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Author(s): Florence Passy and Marco Giugni

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Social Networks and Individual Perceptions: Explaining Differential Participation in Social Movements¹

Florence Passy^{2,4} and Marco Giugni³

This paper seeks to explain differential participation in social movements. It does so by attempting to bridge structural-level and individual-level explanations. We test a number of hypotheses drawn from the social networks and the rationalist perspectives on individual engagement by means of survey data on members of a major organization of the Swiss solidarity movement. Both perspectives find empirical support: the intensity of participation depends both on the embeddedness in social networks and on the individual perceptions of participation, that is, the evaluation of a number of cognitive parameters related to engagement. In particular, to be recruited by an activist and the perceived effectiveness of one's own potential contribution are the best predictors of differential participation. We specify the role of networks for social movements by looking at the nature and content of networks and by distinguishing between three basic functions of networks: structurally connecting prospective participants to an opportunity to participate, socializing them to a protest issue, and shaping their decision to become involved. The latter function implies that the embeddedness in social networks significantly affects the individual perceptions of participation.

KEY WORDS: social movements; differential participation; social networks; individual perceptions.

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² Institut d'Etudes Politiques et Internationales (IEPI), Université de Lausanne, BFSH2, 1015 Lausanne, Switzerland; e-mail: florence.passy@iepi.unil.ch.

³ Département de science politique, Université de Genève, 40 Boulevard du Pont-d'Arve, 1211 Genève 4, Switzerland; e-mail: marco.giugni@politic.unige.ch.

⁴ To whom correspondence should be addressed.

INTRODUCTION

Accounts of individual participation in social movements have most of the time focused on the factors and mechanisms that lead people to become involved. Only rarely have they tried to explain why some people participate more intensively than others do (e.g., Barkan *et al.*, 1995; Klandermans, 1997; Kriesi, 1993; McAdam, 1986; Oliver, 1984; Wiltfang and McAdam, 1991). In this paper we focus on differential participation.⁵ We do so in light of a theoretical discussion of the impact of social networks and individual perceptions. We propose to see structural-level and individual-level explanations as parts of a broader process in which each of them intervene at different moments in time. Taken as a whole, existing research has shown that both social networks (e.g., Fernandez and McAdam, 1988, 1989; Gould, 1995; Kim and Bearman, 1997; Kriesi, 1988, 1993; McAdam, 1986, 1988a,b; McAdam and Paulsen, 1993; McAdam *et al.*, 1988; Rosenthal *et al.*, 1985; Snow *et al.*, 1980) and individual perceptions (e.g., Chong, 1991; Hardin, 1982; Opp, 1989; Sandler, 1992) are critical to understanding micromobilization processes. However, we think that a sort of “division of task” between students of social movements and rational choice theorists has largely prevented us from unveiling the process through which structure translates into action. We make an attempt to link these two kinds of explanation (see Klandermans, 1984, 1997; Marwell and Oliver, 1993, for previous attempts), to theorize on the relationship between the structural location of social actors and their individual perceptions, and to show how this leads them to participate in social movements at different levels of intensity.⁶

We suggest that a way of bridging structural-level and individual-level factors consists in better specifying the nature of social networks as well as their impact on participation. Not only do networks form the social environment on the basis of which individuals make their choices in the short run, they also affect in the long run the cognitive parameters that lead to choices such as participating in a social movement or abstaining from doing so. This calls for further specification of the role of networks for pushing

⁵We will use the following terms interchangeably throughout the paper to refer to differential participation: intensity or level of participation, engagement, or involvement.

⁶We should remark the resemblance between individual participation in social movements and in voluntary associations, especially with regard to the amount of time and energy that people invest in them (see Smith, 1994, for a review). In this respect, most movement participants (except for paid staff) are volunteers. The issue we address in this paper could thus also be addressed from the perspective of volunteering. For example, both kinds of activity are affected by such aspects as the level of resources, the rewards derived from participation, and the context in which the activity is carried out (Wilson and Musick, 1997). In the following we will refer to work in the social movement perspective and will not address the literature on volunteering.

individuals to participate in social movements (McAdam and Paulsen, 1993). We distinguish, among other, between three basic functions of networks: structurally connecting prospective participants to an opportunity to participate, socializing them to a protest issue, and shaping their decision to become involved. The latter function leads them to bridge social-cultural and individual-level determinants of participation.

