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## ABSTRACT

Using data from the National Education Longitudinal Study 1988 (NELS:88), a nationally representative sample of eighth graders in 1988, who were studied again in 1994 as was analyzed for three voting patterns: registered to vote (68.1%), voted in 1992 presidential election (45.5%), and voted last year in local or state election (30.6%) and community service (34.7%). Characteristics of the young adult voters were reported. Test scores do not tell the whole story for Asian-Americans and blacks or explain gender differences. The study analyzed the average grade in social studies courses, A and B students registered, voted significantly more, and did more volunteer work than C or below C students. Students who took three or more years of social studies courses were significantly higher on the three voting behaviors but there was not as consistent of a pattern for community service. Type of community service as well as characteristics of the participants were noted showing wide gender differences. Suggestions were made for further research using large databases, especially the issue of tracking in the social studies. Ultimately, future research needs to address the question: What changes in schools' and teachers' practice may better civic development for all students? (Contains 5 tables of data, notes, and 17 references.) (Author/BT)

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# From Eighth Grade Social Studies to Young Adulthood Voting and Community Service: National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 Eighth Graders

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**From Eighth Grade Social Studies to Young  
Adulthood Voting and Community Service:  
National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 Eighth Graders**

*Abstract*

*Using longitudinal data from NELS:88, a large national sample of eighth graders in 1988 to young adults in 1994 was analyzed for three voting patterns: registered to vote (68.1 percent), voted in 1992 presidential election (45.5 percent), voted last year in local or state election (30.6 percent) and community service (34.7 percent). Characteristics of the young adult voters were reported. Test scores do not tell the whole story for Asian Americans and Blacks or explain gender differences. Using the average grade in social studies courses, A and B students registered, voted significantly more, and did more volunteer work than C or below C students. Students who took three or more years of social studies courses were significantly higher on the three voting behaviors but there was not as a consistent pattern for community service. Type of community service as well as characteristics of the participants were noted showing wide gender differences. Suggestions were made for further research using large data bases, especially the issue of tracking in the social studies.*

How many eighth graders follow their social studies teachers' citizenship goals by voting and participating in community service when they become young adults? What are the characteristics of those who vote and can the number of social studies courses, standardized social studies test scores, and teachers' grades predict those students who will be "good" citizens? Many critics have asserted that social studies courses do little to promote civic behaviors. Is this true? Until recently, social studies educators were limited in researching these questions. Fortunately, data are now available to answer these questions.

The National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) is the first nationally representative longitudinal study of eighth grade students in public and private schools. It is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Among other purposes, NELS:88 was designed to measure instructional practices and cognitive outcomes in four core subject areas: reading, mathematics, science, and history/citizenship/geography. In 1988, about 25,000 eighth graders, their parents, their teachers, and their school principals were surveyed. In 1990, as part of the first follow-up, these same students (most of whom were then 10<sup>th</sup>

graders, others were dropouts), their teachers, and school principals were again surveyed. In 1992, the second follow-up survey was conducted when most of the students were seniors. While enrolled in school, in all three surveys of 1988, 1990, 1992, a history/citizenship/geography test was administered to the students. In 1994, the third follow-up survey, a subsample of the second follow-up sample members (around 15,000), was conducted when most of the sample was out of high school for two years and voting and community participation could be assessed. The next follow-up of this sample will be in 2000.

An exceptional advantage of NELS:88 is that the extremely rich data by the use of weights can be generalized to a nationally representative cohort of three million plus students: all eighth graders in the nation as a whole in spring, 1988, tenth graders in 1990, twelfth graders in 1992, and young adults in 1994. The limitation of this longitudinal study of eighth graders later voting and community service is that in the original sample of 1988 about five percent of the possible respondents were eliminated due to decisions of local administrators about students' physical or mental disabilities or limited proficiency in English, groups that probably are less likely to vote or to participate in community service. In addition, there may be a positive bias to the responses since voting and community service are usually considered "good" or socially approved activities. The data are the reported participation of students/adults; actual participation of the individuals is not known. The sample exclusion and the social desirability responses may be raising the percentages of those reporting voting and community service.

