sixth form or went to university scored one and everyone else scored zero. This simplification should reduce some of the inaccuracies associated with the measure.

Table 15. Pupils perceptions of their parent's participation in Education

	Mothers Education	Fathers Education
Left full-time education at 15 or 16	21	20
Left after college or sixth form	14	11
Studied at University or Polytechnic	13	13
Don't Know	51	56

The future educational attainment, which a student anticipates achieving can also be regarded as an important resource for promoting pupil participation. This was investigated by a question which asked pupils to indicate when they thought they would leave full-time education. About a third of pupils were not sure, so again the responses have to be treated with care. Responses were coded so that pupils planning to leave at the end of sixth-form, typically aged 18 or planning to stay on to university scored one, and others scored zero. Again, this should make the measure more accurate than trying to measure each category. The responses appear in Table 15.

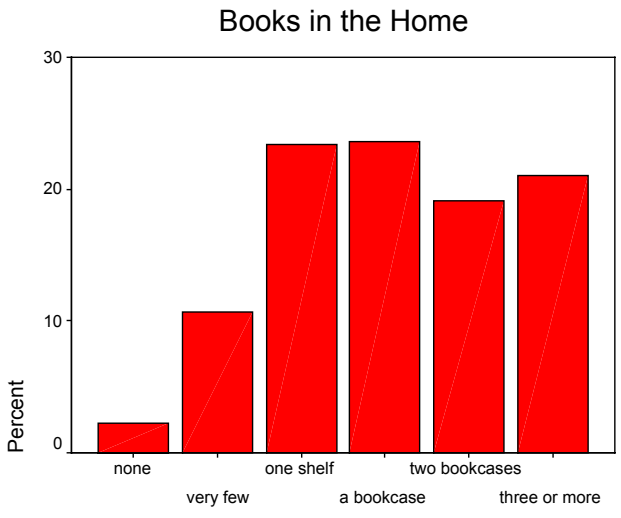
Table 15.

Age planning to Leave Full-Time Education	%
16	17
17	9
18	11
Early 20s	30
Not Sure	33

Resources in most applications of the civic voluntarism model are measured with an indicator of occupational status or social class. This is commonly measured with a series of questions designed to give respondents a precise occupational coding. Pupils were asked to describe the jobs which their parents, guardians or carers did and the responses to this question were coded into some 30 different categories. Only 7 per cent of pupils stated that they did not know what job their parents or guardians did, or gave answers that could not be coded. So this is likely to be a reasonably good indicator of occupational status among pupils. Following the procedure used with parental education, the categories of responses specifying professional occupations of varying kinds, such as corporate manager, health professional or business and public service professional were recoded. Pupils who described their fathers and mothers occupation in these terms scored one, otherwise they scored zero. This provides a simple though robust measure of professional occupational status, and about 22 per cent of the pupils responded in these terms.

Cultural resources refers to the extent to which pupils grow up in households with access to literature and cultural forms other than just television. It is measured with a simple question asking pupils to indicate how many books they have in their household. The responses to this appear in Figure 8, and it shows that very few pupils lived in homes without books. There is a range of responses to this question, and the most common or modal categories indicate that most homes have at least a shelf or a bookcase full of books. Altogether, a fifth of the pupils live in homes containing enough books to fill three or more bookcases, indicating quite a high level of cultural resources.

Figure 8. Cultural Resources in the Parental Home



Interest in politics is the same indicator which appears in the cognitive engagement model. So we use the same scale in this model as appears in Table 8. However, the efficacy measure is new to the civic voluntarism model. In this model efficacy is seen as the product of resources, with higher resourced individuals having a greater sense that they can influence politics and make a difference to outcomes. Although efficacy may be driven by resources, pupils with a strong sense of efficacy should also be more willing to participate. The battery of efficacy items from the survey appears in Table 16.

