

THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF
STUDENTS AND IT'S EFFECT ON POLITICAL EFFICACY:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON POLITICAL
BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty
of the
Department of Sociology
University of Texas at El Paso

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

By
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August 1977

UMI Number: ep01326

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express thanks to Dr. Sarah Watly of the Sociology Department and Dr. James Lamar of the Political Science Department for their valuable time and effort in helping me put together this research project.

I would also like to express thanks to Dr. Richard Hough of the Sociology Department who served as Chairman of my committee, and without whose assistance and guidance in this project I would still be in a maze of confusion.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this research is on the effects that voluntary and political organizations have on students at a university campus. Does being a member of voluntary and political organizations increase one's political efficacy, and does it reduce political cynicism? It would be interesting to examine the political attitudes of students in the aftermath of the "Watergate Crisis," and since the election of a new president.

Much literature has been written on social participation, however it pertains to the general population. This project will be concerned with the political behavior of students. The format employed in this research paper will be a discussion of the literature. Discussion of the actual analysis follows; next will come a discussion of the results, and finally the conclusion.

Chapter 1

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

When attempting to answer some of the questions concerning variations in political efficacy of America's population, one looks for causal explanations, i.e., why do individuals or groups behave in a particular manner? What causes individuals to engage or not to engage in a particular form of political behavior? Could it be that some people act in a particular manner because of feelings they have for certain candidates? Could it be that some people act because they want to see a change, while others act to maintain the status quo? Political behavior is comprised of many different forms, i.e., demonstrations, rioting, contacting and influencing political elites, getting involved in political campaigns, and voting.

The main purpose of this thesis is to compare the differences in the degree of political efficacy of ethnic groups, and the effect that voluntary and political organizations may have in increasing or producing political efficacy. In particular, the question arises, do minority group members who belong to voluntary associations become politically responsive and work more effectively to achieve their goal as a group, or do they feel that it does not matter because political elites seem unresponsive?

One can only guess, initially, that when one belongs to a voluntary association it increases one's political efficacy. Put more clearly, a person may well feel that he has a better chance at contacting and influencing decision-makers as a member of a group than as an individual.

For the population as a whole, lack of political efficacy seemed to be the problem since being pointed out that only 55 percent of the American electorate voted in the presidential election in 1972, and 53 to 59 percent were attracted to the polls in 1976. A congressional off-year election attracts less than 50 percent, state and local elections turn out even less (Olsen, 1972:317). However, Black political activity and the activity of other minority groups is distinct from that of the dominant group. It is distinct because it is aimed at fighting segregation, discrimination, and gaining equal opportunity. Blacks are likely to employ more political activities, methods, devices and techniques that advance their policy preferences than are whites.

Blacks are also more likely to employ "direct action" with the probability that it will bring quicker and more favorable results. In 1972 two-thirds of the Black population approved of efforts to halt actions through sit-ins and mass demonstrations.

On the other hand, Whites are less tolerant of such behavior (Pomper, 1975:126).

The cause of protest employed by Blacks has changed. In 1968, protest was based on hope: a fair government will respond when injustice is brought to attention. More recently, protest has been based on despair: demonstrations are necessary to oppose an unfair government.

Pomper states that White political behavior has also changed; Whites are increasingly engaging in actual demonstrations for a different purpose. These demonstrations have resulted from American involvement in Vietnam or in opposition to school busing. Whites still do not favor protest to the same extent as Blacks, but maybe as time passes White protest will be as likely to increase.

The character of Black politics results from the necessity for Blacks to resolve their problems. Black politics itself is not a homogeneous phenomenon. It differs according to location and type of segregation and discrimination found in different parts of the country (Walton, 1972).

Furthermore, the different political techniques used by Blacks as pointed out by Pomper help to distinguish it from White politics.

Walton states that observers discuss segregation in the Northern and Southern regions, but fail to distinguish between the types of segregation. Even in the same region, segregation is not found to be the same. For example, one may guess that in the deeper parts of the South Blacks are confronted with the "Jim Crow" laws, while in the upper

portions of the South they may well be fighting for desegregation of schools and housing.

It has been suggested that Black politics has moved through four stages, but there has been no simultaneous occurrences of these four stages across regions. These four stages are: (1) non-participation, (2) limited participation, (3) moderate participation, and (4) full participation (Walton, 1972). According to Walton Blacks are still in the non-participation process in some areas, or in some counties in the states of Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama. Furthermore, if the voting right act expires, it is possible that Blacks in a more advanced stage of the political process will be forced back to a lower stage (Walton, 1972:13).

The move from one stage to another takes place because of some significant event. These events occur because of demands made on society by Blacks, or by others on their behalf.

This accounts for the degree of political efficacy of minority groups. Efficacy is the ability to advance to a higher level of political participation suggested by Walton. It also entails the ability to influence decision-makers. What has held true for Blacks might also hold true for Mexican-Americans. Keeping in mind that Walton postulates that these stages do not necessarily occur in order.

The second stage is characterized by extremely low political participation--only a few Blacks participate in the

political process. The third stage is characterized by more than 50 percent Black political participation--Blacks have been motivated to enter the political arena due to occurrences and events in their own community.

The "Ethnic Community" theory is relevant here because it discusses collective political participation mobilized against an outside force. This theory will be discussed later. The fourth stage entails full participation in the political system--Blacks not only acquire consciousness, but obtain political efficacy. In this final stage, Blacks have access to power. They have the tools and devices, as mentioned above, to make an impact on power holders.

Black politics is continually changing. For example, the renewal of the 1965 Voting Rights Act might be a determinant of whether Blacks advance or are forced into a lower level.

It could be hypothesized that ethnic groups become politically efficacious if their participation in voluntary associations is a prerequisite for movement into the third stage. One may pre-suppose that similar statements can be made about other minority groups rather than just one particular minority. It might be added that in conjunction with the fourth stage, one might state that Blacks no longer vote solely on socioeconomic status and social class alone. Indeed, the change may have shifted to racial group consciousness, and organized responsiveness to political events.

Contemporary Black leaders may have helped shape the political meaning of being Black in ways that Black leaders two decades before could not (Miller and Levitan, 1976:27).

The preceding discussion attempted to indicate the difference between Blacks and Whites in politics. There is differentiation between the methods used by the two groups, and reasons for entering into the political arena. The discussion now turns to the relationship that social participation in voluntary organizations has on political efficacy.

VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION PARTICIPATION AND POLITICAL EFFICACY

Marvin Olsen's multi-variate analysis of voter turnout, and social participation brings into focus the relationship of political activity and membership in voluntary associations. Olsen cites three reasons why social participation increases individual political activity: it broadens one's sphere of interest and knowledge in public affairs, and political issues become more salient; secondly, it brings the individual into contact with other people and these relationships bring him into the political arena; thirdly, it trains the individual for social interaction, leadership skills, and provides sources for effective political activity.

Olsen refers to two versions of the "Social Participation Theory." These versions are the "Mobilization Version," and the "Mediation Version." "Social Participation

Theory" itself is derived from the broader idea of social pluralism developed by such theorists as de Tocqueville and Truman (Olsen, 1972:318). "Social Participation Theory" maintains that involvement in special interest or voluntary associations will in turn activate individuals politically. This means old social and economic commitments are broken down, and people become available for new patterns of socialization and behavior. Furthermore, it is the activity of the association which moves people from traditional to more modern ways of life.