### Research Questions

*Research Question 1.* How many 1988 eighth graders, reporting in 1994, were registered to vote, voted in the 1992 presidential election, or voted in the last local/state election? How was voting behavior related to the following characteristics?: (1) gender; (2) race/ethnicity; (3) public, Catholic, or private high school; (4) high school program—academic, vocational, other; (5) socioeconomic status (1992); (6) high school status in 1994—graduate, GED, dropout; (7) type of postsecondary education; (8) highest level of education expected in 1992.

*Research Question 2.* How did social studies grades, scores on standardized social studies tests, units of social studies courses relate to voting and community service of the eighth grade students who were young adults in 1994?

*Research Question 3.* What were the characteristics of those who reported in 1994 that they participated in unpaid volunteer or community service and what type of community service were they engaged in? What was the relationship of social studies grades or number of social studies courses to community service?

### Review of Literature

One of the most important goals for the social studies has always been for students to participate in the democratic process (Engle & Ochoa, 1988) and the researcher shares this perspective. Historically, the public schools have been assigned the mission of preparing students for citizenship competence. Diverse meanings exist on what is citizenship education (Gay, 1997, Gross & Dynneson, 1991, Kaltsounis, 1997, Newmann, 1989, Parker, 1997, Van Sledright & Grant, 1991) plus differing definitions of “acceptable” levels of participation—active vs. passive, group vs. individual, liberal vs. conservative—cause dilemmas in the field of civic education. However, almost everyone accepts as a minimum the definition of a “good” citizen is one who votes and that community participation is another indicator of good citizenship. Voting and community service are closely related since national polling data show that if individuals do not vote, they tend not to participate in any other societal activity; in other words, these people are more disengaged from society.

Civic development or competence emphasizes the idea that democratic citizens are made, not born. Typically democratic citizenship education in the schools focuses on four areas: knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions. Niemi and Chapman (NCES, 1998) named five factors associated with the desire and ability to participate politically: levels of political knowledge, attention to politics, political participatory skills, degrees of political efficacy, and tolerance of diversity as measures of civic development. But civic development does not take place just in the schools. Family influences, media factors, students’ characteristics such as gender and ethnic/racial background, and the community all play a role in civic development (NCES, 1997).

Not all students are developing civic competence. The NAEP 1998 Civics Report Card for the Nation (NCES, 1999) for fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders indicated that about one-third of all students were performing below the basic level of civic understandings. Males were more likely to be concentrated at both the below Basic and Advanced levels. Whites and Asian/Pacific Islander students scored, on the average, higher than other ethnic/racial groups. This lack of political knowledge of one-third of the students comes at a time where the American political system is deeply troubled by a declining voter turnout, a wide spread lack of public trust in government, and little confidence in leaders while at the same time, the United States is a model for the world of a democratic system that has had remarkable political stability and economic prosperity.

## Voting

A majority (51 percent) of voting-age Americans chose not to vote in 1996 and 64 percent did not vote in 1998. These figures are for all potential voters; surveys of registered voters show a higher percentage although voter turnout is declining compared to thirty years ago. Turnout in the 1998 midterm elections was 36 percent, the lowest level since 1942, when millions of Americans were away at

war. However, defying expectations, the 2000 primary presidential turnout more than doubled from four years ago in Michigan and South Carolina and increased in New Hampshire. In 12 of the 18 Republican primaries, voter turnout hit record highs. It is not clear if this were a temporary surge due to high interest in John McCain's presidential candidacy.

Countless surveys indicate that young people vote at lower rates than older citizens. Voting rates are directly correlated to age and level of education. The older and the most educated adults are more likely to vote. In 1996, 75 percent of those 65 or older were registered to vote while only 51 percent of those between the ages of 18 and 24 were registered to vote. Adults 18 to 29 make up 29 percent of the population, but accounted for only 13 percent of likely voters.