THEORY

Individual Perceptions

A number of studies of the determinants of participation in social movements have shown that individual perceptions are strong predictors of engagement (e.g., Klandermans, 1984, 1997; Macy, 1991; Marwell and Oliver, 1993; Opp, 1985, 1989; Opp and Roehl, 1990). Expanding this finding, we assume that individual perceptions also affect differential participation, that is, the intensity with which one is involved in movement activities. In other words, other things being equal, perceptions have a direct positive effect on the level of participation.

In order to be translated into testable hypotheses, this general statement calls for further specification. Although they are rarely taken into account together, previous work emphasizes four cognitive parameters that refer to how individual perceptions influence the social actors' intention to take part in collective action. First, the perceived *effectiveness of the action* influences individual decisions. Rational choice theory (Marwell and Oliver, 1993; Opp, 1989), perspectives linking resource mobilization theory and individual motivations (Klandermans, 1984; McAdam, 1986), and the political process approach to social movements (Koopmans, 1995; Kriesi *et al.*, 1995; Tilly, 1978) all underscore the role of effectiveness in micromobilization processes. We suggest that not only participation in social movements, but also its intensity, depends on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the action. Before they decide to engage, prospective participants assess the potential impact of their own contribution as well as that of the group in which they are going to be involved. Unlike previous work (e.g., Marwell and Oliver, 1993; Opp, 1989), we consider both individual and collective effectiveness, for we think that these two aspects should be distinguished in order to better specify the dimensions of this important predictor of participation. Thus,

Hypothesis 1a: The more positive an individual perceives the effectiveness of her/his involvement and the effectiveness of the group, the higher the level of participation.

Second, as several studies have shown, individual participation depends on the assessment of the *risks of collective action* (della Porta, 1990; Hirsch,

1990; Jenkins and Perrow, 1977; McAdam, 1986; Opp, 1989; Tilly, 1978), especially those related to repression. The perception of the risks of certain movement activities has a negative impact on individual participation, for it raises the costs of getting involved. High costs are a barrier to participation (Klandermans and Oegema, 1987). Higher risks imply higher costs of participating and, consequently, make involvement more difficult. As Wiltfang and McAdam (1991) have pointed out, risks raise barriers not only to participation in social movements, but to its intensity as well. Thus,

Hypothesis 1b: The higher the perceived risks deriving from engagement in a social movement, the lower the level of participation.

Third, the choice to participate is affected in important ways by the social actors' judgment of the *behavior of the authorities*. A number of studies have shown that the lower the legitimacy granted by citizens to authorities in regard to a given issue, the greater the chances that mobilization arises (McAdam, 1982; Melucci, 1989; Piven and Cloward, 1979). Low levels of legitimacy may stem from the authorities' incapability or unwillingness to act. At the same time, the delegitimation of powerholders is likely to increase the legitimacy of protest activities. Applying this idea to differential participation, we can hypothesize that the delegitimation of authorities, together with the legitimation of protest, affects the intensity of participation. Thus,

Hypothesis 1c: The lower the legitimacy given by an individual to political authorities and, conversely, the higher the legitimacy granted to citizens to carry protest activities, the higher the level of participation.

Fourth, participation in social movements depends on *personal availability*, that is, the amount of time at one's disposal to be devoted to collective action (McAdam, 1988a; Wiltfang and McAdam, 1991). Again, it could be argued that what matters is the perception of one's own availability, rather than the disposal of time *per se*. Nevertheless, activism is conditioned by a number of biographical constraints, such as family tasks and, above all, professional activities (Marwell and Oliver, 1993; McAdam, 1988a; Wiltfang and McAdam, 1991). Therefore, we must distinguish between the objective (i.e., actual constraints) and the subjective (i.e., perceived constraints) sides of personal availability.⁷ Thus,

Hypothesis 1d: The more an individual is objectively available in terms of free time, the weaker the constraints on her/his perceptions and, consequently, the higher the

⁷ Actual constraints should be retained in spite of the fact that they are not perceptions because social actors always know precisely their objective availability for a given activity. In contrast, it is more difficult to have an objective judgment over such aspects as the action's effectiveness, the risks involved, and the capability and willingness of powerholders to carry a certain course of action.

level of participation. The same holds for the subjective feeling to have time to devote to collective action.