The thrust of the "Mobilization" thesis is that social mobilization can be used to understand the effects that voluntary organizational activities have on political participation. People caught in traditional patterns of socialization must therefore be mobilized through involvement in new social context. The three reasons brought out by Olsen above serve as examples of the "Mobilization Version."

The "Mediation Version" argues that voluntary associations at least on occasions participate directly in the political system. They influence political leaders and decision-makers and function as a channel through which political elites may contact constituents. Associations such as church-related organizations which are non-political, temporarily become parapolitical. Olsen states that this version views voluntary associations as mediating between individuals and the political system, the focus is on the

organization's actions rather than their effects on members.

Olsen employed three hypotheses in his study: the first hypothesis states that voluntary organization participation rates will be positively related to voter turn-out, whatever the nature of the organization. The second hypothesis states that "participation rates in community and church activities will be positively related to voting turn-out, and these relationships will remain significant when voluntary association participation is held constant." The final hypothesis states that "participation rates in interpersonal interaction will be related to voter turn-out but holding constant participation in voluntary associations, churches, and community affairs will eliminate those correlations." Even though Olsen has limited his hypotheses to the effects of social participation on voting turn-out, one may assume that by a stretch of imagination other types of political participation can be included in his theory.

The first and last hypotheses were accepted; however, the hypothesis on church-related activity was not. Although the hypothesis was accepted that participation rates in voluntary associations are strongly related to voter turn-out, this holds true for the population as a whole. The question that one should ask is, does participation in a voluntary organization increase the political efficacy of minority groups, or a particular minority group? Olsen provides evidence for his hypothesis, which again is limited to voting turn-out.

In Olsen's study it was found that of the 310 respondents voting in 1966, 94 percent belonged to at least one organization before the 1968 elections. Similarly, 91 percent of the 351 respondents belonged to at least one organization in 1964 and also voted in the '68 elections. A second and third analysis were conducted in his study. These were similar except in the second analysis. The respondents belonged to at least two organizations before the '68 elections. The third analysis has shown that the respondents belonged to at least three organizations before the '68 elections.

The explanations of the motivations of why Blacks and Whites join associations can be found in the types of organizations they join. There are two distinct types of organizations which people join; first there are the instrumental organizations, i.e., political clubs, and neighborhood improvement groups. Secondly, there are expressive organizations, or P. T. A. The distinction between these two types may be based largely upon the type of integration an organization affords it's members. Instrumental groups are externally oriented, thus political groups or neighborhood improvement groups aim to influence behavior beyond its confines.

Expressive groups tend to be internally oriented, their goal is aimed at individual gratification and inter-group solidarity (London, 1975:281). London postulates that

in comparison to Whites, Blacks are less likely to join organizations for recreational goals. They are more likely to join organizations which serve to achieve an instrumental goal. Blacks are affiliated with instrumental organizations because of the special problems and issues that arise in the Black community. There are those who join issue-oriented organizations who call themselves "ethnic identifiers." Conversely, there are those who join for social motivations, and are considered "compensators." Ethnic identifiers are considered more likely to enter political participation because they are likely to join organizations whose goal is helping the community. Whereas those who join for social reasons belong to organizations which tend not to be politically oriented, voluntary-association membership cannot be viewed as a monolithic phenomenon nor can Blacks be treated as a homogeneous unit.

While membership in voluntary associations enhances one's likelihood of increased political participation, disagreement is found among researchers about who participates the most. Some will argue that Whites belong to more associations and are more politically active. Others will argue that Black participation is higher than that of Whites, especially with those of similar status. London states that there has been a variety of theories that has confused the issue of Black/White political participation.

Those who find that Whites join more than Blacks posit an isolation or "cultural inhibition theory"--involuntary

isolation of Blacks from civic affairs is viewed as alienation or apathy which decrease Black political participation rates. Those who argue that Blacks participate more than Whites base their explanations on the "compensatory theory" and the "ethnic community theory." The "compensatory theory" contends that Blacks compensate for their subordinate status through intensive participation in organizations. This was the dominant theory explaining Black participation until the "ethnic community theory" which posits that increasing race and class consciousness within the Black communities enhance activism (London, 1975:275).

London argues that there is a discrepancy which is partly due to the type of study conducted. Some studies contain national samples; other researchers have used samples taken from "widely varying areas." Another reason for these discrepancies is that the definition of a voluntary organization varies in different types of studies.

In his attempt to determine who participates in what and why they do so, London divides his analysis into three sections: first by separating respondents into homogeneous race and class; secondly by specifying voluntary associations by relevant type; thirdly by assessing the relationship between an individual's membership in different kinds of associations and their participation in politics.

The most important independent variable to determine who participates in voluntary associations is socioeconomic

status. Those who are members of organizations are found in the middle and upper-middle socioeconomic ranges (London, 1975:279). Blacks on one hand are prevented from becoming active participants because of low levels in educational training and income. On the other hand, if Blacks were elevated to equal status of Whites, all racial differences in social and political participation would disappear (Olsen, 1970:682). Olsen states that when socioeconomic status is controlled Blacks tend to be slightly more active than Whites in voluntary and political organizations.

In assessing Black performance in the political sphere there is reason to believe that opportunities for political participation are more open than opportunities for jobs, income, or education.

Equalitarian values are held more in relation to politics than in relation to other areas (Verba and Nie, 1972: 152). Verba and Nie ask the question, "Is access to political participation more equal than access to special or economic benefits?" There is no precise answer to such a question. One of the reasons is that one is comparing different variables. Verba and Nie state we cannot ask whether Blacks are better off in the political arena than in the economic. That would require comparing votes with dollars. But it can be asked whether the difference between Blacks and Whites is greater in one arena than in another. Specifically, we can ask whether the degree of association between racial status

and economic status is greater than that between racial status and political participation. Two distinct scales were employed, one measuring social status and the other measuring political participation. The authors state each scale gives a fairly good indication of whether one individual or group receives more of the social and economic benefits than another, and whether one individual or group participates more in the political life of his society than another.

Verba and Nie hypothesize that a greater association between race and S. e. S. exist than between race and political participation. The findings from the two scales employed show that Blacks are less represented at the three highest levels of the S. e. S. scale (2 percent, 6 percent, and 6 percent respectively). On the political participation scale, Blacks are represented equally (11 percent, 11 percent and 10 percent respectively). Therefore the political system is more open to blacks than the socioeconomic system.

Although Blacks may be evenly represented in the political participation scale, race has an effect on the degree which Blacks and Whites contact political elites. Blacks may be manifesting group consciousness, but they are still not as likely to contact political leaders. The reason is that there is an "ascriptive barrier" that separates the Black contactor from the usually White target of contact (Verba and Nie, 1972:164). Verba and Nie also point out that Blacks are more likely than Whites to think that a "go-between"

is needed when making contact with governmental officials. In short, Blacks are less likely to perceive themselves as successful in making direct contact. Not only are Blacks less likely to perceive direct contact with governmental officials, but they are also less likely to perceive themselves as finding a "go-between" if needed. Verba and Nie illustrate the degree of contacts made by Blacks and Whites. They found that 89 percent of the Whites have pressing personal or family problems. Of those, 23 percent think that the government can help. Of this group, 40 percent have contacted the government and 60 percent have not. Similarly, 92 percent of the Blacks reported personal or family problems; 39 percent of the Blacks considered the government as a problem solver. However, of those only 23 percent have contacted the government and 77 percent have not (Verba and Nie, 1972).