### **Community Participation**

Robert Putnam's widely discussed article, "Bowling Alone" (1995) stated that Americans no longer joined civic associations the way they once did. For Putnam, the falling levels of involvement in nonpolitical civic associations and other communal activities meant that America's "social capital" such as trust and participation that make society works was in serious danger of depletion. Putnam was alarmed about the sharp decline in public trust in government since the 1970s and was concerned that Americans, and especially young Americans, may not be willing or able to engage in the democratic process.

Both Putnam's data and conclusions have been challenged by Everett Ladd (1999) who assembled all the data he could find to demonstrate exactly how wrong Putnam was. For Ladd, while some civic and fraternal organizations such as the Lions Clubs and the like have lost members over the past few decades, others have expanded rapidly, especially environmental organizations and church groups. Many of the new groups have local chapters and encourage local involvement. Ladd also reported that volunteering and charity have increased. Younger people volunteer less and give less than their elders do, but this has always been true and represents a stage in the life cycle, not any kind of permanent shift in values. Thus, Ladd and others give a more optimistic picture of the current younger generation in terms of community and political involvement.

Chapin (1998, 1999) using data from NELS:88 1992 seniors examined what type of community volunteer work students had done during the past two years. Forty-four percent of the 1992 high school seniors reported having participated in community work. Young women participated more than young men (49.6 percent compared to 38.5 percent) and Asians and Whites more than Blacks and Hispanics. Private school students participated substantially more than public school students. Higher community service participation was related to higher socioeconomic status, higher educational levels of parents, higher test proficiency, being in a college preparatory program, being in the highest quarter of one's class, and not being in a school that had a high proportion of subsidized lunches.

These senior students identified their type of community service with the most popular was church-related groups and the least popular were political groups. Young women participated more in all categories except youth group activities (coaching Little League or helping out with the scouts). Racial/ethnic differences were shown with Black women participated more in political groups than any other group and Hispanic men were the least likely to participate in church groups. White men participated the most in youth groups while Asian women participated highly in hospital groups. White women participated the most in environmental groups. Chapin concluded that teachers should be aware of the popular community organizations that their particular students would like. One unexpected finding was that the urban schools had higher participation in community service than suburban schools.

The National Household Education Survey (NHES) of 1996 (NCES, 1997), Youth Civic Involvement component, asked students in grades six through twelve about their community service activities. About half (49 percent) of students reported they participated in community service in the 1995-96 school year. Note that this was a much higher participation rate than the NELS:88 seniors in 1992 and the time period included only one year instead of two years. It appears that there was truly an increased national involvement in community service supporting the general perception of an increase of community service or service learning in recent years by youth.

Community service participation (NHES) paralleled the results of NELS:88 seniors in most cases. Higher grades correlated with increased participation, with 60 percent of "A" students participating compared to only 30 percent of "D" and "F" students. Community service participation was higher for the following: females (53 percent) compared to males (45 percent); students for whom English was the language spoken at home, and eleventh and twelfth grades. Students who participated in other activities were more likely to participate in community service. Students who attended private schools, especially church-related schools, were also more likely to have done community service. White students were more likely to participate than students from other racial/ethnic groups. Students were also more likely to participate if an adult in the household participated in community service and if the highest degree held by a parent was a college degree or higher.

Using data from NHES:1996, Niemi and Chapman (NCES, 1998) concluded that for ninth through twelfth grade students civic development was increased by community service in some areas but did not seem to promote other key dimensions of civic development. They suggested that the *type* of community service may be a factor in ascribing benefits or lack of benefits of community service toward civic development. Niemi and Chapman also pointed out that the *amount of time* was critical since those who had performed thirty-five or more hours of work had the most positive relationship between service and civic development. But service learning incorporated into the curriculum did *not* noticeably improve students' civic development scores.

In summary, research has shown the importance of individual characteristics of students, the family, and community in influencing civic participation of students. While adults from all walks of life are involved in community service, those from higher income sectors and those with more years of education are more apt to participate in community service.