An important stream within the literature on micromobilization, which we cannot ignore, has stressed the role of selective incentives for participation in social movements. Classical rational choice theory has emphasized the role of material incentives for joining collective action (e.g., Olson, 1965; Opp, 1985). Others, criticizing this restrictive view, have expanded the notion of incentives by taking into account social and moral incentives as well (e.g., Fireman and Gamson, 1979; Pizzorno, 1978). We agree with the criticism that the theory of material incentives, originally conceived for explaining free-riding in interest groups, cannot be applied in a mechanistic manner to unconventional political participation, especially when we are dealing with mobilizations, such as those carried by the solidarity movement, that do not produce immediate and material benefits to individual members. Yet if we expand the notion of selective incentives to cover social and moral aspects we face the danger of tautology, for thus it becomes a catchall concept that has little explanatory power (Chazel, 1986; White, 1976) and, furthermore, can hardly be falsified. Therefore, we do not include selective incentives in our model.

Social Networks

Among the more consistent findings of recent research on micromobilization is the impact of social networks on individual participation in social movements. We extend this finding to the case of differential participation and hypothesize that networks also influence the intensity of engagement. However, it is not sufficient to say that networks are good predictors of engagement, though this is an important result in itself. As McAdam and Paulsen (1993:641) have pointed out, we must “specify and test the precise dimensions of social ties that seem to account for their role as facilitators of activism.” In other words, to reach a better understanding of the dynamics of micromobilization, the nature, content, and function of networks should be specified. The most recurrent specification found in the literature is the distinction between *formal and informal ties* (della Porta, 1988; Kriesi, 1993; McAdam and Paulsen, 1993). The former refer to membership in organizations, while the latter are defined as interpersonal ties such as parenthood, friendship, and acquaintance. As we will try to show, formal and informal ties influence the intensity of participation in distinct manners and have a varying impact on differential participation.

We propose a way of further specifying social networks that can be applied both to their formal and informal side. Previous work has paid much

attention to the recruitment of prospective activists and participants, that is, structurally connecting individuals to an opportunity to participate (della Porta, 1988; Gould, 1995; Kriesi, 1988; McAdam, 1986; Snow *et al.*, 1980). We think that the *structural connection function* of networks must be conceptually distinguished from what we propose to call their *socialization function*. The latter refers to the individuals' previous embeddedness in social networks. Such embeddedness places them in an interactive structure that allows them to define and redefine their framing of the social world. As a result, they gain political consciousness with regard to a particular issue. We can think of socialization as the cultural role of networks, whereas recruitment can be seen as their structural role. To separate between these two functions is of outmost importance, for they intervene at distinct moments in the micromobilization process. Socialization intervenes at the beginning of the process and takes place in the *longue durée*. To put it differently, social networks as a "socialization device" concur to the formation of a mobilization potential and provide or reinforce the political awareness toward a given protest issue. On the other hand, the structural connection function acts at the end of the process by creating a contact between prospective participant and the movement.

Combining the formal/informal and the structural connection/ socialization distinctions, we suggest a number of testable hypotheses on the impact of different types of networks on the level of participation in social movements. As far as structural connection is concerned, previous research has shown that people join collective action mainly through interpersonal ties, that is, informal networks (e.g., della Porta, 1988; Gould, 1995; McAdam, 1988b; Snow *et al.*, 1980). We think that informal networks influence the intensity of participation as well. In the case of differential participation, however, the nature of the tie that links recruiters and recruits plays a decisive role. In this respect, it is useful to look at the strength of the relationship and at the status of recruiters.

Consider, to begin with, the impact of *strong vs. weak ties*. Granovetter's well-known argument (Granovetter, 1973) points to a major effect of weak ties for recruitment in the labor market. Yet it could also be argued that strong involvement in social movements is more likely to occur when an individual has been recruited via strong ties. First of all, before they join a social movement organization, prospective participants are in a situation of uncertainty that stems from the lack of information and knowledge about that organization. Recruiters are a privileged source to reduce such uncertainty. As Pizzorno (1986) has pointed out, trust is critical to political behavior in situations of uncertainty. Prospective participants trust those recruiters who are their close friends and who can convince them that a given organization is a good place to become engaged. This holds in particular for strong

levels of participation, such as becoming an activist, which imply high costs in terms of time and effort. It is especially in these cases that trust becomes necessary, for it is unlikely that people will engage in intensive and costly political activities when they have been recruited by individuals whom they do not know well and do not trust. Thus,

Hypothesis 2a: Individuals who have been recruited—that is, structurally connected to the opportunity to participate—through strong ties are more likely to display a high level of participation than those who have been recruited through weak ties.