Despite the fact that Blacks tend to contact the government less often than Whites, it has been confirmed that low S. e. S. Blacks (42 percent) may join voluntary groups more often than low S. e. S. Whites (39 percent). In comparison, 31 percent of the low S. e. S. Blacks join pressure groups compared to 27 percent of the low S. e. S. Whites. Finally, 27 percent of the low S. e. S. Blacks joined issue-oriented organizations compared to 16 percent of the low S. e. S. Whites. The only deviation is found at the highest S. e. S. levels where the greatest proportion of joiners are

White (74 percent), while only 50 percent of the Blacks in the same category join (London, 1975:278-9).

First the evidence indicates that controlling for S. e. S. raises the mean score of Blacks on political participation, while lowering the scores of Whites. In short, controlling for S. e. S. indicates more membership for Blacks in political organizations. Without the effect of S. e. S., Blacks have higher political participation rates. Low S. e. S. individuals who do join voluntary or political organizations view their activity from a different perspective. Low S. e. S. Blacks are likely to feel the need to strive for a change more than lower class Whites. One should ask the question, is the observed tendency for Blacks to be more socially and politically active in comparison to Whites a very recent phenomenon, or has it been occurring all the time? Supporters of the "compensation theory" will argue that it has been happening for a long period of time, whereas supporters of the "ethnic community theory" will suggest it is a recent outgrowth from the civil rights movement (Olsen, 1970:695-6).

Differences in social and political participation are also attributed to age. This holds true for differences within ethnic groups. Older Whites will participate more than younger Whites, similarly older Blacks will participate more than younger Blacks. According to Olsen, since Blacks have a higher birth and death rate, their distribution tends

to peak into the "young adult" category. Persons under thirty and forty are known to have lower participation rates in many social and political activities. In Olsen's sample Blacks are considerably younger than Whites (57 percent to 43 percent).

Controlling for age does not produce as noticeable a shift as controlling for S. e. S. Olsen states that the two controls taken together do tend to strengthen the general tendency for Blacks to score higher.

In underlining the argument, the point is that it is not simply a matter of race, but also the effects of variables, i.e., S. e. S. and age which determine voluntary and political participation.

VOLUNTARY GROUP ASSOCIATION, S. e. S.,
POWERLESSNESS, AND POLITICAL EFFICACY

In general, S. e. S. and membership in voluntary associations has been linked by the concept of "powerlessness." The authors cite Lipset who provides positive links between S. e. S. and political activity (Sallach, Babchuk and Booth, 1972:879). These links are: (1) differential access to information enjoyed by social class, (2) the varying degree which occupations encourage the skills necessary for political participation; (3) efficacious channels are closed to the lower-class, thereby creating a progressive decline in the salience of political activity along class lines. This last

position was taken by Marx and also by many of the radical left of the Sixties. "Perceived powerlessness" is one of the concepts which is central to this thesis. Restating the hypothesis, if members of ethnic groups join voluntary and political organizations, then it serves as a prerequisite to enhance political efficacy or give political efficacy to minority people as a group.

In support of their argument, the authors refer to two researchers: (1) Aberbach states that "those who see themselves as powerless vote less frequently than those who feel they possess political power." (2) Dean found that correlations between alienation and political apathy are significant, even though they are low in explanatory value.

Sallach, Babchuk and Booth examine the relationship between socioeconomic status, voluntary group membership, perceived powerlessness, and political activity. Their findings most strongly correlated with voting behavior, but is weak in its relationship with political groups. Those who are low in S. e. S. will be less likely to vote because of the powerless position they are in. Their powerlessness may be conquered if they join organizations whereby they build feelings of high political efficacy. In short, voting will be irrelevant, and they will move on to the next stage of political activity. These types of feelings and the degree of political participation is likely to be found in groups such as J. O. I. N., the "Black Panther Party," or through

the politicalization of existing groups, i.e., "Young Lords," the "Young Patriots," or the "Black P. Stone Nation" (Sallach, Babchuk and Booth, 1972:890).

THE POLITICAL EFFICACY OF MEXICAN-AMERICANS

Other researchers agree that one's social class does have an effect on the type of participation in which one engages. Very recently there have been social scientists who have broadened their scope to include Mexican-Americans (Antunes and Gaitz, 1975:1192). The purpose of their study was to determine whether Mexican-Americans resemble Blacks in exhibiting voluntary and political participation that exceeded the political participation of Whites. Ethnicity is an important variable in explaining the different types of activities, i.e., church attendance, voting, and political discussion. It is less important in explaining such things as influence on decision-makers, and organizational membership. In a comparison of Blacks and Whites, their findings indicate Blacks exceed Whites in all but two of the dependent variables related to social and political participation. On the other hand, the findings by Antunes and Gaitz indicate that the comparison between Whites and Mexican-Americans is different. Mexican-Americans exceed Whites in only four of the eleven variables.

There are three explanations relating to the distinctions found among these three groups. First the civil rights

movement plays a part in explaining why there is a distinction between Black and Mexican-American political participation rates.

Civil rights has had a greater impact on the Black community. The Black struggle for equality has been longer in duration than the recent Mexican-American efforts (Antunes and Gaitz, 1975:1203). Mexican-Americans have no association comparable to the N. A. A. C. P., Urban League, or Southern Leadership Christian Conference. It has only been until recently that there has been any civil rights activity among Mexican-Americans. Secondly, the degree of ethnic consciousness should be considered among Blacks and Mexican-Americans. In their findings in the degree of ethnic consciousness, Antunes and Gaitz tested the levels of social and political participation of "non-ethnic identifiers" with those of "ethnic-identifiers." Their findings did not support the "ethnic community theory" because "ethnic-identifiers" exceeded "non-ethnic identifiers" in only two of the eleven variables. Thirdly, there is the concept of social distance, the main thrust being that Whites try to maintain social distance between themselves and the disadvantaged group. With this being the case, Blacks may perceive themselves as being more excluded than they really are, and Mexican-Americans may perceive themselves as less excluded than they really are. This might account for the different levels in social participation. In comparing Blacks and

Mexican-Americans to the social acceptance of Whites Antunes and Gaitz validate their hypothesis. They state that Blacks underestimate the degree of proximity Whites are willing to allow, while Mexican-Americans tend to over-estimate the degree of proximity between themselves and Whites. On scores from the Borgardus Social Distance Scale which range from 0-100, Blacks perceive themselves as twenty-five points away in social distance. Mexican-Americans are more or less accurate about the amount of social distance between themselves and Whites, the result could very well be a fifty-point difference between Blacks and Mexican-Americans. Other research has been conducted that compared the political participation of Blacks, Whites, and Mexican-Americans (Williams, Johnson, and Babchuk, 1973). Many investigators claim that Mexican-Americans seldom belong to any voluntary associations. The "isolation theory" as an acceptable explanation has been ruled out because it should apply to Blacks as well. A more valid argument examines the Mexican-American culture for an answer. Their culture prohibits them from joining associations because of their emphasis of loyalty to the home and family.

The authors point out that the Blacks in their sample have a larger proportion of female heads than found in the other two groups. They further state that if being a female head is associated with active participation that it is possible that Black political participation rates are enhanced by having a larger proportion of female heads. It is interesting to point out that there is some disagreement; other

researchers have found that Black men are more likely to participate in politics than Black women (Clark, 1973:552). Clark also points out that Whites are generally more knowledgeable about politics than Blacks, with the exception being that Blacks at the highest levels of education are more knowledgeable (Clark, 1973).

