

## Can Citizen Governance Redress the Representative Bias of Political Participation?

**Peter John** is the Hallsworth Chair of Governance in the School of Social Sciences, University of Manchester, where he is a director of the Institute for Political and Economic Governance. He has held posts at Birkbeck College and at the Universities of Southampton and Keele. He has interests in the public policy, urban political, and participation. He is the author of *Analyzing Public Policy* (1998) and *Local Governance in Western Europe* (2001). He was codirector of the U.K. Home Office's Civil Renewal Research Programme in 2004–2005.  
**E-mail:** peter.john@manchester.ac.uk

*Can a more collaborative form of public management correct for the historical link between social and economic status (SES) and political participation? New initiatives to involve the citizen directly in public decision making—citizen governance—aim to include a wider representation of groups in society because they draw from service users and seek to recruit hard-to-reach groups. To test the claim that citizen governance may be more representative than other acts of political participation, this essay reports data from the 2005 English and Welsh Citizenship Survey. Using descriptive statistics and regression analysis, it finds evidence that citizen governance is more representative than civic activities, especially for young people and ethnic minority communities. Policy makers can fine-tune their interventions to reach underrepresented groups without believing the citizen governance is a panacea for long-running biases in civic participation.*

Citizens have several means to influence the public decisions that are made on their behalf by bureaucrats and politicians. These range from traditional democratic acts, such as voting, petitioning, and lobbying, to more informal consultation, complaining, and community-based decision making (see Fung 2006). But each one of these acts often only reaches some of the public some of the time. Those who are the most advantaged are often better placed than others to advance their interests because they tend to have higher incomes, more education, and more free time at their disposal. But is it possible that some avenues of participation have a wider representation of the population than others? In particular, can citizen governance, which has been trumpeted by governments of all political hues as a new way of engaging the public more fully in its decisions, involve a more diverse group of citizens? It may be uniquely placed to offer this benefit because of its close relationship to the users of public services. Moreover, state agencies often have as their mission better access to underrepresented groups. Bureaucracies, which have in the past been organized along hierarchical lines and with a large degree of professional autonomy, may now include the

public in more effective and fuller ways than traditional democratic mechanisms.

### Socioeconomic Status and Participation

The starting point of this article is the reliable finding from decades of survey-based studies that the key measures of political participation—voting, more active forms of involvement, citizen contacting, and group membership—are skewed toward those with higher incomes, those who are employed, and those with more years of education—factors that cluster together (see, e.g., Barnes and Kaase 1979; Jennings et al. 1989; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Verba et al. 1993). Even with recent advances in our understanding of political participation, which incorporate the role of context, skills, and psychological factors, socioeconomic status (SES) remains important as a prior factor. In one of the most comprehensive analyses of U.S. participation ever carried out, Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) find that SES determines the skills that, in turn, affect participation. In most studies, years of education and employment appear as part of a standard battery of statistical controls in multivariate models (e.g., Pattie, Seyd, and Whiteley 2005, 152–85). The dominance of SES also runs across comparative studies (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1987) and in surveys of political participation in particular countries, such as the United Kingdom (Parry, Moyser, and Day 1992, 63–84). Moreover, early evidence showing that citizen-initiated contact with public officials is more representative (Verba and Nie 1972) has not been sustained (Serra 1995, 182; Sharp 1982). Nor does direct democracy perform any better. As Dalton, Cain, and Scarrow summarize, “A much larger inequality gap emerges for modes of participation that come closer to direct or advocate forms of democracy” (2003, 262).

Academics and practitioners worry about the bias in political participation because theories of democracy depend on the practice of political equality (e.g., Dahl 1953). Democracy implies that citizens should participate on equal terms. And from the related literature

on political representation, there is also a concern that democracy should be based on descriptive representation. Those at the decision-making table should mirror the composition of the general population, even if there is no substantive representation when the policy preferences of the represented and the delegates match up (Pitkin 1967; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005).

One reaction to the disjuncture between theory and practice is to accept that inequalities derive from deep-rooted social structures, which are hard to change. But democracies work reasonably well even with these limitations. Decision making can still occur fairly without the participation of all groups in society. Moreover, there is a long line of research in political science that finds no significant difference in policy preferences between participants and nonparticipants (Bennett and Resnick 1989; Highton and Wolfinger 2001; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). In addition, the recent generation of studies shows that SES is not such a strong predictor of participation after all. Much of the explanation comes from self-interested and psychological factors, which are only partially correlated with SES (e.g., Cohen, Vigoda, and Samorly 2001).

But, as Verba et al.'s (1993) qualifications to these arguments suggest, the sense of unease continues. Many believe there is a link between the inequality in participation and the type of outputs and outcomes democracies produce (Hero 1998). In addition, at least a degree of equality in political participation is symbolically important for a legitimate political system (Dahl 1989). Such preoccupations prompted Lijphart (1997, 2001) to advocate compulsory voting, for example.