Secondly, Gould (1993) and other scholars have shown that the structural position of social actors, in combination with the properties of networks, matters for joining collective action. We think that not only the status of recruits, but also the *status of recruiters* affects participation in social movements. Specifically, we argue that the stronger the intensity of activity of the recruiter in the movement organization in which the recruit is going to engage, the stronger the latter's involvement. This may be due to a number of reasons. First of all, once again following Pizzorno's criticism of rational choice theory (Pizzorno, 1986), centrally located recruiters are more apt to reduce the uncertainty related to participation. Furthermore, core activists usually are the "true believers," who are arguably more willing to put much effort into convincing people to join them and therefore more effective in doing so. As a consequence, they should be more successful in recruiting participants who will become strongly engaged.⁸ Thus,

Hypothesis 2b: Individuals who have been recruited—that is, structurally connected to the opportunity to participate—by strongly involved activists are more likely to display a high level of participation.

Finally, it is also useful to specify the nature of ties as regards the socialization function of networks. Drawing from work on framing in social movement theory (Gamson, 1992a; Gamson, 1992b, 1995; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Melucci, 1996; Snow and Benford, 1992; Snow *et al.*, 1986; Tarrow, 1992), we argue that networks that share similar cultural frames with a movement—that is, which are *culturally close to the movement*—facilitate the socialization of individuals who are embedded in these networks. The higher a network's cultural and ideological affinity with a movement, the deeper the socialization of prospective participants with respect to the issues raised by that movement. In the case at hand, religious and new social movement networks are not only ideologically, but also historically, the

⁸Of course other similarly arguable reasons could be advanced, such as strongly engaged recruiters acting as a role model or recruiters and recruits sharing a similar structural profile. However, here the point is not to ascertain what causes prospective participants to display a strong level of involvement, but rather to stress that there are good reasons to maintain that the status of recruiters affects differential participation.

closest to the solidarity movement (Passy, 1998). On the one hand, religious organizations are ideologically close to this movement, for they equally emphasize “altruistic” values and attitudes such as helping the poor and the underprivileged. On the other hand, the solidarity movement belongs to the new social movement family, with which it shares a number of values and a similar political culture. Thus,

Hypothesis 2c: Individuals who are embedded in formal networks that are culturally close to the movement are more likely to display a high level of participation.

Linking Social Networks and Individual Perceptions

A third function of social networks deserves a separate discussion, for it is a crucial aspect of our argument. We argue that, in addition to structurally connecting prospective participants to an opportunity to participate and socializing them to the issues raised by a given movement, the embeddedness of social actors in networks has an impact on the definition of individual perceptions. Social relations create and reproduce a structure of meanings that contributes to the definition of individual perceptions about political participation. The cognitive parameters mentioned earlier are constantly redefined by individuals, a process that is strongly shaped by social relations. For example, embeddedness in formal networks affects the perception both of individual and collective effectiveness (Neal and Seeman, 1964; Sayre, 1980). Similarly, structural connection through informal networks influences the perception of the risks involved in participation (della Porta, 1988).

Thus, in addition to their *direct* effect on differential participation due to the structural connection and socialization functions, networks influence the intensity of involvement in social movements *indirectly*. They alter the perception of the effectiveness of the engagement and of collective action, of the risks of being engaged, of the legitimation of the authorities (and of citizens), and of one’s personal availability. This, in turn, increases the chances that one will participate with strong intensity. We see this function of networks as a powerful conceptual tool for linking the structural location of social actors, their individual perceptions, and their actions; for bridging the micro/macro gap; for assuring the transition from small-scale to large-scale processes; and for connecting structure and agency (Emirbayer and Goodwin, 1994; Tilly, 1997). The structural location of individuals translates into action thanks largely to the influence networks exert over the perception of their own possibilities as well as of their social and political environment.