Table 16. Pupils sense of Efficacy

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
People like me can have a real influence if they get involved	10	12	61	14	4
My views are taken seriously by my family	5	11	50	26	8
My views are not taken seriously in my neighbourhood	6	14	60	14	6
I feel I can really influence the way my school is run	9	13	60	13	5

Perhaps not surprisingly for students of this age group many of them chose the 'neither' category in response to the questions in Table 16, but a factor analysis of the responses showed that there was a definite scale underlying responses. Thus pupils who felt that their views were taken seriously by their families, also tended to feel that they could influence the way the school is run. However, the statement about pupil's views being taken seriously in the neighbourhood was not significantly associated with the other items. This suggests that it does not capture a sense of efficacy and so it was omitted from subsequent analysis.

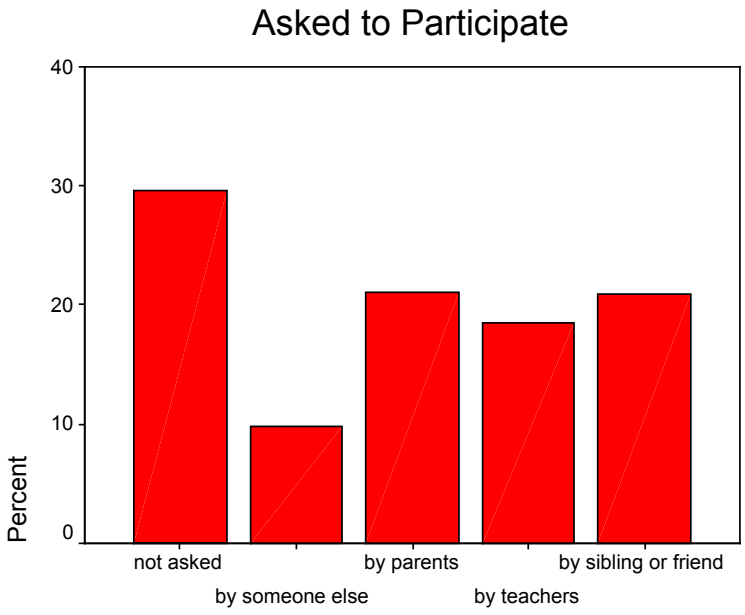
Table 17. The Factor Analysis of the Efficacy Items

Factor Matrix[a]	Factor 1
People like me can have a real influence	.540
Views taken seriously by family	.455
I can influence way school is run	.466

Maximum Likelihood Estimation

The final variable in the civic voluntarism model relates to mobilisation. This is a very straightforward measure of whether or not pupils had been asked to participate in activities by another person. The responses to this appear in Figure 9 and they indicate that about seven out of ten of the pupils had been asked to participate by someone else. Most commonly it is by a parent, sibling or a friend and the measure is scaled to give greater weight to requests from 'significant others'. The idea here is that requests to participate from people they are close to are more likely to be effective than requests from people they do not know. Those asked by a sibling or friend score 4, and those asked by a teacher score 3 and so on. Those who were not asked at all score zero.

Figure 9



Having reviewed all of the predictor variables in the cognitive engagement and civic voluntarism models, in the next section we go on to test these models.

4.1.4 Testing the rival models

The models are tested with a series of regression equations using the three dependent variables discussed earlier. The estimates for the cognitive engagement model appear in Table 18. The table shows that three variables, interest in politics, exposure to citizenship studies and political knowledge have a consistent impact on all three types of participation. Intriguingly, while interest in politics and exposure to citizenship increase participation, political knowledge decreases it in the case of in-school and out-of- school activities, and increases it in the case of the activism scale. As we pointed out earlier, the common characteristic of in-school and out-of-school activities is that they operate within organisations, whereas the activism scale largely measures non-organisational participation. It appears from these findings that organisation facilitates participation without the assistance of political knowledge, whereas knowledge helps to stimulate non-organisational participation.