## Results

### Who Votes?

As shown in Table 1, while more males registered to vote, the actual number of young males (45.4 percent) and females (45.5 percent) who voted in the 1992 presidential election and voted last year in local or state elections was about the same (30.5 percent to 30.7 percent). However, race/ethnicity played a very significant role in who was voting in both types of elections with Asians and Hispanics at much lower rates of participation and Whites and Blacks with the highest number of voters. As for high school sector, Catholic school graduates had a higher number of voters than public or other private. Students enrolled in an academic high school program and students who were not a GED or dropout had a higher voting participation. Those in with a higher socioeconomic status in 1992 also voted more. For those now in higher education, public 4-year institutions had the highest number of voters compared to other public and private two and four year institutions. Students who in 1992 expected to get a graduate degree had the highest number of voters. These data would at first glance appeared to confirm the general adult pattern of those with more income and more education voting more, but did not explain some of the differences in voting participation based on race/ethnicity. What interpretation should be made of the voting rate—too low or to be expected—is a matter of debate.

### NELS:88 Standardized Test Scores and Voting

On the three 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> NELS:88 grade standardized social studies test scores, males were significantly higher in the top 15% of the achievement group compared to females (Chapin, 1998). But in the actual two types of adult voting, presidential and local, there were no differences between males and females. In other words, higher social studies achievement scores on standardized social studies tests of males did not translate into higher voting patterns compared with females who had lower test scores.

Asian Americans and Whites had the highest test scores on all three grade levels followed by Hispanics and Blacks. However, there was not always a direct positive correlation between achievement scores and voting. Asian American students who had the highest social studies test scores in the 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades had the lowest registration and voter participation in 1992 and the last local



election. Black American students who had the lowest test scores on all three grade levels had the second highest voter registration and voter participation of the four race/ethnic groups. In other words, for some racial/ethnic groups and for gender, lower achievement in standardized social studies tests did not predict voting patterns.

### **Interaction of Gender and Race/Ethnicity**

Granted that race/ethnicity made a difference in registering and voting, did gender make a difference within a given racial/ethnic group? Using binomial tests comparing males with females, more Asian American males than Asian women *registered* to vote (.01 level of statistical significance). Hispanic women *voted* (.01 level of significance) more than Hispanic males in the presidential election. These two results were the only significant gender differences among the four racial/ethnic groups (table not shown).

### **Validity of Classroom Grades of Teachers**

The average grade in social studies courses was computed by the NELS:88 staff from the official high school transcripts, unweighted sample size of 12,018. The grade of A included A+, A, and A-; the grade of B included B+, B, and B- and so on. On the average, about 40 percent of the students in social studies courses received an average of A's and B's and thirty three percent were C students leaving around 25 percent with D's and F's. The A and B students registered significantly more to vote, voted in the 1992 presidential election, and voted last year in local or state election as well as doing more volunteer work (Table 2). Thus, grades given by classroom teachers did have predictive validity since the average grade in social studies courses indicated who was most likely to participate or not to participate in voting and volunteer service. The average social studies grade was a composite of teacher ratings based upon a long period of time compared to the relatively short time given to a standardized test and this may have made it a better predictive measurement.

### **Number of Social Studies Units (Courses) Taken by Students**

The total Carnegie units in social studies courses were calculated from the official high school transcripts, unweighted sample size of 12,018. While recognizing that titles of the courses do not always reflect what is being taught, transcripts are still the most accurate available data source of courses that students have taken. Almost half of the students (43 percent) had taken around three years of social studies courses. Students who had taken three or more years of social studies courses were significantly more likely to register to vote, voted in 1992 presidential election, and voted last year in local or state election (Table 3).

However, the relationship between the number of social studies courses to community/volunteer work was not as clear cut. Students with less than two years of social studies did less volunteer service. This was also true of students with less than three years of social studies courses but was not as dramatic. But students with three but less than four years of social studies had significantly the highest participation in community service. Students who had more than four years of social studies were not significantly higher in community service. There was not a consistent pattern between community service and a higher number of social studies courses but taking fewer social studies courses depressed later community volunteer work.

