Using two independent data sets the authors find at least four basic dimensions of peasant political activity in Costa Rica; urbanites reveal five slightly different modes. In some modes of behavior peasants are significantly more active than urbanites. This finding reflects the impact that the context of poverty has on political participation. Rural poverty and the absence of government services forces peasants to satisfy some of their demands for public goods through communal organization.

6.
Structure and Levels of Political Participation in Costa Rica: Comparing Peasants with City Dwellers

MITCHELL A. SELIGSON and JOHN A. BOOTH

Are Peasants Less Active Than Urbanites?

In Latin America and much of the Third World peasants constitute a large proportion of the population. As Shanin (1971, p. 17) points out, "peasants are the majority of mankind," yet political scientists study peasants far less frequently than city dwellers. The result of this tendency is an imbalance in knowledge about the political attitudes and behavior of the two groups. One aspect of this imbalance is the tendency to regard urban dwellers as consistently much more politically active than peasants, a view advanced by modernity theorists (Lerner 1958; Deutsch 1961; Weiner 1971), and empirically substantiated in terms of electoral politics (especially voting) in several societies (Tingsten 1937, pp. 211-214; Rokkan and Valen 1960; Deutsch 1961). Thus, political scientists widely regard peasants as apolitical and acquiescent. Only rarely, during major social upheavals, are peasants seen as activists (Wolf 1969).

We believe that this conventional image, that peasants are much less active in politics than city dwellers, is faulty for three reasons. First, more recent evidence reveals low correlations between urbanization and voting in several societies (Nie et al. 1969; Cameron et al. 1972; Schoultz 1974) and in fact even negative relationships have been uncovered (Johnson 1971; Tarrow 1971; Cameron et al. 1972; Richardson 1973). Despite this new evidence, however, the conventional image lingers.

We extend our thanks for the numerous helpful suggestions made at different stages of this project by Paul Allen Beck, Donald Calloway, James W. Clarke, Henry Dietz, Henry Kenski, James M. Malloy, Steven Neuse, Patricia Bayer Richard, Mark Rosenberg, Jerrold G. Rusk, John Schwartz, Michael Sullivan, Tom Volgy, and Edward J. Williams.

A second problem with the image of peasant passivity concerns approaches to participation drawn from urban society and inappropriately applied to peasant society. Political scientists often overlook a wide range of day-to-day peasant political actions. When peasants take part in politics, they are often seeking to satisfy demands of a much more rudimentary nature than those of their city cousins because many of the services taken for granted by urban dwellers, such as schools, electricity, and running water, are generally not available in the countryside. This difference in the distribution of basic services and infrastructure public goods, we believe, results in a difference of style between urban and rural political participation. The urban style is generally oriented more toward national political campaigns, interaction with public officials and voting, while the rural style tends toward the collective solution of communal problems. Problems of interest to the urbanite are often esoteric for the peasant, who is struggling for survival.

Objectives

This paper compares peasant political activity to that of urban dwellers in Costa Rica, utilizing a broad definition of participation as recommended by Verba and Nie (1972, p. 2-3) and elaborated elsewhere by the authors (Booth and Seligson 1978b). We define political participation as actions that influence or attempt to influence the distribution of public goods. (Public goods are those goods supplied by governments or communities through collective expenditure, consumption of which, once supplied for one person, may not easily be denied to others — such as monetary systems, collective security, streets, community centers, etc.). Although the following analysis is comparative, we will devote somewhat more attention to the public goods distribution efforts of residents of the countryside than those of the city because, as noted, the former are less understood.

We first seek to determine the ways Costa Ricans influence the distribution of public goods. And second, we attempt to explore the difference in the styles and levels of political participation between urbanites and peasants.

The Data

Although we are operating in largely uncharted terrain we are able to employ two similar but independently developed data sets collected in Costa Rica at the same time. This fortunate opportunity permits simultaneous replication of portions of the analysis, providing a test of the construct validity of the findings and hence increasing our confidence in them.

The subjects in this investigation were adult male Costa Ricans who responded to either of two surveys conducted independently in Costa Rica in late 1972 and early 1973. While the two surveys were taken for different reasons and by different investigators, they do provide (1) data on two comparable probability samples from an identical universe of rural cultivators, and (2) data on a probability sample of urbanites. In order to distinguish between the two sets of data, one will be called the Peasant Study (PS)

sample (N=531), and the other the Community Development (CD) sample (N of peasants=306; N of urbanites=350). For details on these data sets see Seligson (1974; 1977a; 1977b; 1979b) and Booth (1975a; 1975b; 1976).