In addition to social networks, we expect two other aspects to act as intervening variables. First, the cognitive parameters mentioned earlier are also influenced by the interest individuals have in the protest issue (Kim and

Bearman, 1997; Marwell and Oliver, 1993). By *interest in the issue* we mean the place a given problem has in the hierarchy of individual priorities of people (central or peripheral), that is, to say, its relative importance with respect to other problems, be they related to their everyday life or to the larger environment. Second, *past experiences with the issue* may facilitate participation in social movements. The perceptions of individuals who have had direct contacts with a given issue prior to engagement are likely to change after such experiences. For example, workers who have faced economic difficulties in their life display different values and behaviors than those who have enjoyed smoother conditions (Andrews, 1991). Similarly, people who have seen and lived Third-World realities closely are probably more likely to become part of the solidarity movement. Thus,

Hypothesis 3: The higher the protest issue in an individual's priorities, the more positive the evaluation of the cognitive parameters and, as a result, the stronger her/his involvement.

Hypothesis 4: Having had past experiences with the protest issue brings an individual to evaluate the cognitive parameters more positively and, as a result, to engage with stronger intensity.

DATA AND METHODS

Our hypotheses cluster into three groups: those referring to the individual level of perceptions, those relating to the structural level of social networks, and those concerned with linkages between these two levels. We test them on a representative sample of members of the Bern Declaration (BD), an organization of the Swiss solidarity movement specialized in development-aid issues that was created in 1970 out of Protestant milieus by liberal theologians shouldered by a small group of intellectuals close to leftist and religious circles.⁹ Unlike traditional charity organizations, which ground their activities mainly on direct aid, the BD aims to sensitize the population toward inequalities and imbalances in North/South relations. Its activities are both social and political. Next is a brief description of the variables used in the empirical analyses. Appendix A provides more detailed information on their operationalization. Appendix B shows their descriptive statistics.

⁹In line with our focus on levels of participation, we truncated the dependent variable so that the sample excludes nonparticipants. We use a sample of 646 respondents who returned a questionnaire that we sent to 1,200 members of the BD, randomly selected in each of the two main linguistic regions of Switzerland (German-speaking and French-speaking). One might argue that, as a result of the almost halved number of respondents, our sample is biased. However, after having compared it to estimations of members made by the organization's staff, we can reasonably claim that our sample is representative of the entire population of BD activists. In particular, the distribution of individuals with regard to their level of activity is consistent with the estimations made.

Intensity of Participation

The construction of the dependent variable combines Klandermans' distinction (Klanderman, 1997) between effort and duration and that between weak and strong intensity. Oliver and Marwell's distinction (Oliver and Marwell, 1992) between "giving money" and "giving time" is a good criteria to separate much effort from little effort. Those who invest time are more deeply involved than those who simply give money. However, this dimension does not allow us to distinguish between different levels of participation within the group of people who spend part of their time in the organization. In order to do so, we need to take duration into account by looking at the frequency of involvement. We distinguish between actions that imply irregular participation, such as sporadically taking part in campaigns or attending annual meetings, and actions that require regular participation, such as belonging to working groups or to the organization's committee. Thus, our indicator of the intensity of participation combines the giving money/giving time and the sporadic/frequent criteria. The resulting variable has three categories of participants of increasing intensity: *subscribers* are members who contribute financially to the movement organization, *adherents* are members who are active on an irregular basis, and *activists* are members who are regularly active in the organization. The distribution of members in our sample is the following: 74% of subscribers, 18% of adherents, and 8% of activists.

Individual-Level Variables

We have five indicators of individual perceptions. Four of them refer to the cognitive parameters discussed in our first cluster of hypotheses. Individual effectiveness regards the impact of the single individual. Collective effectiveness refers to the impact of the BD. The variable we call delegitimation of authorities/legitimation of citizens measures the respondents' perception of the capability of the political authorities (and, conversely, of citizens) to solve problems related to development aid. Subjective availability measures the degree to which participation is avoided due to a lack of time. The fifth indicator of individual perceptions refers to the interest in the issue and indicates the importance of the development aid issue in the respondents' life.

Two variables measure the objective aspects that affect the decision to participate. Objective availability represents the amount of time devoted to professional work. Finally, respondents have had past experiences with the issue when they either are born or have lived in a Third-World country, have

made a journey in the Third World, or have friends or acquaintances coming from there.

Social Networks

We measure embeddedness in networks through three indicators. First, embeddedness in formal networks requires that an individual is or has been a member of at least one social movement or voluntary organization before joining the BD. Second, we created a separate measure for embeddedness in formal networks that are ideologically close to the movement. To operationalize this aspect we gave respondents a list of various types of organizations such as parties, unions, neighborhood associations, religious organizations, new social movement organizations, and so forth. Respondents who have belonged to either religious or new social movement organizations are considered as embedded in networks ideologically close to the movement (see Appendix A for a list of thematic areas covered). These first two indicators refer to the situation prior to involvement. Third, embeddedness in informal networks requires that an individual's family members, friends, or acquaintances be engaged or have an interest in Third-World issues.