Returning to Mexican-Americans, researchers state they are not significantly different from Whites in social participation despite the "cultural inhibition theory." However, in the study by Williams, Johnson and Babchuk, their sample of Mexican-Americans is not representative of the entire population. Their findings support the "compensatory theory," and the "ethnic community theory" but it is not clear which theory is more applicable. Some organizations can fulfill both the "ethnic" and "compensatory" theories. An individual can gain a sense of importance by participating in an organization designed to combat racial discrimination. The percentages of Black Americans who are members of different types of organizations shows no clear pattern of whether one is a member of an organization which is primarily "compensatory" or "ethnic consciousness" oriented.

Unlike Blacks, Mexican-Americans tend to join two types of organizations: (1) church-related groups, and (2) P. T. A. Some will argue that groups affiliated with the church are almost exclusively compensatory. Others will argue that membership in the P. T. A. could express concern

for the welfare of the entire Mexican-American community. The literature then suggests that political efficacy may well result from participation in voluntary organizations. In addition, there may well be significant variations in participation and efficacy and the effects of the former on the latter if one controls for such variables as education, age, income, sex, race and religion. Those variables will be incorporated into a theoretical model in the next Chapter.

Chapter 2

ANALYSIS OF DATA

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE AND PROCEDURES

EMPLOYED IN COLLECTING DATA

The survey research method employed in this study: Questionnaires were distributed, however this method did not produce enough Black students. Questionnaires were then distributed to such students by a "snowball" technique in which known Black students gave the instrument to other Black students who were their friends and acquaintances. An availability sample is obviously limited. It is not easily generalized that students at The University of Texas, El Paso are much less politically oriented than students at large. However, it can serve to develop a source of "explanatory level" insight. The total number of respondents in the questionnaire is 168.

The questionnaire consisted of thirty-four questions, some of which were general; i.e., ethnicity and sex (in which males were coded as "1" and females "2"). Since one of the purposes of this thesis was to examine parental influence on the social and political participation of the student there were questions asking for level of parent's education, parent's income, head of household, and level of socioeconomic status. There was also the question which directly asked if

parents in any way had an influence on the student.

SCALES

The questionnaire also consisted of three scales: (1) political output; (2) political cynicism; and (3) political religiosity. The political output scale was employed to directly measure the student's political activity. It consisted of fourteen questions either answered "yes" or "no" (the questions described are found in the questionnaire in the Appendix). Ten points were given for each question answered "yes" and zero for "no." If the answer was "sometimes," five points were given, and if "don't know" was answered, three points were given. A total of 140 points was the maximum score attained, and three points was the minimum.

The political cynicism scale was made up of five questions. The answers (in the Appendix) to be checked were (1) agree, (2) disagree, (3) strongly agree, and (4) strongly disagree. A negative three was given for agree and /4 for disagree; -5 for strongly agree and /6 for strongly disagree. It was felt that religiosity in some way influences the student. Students who are guided by religion were hypothesized to be more likely to participate in politics. The religiosity scale was designed similarly to the political cynicism scale. The questions' major difference was in the number of points given--a -4 for agree, /5 for disagree, -6 for strongly

agree, and 7 for strongly disagree. Each of the points for the five questions were added; the total was either a positive or a negative. The same technique was used for the political cynicism scale.

PARENT'S AND STUDENT'S ORGANIZATIONAL SCORES

Questions were asked pertaining to the number of organizations one held membership in. The question was asked of various types of organizations; i.e., church related, social, political, etc. Questions were also asked as to how long they have been members of their organizations, what offices were held in each organization, and the number of meetings attended a year. One point was given for meetings attended and was given the least weight. On the other hand, twenty-five points was given for offices held in each organization. Two points were given for number of years of membership in an organization. For example, twenty-five years of membership was worth fifty points. If a respondent belonged to an organization less than a year, then one-half point was given. Three points were given for each organization the respondent listed. A total of five organizations could be listed in all. The individual total score for each organization (which was adding up the points of the categories previously discussed) was then combined into a grand total which was the score for organizational activity. Both parent's and student's scores were derived in an identical way.

If any section of this questionnaire was left blank, or if neither parents nor students belonged to any organizations a score of zero was given. There was no limit on the actual range of student and parent organizational scores. They would range from zero to over one hundred.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The analysis to follow will explore the various relations posited in the theoretical figure presented at the end literature review chapter. The main focus will be on the determinants of political cynicism. The theoretical model suggested that political cynicism by the student is the end product of a causal sequence in which parent's education, income, and organization participation along with ascribed characteristics of the student (age, sex, and race) and his degree of religiosity would all determine the student's extent of organizational participation, which in turn would be causally linked with the political output on the part of the student. To the degree that the student is involved in political activity (output), it was hypothesized that political cynicism would vary.

Each of these hypothesized relationships will initially be treated below, via zero order correlation analysis. The effect of each set of variables on subsequent dependent variables will then be examined while controlling for the antecedent variable in the model through the use of first and second order analysis.

Zero order correlation analysis. The zero order correlation for the primary hypothesized relationships specified in the theoretical model are reported in Figure 1. Each hypothesis will be related and the relevant correlation coefficient examined.

1. Political output will be negatively correlated with political cynicism. This primary hypothesis was the core of the theoretical model. It was hypothesized that variations in political cynicism would crucially depend on political output and that the effects of prior independent variables would probably be contingent on the presence or absence of such output. However, the .018 correlation reported in the Figure is obviously not significant and is in the wrong direction. The degree of student political cynicism is not then contingent on the degree of political activity.

2. Student organization participation will be positively correlated with political output. This part of the model was upheld. The correlation reported in Figure 1 is .34. Political output is contingent on student organizational participation. The findings in the zero order correlation confirms the hypothesis that the more students become involved in voluntary and political organizations, the greater will be their political activity.

The next four hypotheses concern the relationship of the individual characteristics of the student to the student's

extent of political output.

3. Age will be positively correlated with student organizational participation. This part of the model was also upheld. The zero order correlation between age and student organizational participation is .16 which is shown in Figure 1. The findings support the hypothesis that the older the student, the more he or she will participate in voluntary and political organizations.

4. Religiosity will be positively correlated with student organizational participation. The original hypothesis stated that the more religiosity one has, the greater his or her involvement in student organizations. The findings support this hypothesis by showing a positive correlation, although low, between religiosity and student organizational participation. This is also shown in Figure 1. The zero order correlation for religiosity and student organizational participation is $\neq .02$. This part of the model was also upheld, though the relationship is so weak as to be insignificant.

5. Sex will be positively correlated with student organizational participation. Since males were coded as "1's" and females as "2's," this hypothesis suggests that females will be higher in participation than males. However, the correlation of -0.005 reported in Figure 1 indicates there is no significant correlation between the variables in this study.

this study.

6. Race will be negatively correlated with student organizational participation. Since the race-ethnic variables were coded in the direction of less hypothesized organizational participation (Blacks = 1; Anglos = 2; and Mexican-Americans = 3), a negative correlation was hypothesized. A very low negative correlation (-.07) was indicated in the findings and is shown in Figure 1. The prediction is supported that Mexican-Americans will be low in organizational participation.

7. Parent's organizational participation will be positively correlated with student organizational participation. This part of the model has been confirmed. The correlation between parent's organizational participation and student's organizational participation is $\neq .31$. This means that student participation is contingent on parent's participation leading to a positive correlation. This is also shown in Figure 1.