The Dimensionality of Political Participation

We examine here four important types of political participation through which we believe Costa Ricans attempt to influence the distribution of public goods. We expect political participation in Costa Rica to be multidimensional, that is, to consist of several distinct modes of activity, as has been reported by Verba, Nie, and company (Verba et al. 1971; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba et al. 1973). We expect to find four basic types of behavior: (1) organizational activism, (2) community improvement activism, (3) interaction with local government and (4) voting. However, we also expect, owing to the substantial differences in the urban and rural contexts, that peasants and urbanites may exhibit different participatory modes. While we examine forms of participation similar to those found by the Verba-Nie team, there are two important differences. First, we exclude campaign activity because of a lack of comparable data for the PS sample. Second, we divide communal activity into two separate modes for reasons discussed below.

The reader should not infer from our focus upon these four dimensions that they constitute the only modes of political participation engaged in by either urbanites or peasants. Among other modes of participation are political communication, contacting of national public officials, and protest behavior (which may include taking part in strikes, riots and involvement in land invasions). We consider some of these modes of activity elsewhere (Seligson 1974, chapter 10; Booth 1975a; 1976; 1979; Seligson and Booth 1976; Booth and Seligson 1978b; 1979).

In Costa Rica there are several types of local organizations involved in the provision of public goods which have wide membership, attendance and support. Two extremely widespread types of groups serve the local primary school in the city and countryside alike: The school board (Junta de Educación) exercises a very circumscribed decision-making power over school policy, and the parent-teacher organization (Patronate de Educación) acts in an auxiliary function. Other important local groups include community development associations, diverse health-welfare services groups, sports clubs, service clubs, and several sorts of religious organizations. Efforts in these collective goods arenas through membership in such organizations constitute an expected *organizational activism* mode.

We believe that membership in groups such as those mentioned above is not tantamount to active involvement in a community improvement project. As in the United States, many people take part in community organizations solely for the purpose of socializing. Community improvement projects, however, typically represent efforts to supply some needed public good through, for example, the construction of a local school, a water system, a community center, or a soccer field. We expect to isolate, therefore, a *community im-*

provement activism mode that is distinct from group activity.

Looking at what Verba, Nie, and company call the contacting of public officials mode, we focus our attention on municipal government, which controls a number of key public goods (roads and streets, basic public services, etc.) important to all Costa Ricans. The *municipalidad*, the government of the *cantón* (i.e., county), is the lowest level of government and therefore the most accessible to both the rural and urban dweller. In order to compare effectively relative levels of activity, it is necessary to include at least some arenas of action where both peasants and urbanites have similar opportunities for involvement. Municipal government clearly fills this role. We call this expected mode of participation *interaction with local government.*

Finally, political participation through the act of *voting* is widely practiced in Costa Rica, involving over four-fifths of the electorate. Although most Latin American governments either proscribe or manipulate elections, Costa Rica enjoys renown for its tradition of liberal democratic rule. In fact, the nation's electoral probity has progressively strengthened over the last three decades.

Dimensional Analysis

Looking first at peasants, we employ factor analysis to uncover the underlying dimensions, or modes, among the following participation indices.[3] We include eleven variables from the Community Development sample: organizational activism is measured by CD_1-CD_5[4]; community improvement activism by CD_6-CD_8[5]; interaction with local government by CD_9-CD_{10}[6]; and voting behavior by CD_{11}.[7] Varimax rotation of the factor analysis uncovers four factors corresponding to the suggested dimensions of organizational activism, community improvement activity, interaction with local government, and voting (see Table 1).

To replicate these findings we factor analyze fifteen variables from the PS sample. Community improvement participation is represented by PS_1-PS_7[8]; organizational activism by PS_8-PS_{12}[9]; interaction with local government by PS_{13}-PS_{14}[10] and voting by PS_{15}[11]. Four factors clearly replicate the findings of the CD example (see Table 2). Thus, in both data sets the structure of peasant political activity is multidimensional, as reported by the Verba and Nie team for their multiclass samples. The striking degree of similarity between the two sets of findings confirms the construct validity of these modes of participation among Costa Rican peasants.