### **Community Service/Volunteer Service.**

In 1994, the interviewer said the following: "Our next few questions are about unpaid volunteer or community service work. Please tell me which organizations (if any) you have worked with during the past 12 months. Examples of such organizations include youth organizations like Little League, political clubs or organizations, organized volunteer work, such as in a hospital, etc." reading a list with a total of eight categories. If the respondent then indicated that they did participate in one or more volunteer activities, the interviewer then asked what volunteer organizations they participated in the most. The interviewer, if necessary, probed again by reading the list of volunteer organization for the respondent.

In 1994, as young adults out of high school, around 35 percent of the respondents reported volunteering time in the past year. In 1992, when these same students were mostly seniors, 44 percent reported participation in community service within the last two years. This appears to be a decline since leaving high school.

In a surprising contrast with the 1992 senior students and previous research, in 1994, for both males and females the reported participation in community service was about the same. Community service was higher for 1988 eighth graders who were in academic high school programs, attended private not-for-profit four-year and public four-year institutions, who had higher socioeconomic status in 1992, who were high school graduates, and expected to achieve high levels of education. Students who attended Catholic or other private high schools had a higher level of community service than public school students. Whites had the highest level of community service and Hispanics had the lowest rate of participation (Table 4).

Comparisons of gender differences indicated that females compared to males participated more in church or church-related organizations, organized volunteer work, and educational organizations. Males participated more in the categories of youth organizations, the Other category, sport teams or sport clubs, and a union, farm, trade or professional association (Table 5).

## Discussion and Conclusions

Asian Americans were the lowest in all three voting activities although their standardized test scores in the social studies were high at all three grade levels. In contrast, Blacks were second highest in all three voting categories although their test scores were the lowest. It is not clear why this happened. A high percentage of young Asian Americans adults are also attending higher education institutions where students vote more than those not enrolled in higher education institutions which should have increased the voting behavior of Asian Americans. Being in an immigrant family is not an explanation since the immigration factor also applied to Hispanics who had higher voting behaviors than Asian Americans. Young Black adults may have a higher degree of political efficacy and pay more attention to politics. From the test scores, males also should have had a higher number of voters than females although males did register more than females. It appears that standardized test scores do not tell the whole story on who is most likely to engage in voting activities.

Although there is disagreement on how much of a crisis the present low voting turnout is, increasingly political candidates are focusing on individuals who vote time after time. Polls with these voters will help to determine the issues that candidates bring to the public. Nonvoters may be ignored even more than at the present. Future electronic voting, while offering many promises, still will reward those already interested in voting.

With the exception of Asian Americans, the data support the idea that the most important challenge for social studies is getting all of the C and below C average grade social studies students, regardless of their background, more interested, knowledgeable, and skilled in civic participation so that they will vote more and participate more in community service. This challenge is hardly new but the focus on standards-based reform in education is relatively recent. Presently it is uncertain how the standards movement will help the C or below C students. The priority given to standards and testing in many states may emphasize acquiring knowledge, and not as much on the dispositions and skills needed to participate politically in our society. Teaching to standards could reduce efforts on the part of teachers to use community service learning or other non-traditional methods. However, it is possible that the standards movement by focusing on every student, and not just the brighter students, could improve civic participation, especially if there were a financial commitment to create the educational conditions for achievement. Given the wide differences between the various state standards and what standards are being tested, there may be wide variation in the results of the standards movement in social studies education.

Another factor that might increase civic participation skills of all students is the responses of the law related organizations such as the Center for Civic Education to the 1998 Civics Report Card by NAEP. These organizations are

encouraging a more sustained and systematic attention to civics and government in schools so that students will be prepared for a life in a democratic society. In general, the law related organizations' publications and curriculum materials may involve students more and thereby be of more benefit to the average and below average social studies students.