8. Parent's education will be positively correlated with parent's organization participation score. This is another of the primary hypotheses that is confirmed. The findings indicate a positive correlation between parent's education and their organizational score of $\neq .06$. This also has been shown in Figure 1. Parent's with higher education will become more involved in voluntary and political organizations.

9. Parent's income will be positively correlated with parent's organizational participation score. The original hypothesis is confirmed; the findings indicate a low positive correlation between parent's income and parent's organizational participation score. The zero order correlation between the variables is $r = .02$ meaning that income as a sub variable of SES is very weakly but positively linked to parent's organizational score. A number of other zero order correlations were assured by the theoretical model. These completed linkages are summarized in Figure 2 and the correlates are reported in Table 1. These correlations can be discussed under several headings.

LINKAGES TO POLITICAL CYNICISM

Age is significantly correlated with political cynicism; the older the student, the more cynical he becomes. The only other variable approaching age in relation to cynicism was parent's organizational participation score and that correlation is in the opposite direction from the hypothesized relationship. Since the major purpose of the research was to develop a model predictive of political, the absence of significant correlations is itself insignificant. It indicates that the model does not predict cynicism and seems to contradict much of the literature in this area. A possible cause of the lack of correlation could be the failure to perceive variation in cynicism in a student population. The mean and standard deviation in these variables were 9.5 and 6.5

respectively. There is, therefore, significant variations in cynicism and the lack of significant correlations is not a statistical artifact.

The linkages with political output. The linkages here were similar to those expected. Political output is most strongly affected by "student organizational participation scores" ($r = .34$) but significant correlations are found with a number of variables in the model. Parent's organization participation score is positively linked as predicted. Student organizational score and age ($r = .25$) are the most strongly linked political output. Sex is negatively correlated with political output ($-.13$) indicating that males are more active than females. Race is also negatively correlated with political output ($-.14$) indicating that as predicted, Mexican-Americans are the least politically active and Blacks are the most politically active.

The degree of religiosity was a very low negative correlation to political output ($-.03$) and parent's education also has a very low negative correlation with the degree of political output ($-.03$).

Linkages to student organizational participation score. Since this variable is the most important predictor of political output among students in this model, it is important to know it's antecedents. The most important determinants of student organizational participation are the student's age ($r = .16$), religiosity ($r = -.27$), and parent's organizational

participation score ($r = .31$). The relationships of age and parent's organizational participation with student's organizational score occurs as expected. However, the strong negative correlation between religiosity and student organizational participation may require new explanations. It may be that for college students, religious participation is an all-encompassing activity. If a student is religious, that activity may become so important that no other crucial activities are necessary. Therefore, the more religious the student, the lower the organizational participation score.

The linkage with parent's organizational participation.

Linkages with parent's organizational participation were generally not very high--parent's education and income apparently have little to do with parent's organizational activity. Only the racial identification of the student appears to be significantly related to parent's organizational participation. That linkage is negative as would be expected, indicating that Mexican-Americans are the least active and Blacks are the most active in organizations.

It appears, then, from the zero order correlations that a theoretical model like Figure 3 is more representative of the data than Figure 1. The differences between the two are considerable. As can be noted, parent's income, and education add little to the model. They will therefore be excluded from further discussion.

Table 1

SECONDARY ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS

PE*	PI*	Age	Rel	Sex	Rac	Pop	Sop	Po	Pc
PE	.02	.04	-.08	.04	-.11	(.06)	.09	-.04	.01
PI		-.19	.04	.03	-.07	(.02)	-.03	-.05	-.01
Age			-.07	-.17	-.08	-.07	(.16)	.25	.14
Rel				.10	.01	.05	(-.27)	-.03	-.01
Sex					.09	.01	(-.10)	-.13	.03
Rac						-.14	(-.07)	-.14	-.03
Pop							(.31)	.16	-.06
Sop								(.34)	.03
Po									.02
Pc									

¹PE = Parent's education; PI = Parent's income; Rel = religiosity; Rac = race (1 = Black; 2 = Anglo; 3 = Mexican-American); Pop = Parent's organization participation score; Sop = Student organizational participation score; Po = Political output; Pc = political cynicism.

²Sex = (1 = male; 2 = female).

Correlations in parentheses are the correlations reported in Figure 1 in Appendix.

PARTIAL CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The zero order correlation is very low (.018) for the relationship of political output to political cynicism. It might be hoped elaboration on the original relationships will enable us to specify some conditions in which political output and political cynicism are more categorically linked. If this is to occur, removing the effects of the antecedent variable should produce a higher correlation than the original.

1. Correlations first order controls; student organizational score, parent organizational score, age, religiosity, sex, and race. When student organizational participation is controlled there is a very low positive correlation of .007 between political output and political cynicism. This is indicated in Table 2. Removing the antecedent variable did not cause the correlation between political cynicism and political output to become higher. When controlling for parent's organizational participation a positive correlation of .03 between the variables political output and political cynicism. Parent's participation organizational scores seems to have the most effect whereby student organizational participation has the least effect on the original correlation. However, the correlation is in neither case statistically significant.

When age is controlled, the correlation between political cynicism and political output is in the other

direction (-.018). The original hypothesis was that the older the student the more cynical he will become. Age seems to have little significance as an antecedent variable for political cynicism and political output.

When controlling for religiosity, the correlation between political output and political cynicism is almost the exact same as the original zero order correlation (.018). This is indicated in Table 2. Students who are religious are really not overly concerned about politics, which means going back to the explanation previously given that students who are high in religiosity see religion as an all encompassing activity.

When sex is controlled, the correlation between political output and political cynicism is .023. This is reported in Table 2. It was expected that males would participate slightly more than females, and it does have an effect on political cynicism and political output.

Where race is controlled, the correlation of political cynicism and political output is lower and positive (.014), meaning that race is not a significant factor. The original relationship is replicated for political output and political cynicism when race controls for political output and political cynicism.

Correlations with second order controls; parent's organizational score and student organizational score. It was hoped that the zero order correlation (.018) of political

output to political cynicism would be raised when parent's organizational score and student organizational scores are controlled. Since both the participation of parents and students should seem crucial to political output and in turn to the degree of political cynicism; however, the findings report that when parent's organizational participation scores and student's organizational participation scores are controlled, the correlation between political cynicism and political output is lower at .013 as indicated in Figure 4.

Elaboration of the student organizational participation -- political output relationship. The original hypothesis states that if a student participates intensively in voluntary and political organizations, then he will have high political output resulting in a positive relationship. The findings confirm this hypothesis for the zero order correlations between student organizational scores and political output. This is indicated in Table 2 (.34). The analysis here focuses on whether the original high correlation is lower after removing the effects of other variables. If that happens, it will mean that the original correlation was an artifact; partially caused by the linkage of student organizational participation and the other variables to each other and to political output.

When removing the effect of age from the relationship of student organizational scores with political output, the findings indicate a positive relationship of .31. This is

Table 2

ELABORATION OF THE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONAL
PARTICIPATION SCORES--POLITICAL OUTPUT

- I. Zero order correlation = .34
- II. Correlation with first order controls for:
1. Age = .31
 2. Religiosity = .34
 3. Sex = .34
 4. Race = .33
-

indicated in Table 2. What this means is that age has little effect on the relationship of political output with student organizational scores. When the other variables are controlled (religiosity, sex, and race), the correlations between political output and student organizational participation scores are exact or very similar to the original zero order correlation. The correlation when religion is controlled is .34; when the effects of sex are removed, the correlation is .34; and for race, the correlation is .33. What this means is that the original hypotheses are confirmed, and that the other variables have no great effect on student organizational participation correlation.