We have eight measures of structural connection by networks. Recruitment by formal networks implies that an individual has been brought to the BD by another social movement or voluntary organization. Recruitment by informal networks implies that an individual has been brought to the BD by one of its members rather than by the organization itself. In addition, we distinguish between six different types of informal ties. Three of them refer to the status of recruiters: activist, adherent, or subscriber. We measure separately those members who were recruited through strong ties (i.e., by family members or close friends) and those who were brought to participate through weak ties (i.e., by acquaintances, colleagues, or neighbors). Among the former, we also distinguish between strong acquired ties (i.e., close friends) and strong ascriptive ties (i.e., family members).

Social and Cultural Characteristics

In addition to variables pertaining to individual perceptions and social networks, we have a series of control variables. Seven of them refer to the participants' social background: four social class variables plus education, age, and gender. Our measures of class are based on Wright's well-known

typology (Wright, 1985) that takes into account both the occupation and the effective control over productive assets. This allows us to distinguish between three broad classes: the old middle class and petty bourgeoisie, the new middle class, and the working class. Following Kriesi (1993), we use these three categories plus a fourth one represented by the social-cultural specialists, which is a subcategory of the new middle class. We add the latter variable because the new social movements, to which the solidarity movement belongs, draw their mobilization potential largely from this specific sector of the new middle class (Kriesi, 1989). Education is measured through the highest school degree obtained by respondents. Age and gender are the other two social-background variables.

Three other variables refer to the participants' cultural background. To obtain the first two we factor analyzed a set of 10 items regarding the respondents' personal priorities (see Appendix A for the complete list of items and factor loadings). Respondents were asked to self-position on a scale for each item. A confirmatory factor analysis in LISREL generated two principal dimensions: one along a left/right values axis and one along a postmodern/modern values axis. A third indicator of the individuals' cultural background consists of the frequency of attendance to religious services.

We conduct two types of analyses. First, we examine the weight of each variable and set of variables on the intensity of participation by means of OLS regressions.¹⁰ Here we test the first two clusters of hypotheses (perceptions and networks) in order to ascertain the best predictors of differential participation. Nested models allow us to determine whether individual perceptions or the embeddedness in social networks best explain the intensity of involvement. Second, we test the third cluster of hypotheses by examining the direct and indirect effects of selected variables on differential participation by means of a structural equation model estimated with LISREL. Here we inquire specifically into the impact of social networks on the definition of individual perceptions.

¹⁰In order to test for possible different causal patterns for each variable, in addition to OLS regressions for the whole sample, we conducted logistic regressions by collapsing adherents and activists and contrasting them with the subscribers. The results show no differences with the OLS regressions. We also conducted logistic regressions by contrasting activists to the other two categories collapsed and by contrasting adherents to the other two categories collapsed. The results indicate that activists and adherents are not substantially different, as the same factors explain their engagement. Ideally, logistic regression would be more appropriate than OLS regression given the nature of our dependent variable, which is categorical but is treated as an ordinal variable. Bivariate crosstabulations between independent and dependent variables as well as logistic analyses show that the three categories of the dependent variable thus constructed (subscribers, adherents, and activists) have a linear structure. This allows us to conduct OLS regressions, with the advantage that the same dependent variable is used than in the LISREL model, which cannot be run with dichotomous dependent variables.

RESULTS

Social Networks and Individual Perceptions Compared

Table I provides results of OLS regressions of the intensity of participation on the whole set of variables. The table shows six nested models, each one adding a set of indicators (individual-level variables, social networks, and social and cultural characteristics). As far as individual-level variables are concerned, we included all the cognitive parameters raised in our first cluster of hypotheses except for risks. While risks have certainly had an impact in certain types of mobilization in which repression is more likely (della Porta, 1995; McAdam, 1986), we have no reason to think that they play a role in the case of participation in the activities of the organization under study. None of the respondents has ever been subject to repression in relation to involvement in the BD. We therefore exclude this variable from the analyses. In addition, we treat objective availability and past experiences with the issue separately because they are not to be considered as perceptions, but rather as factual data. On the other hand, we included all social-network variables. Finally, we introduced a series of indicators of the social and cultural characteristics of participants as control variables.