Table 18. Cognitive Engagement Models of Participation

	In School Activities	Out of School Activities	Activism Scale
Interest in Politics	0.13***	0.16***	0.03***
	(12.1)	(14.8)	(3.2)
Exposure to Citizenship Education	0.06***	0.03***	0.20***
	(5.7)	(2.8)	(17.3)
Political Knowledge	-0.03**	-0.04***	0.02*
	(2.4)	(3.6)	(1.8)
Exposure to News in the Media	0.01	-0.01	0.08***
	(0.8)	(0.5)	(7.5)
School Encouragement to Participation	-0.01	-0.01	0.06***
	(0.6)	(1.2)	(5.1)
Perception of Citizenship Education	0.02*	0.00	0.06***
	(1.7)	(0.1)	(5.2)
Gender	0.06***	0.04***	-0.01
	(5.4)	(3.8)	(1.0)
White Ethnicity	-0.10***	-0.09***	-0.04***
	(7.5)	(6.8)	(3.1)
Black Ethnicity	-0.02*	-0.01	-0.01
	(1.8)	(0.9)	(0.6)
Asian Ethnicity	0.04***	-0.02	-0.01
	(2.8)	(1.4)	(0.5)
R-squared	0.05	0.04	0.08

It is noteworthy that perceptions of citizenship education have a positive impact on in-school activities and also on the activism scale, so this is clearly an important variable as far as the cognitive engagement model is concerned. The other robust findings relate to demographic variables; boys consistently participate more than girls, and ethnically white pupils participate less that Asians, and with the exception of in-school activities, less than blacks. Other factors such as exposure to the media and encouragement from the school to participate have an impact in the activism model, but not in the in-school and out of school activities models.

Table 19. Civic Voluntarism Models of Participation

	In School Activities	Out of School Activities	Activism Scale
Interest in Politics	0.13***	0.16***	0.03***
	(12.1)	(14.8)	(3.2)
Fathers Educational Attainment	0.06***	0.03***	0.20***
	(5.7)	(2.8)	(17.3)
Mothers Educational Attainment	-0.03**	-0.04***	0.02*
	(2.4)	(3.6)	(1.8)
Student Anticipated Education	0.01	-0.01	0.08***
	(0.8)	(0.5)	(7.5)
Fathers Occupational Status	-0.01	-0.01	0.06***
	(0.6)	(1.2)	(5.1)
Parents Cultural Resources	0.02*	0.00	0.06***
	(1.7)	(0.1)	(5.2)
Personal Efficacy	0.06***	0.04***	-0.01
	(5.4)	(3.8)	(1.0)
Mobilised to Participate	0.01	0.01	0.01
Gender	0.06***	0.04***	-0.01
White Ethnicity	-0.10***	-0.09***	-0.04***
	(7.5)	(6.8)	(3.1)
Black Ethnicity	-0.02*	-0.01	-0.01
	(1.8)	(0.9)	(0.6)
Asian Ethnicity	0.04***	-0.02	-0.01
	(2.8)	(1.4)	(0.5)
R-squared	0.05	0.04	0.08

The estimates of the civic voluntarism models appear in Table 19. They indicate that interest in politics and parent's educational achievement have significant impacts on participation. Father's educational achievement has a positive impact, whereas mother's achievement has a negative impact in the case of in-school and out-of-school activities, but a positive impact in the case

of the activism scale. Parental cultural resources, and fathers occupational status are important in the case of the activism scale, although they do not appear to have a significant impact in the case of in-school and out-of-school activities. A third variable which is clearly important in the civic voluntarism model is personal efficacy. This plays a positive role in explaining participation both in and out of school.

It appears from Tables 18 and 19 that key variables in both the cognitive engagement and civic voluntarism models have a significant impact on participation. But which model provides the best account of participation? To answer this question we test both models together, in order to determine which one appears dominant in explaining participation. The results of this appear in Table 20, which excludes variables not having a statistically significant effect on the participation measures.

Table 20 shows that both models contribute to explaining variations in participation and it would not be true to say that one model dominates another. Political knowledge, exposure to citizenship education, perceptions of citizenship education and interest in politics from the cognitive engagement model are important predictors of participation. Equally, father's educational attainment, father's occupational status and parent's cultural resources are important predictors from the civic voluntarism model. Thus both models have something to contribute when it comes to explaining participation.