### Citizen Governance

It may be the case that democratic practices that are shaped by the public sector, organizing citizens and inviting them to participate in service-focused forums, are more inclusive than acts of traditional political participation. This occurs because the state in Western democracies typically administers a complex array of services. Many involve frequent contact with the citizens, usually without their direct involvement in decision making. In the more traditional top-down model of the state-citizen relationship, citizens vote for people to sit in office to control and direct bureaucracies. The people accept the decisions of the professionals to implement these mandated policies in their best interests (Thompson 1983).

In recent years, citizens and reforming governments have challenged the idea that traditional bureaucracies are the only means for delivering services. Partly

as a result, the bureaucracy has increasingly taken on a more networked and flexible form (Mathur and Skelcher 2007; Meier and O'Toole 2006), which may make it more accessible to group participation and less wedded to top-down solutions. In the language of Bryer (2007), the responsive bureaucracy moves toward a more deliberative form characterized by negotiated or collaborative management. Collaborative public management involves initiatives to involve stakeholders to try to improve policy making (Cooper, Bryer, and Meek 2006; O'Leary, Gerard, and Bingham 2006).

---

One reaction to the disjuncture between theory and practice is to accept that inequalities derive from deep-rooted social structures, which are hard to change.

---

A series of reforms in most developed countries have now led to a reassessment of citizen-state relationships. These initiatives often involve a more active role for the citizen in choosing and coproducing services and lead to a more responsive bureaucracy that is interested in listening

to them (Roberts 2004, 2008). More voice implies including citizens in decision making and allowing them to represent their interests. Citizen governance is not just about individual representation, but gathers together the users and other affected interests in decision-making forums. It involves the citizen in directly providing and shaping the delivery of those services (Barnes, Newman, and Sullivan 2007; Clarke et al. 2007). These initiatives particularly occur in the policy fields of regeneration, crime, education, and health, and usually involve meetings and consultations. They are often neighborhood based, focused on what citizens are concerned about in their communities.

While these citizen governance initiatives are a cross-national phenomenon, English and Welsh central and local governments have pushed them much further than elsewhere in the world. Politicians express a commitment to civil renewal and to new types of citizen involvement and empowerment (Brannan, John, and Stoker 2006). Examples are forums for council house tenants in Tenant Participation Compacts and Housing Cooperatives. Another policy field is health, where there is statutory consultation by Primary Care Trusts (Milewa et al. 2006) and health panels to encourage long-term involvement and representation of communities in policy making. In addition, Foundation Hospitals are accountable to local communities and include members of the public on their governing bodies. There are long-standing ways of involving the citizen in education through parent-teacher bodies and boards of governors, which have strengthened in recent years. In spite of the expansion of this kind of participation, commentators need to be careful not to make strong claims about the extent to which participation in these initiatives leads to the articulation of different policy preferences than conventional modes

of participation and whether they affect policy. It fits somewhere at the midpoint of Fung's (2006) classification of democratic acts (the "democracy cube"): closest to "lay stakeholders" on the scale of participant recruitment methods; somewhere between least intense (the spectator) and most intense (the deliberative form) in the mode of communication and decision; and between direct authority and individual power for the application of power and authority.

### Representativeness and Citizen Governance

This paper addresses the claim that these initiatives may involve a different kind of citizen in their deliberations, one who is more representative of the general population than commonly occurs in other forms of political engagement, such as petitioning or protesting. The expectation is that there may be aspects of this engagement that encourage a wider range of groups to participate. First, the groups are often recruited from service users or those closely affected by the service. They often have a different representative basis than the general population because many are targeted to needy groups, such as people with health care problems or social housing tenants. Initiatives with a strong participation element, such as Crime and Disorder Partnerships, are often located in less well-off neighborhoods because they are designed to target particular social problems associated with deprivation, such as crime and disorder.

Second, the social basis for participation partly derives from the manner of recruitment. One settled finding from the research literature is that being asked, such as being mobilized or canvassed, is one of the key factors that influences the decision to participate (Green and Gerber 2005; Rosenstone and Hansen 2003). With civic participation, the informal networks that determine who asks whom is one of the reasons for the SES bias in participation. Those of high socioeconomic status tend to recruit people who are similar to themselves. But participants may also be recruited by professionals who ask citizens to get involved. This feature is central to state-sponsored participation, moving from what Fung (2006, 67) calls self-selection to selective recruitment or, in some cases, random selection.

Third, and linked to the second factor, these initiatives have as their aim the inclusion of excluded groups and go beyond the range of the "usual suspects" (Barnes 2000). Professional recruiters seek out underrepresented groups as part of their mission.

Of course, it is not a foregone conclusion that citizen governance has a different character than its civic

equivalent. The resource imbalance in the citizen population may still lead to biases, whatever the form of participation. In spite of the role of the state, citizen governance is still voluntary in character, so it is subject to the same social influences as civic participation. Some people have more confidence in themselves and their abilities and are better placed to get more out of participation than others who are less well endowed with these resources. They, in turn, may recruit others from their high-SES networks. The only way to answer this representativeness question is to compare the different kinds of involvement in the same sample survey.

