

Poor People's Participation: Neoliberal Institutions or Left Turn?

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Abstract

While comparative political studies of voting and protest abound, little attention has been paid to nonelectoral and noncontentious participation, particularly at the local level. Who participates in local associations and why? We study the individual-level determinants of local civic participation in Bolivia to ask: Does local engagement reproduce the high socioeconomic bias predicted by resource theory? Did the left turn in government change the predictors of participation? Contrary to expectations, we find there is no high-class bias in Bolivia's local civic engagement. Moreover, the levels and predictors of local civic engagement have not changed after the left turn. We contribute to the comparative politics literature by conceptualizing *local programmatic participation* and showing that the resource theory does not apply to this type of participation in a developing context. We argue that *need*—rather than *plenty*—prompts people to participate. Our findings are relevant to participation studies in developing societies.

Keywords

Latin American politics, decentralization, quality of democracy, survey design, subnational politics

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Introduction

What moves people to action? Who is more likely to participate in public life and why? These two questions have been extensively researched with reference to political participation in the United States and Europe (Bekkers, 2005; Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2012; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). The scholarly consensus is that citizens endowed with the highest levels of socioeconomic capital participate the most, both in elections and in local institutions such as school boards (Putnam, 2000; Verba et al., 1995). In fact, one of the most systematic social science findings is that in liberal democracies, the participatory process exhibits a high-class bias that exacerbates socioeconomic inequalities (Verba, Nie, & Kim, 1978; Verba et al., 1995, pp. 186, 509-533).¹

In the recent past, networks of local community associations have proliferated throughout Latin America (Auyero, 2000; Collier & Handlin, 2009). The new local community associations initially sought to address the needs created by economic crises and market reforms. But as the old linkages provided by unions and traditional parties severed (Morgan, 2011), the associational networks have increasingly provided alternative linkages between state and civil society (Collier & Handlin, 2009). Parallel to the proliferation of associational networks, institutional innovations for participation were adopted by the region's leftist governments to promote social inclusion and participation by the poor. These included participatory budgeting (Abers, 2000; Baiocchi, Heller, & Silva, 2011; Goldfrank, 2011; Wampler, 2007), local health councils (Avritzer, 2009), national health conferences articulating local and regional councils (Pogrebinschi & Samuels, 2014), water committees (Abers & Keck, 2013), regional development councils (McNulty, 2011), local development communes (Smilde & Hellinger, 2011), and prior consultations (Flemmer & Schilling-Vacaflor, 2016). Who participates in these local civic associations is an important question, both for theory and politics. Will the representation of interests emerging from the new associational networks reproduce the inequalities and distortions resulting from the socioeconomic structure, as some recent studies have suggested (Dunning, 2009; Seawright, 2009)? Or could we expect the left turn in politics to cancel out the putative resource bias in civic engagement?

Although most of the political development literature focuses on electoral participation or contentious politics, we know little about the individual determinants of civic engagement in developing societies. In this article, we analyze a dimension of participation that, while researched in the context of developed societies, has been scantily studied in developing countries: *local programmatic participation* or civic participation in local programmatic

associations. We study this type of participation through a long series of comparable and representative surveys that capture individual engagement in local programmatic associations in Bolivia, from 1998 to 2014.

Contrary to the findings regarding local community participation in developed democracies, we find that in Bolivia, low-income and indigenous groups are more likely to participate in local programmatic associational life. In addition, we find no evidence that participation from these groups increased after the left turn in Bolivia. In fact, we attribute the higher levels of participation by the poor in Bolivia to reforms undertaken in the neoliberal period, during the 1990s. Our results point to the importance of decentralizing policies that sought to empower local community associations and encourage the participation of otherwise disenfranchised groups. Our main argument is that civic associational life, largely driven by *need*, has been pro-poor even before the advent of the new left in Latin America.²

Bolivia constitutes an ideal case to study civic associational life because a series of national laws have sought to promote civic participation at the local level.³ Although individual participation in local associations remains voluntary, national legislation has mandated the creation of local programmatic associations such as school councils, neighborhood councils, and oversight committees in all municipalities. For the purposes of our study, what matters is that these legal requirements *evenly* affect municipalities across the country, regardless of their size, level of development, or rurality. Moreover, Bolivia's left turn in 2005, with the election of Evo Morales to the presidency and the ascension of the MAS (*Movimiento al Socialismo*) to power, allows us to study the impact of a left turn on local civic associational life separate from the introduction of participatory laws.

Our article makes several contributions to the political science literature on participation. First, it focuses on a type of participation that has been largely overlooked in developing countries: *local programmatic participation*. Our conceptualization and measurement of local programmatic participation can be applied to other countries. Second, our study calls into question the applicability of participation theories that originated in the study of developed societies. We show that these theories, most notably the resource theory of participation, cannot explain the individual-level determinants of participation in Bolivia. We suspect our results would hold in other developing countries that have created institutions for citizens' participation after decentralization reforms (Heller, 2001). Third, we find more continuity in the patterns of civic associational life than the left turn literature would have led us to expect. We argue that the institutional environment created for participation in the neoliberal period is more significant in explaining the individual-level socioeconomic determinants of civic participation in Bolivia than the left turn in government.⁴

The article is organized in five remaining sections. In the next section, we provide a definition of local programmatic participation and briefly discuss the literature's expectations regarding the socioeconomic level of participants. In the "Latin America's Left Turn and Popular Participation" section, we analyze the relationship between Latin America's left turn and local participation. The "Bolivia: Institutional and Political Changes Fostering Local Programmatic Participation" section justifies our case selection. The "Variables, Models, and Data Analysis" section presents our methods and analysis. The final section concludes by summarizing our findings, the scope conditions of our argument, and directions for future research.

Local Programmatic Participation

More than 50 years ago, as part of the behavioral turn in the social sciences, a prolific research agenda emerged on the individual predictors of political participation. Drawing from public opinion surveys, scholars focused attention mostly on developed societies (Almond & Verba, 1963; Verba et al., 1995). The resource theory of participation stated that individuals' income and education were powerful predictors of civic participation (Almond, 1980, p. 23; Verba et al., 1995, p. 420).

Meanwhile, the early research on political participation in nondemocratic, and developing countries yielded less uniform results, which we attribute to concept stretching (for a summary of these early research findings, see Booth, 1979, pp. 32-45 in particular). Political participation was defined too broadly, as to encompass both electoral (voting, interaction with elected officials, and political party and campaign activity) and community-oriented behavior (civic and social activism), as well as contentious (such as strikes, protests, riots, or land invasions) and noncontentious forms of participation (such as community improvement participation, organizational activism, interaction with public officials, and voting; Seligson & Booth, 1976, p. 101).

In recent years, greater conceptual precision regarding political participation, operationalized as voter turnout, has produced more conclusive results, whether the focus has been on individual, institutional, or structural-level variables (Fornos, Power, & Garand, 2004; Pérez-Linán, 2001; Remmer, 2009). The literature on protest and contentious participation in the developing world has also grown and sharpened its findings regarding who joins in protests and why (Boulding, 2010; Moseley, 2014; Riofrancos, 2014; Simmons, 2016). Yet, relatively little attention has been paid to the determinants of nonelectoral and noncontentious modes of participation, on which we focus our analysis.

Within nonelectoral and noncontentious participation, we schematically distinguish among four types of local associations, depending on their explicit

Table 1. Typology of Local Associations.