Having delineated the dimensionality of political activity within the Costa Rican peasant sector, we will now compare peasants with urbanites – residents of the metropolitan San José area. Two main questions must be considered: Does the structure of political participation among peasants differ from that of city dwellers? Are there differences in the levels of participation between the groups? To answer these questions, we turn to the CD study, since it alone provides a metropolitan area sample.

TABLE 1

VARIMAX ROTATED FACTORS — PEASANTS
Community Development Study

		Factors			
		I	*II*	*III*	*IV*
Organizational Activism					
CD_1	Officer PTA or School Board	.89	.11	.03	.03
CD_2	Member PTA or School Board	.88	.08	.06	.08
CD_3	Average group leadership	.88	.06	.08	.10
CD_4	Average group attendance	.86	.07	.12	.12
CD_5	Total number of group memberships	.68	.05	.44	.12
Community Improvement Activism					
CD_6	Ever participated in community improvement project	.17	.93	.08	.01
CD_7	Contributed material support or labor to community project	.07	.85	.26	.03
CD_8	Total number of community improvement projects	.17	.84	.24	.07
Interaction with Local Government					
CD_9	Contact municipal executive	.08	.04	.75	.13
CD_{10}	Contact municipal councilman	.12	.07	.72	.11
Voting					
CD_{11}	Vote in 1970	.08	.03	-.01	.97
	Percent variance	43.2	27.7	17.0	12.1

N = 306*

*N varies slightly owing to missing observations.

TABLE 2

VARIMAX ROTATED FACTORS — PEASANTS
Peasant Study

		Factors			
		I	*II*	*III*	*IV*
Community Project Participation					
PS_1	Naming of local problem	.90	.06	.01	.14
PS_2	Cause of local problem	.90	.08	.03	.18
PS_3	Solution of local problem	.89	.05	.05	.03
PS_4	Respondent can solve problem	.79	.18	.21	.11
PS_5	Chance to solve problem	.76	.05	-.19	.02
PS_6	Respondent has tried to solve	.73	.18	.19	-.04
PS_7	Who can solve	.58	.09	.06	-.25
Organizational Activism					
PS_8	Member of school board	.32	.71	.07	-.21
PS_9	Officer of Committee	.08	.69	-.36	.09
PS_{10}	Member PTA	.07	.67	-.36	-.10
PS_{11}	Member Church Committee	.05	.64	.07	.33
PS_{12}	Member Progressive Committee	-.02	.63	.15	.08
Interaction with Local Government					
PS_{13}	Attend municipal meeting	-.04	-.13	.82	-.10
PS_{14}	% of municipal councilmen named	-.24	.01	.74	.02
Voting					
PS_{15}	Vote in 1970	.02	.11	.04	.87
	Percent variance	46.6	23.4	16.2	10.8

N = 531*

*N varies slightly owing to missing observations.

Table 3 provides varimax rotations of component factor analyses of the eleven CD participation indicators for male residents of greater metropolitan San José, the national capital. The metropolitan sample reveals a somewhat different participation structure (Table 3) from that of peasants (Tables 1 and 2). Although the urbanites' community improvement, interaction with local government, and voting modes (Factors II, IV, and V, respectively) resemble those of peasants, the two groups differ in the structure of their organizational behavior. Among residents of San José education-related group participation splits off from other organizational activities to form two separate factors (Factors III and I, respectively).

TABLE 3

VARIMAX ROTATED FACTORS — URBANITES
Community Development Study

Organizational Activism		*Factors*				
		I	II	III	IV	V
CD_1	Officer PTA or School Board	.19	.09	**.95**	.07	.02
CD_2	Member PTA or School Board	.20	.08	**.95**	.01	.00
CD_3	Average group leadership	**.88**	.08	.22	.08	.08
CD_4	Average group attendance	**.92**	.03	.08	.02	.01
CD_5	Total number of group memberships	**.71**	.15	.18	.29	.03
Community improvement Activism						
CD_6	Ever participated in community improvement project	.15	**.89**	.14	.20	-.01
CD_7	Contributed material support or labor to better community	-.03	**.88**	.02	-.13	.05
CD_8	Total number of community improvement projects	.18	**.76**	.13	.41	.08
Interaction with Local Government						
CD_9	Contact municipal executive	.20	.17	-.09	**.72**	.08
CD_{10}	Contact municipal councilman	.05	.03	.15	**.84**	.05
Voting						
CD_{11}	Vote 1970	.07	.02	.02	.03	**.99**

N = 348*

*N varies slightly owing to missing observations.