### Data and Methods

#### Survey Questions on Citizen Governance

Most surveys about civic behavior do not ask directly about involvement in citizen governance decision-making forums, mainly because they were not until recently a major component of participation. Survey instruments tended to replicate some well-known question wordings (Baumgartner and Walker 1988, 913–14), which included but did not separate out citizen governance. For example, the American Citizen Participation Study, conducted in 1990 (Verba *et al* 1995), asked about participation in a "neighborhood/homeowners/condominium association or block club," "health service organizations/organization for services to needy," and "school service organizations." U.K. surveys do the same. The Citizen's Audit, for example, asks about participation in residence, housing, and neighborhood organizations, and also the PTA (Pattie, Seyd, and Whitely 2004, 98). However, this question does not capture the full range of activities that depend on a closer interaction between public decision makers and the citizens.

#### The Citizenship Survey

A question on the 2005 Citizenship Survey for England and Wales provides a unique opportunity to observe the full range of citizen governance activities. The Citizenship Survey is a biannual, random-probability, face-to-face survey that takes place in England and Wales; surveys were conducted in 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007. It has achieved a sample of about 10,000 respondents.<sup>1</sup>

---

A question on the 2005  
Citizenship Survey for England  
and Wales provides a unique  
opportunity to observe the full  
range of citizen governance  
activities.

---

The Citizenship Survey's main question on citizen governance reads, "In the last twelve months . . . have you done any of the things listed?" with a card referring to seven actions: "member of a group making decisions on local health services," "member of a decision-making group set up to regenerate the local area," "member of a decision-making group set up to tackle local

crime problems,” “member of a tenants group decision-making committee,” “member of a group making decisions on local education services,” “member of a group making decisions on local services for young people,” and “member of another group making decisions on services in the local community.” Respondents could indicate that they undertook more than one option if they wanted to. Important for assessing the validity of this question, there is some crossover with the standard option for the group membership question for neighborhood and community groups, which the Citizenship Survey also asks. This response has a strong relationship to the more community-based items of the citizen governance question: .25 for tenants groups and .24 for crime, whereas health and education have correlations of less than .1. These activities spread out evenly spread across England for health, education, and young people. They are part of the way in which national policies are delivered by local agencies and reflect the centralized character of governance in England. There is some bias toward deprived areas for the regeneration, crime, and tenants’ groups. But policy makers intended this skew to take place and to give opportunities to the kinds of citizens who had previously been excluded.

## Results and Analysis

### Frequencies and Scaling

Table 1 presents the frequencies for the responses to the citizen governance question. When taking each service in turn, the results show that between 1 percent and 3 percent of the population carries out each activity.<sup>2</sup> But taken altogether, the figure for the total number of activities for the sample rises to 8.3

percent,<sup>3</sup> mainly because citizens only carry out one or two activities each (the average is 1.5). For an overall assessment of the nature of citizen governance, there needs to be a measure of the total number of activities. This article uses a dichotomous score created by adding together all of the activities and denoting individuals with both single and multiple activities with a value of 1 and those doing nothing as 0. The scaling statistics and factor scores, which measure an underlying variable, justify this approach. Table 2 shows the extraction from a factor analysis of these variables. The procedure produces two factors with eigenvalues in excess of 1, which load in varying degree on the factors. It is the first factor that is most salient. It has an eigenvalue of 2.0, whereas the second one is just over 1.0. In general, the loadings are similar for each variable. Only health participation is different from the others. An alpha score to check the reliability of this scale is .576 out of 1, a respectable figure.

### Civic Activities

The key task of this study is to compare participation in citizen governance with other acts of political participation. The analysis does not cover voting because of the wish to examine broadly comparable forms of involvement. For civic activities, there are three questions about political participation: whether the respondents have “attended a public meeting or rally,” “taken part in public demonstration,” and “signed a petition.” Table 3 reports the results. In factor analysis, these activities scale highly on one factor and have an alpha of .34. When taken together, they cover a larger proportion of the population than citizen governance activities at 27.1 percent, though the largest segment is the relatively passive form of participation of signing a petition.