Type of goals\relationship to the state	Autonomous from the state	State-sponsored and/or state-sanctioned institution
Programmatic	PTA's Neighborhood councils Local chapters of professional associations	Participatory budgeting Prior consultation Local health councils <i>Comunas</i>
Nonprogrammatic	Swimming clubs Religious groups	Local public radios

PTA = parent teacher association.

goals and relationship to the state (see Table 1).⁵ The first distinction is between programmatic and nonprogrammatic local associations. We define local programmatic associations as those whose main goal is to arrive at collective decisions regarding the management and distribution of social services, such as local budgets, schools, or health clinics.⁶ For example, parents' associations involved in the management of schools or participatory budgeting institutions designed to determine the allocation of local budgets would all seek to arrive at collective decisions to influence the distribution and management of social services and would be considered programmatic associations. A professional association or a labor union negotiating on a public good for all its members, such as indexed salary increases, would be another example of a programmatic association.

However, local associations whose main mission does not explicitly involve arriving at collective decisions regarding the distribution of social services are considered nonprogrammatic. Examples of nonprogrammatic institutions are religious groups, sports clubs, or local radios. This is not to say that these associations cannot be catalysts for the distribution of social services (religious groups would be the most notable example).⁷ However, to us, they are nonprogrammatic associations in that deciding over the distribution of social services is not their primary goal.

The second distinction is between associations that are mostly autonomous from the state, and those that are instead sponsored or heavily sanctioned by the state. An institution that relies on the state for its continued operation or that would not function without state sanctioning would be considered to be state-sponsored. Collier and Handlin (2009, p. 37) define state dependence "as when associations receive funding from the state, implement state programs, or were partly founded by state actors." Of course, state autonomy operates on a spectrum, and all associations require some amount of state acceptance or regulation, and this does not preclude *interactions* with

the state. For example, depending on their relation to the state, local charters of programmatic associations such as unions could fall in either column of Table 1. In the context of state corporatism, labor unions are mostly dependent on the state and their local chapters would fall on the right column; while under societal corporatism, unions are more autonomous from the state and would belong in the left column (Collier & Collier, 1979; Schmitter, 1971). Among nonprogrammatic associations, social clubs may require official registration with the state, and religious groups might certainly lobby the state to incorporate their interests, but for our purposes, when associations are autonomous from the state they are not dependent on the state's blessings for their existence and day-to-day operations.⁸ Table 1 provides examples of local associations in each quadrant.

We analyze civic participation in local associations that pertain to the top left quadrant: that is, state-autonomous and programmatic local associations, thereby excluding participation in religious groups, sports clubs, and political parties. In contrast, the forms of associational activities that Putnam (1993, 2000) studies lie in the bottom left quadrant; whereas the forms of associational life analyzed in Verba et al. (1995) we would argue suffer from conceptual stretching and can be found in all quadrants.⁹

We define local programmatic participation as nonovertly contentious, voluntary, individual, and locally organized behavior that aims to influence the distribution or management of social services, and that it is not directly implemented or overseen by the state.¹⁰ While conflict always underlies social interaction, local programmatic participation is nonovertly contentious in that it does not seek to promote social mobilization or protest against the state or local authorities. It is voluntary behavior and receives no pay (or only token financial compensation). Horizontal linkages among the majority of the participants predominate.

Local programmatic participation, as defined here, is part of what scholars have alternatively called civic engagement (Putnam, 1993), social activism (Seligson & Booth, 1976, p. 97), volunteering (Schmitt, 2010, p. 1443), or programmatic associational participation (Dunning, 2009). Compared with these more encompassing concepts, two important features of our definition are that it pertains to the *local* level (i.e., the level of the municipality, village, or town) and takes place in *programmatic institutions* oriented toward the distribution of *social services*.

We are interested in locally organized associational life because it is at the local level that citizens interact with each other and “street-level bureaucrats” (Lipsky, 2010). These interactions are highly consequential to individuals' socialization into the political system. Moreover, by focusing on local participation, we can bracket the discussion over the relationship between

participation and representation, since at the local level, the aggregation of individual preferences does not often require of representative intermediaries.

Furthermore, we are interested in participation in programmatic associations because in developing countries, where state capacity is low, collective decision making regarding the management and distribution of social services is consequential to individuals' quality of life and opportunities, much more so than in countries where state capacity is high and a stronger public safety net is likely to exist.

Focusing on participation in the nonelectoral arena and with regard to contemporary Latin America, the literature presents us with conflicting accounts of who is more likely to participate. On one hand, scholars find evidence matching the American political participation literature (Dunning, 2009; Seawright, 2009). In their edited volume on popular politics and participation in Latin American metropolitan areas, Collier, Handlin, and their collaborators (2009) find that the middle and upper classes have a significantly higher chance of participating in the associational networks of Buenos Aires, Santiago, Caracas, and Lima. On the other hand, there are studies that stress that the neediest, those with the lowest levels of economic and human capital, are driving increased local participation in participatory budgeting institutions. These scholars highlight the opportunities that the new local participatory institutions open up for the lower classes (among others, see Abers, 2000; Baiocchi et al., 2011; Goldfrank, 2010, 2011; Wampler, 2007).

These contradictory findings may stem from the study of different types of institutions and associations. For example, whereas Collier and collaborators focus on community-based associations (such as neighborhood, anticrime, food distribution, place-of-origin, producers, or parents' associations), the literature on participatory budgeting studies an institution explicitly designed to address and ameliorate structural inequalities. Moreover, Collier and Handlin (2009) solely study civic participation in urban settings, which might be a second source of contradictory findings. Cleary and Stokes (2006, pp. 130-138), for example, find that participation in civic associations is higher in rural (and less developed) localities. Higher levels of development, they argue, lead to a lower incidence of clientelism and higher levels of individual skepticism and consequently to lower rates of civic participation. And Remmer (2009) shows that, at least for voter turnout, community size is negatively related to participation rates. In other words, the high-class bias in civic participation that Collier et al. (2009) find in urban areas may be absent once rural communities are included in the sample. Hence, the first hypothesis we test is whether *higher socioeconomic status results in higher levels of local community participation* (H1), as the resource theory of participation and studies of participation in urban areas of Latin America would lead us to expect.

Latin America's Left Turn and Popular Participation

Local participation has expanded significantly both by default and by design in Latin America. On one hand, the withdrawal of the state from large sectors of the economy and from the provision of social services, which accompanied the process of market economic reforms during the 1980s and 1990s, left a void that local community collective action, particularly in poor communities, had to address. Even before the enactment of market reforms, Seligson (1978) found a relationship between rural economic underdevelopment and high levels of group activism. In his study of Costa Rica, he concluded, "In areas where the infrastructure is poorly developed and government services are minimal, individuals are compelled to participate politically if they hope to see some improvement" (pp. 150-152). Wolford (2010) has more recently argued that the Brazilian state's withdrawal from the issue of land reform has allowed the Rural Landless Peoples' Movement "to participate in the selection of properties for distribution and beneficiaries as well as in the day-to-day running of life on the settlements" (p. 94). This is an example of what she calls participation "by default" (Wolford, 2010, pp. 98-100). Moreover, added to the state's withdrawal from many of its economic and regulatory roles, the collapse of some of the political party systems of the region in the late 1990s, such as in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela (Morgan, 2011) amplified the need for new forms of linkage between state and civil society, and local programmatic participation has been one such linkage.

However, processes of democratization, decentralization, and the left turn have changed the political opportunity structure for local participation. First, the process of democratization lifted significant obstacles to effective participation in local politics and civic life. Second, the process of government decentralization that swept the region in the 1980s and 1990s, placed more responsibilities, and sometimes resources and authority, in local governments, which thus became significant targets and sites of collective action aimed at affecting the distribution of social services (Falleti, 2005, 2010). This was the effect of the decentralization laws of the 1990s in Bolivia (Faguet, 2012). Finally, the left turn has emphasized the importance of popular participation, particularly at the local level.