What accounts for this difference? We believe that for urbanites school-related activities (CD_1 and CD_2) stand apart from other organizational activism (CD_3–CD_5) owing to demographic factors. Only those individuals who have school-aged children are likely to attempt to influence school-related public goods through the PTA and school board. Thus, in rural communities, where people have more children than in urban areas (mean rural = 5.5, mean urban = 3.8), respondents are more likely to have school-aged children in the household than are urban persons. All other things being equal, individuals in rural areas who are inclined to be active in organizations are, at any given moment, more likely than urban individuals to participate in school-related organizations.

Levels of Participation

Two conflicting lines of scholarly inquiry complicate predicting whether urbanites or peasants should be more politically active. As noted in the introduction, the evidence comparing urban and rural electoral participation is mixed, varying from nation to nation. We are left to concur with Richardson's affirmation that, in predicting participation levels, "place of residence has different meanings in different national and regional settings" (1973, p. 435).

On the other hand, peasants are frequently portrayed as politically passive and uninvolved (Lewis 1959). Further, researchers have usually found a positive correlation between socioeconomic status and political participation (Milbrath and Goel 1977). Thus, Robert H. Salisbury's (1975, p. 326) recent review of the participation literature asserts, "well-educated, high income citizens participate more than the poor, no matter what the context or institutional setting." The peasants of this survey were considerably less educated and poorer than the urban sample: the peasants had a mean education of 2.6 years and a mean annual income of $492, whereas the metropolitan residents had attended school an average of 10.2 years and earned an average of $3,304 per year. One would hardly expect to find Costa Rican peasants to be more politically active than urban dwellers, yet this is precisely what some of our data show.

In order to compare levels of participation we computed the mean scores of each of the indicators of participation in the CD sample, and applied a t-test of statistical significance (Table 4). We found mean levels of community project participation and education-related organizational activism significantly higher ($p = .001$) among the peasants than the urbanites. In contrast, we found that city dwellers reported slightly higher voting ($p = .05$), more frequent contact with the municipal executive ($p = .01$) and greater activity in the non-educational groups ($p = .001$) than did the peasants. No significant differences appeared for group leadership and contacting municipal councilmen.

A closer look at the organizational activism variables reveals that peasants may also be more active in non-education related organizations. In order to understand why this is so, it is necessary to borrow Joseph Schlesinger's (1968) concept of "opportunity structure." Not all individuals have available to them

the same number of organizations in which they can obtain membership; tiny villages, because of their limited population, are unable to sustain the wide range of organizations found in metropolitan areas. Thus the opportunity structure for participation is conditioned, at least in part, by the community's population. In the Costa Rican case, Booth (1975b) has shown that the number of organizations in a community is linearly related to population, thus the larger the town, the greater one's opportunity for organizational activity. As a consequence of this finding we have recomputed our total group

TABLE 4
MEAN LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION FOR PEASANTS AND FOR URBAN RESIDENTS
Community Development Study

	Variables	$\bar{X}$ *Peasants (males)*	$\bar{X}$ *Urban (males)*	*Difference of means* t	p
Communal Organizational Activism					
CD_1	Officer PTA or School Board	.729	.315	5.82	.001
CD_2	Member PTA or School Board	.398	.171	6.69	.001
CD_3	Average group leadership	.984	1.111	2.09	N.S.
CD_4	Average group attendance	1.523	1.838	3.43	.001
CD_5	Uncontrolled total group memberships	1.190	1.796	5.18	.001
CD_5'	Controlled total group memberhips	.472	.303	5.11	.05
Communal Project Participation					
CD_6	Ever participated in community improvement project	.663	.387	7.36	.001
CD_7	Contributed material support or labor to Community Project	.516	.246	7.35	.001
CD_8	Total number of community improvement projects	1.274	.710	6.39	.001
Citizen Initiated Contacting					
CD_9	Contact municipal executive	.094	.171	2.86	.01
CD_{10}	Contact municipal councilman	.101	.108	.29	N.S.
Voting					
CD_{11}	Vote in 1970 election	.839	.903	2.45	.05
	N	306*	350*		