Chapter 3

RESULTS

The findings have indicated much of what was already expected, however there are significant changes produced by the analysis that differed from the original hypotheses. One thing that was unexpected was the fact that political output of the student has very little to do with political cynicism. One may reason that the student may be already cynical even before they join voluntary and political organizations. They may be cynical about life in general; however it may not be a very deep cynicism, and they always may be cynical about politics. It should also be noted, however, that some students are not as cynical as others. The variables employed in this study do not allow a close examination which is discriminatory between the two. Also the organizations the student participates in may have nothing to do with his political output. It also might be reasoned that the candidate he campaigned for or help push into office failed to keep his promises, or once the favored candidate is in office ignores his electorates, which might lead to frustration. Also unexpectedly, parent's education and parent's income as sub-variables of socioeconomic status do not determine the degree to which a parent will participate in voluntary and political organizations. There is a positive relationship

between these variables and parental organizational membership, but it is very slight.

As was expected, parent's organizational activity has a positive effect on student organizational activity, which can be interpreted to mean that students tend to imitate their parents when it comes to joining voluntary organizations. In some cases parents and their children alike join the same organizations; i.e., El Paso Country Club, or church related organizations. Sometimes parents not only have an indirect influence on their child's activity, but may encourage the student to get involved in voluntary and political organizations. It should be pointed out that the respondents in the sample rarely reported that parents have any direct influence on voluntary or political activity.

It is of little surprise to find that the age of the student is positively related to political cynicism in three ways: (1) there is a direct positive relationship; (2) and an indirect positive relationship; indirectly because the findings have shown that the older the student is the greater his organizational activity, and the greater his activity, the greater his political cynicism. Second, the older the student, the more political output, the more cynical he becomes. Third, by stating that the direct relationship between student's age and political cynicism is positive. The older he is, the more cynical he becomes. In all, it can be stated that as students become more politically

aware of what is happening around them, they may begin to feel hopeless and frustrated about how the country is run. Political disillusion might be a better word to describe their feelings. This is brought about when elected officials do not fulfill their promises, or turn out as crooks. The degree of cynicism in the current student generation may be effected by the aftermath of the Nixon Era, and therefore somewhat temporary, or it may be more enduring.

The findings do not show, however, that religion is not a determinant of student organizational participation. It was previously stated that religion may be the only activity that some students perceive as important. This simply means that the more religious a student becomes, the more he is going to become "wrapped up" in that activity, and the less attention he will pay to other activities. It might be interesting to point out that religion itself should get involved in politics, other respondents answered that the church and not necessarily religion should become more involved in politics. No respondents stated that religion and the church should both be involved. One might assume that the church should perform other functions at the community level and not just perform churchly functions.

The results indicate that the findings of this study and the one conducted by Antunes and Gaitz (1975:1203) are in agreement about the degree to which ethnicity determines social participation and political output.

The findings support the original hypothesis that Blacks participate more than Whites, who participate in politics slightly more than Mexican-Americans. There is a slight negative correlation between race and student organizational participation scores of $-.07$ and also for race and political output of $-.13$. As noted above, Blacks were coded as "1's," Whites as "2's," and Mexican-Americans as "3's," therefore the correlations are negative. The reasons given by Antunes and Gaitz for racial variation in political activity are also quite valid for this study. Briefly stated, one can assume that (a) since there are no civil rights associations for Mexican-Americans comparable to those of Blacks; i.e., NAACP, or the Southern Leadership Christian Conference, they will have less political output and (b) the difference between the racial groups in the self-perception of how close they feel they are to Anglos will affect political output. Mexican-Americans believe they are more socially accepted than Blacks, hence they would feel the need less for a civil rights struggle; thirdly, Mexican-Americans feel that they have a primary responsibility to the home and family, meaning that they should not get too involved in political activity. However, one might add that this is quickly changing, especially in South El Paso where Chicanos are becoming very politically active, and the fact that a Spanish sur-named politician was elected mayor of El Paso.

Sex and political output were related in the findings, as expected. Males do participate more in politics than do females (-.13), however this difference is slight. It could be that in some areas of political participation men participate more than women such as campaigning or running for office. On the other hand, women might be found going to the polls more frequently than men. In any case, it is debatable about which sex participates the most. One might assume that with more attention being given to equal rights, women may be stepping up their political participation rates.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This Chapter will focus on the limitations encountered while conducting this study. This research project has been limited in many ways, one of the major limitations is in the selection of the sample. Since the selection of the sample was made up of students, there is a greater lack in the variation of information which might have been obtained if the sample were composed of the general population in El Paso. There would have been more variation in age, difference in political ideology, and a better self-perception of one's socioeconomic status. However, such factors as time and money have prevented this alternative.

Another alternative would have been to distribute questionnaires to student organizations. A variation in political ideology would have been obtained. Because these organizations, i.e., "Young Republicans," the "Young Democrats," and other political organizations meet only at certain times of the school year, it was impossible to obtain such information. Another factor contributing to the limitations in the sample is the small number of Black students; a larger proportion of Black students in the sample would be comparable with the Anglos and Mexican-Americans.

Another limitation which has confronted this research project is the availability of published material comparing Mexicans, Anglos and Blacks in the social and political participation. Most of the literature for this project discusses only the political behavior of Blacks and Whites. Very little has been written about the political behavior on Mexican-Americans. Each individual ethnic group should have been examined more closely to find out specifically the political behavior of each group, then compare the political behavior of such groups. But as previously pointed out that there was a lack of time, this was virtually impossible.