In the last two decades, the political left in Latin America amassed a significant number of subnational and national electoral victories. By 2009, "nearly two-thirds of Latin Americans lived under some form of left-leaning national government" (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011, p. 1). One feature that is common to all leftist governments has been their emphasis on political inclusion and *participation*. According to Levitsky and Roberts (2011), "In

the political realm, the Left seeks to enhance the participation of underprivileged groups and erode hierarchical forms of domination that marginalize popular sectors” (p. 5). Similarly, Weyland, Madrid, and Hunter (2010) evaluate the recent leftist governments of Latin America by the extent to which they promoted economic development, social equity, *and* political participation (p. 13). As Beasley-Murray, Cameron, and Hershberg (2010, p. 8) point out, the promotion of participatory mechanisms to affect representative democracy is an important institutional commonality of the leftist governments of the region.

Indeed, we find that all Latin American leftist governments have encouraged *local* participation.¹¹ Here we study only one aspect of such participation: civic engagement in local programmatic associations, recognizing that the institutional creation promoted by these governments affected a broader range of participatory avenues than just the associations studied here.¹² And yet, local programmatic participation is an important political and policy phenomenon in the region. Are there variations in the patterns of citizens’ voluntary local participation that could be attributed to the left turn? To put it differently, we are interested to test whether, as the left turn literature would expect: *A left turn in national government increases local programmatic participation, especially by individuals of lower socioeconomic status* (H2).

Bolivia: Institutional and Political Changes Fostering Local Programmatic Participation

According to Murillo, Oliveros, and Vaishnav (2011, p. 52), the leftward tilt in Latin American politics that got its first footing with the election of Hugo Chávez and gathered strength with leftist national victories in Chile, Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, reached “*full speed*” in 2005 with the election of *cocalero* leader Evo Morales in Bolivia. The election of Morales to the presidency of Bolivia, which was followed by more leftist victories across the continent, made clear that what was by then characterized as a “pink tide” had indeed become a “left turn.”

Evo Morales, an indigenous union leader, rose to the presidency heading the mass-movement party *Movimiento Al Socialismo* (MAS; Anria, 2010, 2013). The case of Bolivia is paradigmatic, however, in that profound institutional reforms were designed and implemented *before* the election of Evo Morales to the presidency. Bolivia thus provides an excellent case to analyze the degree to which the left turn, per se, had an effect on local community participation. In other words, Bolivia grants us the opportunity of separating the effect of the left turn in politics from that of institutional creation for participation, two events that are confounded in other countries that turned to the left.

Before the election of Evo Morales, the Law of Popular Participation (LPP) of 1994 significantly changed the Bolivian institutional landscape. The LPP decentralized fiscal and political power from the national government to the municipalities, redrew the Bolivian map by almost tripling the number of municipalities—increasing them from 117 to 315—and designed an institutional framework at the municipal level for civic participation and the monitoring of local authorities. The LPP assigned 20% of national tax revenues to municipal governments along with responsibility for maintenance and construction of schools, health clinics, secondary roads, micro-irrigation systems, and sports facilities (Kohl, 2003, p. 156).¹³ The law created an institutional framework for participatory planning by neighborhood and indigenous organizations. It recognized community-based organizations, which included urban neighborhood organizations, indigenous organizations, and peasant unions. In 3 years between 1994 and 1997, the government registered almost 15,000 grassroots territorial organizations! At the municipal level, these organizations were charged with the responsibility of crafting annual operating plans and 5-year municipal development plans, overseeing projects, and mobilizing community labor for the construction and maintenance of public works (Kohl, 2003, p. 156). The law also created oversight committees with members drawn from the community, with the power to veto municipal budgets and recall mayors.¹⁴ Many scholars agree this law was largely responsible for providing the favorable institutional context in which the MAS could ascend to power from the municipal to the national level (Collins, 2006, p. 412; Kohl, 2003, p. 162; Van Cott, 2003, pp. 755-756; 2008, p. 186).¹⁵ In 2003, after the presidential elections of 2002 in which Evo Morales had come in second, less than 2% behind the winner, geographer Benjamin Kohl provided a vivid description of the political effects of the law, “the LPP”—he wrote—

has been successful in increasing the participation of *campesinos* and other underrepresented groups in planning at the municipal level. Even if the law does not live up to the promises of its boosters, it still is significant for having brought government resources to large areas of the country for the first time. Perhaps more significant, however, are the ways that the LPP has changed the expectations that many Bolivians have of their government. The LPP and the accompanying decentralization have increased . . . a growing grassroots democratic opposition to the traditional urban political parties. (Kohl, 2003, p. 162)

Just 2 months after the creation of the LPP, the Bolivian Congress passed the Law of Education Reform (Law 1565 of 1994). According to this law, Popular Participation was one of the four pillars in the organization of the

educational system (together with the organization of the curriculum, administration, and human resources). Interestingly, such popular participation in the educational system was superimposed on the territorial oversight committees created by the LPP. The oversight committees were charged with creating local school councils, with equal representation of men and women from the community. Among its legal responsibilities, the local parents' educational councils would respond to citizens' demands to improve efficiency and quality in education and through monitoring would curb corruption (Article 6). This law meant new and effective mechanisms for parents' participation in schools, who until then had had a very limited role in them, and with long-lasting consequences for civil society participation in educational and local affairs (Veliz Córdova, 2011).¹⁶

Opportunities for local participation were reinforced in other national laws including the Law of Administrative Decentralization of 1995 and the Law of National Dialogue of 2000. After the election of Evo Morales to the presidency, in 2005, further institutional reforms for local participation were adopted, most notably in the Constitutional Reform of 2009. Examples of these reforms are the recognition of indigenous collective rights such as the right to prior consultation and legal pluralism and the creation of the national biometric registry of voters, which granted political citizenship to previously excluded groups.

The Bolivian case is paradigmatic in that the availability of local participatory institutions has been practically constant throughout the period under consideration, 1998 to 2014, allowing us to assess the effect of the 2005 left turn change on local associational life. At the same time, it is worth highlighting that while Bolivian legislation has ruled on the existence of school parents' associations and neighborhood committees at the local level, individuals' participation in such institutions remains *voluntary*. There are instances in which participation is not fully voluntary, as when tribal or informal community rules force members to participate in the governance of their communities, but that is not a type of participation we focus on.

Variables, Models, and Data Analysis

To test our hypotheses, we analyze individual-level data from the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). We compile nine biannual nationally representative surveys, from 1998 to 2014.¹⁷ We study local community participation through three questions asked in every survey wave. The questions ask if an individual has (a) attended a meeting of a parents' association at school, (b) attended a meeting of a community improvement committee or neighborhood association, or (c) attended a meeting of an association

of professionals, merchants, manufacturers, or peasants.¹⁸ Together, these questions get to the core of an individual's local community participation through involvement in formal local programmatic institutions such as schools councils, community councils, or economic interest associations.

Overall, community participation is high in Bolivia, with between 70% and 77% of respondents having engaged in at least one local community association.¹⁹ Figure 1 illustrates the level of participation in Bolivia and the proportions of individuals who participate in one, two, or three local community associations at any given time. The bottom panel of Figure 1 extends the results to 2014 with only two activities.