The average grade in the social studies courses given by teachers showed that classroom grades did have a high predictive validity in both voting and community participation. Those with grades of A and B were far more like to be engaged as adults in political and community activities while lower scoring students were not. But unknown are what factors in getting a A or B help later in civic competency. Is it just knowledge? What is the role of cooperative behavior in the classroom? Good attendance? Completion of homework? Participation in class?

Taking more social studies courses was related to an increase the voting behaviors. This result needs to be widely publicized to answer the critics who assert that social studies courses are a waste of time and that students would be better off taking other courses. But taking more courses was more mixed in promoting community/volunteer service. Students with the highest number of social courses did not increase in community service as young adults. More research is needed to identify how and in what circumstances the community service experiences can contribute to civic participation. The results also showed the different choices that students of differing backgrounds made in doing community service. Allowing students as much choice in community service would seem to be worthwhile.

Finally, a plea for more use of large data bases for social studies educators is made since certain important research questions can only be answered with the use of large data base. For example, we need to know how much tracking is going on in social studies classrooms and its effects on achievement on different ability students and if this is making a difference in later voting and community participation. Researchers have already used NELS:88 data for analysis of tracking in mathematics. As another example, researchers using NELS:88 data could identify if all the history courses that students take contribute more to voting and to community service compared to other social studies courses (such as civics). This would answer those who assert that history courses as they presently are taught do not make much of a contribution to civic behavior. Lastly, a follow-up needs to be done on the voting and community participation of 1988 eighth graders in 2000. Will this cohort follow the pattern of more voters and more community service as they get older? Will Asian Americans be voting more? It will take a few years for NCES to process the data for researchers to be able to use. Everything that can be gained from research about our students/young adults in voting and community service will be valuable in the goal of preparing all students, regardless of their background or grades, for political participation. Ultimately, future research needs to address the question: What changes in schools' and teachers' practice may better promote civic development for *all* students.

### Notes

The Base Year through Third Follow-Up ECB/CD-ROM 1996, public version, was used to access data and to perform the appropriate statistical analysis. For a detailed technical description of the sampling and data collection procedures see *National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS:88/94) Methodology Report* (NCES, 1996a).

For convenience the terms and order of NELS:88 data were used; "Asians" really mean Asian Americans and Blacks mean African-Americans. The category of American Indians was not used because of the extremely small size of the sample.

The weight (F3QWTG8) was used to expand counts from sample data to full population levels. The general purpose of weighting survey data is to compensate for unequal probabilities of selection and to adjust for the effects of nonresponse.

The 1999 report of the APA Task Force on Statistical Inference recommended researchers to compute effect size indices for all quantitative studies; see author for data. There were extremely low standard errors of proportion showing the enormous advantage of having large sample sizes.

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TABLE 1

*Demographics in percent of 1988 eighth graders, who, in 1994, were registered to vote, voted in the 1992 presidential election, or voted in the last local election, by selected characteristics*

	Registered to vote	Voted in 1992 presidential election	Voted last year in local or state election
<b>Total</b>	68.1	45.5	30.6
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	71.1	45.4	30.5
Female	64.9	45.5	30.7
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>			
Asian or Pacific Islander	48.2	26.8	19.7
Hispanic regardless of race	56.1	29.4	22.6
Black not of Hispanic origin	66.4	37.8	28.7
White not of Hispanic origin	71.5	50.8	33.0
<b>High school sector</b>			
Public	69.0	46.5	31.6
Catholic	78.2	56.8	39.5
Other private	66.7	49.8	28.0
<b>Last high school program</b>			
Academic	73.5	53.0	35.9
Vocational	65.0	37.1	25.5
Other	58.6	34.0	22.5
<b>Socioeconomic status (1992)</b>			
Lowest quartile	56.9	27.2	20.1
Middle two quartiles	68.2	46.7	32.3
Highest quartile	78.6	60.9	37.7
<b>High school status (1994)</b>			
Graduate	72.3	50.7	34.2
GED or equivalent	55.8	30.5	23.0
Dropout	48.8	17.1	9.9