*N varies slightly owing to missing observations.

membership index (CD_3), to control for the opportunity structure (CD_5). This was done by dividing the total number of organizations in which the respondent held membership by the total number of organizations that existed in his community.[12]

When the opportunity structure is controlled (as it should be in order not to penalize peasants living in tiny villages for not being members of groups which do not exist) Costa Rica's peasants do participate more ($p = .05$) than urbanites. While we believe that the variable which measures average group attendance (CD_4) would also reveal greater participation among peasants than urbanites, we are unable to control for the opportunity structure of participation for CD_4 since we have no measure of the number of meetings held in the communities. Our research has found, however, that urban communal organizations meet more frequently than do rural organizations, which tend to have restricted meeting schedules during the long months of harvest and planting season when the peasant has little free time (Booth et al. 1973, pp. 115-129).

What seems to be the major determinant of the greater communal activism among peasants? We believe the level of the community's service infrastructure to be of primary importance in determining the greater communal activism in rural Costa Rica (see Seligson 1978). Costa Rica is a highly centralized society, both along class and geographical lines. The local and national governments supply to the residents of metropolitan Costa Rica a broad array of public goods including a typically wide range of public and social service amenities common to most modern cities. Residents of the countryside, however, generally lack access to such public goods (Booth et al. 1973; Booth 1974; 1975a; 1975b). Peasants' more intense community participation stems from the need to upgrade the standard of living in their towns by creating or causing the government to redistribute basic services, a need not as urgent for non-slum urban dwellers because of the relatively higher levels of services already provided them (Booth 1974; Seligson 1974). Thus, Salisbury's (1975) assertion that lower SES individuals participate less *regardless of the context* is simply not true in Costa Rica. Rather, it is precisely *the context itself* (i.e., the distribution of critical public goods – the service infrastructure) which appears to determine the degree to which people engage in community participation.

There is substantial additional evidence to support the above contention. Research in Costa Rica has shown that, regardless of the average socioeconomic status of their residents, both rural communities (Seligson 1978; 1979a) and urban communities (Booth et al. 1973, pp. 115-129) with inadequate public service infrastructures or service breakdowns exhibit much more intense community improvement activism than communities with adequate service infrastructures. Research on urban squatters in Santiago (Portes 1971a; 1971b), Lima (Dietz 1974) and Guayaquil (Moore, chapter 15) reveals that the greatest activity takes place in the settlements which have fewest services. In older *barrios*, which have more developed service infrastructures, the residents are much less prone to do community improvement work.

The only areas of participation in which the Costa Rican urbanite clearly excels are voting (CD_{11}) and contacting the municipal executive (CD_9). A large part of the explanation for the higher voting and contacting seems to lie in an environmental constraint on peasant behavior which makes the cost of attempting to influence public goods distribution in these arenas much higher for peasants than for residents of the metropolis. Since rural *cantones* in Costa Rica are almost always substantially larger than urban ones, peasants typically have to travel considerable distances in order to reach a polling place to cast their ballots, and even longer distances to reach the county seat where they can contact the municipal executive. Urban dwellers do not have such problems. Generally quite primitive roads and underdeveloped transportation networks in rural Costa Rica compound the impact of distance on participation. This means that bus service in the countryside is not only infrequent and irregular, but also quite expensive because of the high costs involved in maintaining vehicles on unpaved, rutted roads. A trip in remote areas of the country costs from four to five times as much as a trip of equal distance in urban areas. Furthermore, the greater costs of travel in the countryside must be borne by individuals whose incomes average less than one-sixth of those earned by urban dwellers.

Discussion

To summarize, Costa Rican peasants and urbanites exhibit similar modes of activity except for organizational activism, a difference attributable to the differences between the number of school-aged children in rural and urban families. Rural dwellers play a more active role than urbanites in community projects, in school-related organizations, and (when opportunity structure is controlled) in overall group membership. Urban dwellers, on the other hand, vote, interact with local government (the municipal executive), and attend meetings more frequently. These findings demonstrate that there are different styles of political participation in urban and rural sectors.