To assess whether local participation in programmatic associations in Bolivia has a high social class bias that makes individuals with higher levels of economic and human capital more likely to participate (H1), we start by comparing the average rates of participation of the popular and nonpopular sectors. We define popular sectors as those whose total monthly household income (which includes remittances and the income of all adults and children) is lower than two minimum wages.²⁰ We present these differences in the first pair of bar graphs in Figure 2.²¹

Alternatively, if we define popular sectors as those with less education than a high-school diploma, as per Dunning (2009) and Seawright (2009), we also find that the difference in the average participation of popular and nonpopular sectors is positive and statistically significant (second pair of bar graphs in Figure 2). Finally, defining the popular sector as those who speak an indigenous language at home, we see even greater differences in participation as shown in the third pair of bar graphs in Figure 2. Hence, all *t* tests of difference of means, whether the popular sector is defined by income, education, or indigenous group membership, indicate that the popular sectors participate more than the nonpopular sectors in local programmatic associations. To test whether other variables may be driving the difference in rates of participation of popular and nonpopular sectors, we turn to ordinary least squares (OLS) linear regressions using a summary index of participation as the dependent variable. Following Anderson (2008), the summary index is a weighted average of the three participation variables, where the weights are used to maximize the amount of information captured by the index.²² All point estimates in regressions are then interpreted as standard deviation changes. Using an index confers several benefits. First, it improves statistical power while still being robust to overtesting as the index represents a single test instead of three separate tests for each component of the index. Second, while presenting a single test for the combined effect of the index, standard practice recommends also presenting results of each component of the index separately to allow us to understand if any particular variable is driving the

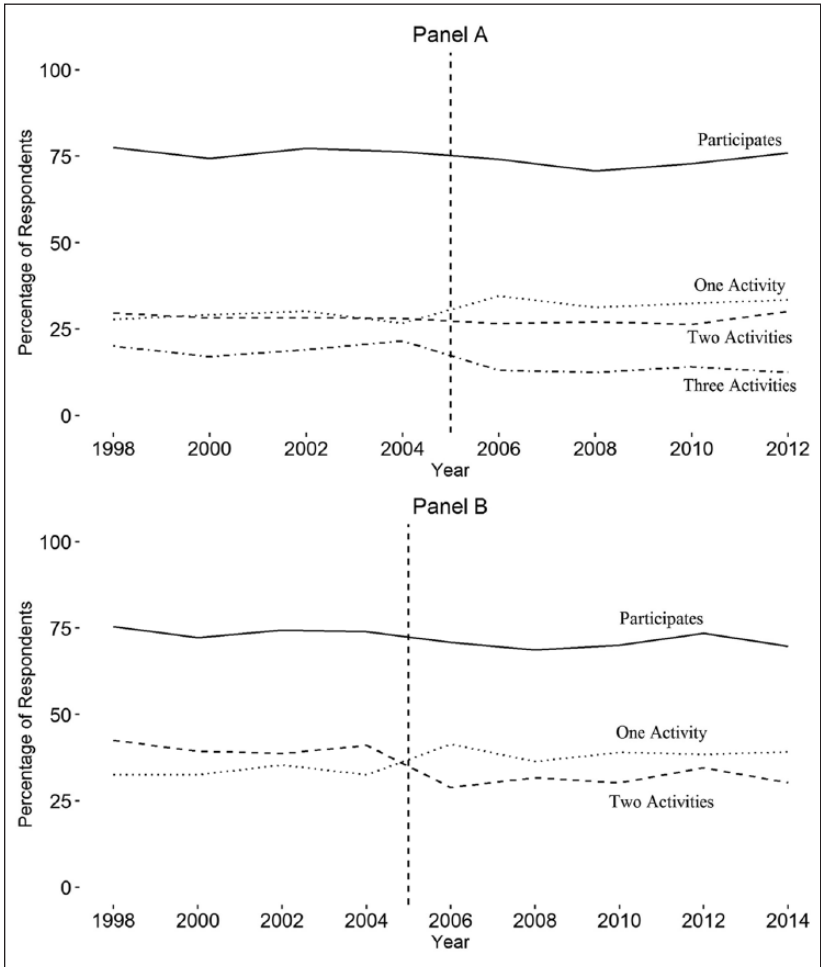


Figure I. Participation trends over time (Panel A: 1998-2012, PTA, community organizations, and professional organizations; Panel B: 1998-2014, PTA, and community organizations). PTA = parent teacher association.

results. While we report results for all components of the index, we conclude that there is a statistically significant effect only if the coefficients on the summary index are significant. This ensures that we do not cherry pick results and over interpret the importance of individual proxy measures, which may be statistically significant due to random chance.

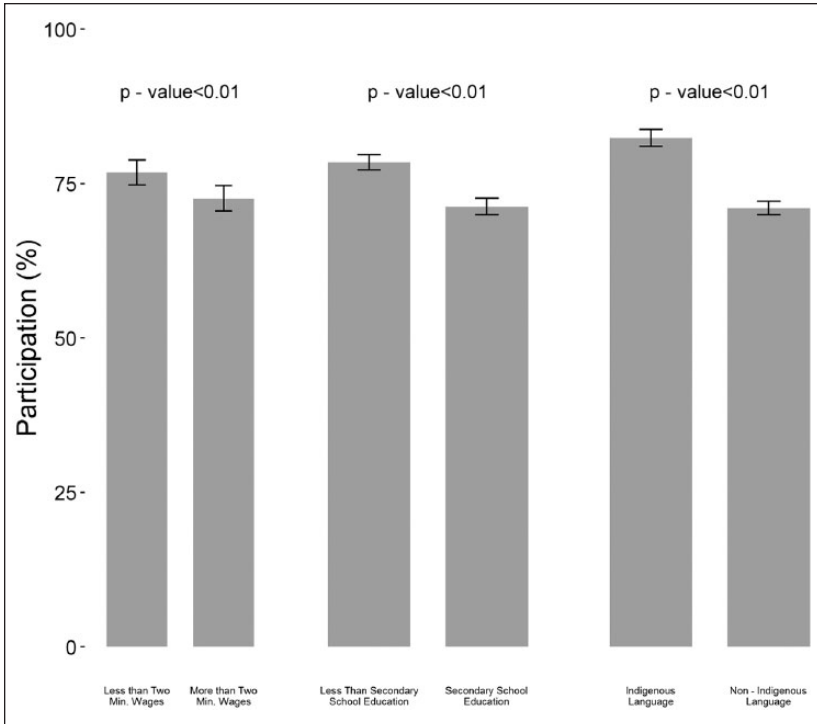


Figure 2. *T* test of participation by popular sector.

For the main independent variable of interest, we use principal components analysis to construct an index of *class* composed of three variables: an index of assets owned by the household (including whether a household owned a television, refrigerator, telephone, washing machine, motorcycle, and had running water in the house),²³ education, and whether the respondent speaks an indigenous language at home, indicative of a putative class bias.²⁴ Education is a continuous variable from 0 to 18 for the number of years of schooling the respondent has. Finally, nonindigenous language is coded as 1 if the respondent *does not* speak an indigenous language at home so that all three variables of the index represent *higher class*.

We prefer this multifaceted approach to class for a number of reasons. First, while income and education are often seen as strong indicators of class, they are also often strongly collinear—the wealthy have higher levels of education and higher levels of education often leads to higher income—and it can be difficult to disentangle this in multivariate regressions. Second, MAS

Table 2. Class Index Factor Loading.

	Scoring factors	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Nonindigenous language	0.671	0.694	0.461
Assets	0.76	23.37	21.412
Education	0.777	10.201	4.792

has integrated class and ethnic appeals in its mobilization, to create a broader lower class coalition (Madrid, 2012). Indeed, many of its appeals are targeted at different identities depending on the context. Moreover, in the case of Bolivia, speaking an indigenous language at home highly approximates the definition of popular sector, as speaking Spanish (without an indigenous accent) is a prerequisite for upward labor market and social mobility. Finally, absent an indicator of class that perfectly captures the background concept (Adcock & Collier, 2001), scholars have been using indices to capture some form of class or wealth (Filmer & Pritchett, 2001). By combining income, education, and indigeneity, we construct a new variable we believe approximates the underlying concept we are interested in: social class. We report the scoring factors from the principal components analysis and summary statistics for the three variables in the index in Table 2.

For controls, we include *partisanship*, a 10-point right-to-left ideology scale. Our underlying assumption is that with the turn to the left in 2005, those individuals who identify politically with the government might be more compelled to participate and get involved in their communities, whether they belong to the popular sector or not.