Table 20. Statistically Significant Predictors of Participation from the Rival Models

	In School Activities	Out of School Activities	Activism Scale
Interest in Politics	0.13***	0.15***	0.05***
	(11.8)	(14.0)	(4.6)
Fathers Educational Attainment	0.02*	---	0.04***
	(1.8)		(3.9)
Fathers Occupational Status	-0.05***	-0.06***	0.03***
	(4.3)	(5.1)	(2.8)
Parents Cultural Resources	0.06***	-0.06***	0.08***
	(5.4)	(5.4)	(7.7)
Political Knowledge	-0.02*	-0.03***	0.03**
	(1.7)	(2.9)	(2.3)
Exposure to Citizenship Education	0.07***	0.04***	0.21***
	(6.1)	(3.4)	(19.2)
Perception of Citizenship Education	0.02*	---	0.06***
	(1.7)		(5.3)
Gender	0.06***	0.04***	-0.02*
	(5.2)	(3.2)	(1.7)
White Ethnicity	-0.08***	-0.07***	-0.04***
	(6.5)	(6.1)	(3.4)
Asian Ethnicity	0.04***	---	---
	(3.6)		
R-squared	0.05	0.05	0.08

Despite this there are clear differences between the models. In the case of in-school activities father's educational attainment and parents cultural resources have a positive impact on participation, whereas father's occupational status has a negative impact. Once again, political knowledge has a modest, though negative impact on in-school activities. In the case of out-of-school activities the key resource variables of father's occupational status and parent's cultural resources have negative impacts on participation. However, in relation to the activism scale all the resource and cognitive engagement variables have positive impacts on participation.

The explanation of these apparently contradictory findings lies in the importance of organisation. Early research using the civic voluntarism model showed that organisation was the 'weapon of the weak', that is to say low-status and low-resourced individuals could be motivated to participate as long as they could join organisations or institutions which facilitate participation (Verba *et al*., 1978). It is clear that the school itself provides an institutional

framework in which low-status students can participate and this explains the findings in relation to in-school activities. The out-of-school activities are similarly organisationally based and are clearly linked closely to the in-school activities, so this effect carries over into the out-of-school activities. Thus the organisational environment moulds the opportunity structures, which facilitate participation for people who would otherwise not be involved.

When it comes to the activism scale, which is not organisationally based, the resource and knowledge measures all play a positive role in stimulating participation. In this case organisational frameworks do not necessarily exist to facilitate participation, so these variables come into their own as factors which explain engagement. This means that organisations mediate the relationship between the predictor variables and engagement in all of these models.

The most important finding from this exercise is that the two variables most closely related to the core curriculum in citizenship education, exposure to and perceptions of citizenship education, are robust predictors of participation in all of the models with all of the control variables included. Citizenship education appears to have a direct impact on these rather different forms of participation, even when many other factors are taken into account. This strongly suggests that once the core curriculum is fully in place and becomes a regular and accepted part of the education in Britain's schools, it is likely to strengthen civil society in the long run.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This literature review has established a number of important findings. Firstly, education, broadly defined, has an important influence on civic engagement in a wide variety of alternative models of participation in political science. The precise mechanisms by which this works differs between the models and in some cases the links involve psychological processes of cognition, whereas in others it involves reinforcing networks of engagement which themselves stimulate participation. But there are several channels through which education operates. Secondly, the review shows that while the evidence that civic education has a direct impact on political knowledge is equivocal, research which casts the net wider to consider civic engagement more generally, and not just knowledge, demonstrates strong effects in a wide variety of different countries.

But the most important finding is that in two fully specified models of civic engagement, with controls for many confounding factors the citizenship curriculum in schools is clearly having robust and positive effects on pupil engagement. Whether these effects get stronger over time is a topic for future research. But at this stage it is clear that citizenship education in schools is likely to play a positive role in strengthening civil society and civic engagement in Britain.

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