We have attempted to demonstrate that such styles develop because the distinctive environments in which urban and rural Costa Ricans live define greatly divergent public goods needs and participation costs for each sector. Urban dwellers, comparatively well-served by national and local political institutions, participate more intensely in these arenas. Peasants, on the other hand, rely more upon their own resources through organizational activity and community project participation. In essence, Costa Rican peasants supply many of their own public goods because formal governmental institutions do not provide them nearly so well as for the residents of the cities.

We should point out that peasants in some other areas of Latin America exhibit similar levels and patterns of behavior. Costa Rican *campesinos* appear not to be exceptionally active, but rather representative of peasants in other countries of Latin America. See Booth and Seligson (1978b) and Booth (1979) for reviews of relevant research, as well as Fishel (chapter 5), Landsberger and Gierisch (chapter 7), and Varela (chapter 11). Of course, in areas

where authoritarian regimes repress peasants (see Forman, chapter 4), participation is considerably lower.

In this analysis we have disregarded distinctions *within* the urban and rural sectors. However, understanding of political participation cannot be complete without attention to such intraclass factors. In a forthcoming paper (Booth and Seligson 1979) we examine in detail the notable effects of land tenure upon participation within the Costa Rican peasant sector.

We hope our research has helped in some way to demystify commonly held notions about how peasants differ politically from urbanites. Because peasants dress, eat, and speak differently, and a wide range of their customs differ dramatically from those found in urban areas, observers of peasant society have often become entranced by this distinctiveness. Political scientists have generally assumed, without empirical substantiation, that this distinctiveness includes political passivity. Systematic cross-national studies of peasant participation may well reveal that such assumptions lack foundation. In the Costa Rican case we have found that peasants participate in much the same ways as do individuals in other nations. Moreover, we have found that in some modes of political activity they are even more active than Costa Rican urbanites. Ultimately, we believe that the structures and levels of political participation, in the countryside as well as the city, stem not from inherent cultural differences between sectors, but in clear structural differences in the distribution of public goods within the society. Rigorous empirical research, we suggest, will put to rest the myth of the passive peasant and further illuminate the conditions that shape participation throughout Latin American societies.

Notes

1. The Verba-Nie studies (Verba et al. 1971; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba et al. 1973) distinguish between contacts with particularized referents and contacts with communal referents. We believe, however, that the real difference to which they allude is between concern with state-controlled private goods (particularized contacting) and concern with public goods (communal contacting). Our definition would exclude particularized contacting from the realm of political participation since it essentially involves private economic transactions. For an extended discussion of this point see Booth and Seligson (1978b).

2. While it is true that elections are free and democratically run, voting itself is mandatory. Since 1959 certain sanctions, including fines and the loss of the identification card *(cédula)* are applied to non-voters. A partial result of the mandatory voting law has been voter turnout averaging over 80% of the registered voters in the last three elections. Since voting became mandatory, from 15% to 20% more of the electorate has voted in each election than in the last one before this new requirement was put into effect (turnout in 1958 was 65%) (Tribunal Supremo de Elecciones 1969; 1970; Aguilar Bulgarelli 1973).

3. The model employed is component analysis with unities in the principal diagonal.

4. CD_1: "Have you participated as an officer or as president of a school board or PTA?": officer (14.8%), president (9.2%). (Note that all distribution data in notes 4 through 7 refer to the Community Development peasant subset).

CD_2: "Are you or have you been a member of a school board or PTA?": affirmative responses = 38.9%.

CD_3: This index is based on an individual's response to the following question for several specific organizations. "Have you participated as an officer or president in any of the following organizations: sports clubs, voluntary associations, religious organizations, social committees, etc. . . ." A mean score was calculated by summing the leadership scores and dividing the sum by the total number of member organizations. The mean score for the 306 respondents was 0.98.

CD_4: With respect to the list of organizations mentioned above, the respondent was asked, "Is your attendance at meetings and activities frequent (coded 3), from time to time (coded 2) or seldom or never (coded 1)?" Non-members were coded as zero. The scores were summed and divided by the total number of group memberships, giving an average attendance index. The mean score was 1.52.

CD_5: The total number of groups to which the individual is a member. The mean for the peasant respondents is .472. While this index does partly subsume CD_1-CD_4, it also measures membership in any organization to which the respondent belongs, indicating global organizational activism.

5. CD_6: Have you ever participated in some effort to improve the community, such as work on the roads, the school, the church, or something like that?": no = 33.7%, yes = 66.3%.