We also include three groups of other control variables. First, there are *demographic* variables: *gender* and *age*. Second, we control for *socialization* in nonprogrammatic associations, such as religious institutions (recorded in the variable *church*), which could be positively related with participation in local programmatic associations. The underlying idea is that by attending a church or temple, individuals meet their neighbors and expand their social network, which is found to be positively correlated with participation (La Due Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998).²⁵ We also incorporate the variable interpersonal *trust*, which a large body of literature finds to be positively correlated with participation and tightly linked to social networks. Third, we include two context variables to control for structural effects: *urban* (the respondent lives in a community of 20,000 people or more) and *media luna* (which records whether the individual lives in one of the five departments of the “half moon,” that is, Pando, Beni, Santa Cruz, Chuquisaca, and Tarija).²⁶ The *media luna* region has been politically distinct from the rest of the country

Table 3. Summary Statistics.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	Minimum	Maximum
Participation index	-0.02	0.7	26,175	-0.75	2.33
Attend PTA meetings?	1.13	1.09	25,887	0	3
Participate in your community?	0.85	1	25,879	0	3
Participate in professional associations?	0.5	0.89	22,808	0	3
Class	0.02	1.01	26,175	-2.12	2.75
Nonindigenous language	0.69	0.46	26,175	0	1
Assets	23.37	21.41	26,175	0	100
Education	10.2	4.79	26,175	0	18
Partisanship	5.19	2.12	21,010	1	10
Age	2.66	1.5	26,165	1	6
Male	0.5	0.5	26,175	0	1
Church	1.57	1.18	26,013	0	3
Trust	2.49	0.87	25,762	1	4
Urban	0.6	0.49	26,175	0	1
Media luna	0.41	0.49	26,175	0	1

PTA = parent teacher association.

and largely opposed to the government of Morales. Table 3 presents the summary statistics of our dependent, independent, and control variables.

In Table 4, we regress the participation index on our index of social class bias and the control variables. The model in the odd-number columns includes year-fixed effects but does not include controls, while the models in the even-numbered columns include both controls and year-fixed effects. We present the results of the cumulative index in the first two columns, and then the individual components of the index, participation in parent teacher associations (PTAs), community associations, and professional associations in the following columns.

Looking explicitly at our findings for class bias (H1), the results from the bivariate tests hold up when subjected to more rigorous tests. Unlike the literature on participation in the United States, we find that in Bolivia, class has a *negative* impact on participation in most specifications. A one standard deviation increase in class results in a .06 to .16 standard deviations decrease in participation in all the significant results. We should note that while still negative, the point estimate in column 2 of our participation index regressed on a full battery of controls is not significantly different from zero.

Translating the point estimates to representative respondents, moving from a Bolivian that does not speak an indigenous language at home with

Table 4. OLS Estimates for Entire Sample.

	Participation index	Participation index	PTA	PTA	Community	Community	Professional associations	Professional associations
Class	-0.067*** (0.006)	-0.008 (0.008)	-0.093*** (0.008)	-0.067*** (0.010)	-0.160*** (0.009)	-0.078*** (0.009)	0.003 (0.011)	0.068*** (0.012)
Partnership		-0.010*** (0.003)		-0.014*** (0.004)		-0.008*** (0.004)		-0.013*** (0.005)
Age		0.056*** (0.005)		0.049*** (0.006)		0.087*** (0.006)		0.045*** (0.007)
Male		0.085*** (0.013)		-0.186*** (0.016)		0.154*** (0.018)		0.148*** (0.019)
Church		0.075*** (0.006)		0.078*** (0.008)		0.106*** (0.009)		0.065*** (0.008)
Trust		0.013* (0.007)		-0.023** (0.010)		0.023** (0.010)		0.020** (0.010)
Urban		-0.197*** (0.020)		-0.074*** (0.022)		-0.294*** (0.027)		-0.204*** (0.028)
Media Luna		-0.140*** (0.018)		0.014 (0.019)		-0.193*** (0.027)		-0.184*** (0.023)
Constant	0.071** (0.031)	-0.010 (0.045)	0.222*** (0.029)	0.253*** (0.056)	0.059* (0.036)	-0.142** (0.056)	0.029 (0.040)	-0.013 (0.060)
Observations	26,175	20,656	25,887	20,491	25,879	20,492	22,808	18,036
Year-fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust survey clustered standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable in columns 1 and 2 is a summary index of participates in PTAs, community associations, and professional associations. The dependent variable in columns 3 and 4 is whether the respondent participates in PTA and is normalized from a range of 0 to 3 with 0 equal to never participates, 3 equal to once or more a week. Columns 5 and 6 are whether respondents participate in community associations and 7 and 8 are whether respondents participate in professional associations. OLS = ordinary least squares; PTA = Parent Teacher Association. * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$.

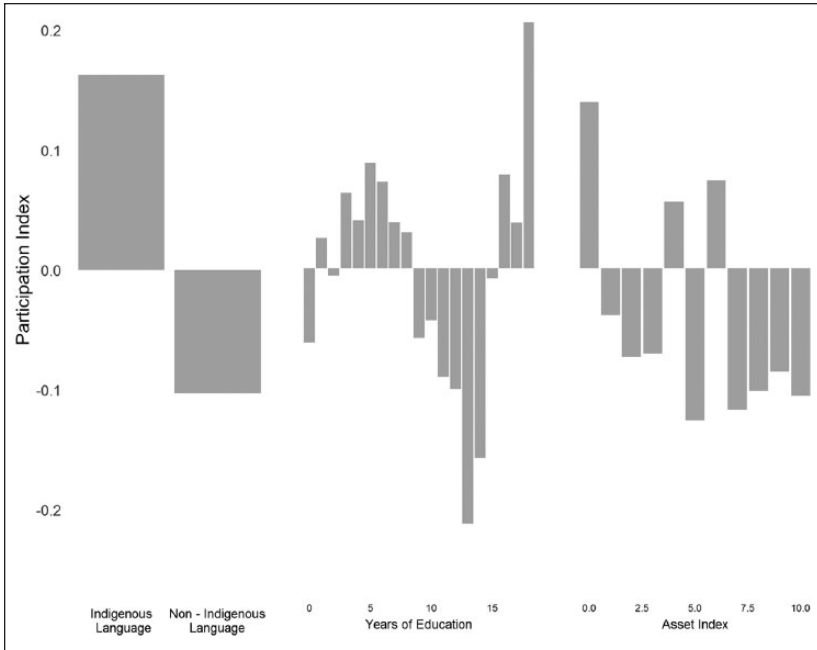


Figure 3. Participation means at each level of class variables.

average levels of income and education to a Bolivian who speaks an indigenous language at home, results in a 3% to 8% *increase* in the probability of participation in a local community association.²⁷ While the point estimates appear small, the real effect sizes are large once we take into account the range of our class variable. The only local forum for which this does not hold are professional associations, where there is still a high-class bias, but this is overshadowed by the low-class bias in PTAs and community associations.²⁸

The coefficients of the other control variables are as expected. Left-wing partisans are more likely to participate than right-wing partisans, and local community participation is biased toward the elderly and slightly toward males, those that attend church regularly, those who are more trusting, and those that live in rural areas and do not live in the *media luna*.

To further unpack the relationship between local participation and socioeconomic class, we plotted average mean levels of participation by indigeneity, years of education, and asset ownership in Figure 3. Each panel in the figure takes the mean-level participation at each level of the independent variable.²⁹ The first two bars of Figure 3 show that respondents that speak an

indigenous language at home are far more likely to participate than those that do not speak an indigenous language at home. In the middle part of the graph, the relationship between education and participation becomes clearer and exhibits a twin-peaked distribution with the least and most educated participating the most, although those with *no* years of education appear to participate at very low levels. Nonetheless, participation decreases nearly monotonically between 5 and 15 years of education, suggesting a negative relationship between years of education and participation for those individuals with less than a tertiary degree. The relationship between asset ownership and participation suggests that respondents with few assets participate the most and those with many assets participate the least, although there is no consistent relationship between assets and participation.