**Table 1** Frequencies for Citizen Governance Activities

	Percent	Observations
Member of a group making decisions on local health services	0.8	9,691
Member of a decision-making group to regenerate the local area	1.8	9,691
Member of a decision-making group to tackle local crime problems	1.6	9,691
Member of a tenants’ group decision-making committee	1.7	9,691
Member of a group making decisions on local education services	1.3	9,691
Member of a group making decisions on local services for young people	2.8	9,691
Member of another group making decisions on services in the local area	2.8	9,691
No activities	91.5	9,691

**Table 2** A Principal Components Analysis of Citizen Governance Activities (unrotated)

	Extraction	Factor 1	Factor 2
Member of a group making decisions on local health services	.252	.137	.397
Member of a decision-making group to regenerate the local area	.473	.339	-.105
Member of a decision-making group to tackle local crime problems	.513	.226	-.452
Member of a tenants’ group decision-making committee	.491	.203	-.538
Member of a group making decisions on local education services	.456	.240	.449
Member of a group making decisions on local services for young people	.462	.230	.060
Member of another group making decisions on services in the local area	.413	.307	.060

**Table 3** Frequencies of Civic Participation Activities

	Percent	Observations
Attended a public meeting or rally	6.9	9,691
Taken part in public demonstration	2.2	9,679
Signed a petition	23.2	9,679

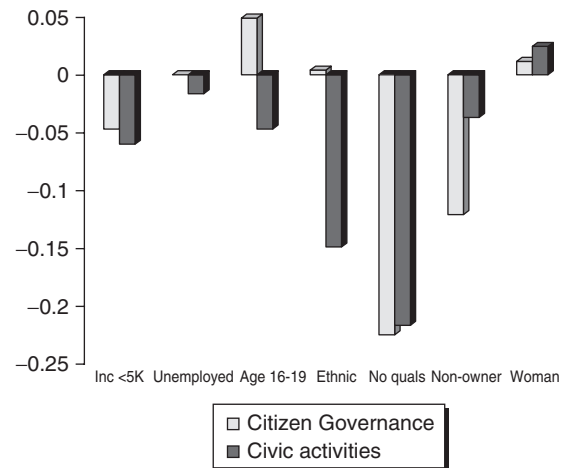
### Who Does Only Citizen Governance?

An initial question is the extent to which these two groups of civic participation and citizen governance share the same membership: 4.7 percent of the sample do both, 22.4 percent do just civic activities, and 3.6 percent of the sample carry out just citizen governance. This 3.6 percent is a new group of people to bring into the public arena. Citizen governance does not just recruit people who are already participants. In terms of the adult population of England and Wales of 39.0 million people, this represents about 1.4 million brought into the political process. The total contrasts with some gloomy figures presented by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation study, *Who Benefits?* (Skidmore, Bound, and Lownsborough 2006), which estimated the total numbers of community participants at about 1 percent of the adult population.<sup>4</sup>

### The Representation Scale

The second and main question of this study is the extent to which citizen governance activities are carried out by the same kind of high-SES participators and other overrepresented groups as is the case for civic forms of political participation. The approach here is to use Verba et al's (1993) measure of representation. This is an index, developed from Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980), based on the ratio between the percentage of the group who are participating to its percentage in the population as a whole (Verba et al. 1993, 305). The log of this ratio creates the Log Representation Scale (LRS), a figure that takes the value of 0 if there is equal representation, greater than 0 for overrepresentation, and less than 0 for underrepresentation. When presented visually, this score allows the reader's eye to observe the way in which a governing forum is representative of its constituencies. Low values show poor representation and high values overrepresentation. The visual representation facilitates the comparison between civic acts and citizen governance, which is displayed in Figure 1. Appendix 1 contains the percentages used to calculate the LRS.

The figure does not report just one SES term, but contrasts the different elements of social and resource differences among the participants by income, age, ethnicity, education, and sex. These reflect the different drivers of participation, such as motivation or resources. The figure shows that the income variables



**Figure 1** Logged Representative Scores (LRS) of Citizen Governance and Civic Activities by Under Represented Groups

produce a mixed message. Among very low-income groups, citizen governance is better represented than civic participation; however, the difference is less marked with higher-income groups. Citizen governance performs markedly well among the younger age groups, which have had a massive falloff in rates of conventional political activity in recent years (see Russell et al. 2002). These new forums may be correcting for the underrepresentation of newly disenfranchised groups. Citizen governance also performs much better among nonwhite or black and minority ethnic (BME) groups, as there is a large contrast to the underrepresentation of these groups among civic participants. An examination of the different elements of citizen governance shows this to be partly a function of health participation, where there is a good representation of ethnic minorities: 15.8 percent of health volunteering is from BME communities compared to BME groups' 10.3 percent representation in the adult population overall. This difference creates a .185 score on the Verba et al. LRS index. Surprisingly, there is no difference in representation for education, whereas those who are citizen governance participants are more likely to be homeowners. Finally, there is more overrepresentation of women among civic participants than for citizen governance. It seems that a simple story of one type of participation being overall more or less representative than the other for certain kind of group is not supported by this data, but that citizen governance outperforms civic participation on particular dimensions.

### Regression Analysis

A further way to examine the impact of SES is to construct a regression model. The SES variables in any case appear in most models of political action, so this kind of analysis is not controversial. The idea

here is that an identical selection of covariates can be used to predict citizen governance and civic activities, which permit the comparison of the effects of SES and other demographic factors.