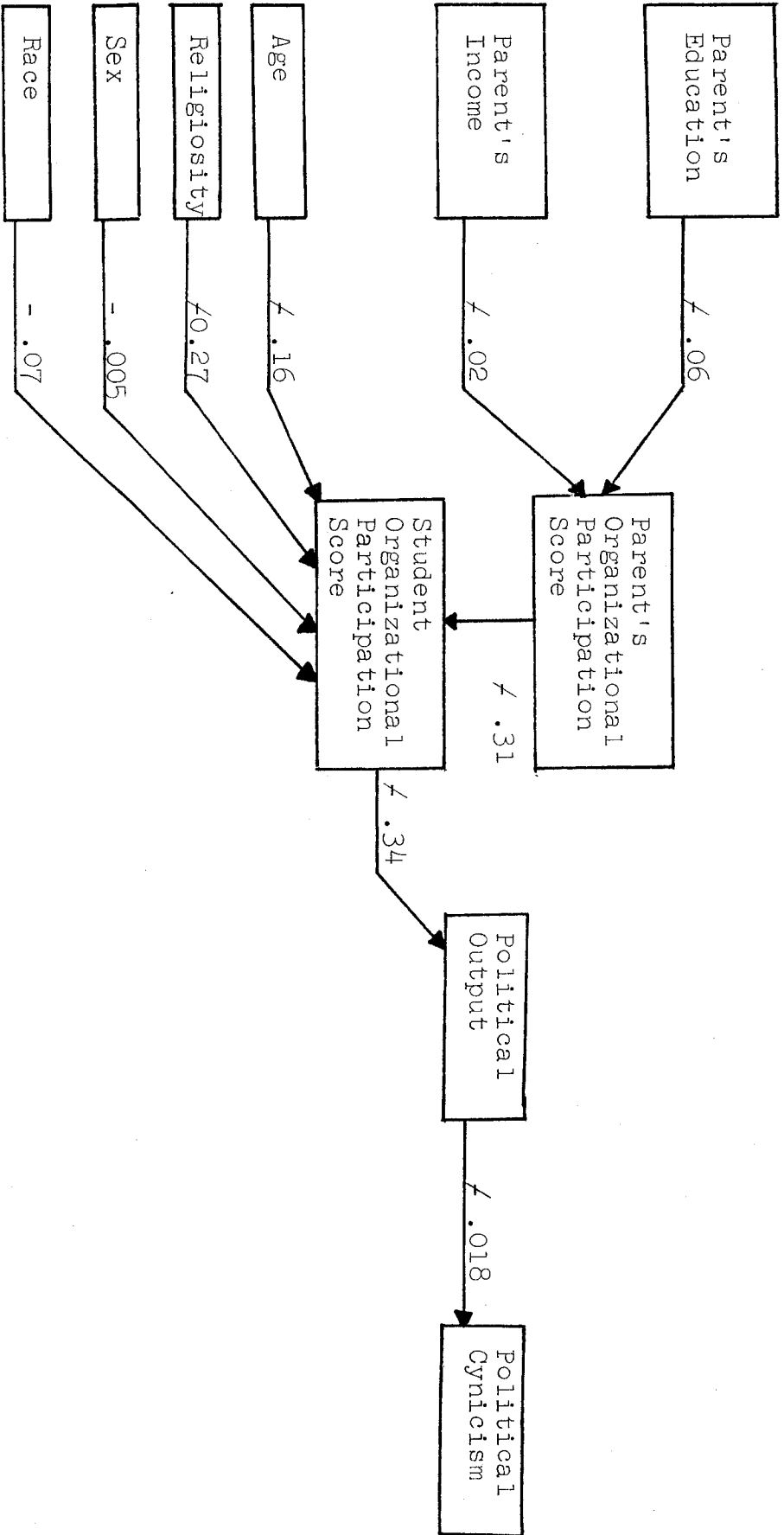
In conclusion, the purpose of this research study was to conduct a comparative analysis of how such factors of parental influence as income, education, and parental organizational membership effects the student's political output. Also the characteristics of the student, i.e., age, sex and race, were factors in the student's political output. The main concern being that we wanted to find if student organizational participation had any effect on the student's political efficacy. It is hoped that more research may be conducted on the political efficacy of ethnic groups, and that more effort will be made to include Mexican-Americans as well as Blacks and Anglos to broaden the scope of such research.

APPENDIX

This Appendix contains Figures 1, 2 and 3 of the theoretical model. It also contains a page which has listed the mean and standard deviation of each of the variables. A copy of the instrument which was employed in gathering the data sample has been provided in the Appendix.

PRIMARY THEORETICAL HYPOTHESIZED ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS

Figure 1



SECONDARY THEORETICALLY IMPLIED ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS

Figure 2

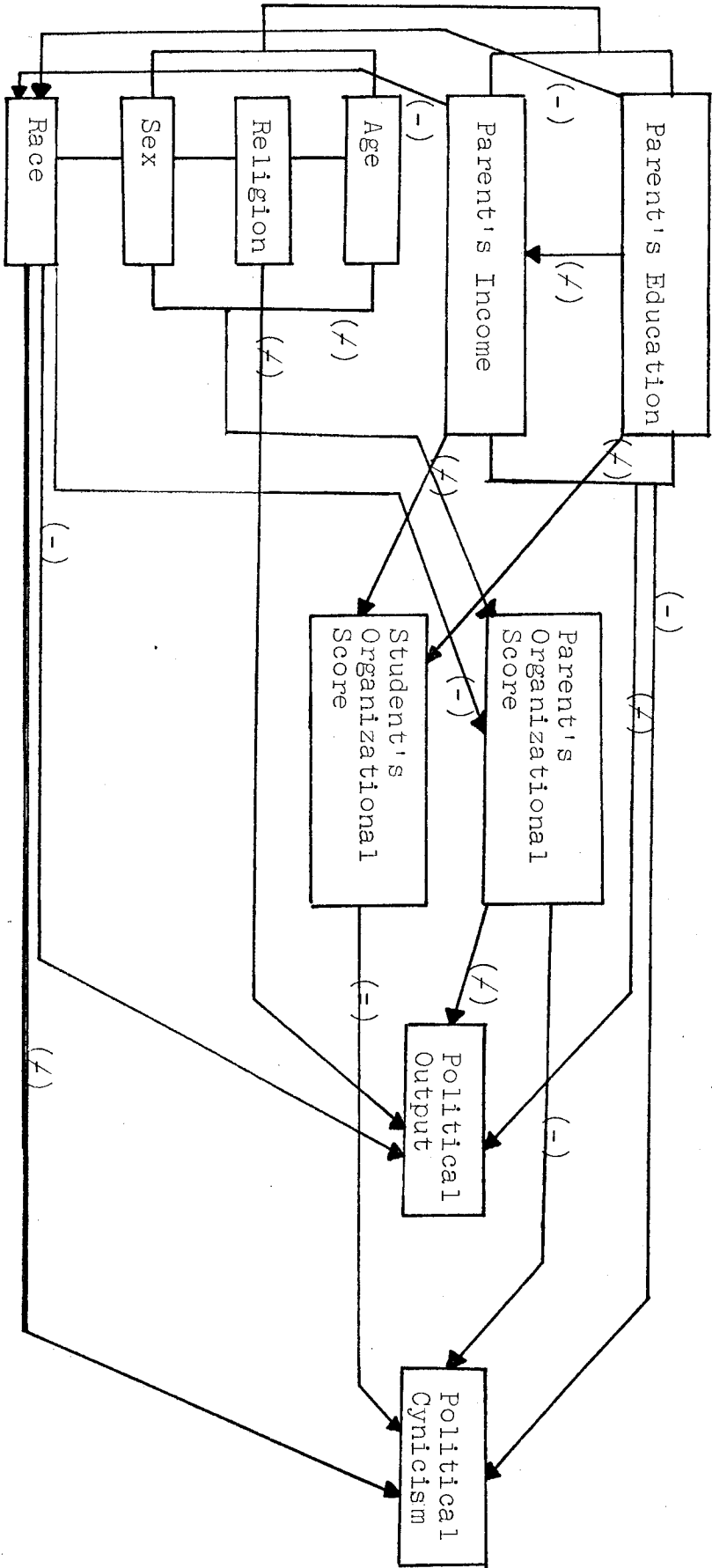
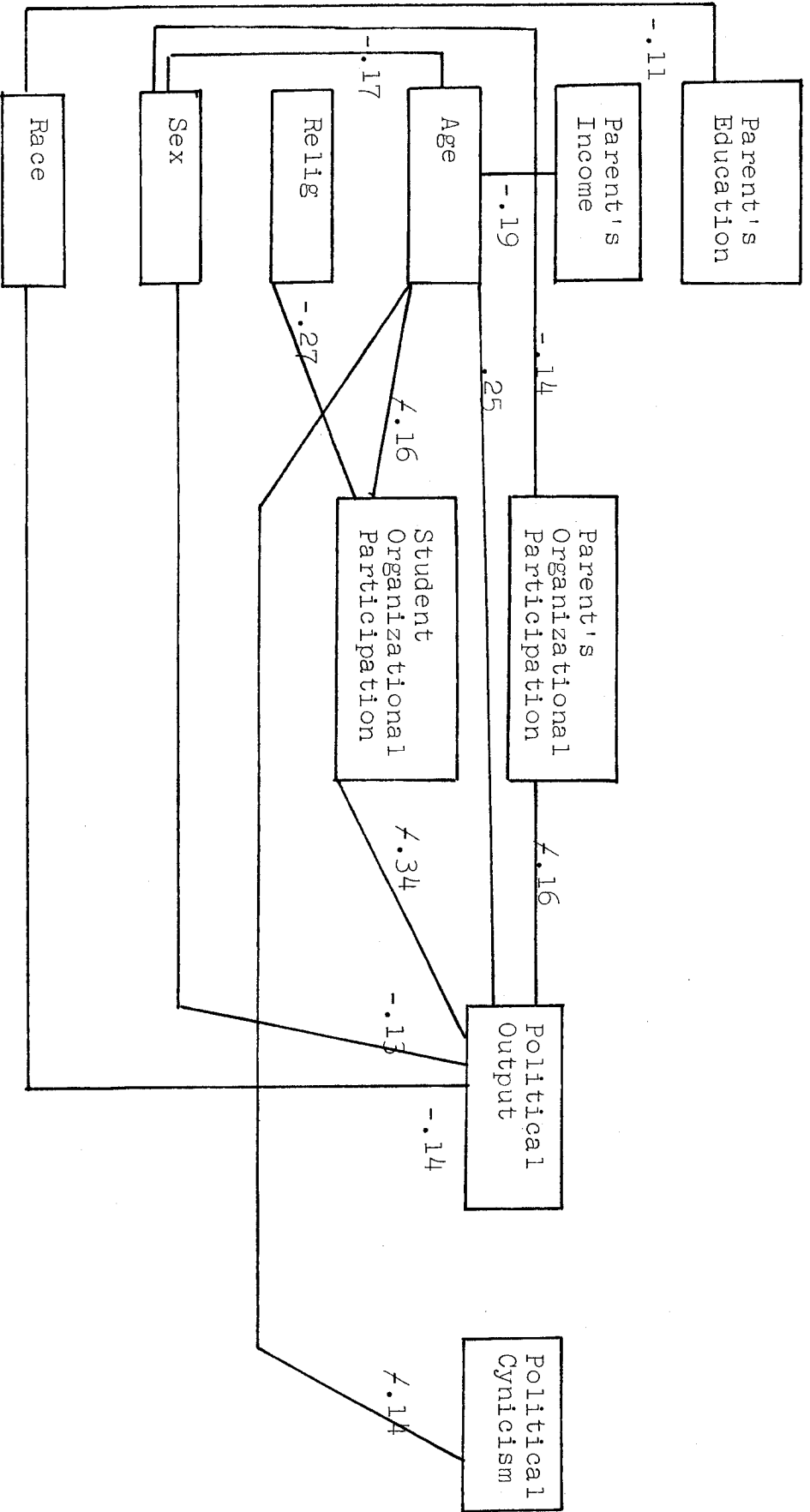