These plots confirm that there is an *anti-high* class bias in the participatory regime in Bolivia. In sum, neither the *t* tests of difference of means nor the multivariate regressions statistical analyses support the first hypothesis. *We did not find statistical evidence that would indicate that there is a middle- or high-class bias in Bolivia's local programmatic participation*, as it is the case in developed societies (e.g., Verba et al., 1978; Verba et al., 1995) and in four metropolitan areas of Latin America (Collier & Handlin, 2009). On the contrary, we found a pro-poor (less income, less education, and more indigenous) bias in the local programmatic participation patterns of Bolivia, since 1998 to the present.

Could our results be driven by what might have happened in the participatory regime once the left ascended to power in 2005? Turning now to our second hypothesis, Figure 1 (Panel A) above reveals that whereas the number of individuals participating in three activities decreased after 2005, the overall levels of respondents that participated in *at least one* activity remained roughly the same throughout the period (see solid line in Figure 1). This suggests that the *intensity* of participation might have decreased post 2005, a finding we explore next.

We take advantage of the large number of surveys before and after 2005 (four waves before 2005 and five after 2005) to test whether levels of participation changed after the rise of MAS to power. We run a similar multivariate statistical analysis as we did in Table 4, except that we also interact *class* with a dummy variable for all survey waves post 2005. We present the results of this analysis in Table 5. While the results are largely similar, there are some that merit further discussion. The negative relationship between *class* and *participation* still holds in the new regressions. However, confirming the slight decrease in participation, we see in Figure 1, the post-2005 coefficient is negative in all specifications. This suggests that the general population has participated less since the election of Evo Morales. We are

Table 5. Post-2005 Participation.

	Participation index	Participation index	PTA	PTA	Community	Community	Professional associations	Professional associations
Class	-0.083*** (0.012)	-0.014 (0.012)	-0.132*** (0.013)	-0.094*** (0.015)	-0.183*** (0.015)	-0.074*** (0.014)	-0.002 (0.017)	0.063*** (0.018)
Post-2005	-0.180*** (0.035)	-0.212*** (0.036)	-0.337*** (0.035)	-0.364*** (0.042)	-0.245*** (0.044)	-0.280*** (0.047)	-0.087** (0.046)	-0.126*** (0.047)
Post-2005 × Class	0.028** (0.014)	0.010 (0.014)	0.066*** (0.016)	0.048*** (0.017)	0.040** (0.018)	-0.006 (0.018)	0.009 (0.021)	0.010 (0.022)
Partisanship		-0.010*** (0.003)		-0.015*** (0.004)		-0.008** (0.004)		-0.013*** (0.005)
Age		0.056*** (0.005)		0.049*** (0.006)		0.087*** (0.006)		0.045*** (0.007)
Male		0.085*** (0.013)		-0.186*** (0.016)		0.154*** (0.018)		0.148*** (0.019)
Church		0.075*** (0.006)		0.077*** (0.008)		0.106*** (0.009)		0.065*** (0.008)
Trust		0.013* (0.007)		-0.023** (0.010)		0.023** (0.010)		0.020** (0.010)
Urban		-0.196*** (0.020)		-0.072*** (0.022)		-0.294*** (0.027)		-0.203*** (0.027)
Media Luna		-0.140*** (0.018)		0.016 (0.019)		-0.193*** (0.027)		-0.184*** (0.023)
Constant	0.066** (0.030)	-0.011 (0.045)	0.210*** (0.029)	0.250*** (0.056)	0.052 (0.035)	-0.141** (0.056)	0.028 (0.039)	-0.013 (0.060)
Observations	26,175	20,656	25,887	20,491	25,879	20,492	22,808	18,036
Year-fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust survey clustered standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable in columns 1 and 2 is a summary index of participates in PTAs, community associations, and professional associations. The dependent variable in columns 3 and 4 is whether the respondent participates in PTA and is normalized from a range of 0 to 3 with 0 equal to never participates, 3 equal to once or more a week. Columns 5 and 6 are whether respondents participate in community associations and 7 and 8 are whether respondents participate in professional associations. PTA = Parent Teacher Association.

*p < .10. **p < .05. ***p < .01.

interested in finding if this decline in levels of participation has affected social classes differently and the coefficient on the interaction between the post-2005 dummy and class. Here, we see that the interaction coefficient is positive in most specifications, although not always significant. This suggests that there has been a slight shift in greater participation among higher classes since 2005. The directions of all the control variables are the same between Tables 4 and 5.

Finally, to subject this hypothesis to a further test, we look at each survey wave individually, running the same analysis we did in Table 4 on each year. Given the large number of results for this analysis, we prefer to present these results graphically in Figure 4.³⁰ The top panel presents the point estimates for the *class* variable with 95% confidence intervals for participation in PTAs every year. Likewise, the second panel presents the results for community associations, the third panel presents results for professional associations, and the final index presents results for the participation index comprised of the previous three variables. These results confirm the results we found earlier, although patterns are harder to find given the noise between individual survey waves. There is a strong low-class bias in participation for PTAs and community associations, while there is a pro high-class bias for participation for professional associations.

In sum, regarding H2, we find that the average levels of participation are lower *for all respondents* after the left turn. This, however, is the only consistent result post 2005. There seems to be a small, but not always significant *decrease* in participation for lower class groups as can be seen by the positive coefficient on all the *Post-2005* × *Class* coefficients in Table 5. It would appear that while demobilization has cut across all social sectors after 2005, it has been slightly more pronounced among lower classes. Unpacking these results further in Tables A5-A7 in the online appendix, this result is being driven by a decrease in participation of indigenous respondents, precisely the sector that Evo Morales mobilized the most. It is possible that once the larger goal of having an indigenous person elected president was complete, there was a subsequent demobilization after the elections of 2005. Alternatively, this could be capturing a shift in civic participation from local programmatic associations toward other participatory institutions.³¹ We hesitate to draw further inferences in these results given their small sizes and inconsistent significance across specifications.

Conclusion

Whether by default or by design, local civic participation is more salient in Latin America nowadays than it was just a couple of decades ago. On one