The regressions include the following independent variables: age, on the basis that older people have more resources and a greater stake in the community; age squared, on the assumption that there is a nonlinear relationship between age and participation (older people are increasingly likely to participate); individual income, because this is one of the core SES elements; no qualifications and having a degree, because of the strong educational drivers of participation; whether the respondent is from an ethnic minority community, to account for long-standing patterns of exclusion, especially in group membership; and whether the respondent is a woman, to account for the long-running gender biases in political participation.

The regression also includes a series of factors that conventionally predict participation over and above SES and demographic characteristics. These are the controls needed for a fully specified model. The first of these variables is whether the respondent actively practices a religion, which has a long-standing link to participation because of the opportunities for civic learning (Jones-Correa and Leal 2001). The next is the degree of attachment to the neighborhood, which measures a sense of investment in local decision making from the question that asks, “I would like to ask you how strongly you feel you belong to your immediate neighborhood,” with responses 1 = not at all strongly, 2 = not very strongly, 3 = strongly, and 4 = very strongly. There is also a question on service satisfaction, in this case for the police service, with responses of 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = fairly dissatisfied, 3 = neither satisfied or dissatisfied, 4 = fairly satisfied, and 5 = very satisfied. Here the assumption is that dissatisfaction encourages voice (Lyons, Lowery, and DeHoog 1992). As with many studies of participation, efficacy is a predictor, measured by the question, “Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?” with responses of 1 = definitely disagree, 2 = tend to disagree, 3 = tend to agree, and 4 = definitely agree (Pollock 1983). Finally, following Putnam (2000), the number of hours respondents report watching television during weekdays should reduce participation and group activity. Appendix 2 contains the descriptive statistics of these variables.

Table 4 presents the results from a probit regression on the two dependent variables. These coefficients have been standardized in a dprobit model—they report the marginal effects so that it is possible to compare

**Table 4.** Determinants of Citizen Governance and Civic Participation

	Probit model, clustered robust standard errors in parentheses	
	Citizen Governance	Civic Activities
Age	-0.00206 (-0.0019)	0.00438 -0.0031
Age squared	2.95E-05 (-2.1E-05)	-4.7E-05 (-3.6E-05)
Income	0.00123 (-0.0016)	0.00706*** (-0.0027)
Unemployed	0.019 (-0.029)	0.0917* (-0.052)
Degree	0.0290*** (-0.011)	0.0916*** (-0.017)
No qualifications	-0.0454*** (-0.0096)	-0.120*** (-0.015)
Ethnic minority	-0.00669 (-0.015)	-0.112*** (-0.021)
Practice religion	0.0494*** (-0.01)	0.0492*** (-0.015)
Female	0.00297 (-0.0076)	0.0727*** (-0.015)
Neighborhood attachment	0.0179*** (-0.0049)	0.0276*** (-0.0083)
Service satisfaction	-0.00921*** (-0.0035)	-0.0310*** (-0.0061)
Local efficacy	-0.0297*** (-0.0047)	-0.0387*** (-0.0081)
Hours watching TV	-0.00231 (-0.0014)	-0.00717*** (-0.0026)
Observations	5,784	5,784
Pseudo R2	.0567	.0545

\*\*\* p < .01; \*\* p < .05; \* p < .1.

the size of the coefficients between the variables as well as across the two regressions. The table controls for the clustering of the error terms in local authority areas and presents robust standard errors.

The table shows the superior representative character of citizen governance when all the SES, demographic, and attitudinal have been controlled for. The findings are that age is not different or significant across the categories, but that income is a positive and significant weak predictor for civic activities but not for governance. Being unemployed moderately reduces civic participation but has no effect on citizen governance. Education is a significant predictor for both categories of participation, but the coefficients on these two terms for the civic side are nearly three times the size of their citizen governance equivalents. There is no bias in ethnic representation for citizen governance activities, in contrast to the negative and strong significant coefficient on the civic side. It is for women that civic actions come into their own: They are moderately overrepresented for civic activities, whereas there is no difference between men and women for citizen governance. Thus, for the key SES and other underrepresented categories, citizen governance proves itself to be more representative than

civic activities when all the predictors are controlled for in a statistical model.

Even when regressions are performed on the different elements of citizen governance, such as health, education, and housing participation, they show the same pattern of results. One of the main discriminators of citizen governance is education in the form of lack of qualifications and/or having higher education. Education remains significant across all of these seven subregressions, with the other SES elements usually not proving to be statistically significant. The main individual finding that stands out is that women are more represented in groups representing education services, which is consistent with other research on volunteering (Lowndes 2001, 534; 2004).

**Governance in Deprived Areas**

Finally, it is possible to examine the presence of citizen governance and civic activities by examining the kinds of areas in which they occur. Here the argument is that citizen governance should be able to extend participation in areas that have less rich civic resources. The data can be categorized by the extent to which an area is deprived, its IMD (Indices of Multiple Deprivation) score, the official index of deprivation.<sup>5</sup> Because of different ways of measuring deprivation in Wales, the figures are for the English data only. This smaller sample means the numbers of observations are slightly different from earlier tables. Tables 5A and 5B show the variation according to the quintiles of the key deprivation indicator. What is of interest is the extent to which the involvement of people in citizen and civic actions differs according to the category of ward. But from these figures, it seems that citizen governance does not reap its service advantages in a way that is different from civic acts. Both have a U-shaped

function, with higher representation in the least and most deprived places.