CD_7: This item isolates individuals who have given important support, such as money, materials or land, as well as their own labor, to better their communities: no = 48.4%, yes = 51.6%.

CD_8: Total number of community improvement projects participated in by the individual respondent: The mean score was 1.27.

6. CD_9: "Have you ever asked for help from the municipal executive?": affirmative response = 9.4%.

CD_{10}: "Have you ever asked for help from the *síndico* (district representative) or *regidor* (municipal councilman)?": affirmative response = 10.1%.

7. CD_{11}: "Did you vote in the last national election?": yes = 83.9%.

8. PS_1: "What is the most serious problem in the village, that is to say, of ____?" (name of respondent's village). For the purposes of this paper the responses were recoded so as to distinguish between those who mentioned a problem and those who did not: problem = 63.1%, no problem = 36.9%.

PS_2: "How would you go about solving this problem?" All responses which proposed some solution were coded to distinguish these respondents from those who had no solutions: response = 56.3%, no response = 43.7%.

PS_3: "How did this problem arise?" Coding comments for PS_2 apply here: response = 60.1%, no response = 39.9%.

PS_4: "What chance would you and others like you have to solve this problem? Good, fair or bad?" good = 25.2%, fair = 14.3%, bad = 20.2%, none = 40.3%.

PS_5: "Do you think that you could do something to solve it?": yes = 34.7%, no = 66.3%.

PS_6: "Have you made an effort to solve this problem?": yes = 29.8%, no = 70.2%.

PS_7: "Is there anybody from right in this village who can help you solve this problem?": yes = 23.0%, no = 77.0%.

9. PS_8: "Are you or were you ever a member of the board of directors of any of the above committees that have just been mentioned?" (Note that this question was asked after $PS_{8\text{-}12}$): yes = 26.2%, no = 73.8%.

PS_9 – PS_{12}: "Many people don't have time to attend community meetings. Do you go to the meetings of the following committees?" Note: After each committee which the respondent said he attended, interviewers asked, "Do you attend almost all the time, once in a while, or almost never?" Almost always was coded 1, once in a while 2, almost never 3, and never 4. The committees are:

PS_9	School Board, $\bar{X} = 3.0$
PS_{10}	PTA, $\bar{X} = 3.0$
PS_{11}	Church Committee, $\bar{X} = 3.3$
PS_{12}	Progressive Committee, $\bar{X} = 3.6$

10. PS_{14}: "Let's talk about the municiality of ––– (respondent's county). Many people are so busy with their work that they don't have time to go to municipal meetings. Have you gone to a meeting of the municipality with the past year?": yes = 22.0%, no = 78.0%.

PS_{15}: "By the way, do you know who the present councilmen in this county are? If "yes", "What are their names?" The variable was coded by taking the number of councilmen correctly named and dividing by the total number of councilmen in the county. The mean score correct was 16%.

11. PS_{16}: "Did you vote in the last presidential election, that is, the election of 1970?": yes = 83.1%.

12. The number of organizations present in each community surveyed was obtained by elite interviews in the community. In the CD study the field team leader interviewed several key observers in each community to obtain extensive data. See Booth et al. (1973). The boundaries of the community were defined by local informants as well. Hence, in the urban part of the sample, only those organizations functioning directly within the respondent-defined neighborhood (i.e., *barrio*) were counted so as not to inflate the number of organizations to include the multitude which exist in all of metropolitan San José.

While this procedure does "protect" the peasant with a limited opportunity structure from receiving an undeservedly low score, it has the drawback of making peasants who, let us say, participate in the only organization available in their village (score = 1.0) appear more active than others who may participate in 4 out of 5 organizations in the village (score = .80). To correct for this difficulty, the PS study awarded peasants who were more active than the mean participation level a .10 "bonus" point for every organization over the mean to which they belonged. Verba and Nie (1972) do not explicitly consider the opportunity structure of participation in computing their indices of participation (see their Appendix B), although they do consider the number of available voluntary organizations per capita at one point (pp. 244-245). They may have thus underestimated levels of rural participation since in smaller rural communities in the United States one would not expect to find all of the organizations they list (see p. 354), whereas in the urban areas probably all but the farm organizations would be present. While for a highly urban society such as the United States, controlling for opportunity structure would likely have only a limited effect on the results, in a predominantly rural nation such as Costa Rica, controlling for the opportunity to take part in groups could be critical.