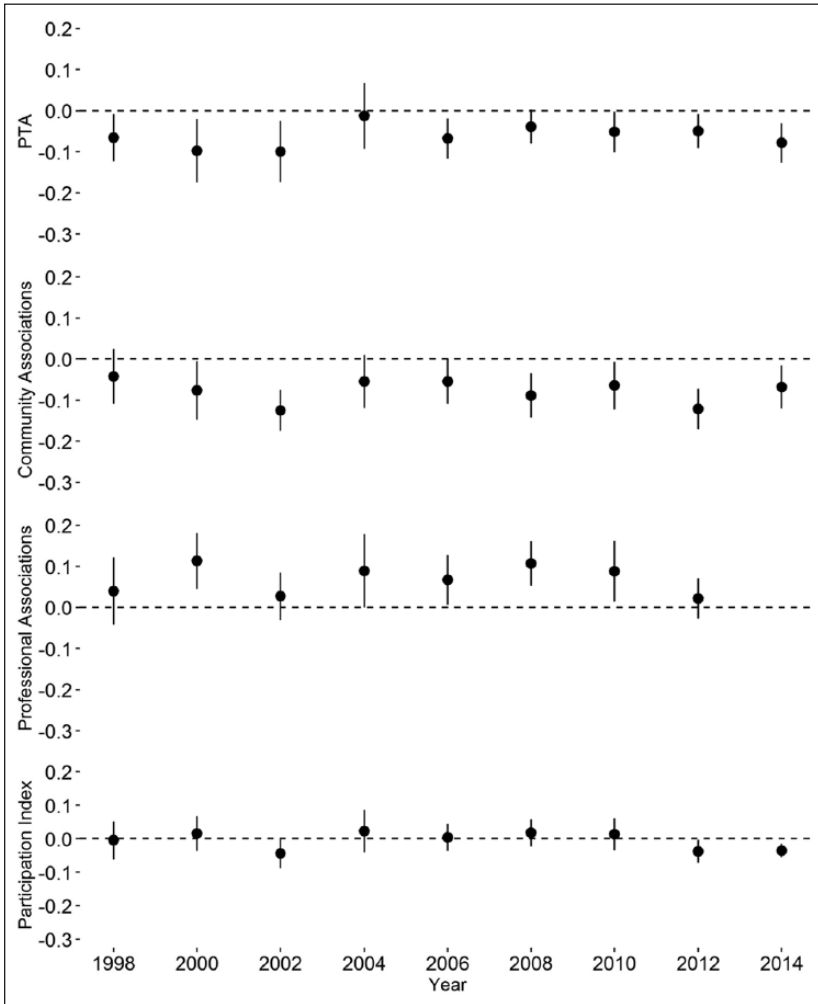


Figure 4. Point estimates of participation in each component of the index in each survey.

PTA = parent teacher association.

hand, processes of market-oriented reforms and crises of the political party systems during the 1990s, left a void in the social safety net that local community associations had to fill. On the other hand, democratization and decentralization of government, as well as the left turn changed the

institutional and political opportunity structures for collective action in the region. National governments, particularly those on the left, have fostered participation. In light of recent findings (Collier & Handlin, 2009), as well as an established participation research tradition (Verba et al., 1995), a scholarly imperative is to find out whether local civic engagement is biased toward the representation of the middle and upper classes.

In our analysis of Bolivia, based on nine nationally representative samples spanning the period 1998 to 2014, we did not find evidence of a high-class bias in the patterns of individuals' participation in local programmatic associations, either before or after the left turn. On the contrary, we found that the participatory regime created in Bolivia in the 1990s, in the midst of a neoliberal administration, shows a pro-poor bias. Our analyses all consistently show that *income, education, and nonindigeneity are negatively related to participation in local civic associations. The higher the individual's income, the more education she has, and if she is not indigenous, the lower her chances of participation in local programmatic associations, such as school boards, community councils, or professional associations.*

Unpacking this general trend, our results align with studies of participation in other developing areas of the world. For example, in his analysis of local political participation in the rural villages of two Indian states, Krishna (2006) finds that wealth does not matter to citizens' political participation. The effect of education on local community participation is less straightforward. In our study, for individuals with high-school terminal degrees or less, the higher the level of education the lower their chances of local community participation, but individuals with at least some college education do participate at high levels. However, this is largely due to the effect of their participation in professional associations (which is one of the three variables included in our index of local programmatic participation), and this only materializes at high levels of education—16 years or more. It has been affirmed that “the positive relationship between education and political participation is one of the most reliable results in empirical social science” (La Due Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998, p. 567). Whereas our results do not refute this statement, they do suggest that *the relationship between education and local community participation is not monotonic* and future participation models would benefit from taking this finding into account. Finally, individuals who speak an indigenous language at home have a higher chance of participating in local associations than those who do not. In the case of Bolivia, this finding confirms the pro-poor bias of the country's participatory regime.

Regarding our second hypothesis and contrary to the expectations of the left turn literature, we did not find evidence that the left turn in Bolivia's national government has produced sizable differences in the percentage of

local community participants or in their socioeconomic characteristics. In fact, we observe a decline in levels of local autonomous programmatic participation, albeit, as noted above, we cannot conclude on whether other types of local participation (such as nonprogrammatic or state-sponsored) may have increased. However, our findings regarding local programmatic participation remains puzzling and deserves future investigation. As we lack individual-level panel data, we do not want to over interpret these results, which could be a result of a number of other trends. For example, the number of respondents who claimed to speak an indigenous language at home declined from a high of 44% in 1998 to a low of 23% in 2010 and 2012. Why this is the case is beyond the scope of this article, but many of those who were previously participating might no longer claim to speak indigenous languages at home. At this point, however, we can confidently say that local civic participation in Bolivia does not present a high-class bias, either before or after the left turn.

In terms of generalizability, three scope conditions are important for our argument to travel to other cases. First, our research is particularly germane to developing countries, where large sectors of the population have unmet basic needs. In such contexts, we expect participation in local associational life to partially address those needs—as shown in research by Seligson (1978), in the Latin American context, and Krishna (2006) in India. Second, a modicum of decentralization in the provision of public services is necessary, such that local civic engagement can be expected to influence decisions over the allocation or management of social services. Finally, while not a necessary condition, we expect poor people's participation in civic associational life to be higher in democratic or democratizing contexts, where there are lower risks to personal security as a consequence of civic participation.

Moreover, our findings suggest that local programmatic participation may indeed help alleviate some of the inequalities that stem from the socioeconomic sphere and shine on the “shadow of unfairness” that is characteristic of liberal democracies (Green, 2016). Of course, a limitation of our research design is that it does not tell us about the *quality* or *content* of that participation. It could indeed be the case that the higher likelihood of male and older participants tilts the contents of local programmatic participation in their favor. More studies, such as those of Altschuler and Corrales's (2012) on spillover effects of PTA participation in Guatemala or Rao and Sanyal's (2010) study on the effects of deliberation in village meetings for a culture of civic and political engagement among the poor in South India, will be necessary to evaluate the quality and contents of participation and the potential spillover effects that local programmatic participation may have on democracy. Yet, our results are promising in that, at least, local participation is not amplifying the voices of those with more material resources.

A very interesting research agenda lies ahead at the intersection of poverty and participatory institutions in Latin America, which will build upon the path breaking scholarship on poverty and politics of Seligson (1978) and Auyero (2000), among others.

The second limitation of our research design is that it does not allow us to impute causation. Future research will be necessary to find out whether the absence of a high-class social bias in Bolivia's local programmatic participation is the result of the specific institutional design of participatory institutions explicitly created to alleviate existing structural inequalities; or whether the absence of the high-class bias is the result of a broader pattern of mobilization by the poor, both during and after the neoliberal period. Despite this limitation, our study clearly calls for caution regarding the degree to which the statement "more economic and human capital, more participation" is a generalizable one. Whether institutional crafting or movement politics are at work, the fact is that the poor are participating more than the nonpoor in nonelectoral and noncontentious forms of participation in Bolivia. As Mitchel Seligson (1978, p. 152) wrote over three decades ago, for the poor, participation, once considered a sort of luxury that could not be "afforded" by those who struggle to fulfill their subsistence needs, is a "necessity." As our research shows, the application of the resource participation theory (starting with Almond and Verba's [1963] landmark study) to developing societies may result in seriously misleading expectations and results. A new theory of civic engagement in the developing world awaits articulation, and our study of local programmatic participation constitutes a step in that direction.

Authors' Note

The authors share equal responsibility for this article and are listed alphabetically.