**Conclusions**

If there is one message that emerges from the long years of research on political participation, it is that its social bases are very well entrenched. Patterns of involvement remain fairly constant over time and vary systematically across different types of people in a society, largely according to income and education. The introduction of new kinds of citizen representation by the U.K. government for the general population

---

If there is one message that emerges from the long years of research on political participation, it is that its social bases are very well entrenched.

---

in England and Wales is intended to shift the balance of participation. The aim is to make participation less reliant on conventional forms of political engagement so that it better represents the population through more direct connection to

service users and attention to populations normally excluded from direct involvement. On the other hand, it would be wrong to expect these new mechanisms to be radically different in makeup from other sorts of participation. The social structures that give rise to different skills of potential and actual participants are likely to be replicated in new forms of governance. So, it is more a question of small degrees of difference. The opportunity for policy makers lies in responding to the marginal and precise differences that alternative avenues of recruitment possess.

The results from the Citizenship Survey are consistent with this incremental line of reasoning. In terms of descriptive statistics, there are variations in representation across the main categories between civic participation and citizen governance, but not across all dimensions of SES. The main advantage of citizen governance is for young people and ethnic minority communities.

**Table 5A** Citizen Governance by Quintiles of Deprived Wards

	0.59–8.35 (least deprived)	8.35–13.72	13.72–21.16	21.16–34.21	34.21–86.36 (most deprived)	Total
No citizen governance	91.6	90.1	91.3	93.4	92.6	91.8
Citizen governance	8.4	9.9	8.7	6.6	7.4	8.2
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Observations	1,904	1,872	1,892	1,858	1,627	9,153

**Table 5B** Civic Activities by Quintiles of Deprived Wards

	0.59–8.35 (least deprived)	8.35–13.72	13.72–21.16	21.16–34.21	34.21–86.36 (most deprived)	Total
No civic activities	70.1	71.2	72.6	74.9	77.3	73.1
Civic activities	29.9	28.8	27.4	25.1	27.7	26.9
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Observations	1,902	1,869	1,890	1,855	1,623	9,139

The results are stronger in the regression analysis, with SES variables tending to influence civic participation more than citizen governance. On the other hand, in terms of location, citizen governance activities are not represented differently in deprived areas.

For both academics and policy makers, the critical finding is not that one kind of participation is necessarily superior to another, but that each involves a different kind of underrepresented citizen. There are many routes, then, to wider citizen participation. Policy makers who believe there is a magic formula to get around the classic dilemmas of modern democracy will be disappointed. The long-engrained patterns of social economic status are hard to shift. But those who wish to understand the fine-grained nature of the levers they possess will be encouraged to examine and recalibrate new forms of direct citizen contact with bureaucracy. In particular, these mechanisms will allow them to make contact with groups that have been previously excluded from decision making.

The final message for policy makers is the relatively high numbers involved in citizen governance: 8.3 percent of the population is engaged directly with public management. Moreover, there are new people brought into participation from this route—the 3.6 percent who have not engaged in civic participation. These citizens, who are more likely to be younger and from ethnic minority communities, may help practitioners and politicians compensate for recent declines in conventional types of political activity among these groups. Overall, citizen governance can help redress some of the long-running biases in political participation.

## Notes

1. In 2005, the survey sampled from the post code address file, using a two-stage sampling procedure to select the addresses. In the first stage, a random sample of census area statistics (CAS) wards was selected, and then wards were selected in a second stage. All tables and regression results are adjusted by the application of a weight derived by a software program, AnswerTree, which applies an algorithm, CHAID, to look at the statistically significant differences between responding and nonresponding households (see Michaelson et al. 2005). This allows an inference to be made as to the population level, which is particularly important for research on participation. However, estimates using both weighted and unweighted data yield substantively the same results for both the descriptive statistics and the regressions, with the exception that age is a significant predictor for civic activities (see Appendix 3).
2. These figures are very similar to the unweighted scores.
3. The difference between the total of 8.3 percent and

8.5 percent comes from the 17 respondents who said no to “no activities” but did not indicate any of the items in the previous citizen governance questions.

4. This study was not survey based but examined the availability of positions in deprived communities, so it is more illuminative rather than strictly comparable.
5. The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a composite deprivation index for areas that brings together data from seven domains of deprivation.