Figure 3



A MODEL OF THE SIGNIFICANT ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Sex	1.3869	0.4885
Age	23.7048	7.3685
Race	2.4881	1.1987
Head House	1.8512	1.0702
Par Ed	2.8631	1.6413
Par Inc	3.0000	1.4723
SeS	3.0238	1.0720
Par Org	20.8274	50.2205
Stu Org	25.0357	49.8311
Pol Out	41.6667	29.5478
Pol Cyn	9.5655	6.5136
Rel Score	9.1488	6.9701

QUESTIONNAIRE

Sex: Male _____ Female _____

Age: _____

Ethnicity: Black _____ White _____ Mexican-American _____

Other _____ (Specify) _____

Who do you consider the head of your household?

Father _____ Mother _____ Self _____ Spouse _____

Other _____ (If other, specify) _____

Level of Father's Education:

Elementary _____ High School _____ Some College _____

College Grad _____ Grad School _____

Parents' Occupation: _____ . Estimate of family
income:

Under \$5,000 _____

\$6,000-\$10,000 _____

\$11,000-\$20,000 _____

Over \$20,000 _____

Estimate of Social Status:

Upper Class _____

Upper Middle Class _____

Middle Class _____

Working Class _____

Lower _____

List the types of clubs and organizations, and tell me the names of various clubs and organizations to which you now belong. I.e., Church, Civic, Political Organizations,

U. T. E. P., Recreational

Type of Organization

Years of Membership

Ever An Officer?

of Meetings Attended in Last Year

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

List the types of clubs and organizations and the names of various clubs which parent(s) now belong.

Type of Organization

Years of Membership

Ever An Officer?

of Meetings Attended in Last Year

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Have you ever made financial contributions or been on special committees in those organizations of which you are a member?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A _____

Whether or not you belong to an organization at present, how much do you enjoy getting together with other people?

Very much _____ Some enjoyment _____

Not much at all _____ None _____

Do you believe that your parents have been an influence in getting you to participate in politics beyond voting?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you have an undivided loyalty and love for this country?

Extreme loyalty _____ Some loyalty _____

Not much at all _____ None _____

To what degree do you keep informed about politics?

Highly informed _____ Moderate _____

Hardly at all _____ None _____

Did you vote in the 1972 election?

Yes _____ No _____

If no, give reason(s).

Did you vote in the 1976 election?

Yes _____ No _____

If no, give reason(s).

Did you vote in recent city elections?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you send messages of support to political leaders when they are doing well?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you send protest messages to political leaders when they are doing badly?

Yes _____ No _____

Protest both vigorously and publicly if the government does something that is morally wrong?

Yes _____ No _____

Join in public street demonstrations?

Yes _____ No _____

Riot if necessary to get public officials to correct public wrongs?

Yes _____ No _____

Take an active part in political campaigns?

Yes _____ No _____

Have you ever joined or supported a political party?

Yes _____ No _____

Have you ever been a candidate for public office?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you feel that you are a calming and supporting influence in your own community?

Yes _____ No _____

Have any groups or organizations of which you are a member taken a stand in support of your community?

Yes _____ No _____ Don't know _____ N/A _____

If yes, what is the name of that organization?

Do you think that in the past the U. T. E. P. Student Association presidents, in general, have done a good job?

Yes _____ No _____ Don't know _____

For the most part, the government serves the interest of a few organized groups, and isn't very concerned about the needs of the people.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Strongly agree _____
Strongly disagree _____

It seems to me that the government often fails to take necessary actions on important matters, even when most people favor such actions.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Strongly agree _____
Strongly disagree _____

As the government is now organized and operated, I think it is hopelessly incapable of dealing with all crucial problems facing the country today.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Strongly agree _____
Strongly disagree _____

People would be better off if religion had a greater influence in their daily lives.

Agree _____ Strongly agree _____ Disagree _____
Strongly disagree _____

Do you question the legitimacy of regulations issued by authorities before obeying them?

Yes _____ No _____

If a person lives by his personal code of ethics, he does not have much need for religion.

Agree _____ Strongly agree _____ Disagree _____
Strongly disagree _____

No longer can a young person build his character and his hopes on solid ground; the future is dreadfully uncertain, and his life hangs by a thread.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Strongly agree _____
Strongly disagree _____

Beneath the polite and smiling surface of man's nature, is a bottomless pit of evil.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Strongly agree _____
Strongly disagree _____

The truly religious person is interested and active in the civic and governmental life of his community, state, nation, and world.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Strongly agree _____
Strongly disagree _____

Churches have a right to issue policy statements on social and economic problems.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Strongly agree _____
Strongly disagree _____

People should do what is morally right regardless of consequences.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Strongly agree _____
Strongly disagree _____

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