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Notes

1. For an alternative account of participation in the United States, based on the concept of “issue publics,” see Han (2009).
2. Of course, a pro-poor participatory institutional framework, such as that one created through participatory budgeting or local health councils in Brazil, or the processes of prior consultation of indigenous or Afro-descendant communities in the Andean countries, should promote engagement from the lower social classes. However, the type of participation analyzed here (in schools, neighborhood councils, and occupational associations) was not specifically pro-poor, and yet did result in higher levels of participation from those with lower socioeconomic status, as we explain in what follows.
3. Most notably, these are the Popular Participation Law of 1994, the Law of Education Reform of 1994, the Law of Decentralized Administration of 1995, the Law of Municipalities of 1999, and the Law of National Dialogue of 2001 (Faguet, 2012), and more recently the right to prior consultation, included in the Law of Hydrocarbons of 2005 and the 2009 Constitution (Flemmer & Schilling-Vacaflor, 2016).
4. It is worth noting that there are a host of participatory institutions, such as prior consultation, that have been deployed after the left turn that we do not analyze here. Hence, our findings should be read more as reflecting the reality of the civic associational life of Bolivia—and in comparison with the civic engagement literature in the United States and Europe—than as a definitive depiction of the participatory regime of Bolivia, which has grown to include other institutions for civic and political participation. Recent studies have highlighted the promise as well as the limitations of these institutions (Schilling-Vacaflor, 2011; Wolff, 2013).
5. These are ideal types built for the purpose of conceptualization. In reality, local associations could exist in a continuum between types. Yet, this typology is helpful to further specify the civic engagement of interest.
6. Similarly, Collier and Handlin (2009) define programmatic associations as those whose main activities are oriented toward solving collective problems.
7. For excellent studies of religious groups serving as catalysts for the distribution of social services such as housing and education, see Cammett (2014) and Thachil (2014).
8. We would also note that, contrary to Putnam (1993, 2000) who argues that associational life emerged independent of state assistance, Skocpol (2003) finds that at the foundational moment of much associational life in the United States, the state played a large role in helping members connect and establish local associations.
9. The *American Civic Participation Study* includes 20 types of civic organizations, ranging from political issue organizations, to religious groups, hobby or sport clubs, and labor unions (see ACPS Questionnaire, Section 17, <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/6635#scope>, last accessed on June 3, 2016).

10. For previous definitions of political participation as behavior oriented toward the distribution of public goods, see Booth (1979, pp. 30-31); and Booth and Seligson (1978, pp. 5-9).
11. This is reflected in the increasing body of scholarship devoted to local community participation, such as Abers (2000), Abers and Keck (2013), Avritzer (2009), Baiocchi, Heller, and Silva (2011), Goldfrank (2007, 2011), Lupien (2015), Van Cott (2008), and Wampler (2007), among others.
12. On the broader participatory regime in Bolivia, see Faguet (2012); Schilling-Vacaflor (2011); Wolff (2013).
13. Prior to the LPP, three cities (La Paz, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz) captured 93% of the total national funding directed to municipalities (Kohl, 2003, p. 156).
14. For a critical assessment of the role of Bolivia's oversight committees on local democracy, see Hiskey and Seligson (2003).
15. For a dissenting perspective stressing the features of the indigenous ethnic movements in the MAS' ascension to power, see Madrid (2008, 2012); for an argument that highlights the importance of the 1995 electoral reform, in which Bolivia moved from a list proportional to a mixed-member proportional electoral system, see Centellas (2009).
16. A new education law was passed in 2010 (Law 070 Avelino Siñani – Eilizardo Pérez), which interestingly relegates social communal participation to its last chapter (Chapter 4). Social participation is nowadays articulated more at the national than at the local level. While local-level school educational councils continue to exist, they are part of a broader structure of national educational councils and organizations (see Law 070 of 2010, Articles 91 and 92).
17. The surveys are representative at the subnational, departmental, level. Each survey wave includes approximately 3,000 respondents. For more information on the surveys, consult <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/bolivia.php>
18. Descriptions of all the variables and coding criteria are provided in the online appendix. Unfortunately for the 2014 wave, LAPOP did not ask participants about their participation in professional associations. We present results with an index using all three variables in this article, and results only using the first two components of the index are presented in Tables A21 and A22 in the online appendix. Only using the first two components of the index strengthens the results discussed here as participation in community associations and PTAs are stronger in all waves among nonelite households.
19. In a survey conducted in four Argentine localities and four Mexican states, only 20% of the Argentine respondents and 23% of the Mexican respondents reported to have attended an assembly or meeting about a problem in their community or school in the last year (Cleary & Stokes, 2006). And in a survey carried out in 2002 in four Latin American metropolises, only Lima came close to Bolivia's percentage of participants in programmatic associations, with 55%. The other three cities had much lower average participation rates (Buenos Aires 28%, Santiago 28%, and Caracas 22%; Dunning, 2009).
20. In 2009, the national minimum wage in Bolivia was B\$647 (about US\$92) and B\$577 (US\$82) before then.

21. The differences between all three pairs of bar graphs presented in Figure 2 are significantly different from zero at the 1% level.
22. The weights are the inverse of the covariance matrix. Variables in the index that are more highly correlated with each other are therefore given lower weight within the index as they provide less independent information.
23. Further details on how this index was constructed as well as replication code can be found in the variable description in the online appendix. We thank Sara Niedzwiecki for suggesting this measure as well as replication code to implement it. We prefer the use of an asset index instead of direct measure of income for two reasons. First, the asset index is consistent across survey waves. Measure of income across LAPOP survey waves change to account for inflation and greater wealth, therefore making comparison across waves difficult. Second, using an index of asset ownership is consistent with other users of the LAPOP surveys (Stoyan, Niedzwiecki, Morgan, Hartlyn, & Espinal, 2014), and works in development economics that try to measure household wealth without reliable measures of either income or wealth (Filmer & Pritchett, 2001). We present results using income instead of the asset index in Online Appendix Tables A12-A20 and note that results do not change substantively using either measure.
24. Further information on all variables is provided in the online appendix.
25. We are only assuming that religious institutions may operate as a meeting place, and that the socialization there facilitates coordination in future collective action endeavors. But the causal connection between the variable Church, particularly the Catholic Church to which the vast majority of the Bolivian respondents belong, and higher levels of local community participation could be due to the strategic action of Church officials. Guillermo Trejo (2009) advances the argument that the Catholic Church in Latin America has promoted indigenous movement organization when under threat of losing parishioners due to local religious competition with other churches. Martí i Puig (2010) corroborates the argument.
26. We include the Department of Chuquisaca in the *media luna* region because the average response to the question “To what extent do you feel part of the ‘Half Moon?’” was closer to responses in the four other departments of the *media luna*. Thus, the *Altiplano* region comprises the remaining Departments of Cochabamba, La Paz, Oruro, and Potosí.
27. To back out these figures, we took the significant point estimates on class in Table 4, and multiplied this by the difference in the mean of the key independent variable between the average indigenous and nonindigenous respondent. Further details on these calculations are provided in the online appendix.
28. For all regressions that use the *class* index, we also conducted analyses using only one of the components of the index at once. The results of those analyses are presented in the online appendix. Table A2 replicates Table 4 only using indigenous language, Table A3 replicates Table 4 only using income, and Table A4 replicates Table 4 only using education. The results in these three specifications largely replicate the results from Table 4 except that there is sometimes a positive relationship between education and participation, a finding we discuss later.

29. Absent a method to uncover the marginal effects that also accounts for complex survey weights, these figures can be thought of as marginal effects—as we progress along the independent variable, how does the mean of the dependent variable change?
30. The results are presented in table form in Tables A8-A11. Each column in each regression represents a different year. Table A8 presents the results from the participation index, Table A9 PTAs, Table A10 community associations, and Table A11 professional associations.
31. The Law of the National Dialogue of 2000, for example, created a variety of participatory institutions, such as trans-local-communities (*mancomunidades*) and local councils for production and socioeconomic development. The process of institutional reform was later accelerated with the election of Evo Morales and the new Constitution in 2009. In 2009, for instance, existing participatory institutions in Bolivia included the advising citizen councils, the councils of municipal development, and the municipal health councils, among others. We thank a reviewer for their related comment and recognize that our analysis focuses on the dimensions of civic participation for which there is comparable survey data, and that participation in some local institutions may not be captured by the questions analyzed here.

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