## References

- Barnes, Marian. 2000. Researching Public Participation. In *Renewing Local Democracy? The Modernisation Agenda in British Local Government*, edited by Lawrence Pratchett. London: Routledge.
- Barnes, Marian, Janet Newman, and Helen Sullivan. 2007. *Power, Participation and Political Renewal: Case Studies in Public Participation*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Barnes, Samuel H., and Max Kaase. 1979. *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Baumgartner, Frank, and Jack Walker. 1988. Survey Research and Membership in Voluntary Associations. *American Journal of Political Science* 32(4): 908–28.
- Bennett, Stephen Earl, and David Resnick. 1989. The Implications of Nonvoting for Democracy in the United States. *American Journal of Political Science* 34(3): 771–802.
- Brannan, Tessa, Peter John, and Gerry Stoker, eds. 2006. *Re-Energizing Citizenship: Strategies for Civil Renewal*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Bryer, Thomas A. 2007. Toward a Relevant Agenda for Responsive Public Administration. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 17(3): 479–500.
- Clarke, John, Janet E. Newman, Nick Smith, Elizabeth Vidler, and Louise Westmarland. 2007. *Creating Citizen-Consumers: Changing Publics and Changing Public Services*. London: Sage Publications.
- Cohen, Aaron, Eran Vigoda, and Aliza Samorly. 2001. Analysis of the Mediating Effect of Personal-Psychological Variables on the Relationship between Socioeconomic Status and Political Participation: A Structural Equations Framework. *Political Psychology* 22(4): 727–57.
- Cooper, Terry L., Thomas A. Bryer, and Jack W. Meek. 2006. Citizen-Centered Collaborative Public Management. Special issue, *Public Administration Review* 66: 76–88.
- Dahl, Robert A. 1953. *On Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- . 1989. *Democracy and Its Critics*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Dalton, Russell J., Bruce E. Cain, and Susan E. Scarrow. 2003. Democratic Publics and Democratic Institutions. In *Democracy Transformed?* edited by Bruce E. Cain, Russell J. Dalton, and Susan E. Scarrow, 250–75. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



- Fung, Archon. 2006. Varieties of Participation in Complex Governance. Special issue, *Public Administration Review* 66: 66–75.
- Green, Donald P., and Alan S. Gerber. 2004. *Get Out the Vote! How to Increase Voter Turnout*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Hero, Rodney. 1998. *Faces of Inequality: Social Diversity in American Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Highton, Benjamin, and Raymond E. Wolfinger. 2001. The Political Implications of Higher Turnout. *British Journal of Political Science* 31(1): 179–223.
- Jennings, M. Kent, Jan van Deth, Samuel H. Barnes, Dieter Fuchs, Felix J. Heunks, Jacques Thomassen, et al. 1989. *Continuities in Political Action: A Longitudinal Study of Political Orientations in Three Western Democracies*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Jones-Correa, Michael A., and David L. Leal. 2001. Political Participation: Does Religion Matter? *Political Research Quarterly* 54(4): 751–70.
- Lijphart, Arendt. 1997. Unequal Participation: Democracy's Unresolved Dilemma. *American Political Science Review* 91(1): 1–14.
- . 2001. Compulsory Voting Is the Best Way to Keep Democracy Strong. In *Points of View*, edited by R. E. DiClerico and A. S. Hammock, 74–77. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Lowndes, Vivien. 2001. Women and Social Capital: A Comment on Hall's "Social Capital in Britain." *British Journal of Political Science* 30(3): 533–37.
- . 2004. Getting On or Getting By? Women, Social Capital and Political Participation. *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 6(1): 47–66.
- Lyons, W. E., David Lowery, and Ruth Hoogland De-Hoog. 1992. *The Politics of Disatisfaction: Citizens, Services, and Urban Institutions*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- Mathur, Navdeep, and Chris Skelcher. 2007. Evaluating Democratic Performance: Methodologies for Assessing the Relationship between Network Governance and Citizens. *Public Administration Review* 67(2): 228–37.
- Meier, Kenneth M., and Laurence J. O'Toole, Jr. 2006. *Bureaucracy in a Democratic State: A Governance Perspective*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Michaelson, Juliet, Kevin Pickering, Natasha Wood, and Shaun Scholes. 2005. *2005 Home Office Survey: Technical Report* London: National Centre for Social Research.
- Milewa, Timothy, Stephen Harrison, Waqar Ahmad, and Philip Tovey. 2006. Citizens' Participation in Primary Healthcare Planning: Innovative Citizenship Practice in Empirical Perspective. *Critical Public Health* 12(1): 39–53.
- O'Leary, Rosemary, Catherine Gerard, and Lisa Blomgren Bingham. 2006. Introduction to the Symposium on Collaborative Public Management. Special issue, *Public Administration Review* 66: 6–9.
- Parry, Garaint, George Moyser, and Neil Day. 1992. *Political Participation and Democracy in Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pattie, Charles, Patrick Seyd, and Paul Whiteley. 2004. *Citizenship in Britain: Values, Participation and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pitkin, Hanna Fenichel. 1967. *The Concept of Representation*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Pollock, Philip H., III 1983. The Participatory Consequences of Internal and External Political Efficacy: A Research Note. *Western Political Quarterly* 36(3): 400–409.
- Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Roberts, Nancy. 2004. Public Deliberation in an Age of Direct Citizen Participation. *American Review of Public Administration* 34(4): 315–53.
- . 2008. *The Age of Direct Citizen Participation*. New York: M. E. Sharpe.
- Rosenstone, Steven J., and John Mark Hansen. 2003. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan.
- Russell, Andrew, Edward Fieldhouse, Kingsley Purdam, and Virinder Kalra. 2002. *Voter Engagement and Young People*. London: Electoral Commission.
- Schwindt-Bayer, Leslie, and William Mishler. 2005. An Integrated Model of Women's Representation. *Journal of Politics* 67(2): 407–28.
- Serra, George. 1995. Citizen-Initiated Contact and Satisfaction with Bureaucracy: A Multivariate Analysis. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 5(2): 175–88.
- Sharp, Elaine B. 1982. Citizen-Initiated Contacting of Government Officials and Socioeconomic Status: Determining the Relationship and Accounting for It. *American Political Science Review* 76(1): 109–15.
- Skidmore, Paul, Kirsten Bound, and Hannah Lownsbrough. 2006. *Community Participation: Who Benefits?* York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Thompson, Dennis. 1983. Bureaucracy and Democracy. In *Democratic Theory and Practice*, edited by Graeme Duncan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Verba, Sidney, and Norman H. Nie. 1972. *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Verba, Sidney, Norman H. Nie, and Jae-on Kim. 1987. *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, Henry E. Brady, and Norman H. Nie. 1993. Citizen Activity: Who Participates? What Do They Say? *American Political Science Review* 87(2): 303–18.
- Wolfinger, Raymond E., and Steven J. Rosenstone. 1980. *Who Votes?* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