<b>Type of first institution</b>			
Private for-profit	62.7	36.3	26.5
Private not-for-profit less 4-yr	62.0	31.8	20.0
Public less than 2-year	72.2	53.5	18.9
Public 2-year	72.5	52.9	36.5
Private not-for-profit 4-year	76.5	57.0	36.2
Public 4-year	80.0	59.8	39.5
<b>Highest level of education expected in 1992</b>			
High school or less	53.4	26.1	16.8
Trade/vocational	59.5	34.1	25.1
Some college	61.7	39.3	27.4
Finish college	74.7	53.8	34.3
Graduate degree	77.6	59.3	39.0

Adapted from National Center for Education Statistics (1996b), *Descriptive Summary Report National Educational Longitudinal Study 1988-1994*, p. 100.



TABLE 2

*Average grade in social studies in percent of 1988 eighth graders, who, in 1994, were registered to vote, voted in the 1992 presidential election, voted in the last local election, did volunteer work*

Average Grades	Register to vote	Voted in 1992 presidential election	Voted last year in local or state election	Did volunteer work in past year
A 10.1%	11.7***	13.9***	13.2***	16.5***
B 30.7%	32.6**	35.9***	35.0***	37.6***
C 33.5%	32.7**	32.1*	32.5**	29.5***
D 20.4%	19.0*	15.4***	16.4***	13.2***
F 4.1%	3.1	0.2***	0.2***	2.5**

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ ; Binomial tests compared to average grade in social studies

TABLE 3

*Total Carnegie units in social studies in percent of 1988 eighth graders, who, in 1994 were registered to vote, voted in the 1992 presidential election, voted in the last election, did volunteer work*

Years of social studies units	Register to vote	Voted in 1992 presidential election	Voted last year in local or state election	Did volunteer work in past year
0 to <2 11.1%	8.4***	6%***	6.3***	6.5***
2 to <3 14.2%	13.2**	12.6**	12.6**	12.7*
3 to <4 42.7%	43.6**	44.6***	44.1**	45.8***
4 to <5 25.0%	27.1***	28.7***	28.9***	27.9
5 or more 7.0%	7.7%**	8.1***	8.1***	7.2

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ ; Binomial tests compared to years of social studies units

TABLE 4  
*Demographics in percent of 1988 eighth graders reporting in 1994 about their volunteer service*

Characteristic	Volunteer service	Characteristic	Volunteer service
<b>Total</b>	34.7	<b>Type of first institution</b>	
<b>Gender</b>		Private for-profit	23.7
Male	35.0	Private not-for-profit less than 4-year	43.1
Female	34.5	Public less than 2 year	41.2
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>		Public 2-year	33.4
Asian/Pacific Isl.	33.8	Private not-for-profit 4-year	58.5
Hispanic	28.4	Public 4-year	48.2
Black	33.2	<b>Highest level of education expected in 1992</b>	
White	36.2	High school or less	17.7
<b>High school sector</b>		Trade/vocational	20.6
Public	34.6	Some college	25.6
Catholic	45.9	Finish college	39.7
Other private	48.0	Graduate degree	50.2
<b>Last high school program</b>		<b>Socioeconomic status (1992)</b>	
Academic	39.8	Lowest quartile	22.7
Vocational	24.3	Middle 2 quartiles	31.9
Other	27.7	Highest quartile	51.7

Adapted from National Center for Education Statistics (1996), *Descriptive Summary Report National Educational Longitudinal Study 1988-1994*, p. 98

TABLE 5

*Comparisons by gender of volunteer work in percent of 1988 eighth graders who in 1994 indicated the volunteer organization they most participated in the most*

Volunteer Organizations	Females	Males
Church or church-related (not including worship services)	25.2***	18.2
Organized volunteer work--such as in a hospital	22.1***	16.0
Other	14.4	15.9**
Youth organizations i. e., Little League coach, Scout Leader	13.6	18.4***
Educational organizations--such as an academic group	11.7***	7.7
Sports teams or sport clubs	7.4	16.7***
Political clubs or organizations	4.1	4.1
A union, farm, trade or professional association	1.5	2.3*
Total	100	100



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