**Appendix 1.** Citizen Governance and Civic Participation by Key Demographic Characteristics

	Citizen governance	Civic Participation	Total
Income < 5,000	20.8	20.2	23.4
Income 5,000–9,999	16.9	16.5	19.4
Income 10,000–14,999	12.6	14.5	15.1
Income 14,000–19,999	11.7	12.0	11.8
Income 20,000–29,999	18.5	18.7	15.4
Income 30,000–49,999	13.8	12.8	10.8
Income 50,000–74,999	3.2	3.0	2.4
Income > 75,000	2.5	2.4	1.7
No paid work	9.1	10.6	11.7
Age (mean)	44.9	44.9	46.4
Nonwhite (BME)	10.4	7.3	10.3
No qualifications	10.3	10.5	17.3
Qualifications below degree	49.5	48.4	48.9
Degree qualification	29.9	28.7	19.2
Nonowner	13.9	16.9	18.4
Woman	53.0	54.6	51.6

**Appendix 3.** Unweighted Results for Table 4

	Citizen Governance	Civic Activities
Age	–0.00163 (0.0019)	0.00627** (0.0029)
Age squared	0.0000236 (0.000021)	–0.0000689** (0.000034)
Income	0.00185 (0.0015)	0.00648** (0.0026)
Unemployed	0.0466 (0.032)	0.0852* (0.045)
Degree	0.0314*** (0.010)	0.0849*** (0.017)
No qualifications	–0.0484*** (0.0090)	–0.132*** (0.015)
Ethnic minority	–0.00730 (0.014)	–0.119*** (0.018)
Practice religion	0.0534*** (0.0094)	0.0486*** (0.014)
Female	0.00814 (0.0074)	0.0759*** (0.014)
Neighborhood attachment	0.0200*** (0.0048)	0.0292*** (0.0077)
Service satisfaction	–0.0103*** (0.0031)	–0.0323*** (0.0057)
Local efficacy	–0.0349*** (0.0040)	–0.0472*** (0.0077)
Hours watching TV	v2 –0.00190 (0.0014)	–0.00718*** (0.0020)
Observations	5,784	5,784
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.07	.06

\*\*\* p < .01; \*\* p < .05; \* p < .1.

**Appendix 2.** Descriptive Statistics of the Main Variables

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Citizen governance	9,691	0.0870911	0.2819831	0	1
Civic participation	9,677	0.2652682	0.4414987	0	1
Age	9,691	49.63626	18.38318	0	100
Age squared	9,691	2801.665	1920.582	0	10,000
Income	8,802	4.590548	2.834614	0	14
Unemployed	9,691	0.0224951	0.1482948	0	1
Degree	7,639	0.224244	0.4171108	0	1
No qualifications	9,691	0.1742854	0.3793743	0	1
Ethnic minority	9,689	0.0832903	0.2763348	0	1
Practice religion	8,307	0.3493439	0.4767915	0	1
Female	9,691	0.5585595	0.4965846	0	1
Neighborhood attachment	9,628	3.022954	0.8640848	1	4
Service satisfaction	9,379	3.136262	1.178731	1	5
Local efficacy	9,672	2.855769	0.9416762	1	5
Hours watching TV	9,656	3.654722	3.197857	0	24

Copyright of *Public Administration Review* is the property of Blackwell Publishing Limited and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.