We can start our analysis by comparing the nested models in order to assess the relative weight of social networks and individual perceptions in the explanation of differential participation. To begin with, we observe that the social and cultural characteristics of individuals have no direct impact on differential participation in social movements. To be sure, some variables do have an effect when we consider them separately (Model 1). However, when we control for the effect of social networks and individual perceptions, all statistically significant relationships disappear. Furthermore, the part of variance explained by the social and cultural characteristics is very small. Social and cultural factors might be crucial to bring individuals to collective action, but do not determine the intensity with which they will participate.

In contrast, networks and perceptions have a significant impact on differential participation. Taken together, they explain 30% of the variance (subtracting Model 1 from Model 4). This shows that social networks and individual perceptions are good predictors of the intensity of participation in social movements. In this regard, networks have a somewhat greater impact than perceptions do: the former explain 19% of the variance (subtracting Model 1 from Model 3), whereas the latter account for 11% of the variance (subtracting Model 3 from Model 4). We also see that the recruitment function of networks has a more important weight than their socialization function do (comparing Models 2 and 3), a result that confirms the relevance of the recruitment process stressed in previous work. Finally, we observe that

Table I. Coefficients from OLS Regressions of the Intensity of Participation on Selected Independent Variables (Nested Models)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Social and cultural characteristics						
Social characteristics						
Social-cultural specialists	.16**	.13*	.10	.06	.04	.03
New middle class (other)	.12	.10	.09	.07	.05	.05
Workers	-.01	-.01	-.02	.01	.05	-.04
Age	.01	.00	-.06	-.11	-.07	-.07
Education	.05	.04	.07	.02	.02	.01
Gender (women)	.08	.07	.07	.03	.01	-.02
Cultural characteristics						
Left/right values	.26***	.23***	.21***	.15	.19*	.15
Postmodern/modern values	-.15**	-.17**	-.10	-.07	-.11	-.07
Frequency of attendance to religious services	-.07	-.04	-.06	.02	-.02	-.02
Social networks						
Socialization						
Formal networks						
Embeddedness in formal networks close to the movement		.15***	.14***	.18**	.18**	.18**
Embeddedness in other formal networks		-.02	-.01	-.01	.00	-.01
Informal networks						
Embeddedness in informal networks		.12**	.07	.14*	.14*	.14*
Structural connection						
Formal networks						
Recruited by an organization			.06	.08	.05	.07
Informal networks						
Recruited by a BD member			.08	.05	.00	-.01
Recruited by an activist			.30***	.30***	.28***	.29***
Recruited by an adherent			-.01	-.03	.02	.03
Recruited by a subscriber			-.13*	-.02	.03	.06
Recruited through strong acquired ties			.09	.11*	.14*	.13*
Recruited through strong ascriptive ties			-.04	-.09	-.08	-.07
Recruited through weak ties			-.01	-.03	-.05	-.05
Individual-level variables						
Perceptions						
Interest in the issue				.05	.01	-.01
Individual effectiveness				.29***	.31***	.23***
Collective effectiveness				-.06*	-.13*	-.13*
Delegitimation of authorities/legitimation of citizens				-.02	-.06	-.05
Subjective availability				.05	.06	.07
Objective aspects						
Objective availability					.13*	-.07
Past experiences with the issue					.08	.06
Interactive term						
Individual effectiveness × objective availability						.29***
R^2	.06	.10	.25	.36	.39	.42

* $p = .05$; ** $p = .01$; *** $p = .001$.

the objective aspects of individual-level variables explain only a small part of the variance (subtracting Model 4 from Model 5).

The Effect of Individual Perceptions

Let us now examine the effect of individual perceptions. We do so by looking at the full model in Table I. Confirming previous research, the perceived effectiveness of the action is by far the best predictor of differential participation. However, only individual effectiveness increase the chances that prospective participants become strongly engaged, whereas collective effectiveness has a statistically significant but negative effect.¹¹ While it is difficult to find an explanation for that, it should be noted that most respondents display a positive evaluation of the organization's effectiveness. This skewed distribution might, at least in part, be responsible for the unexpected finding. We thus see that the feeling of positively contributing to change things through one's own involvement not only pushes people to engage in collective action, it also leads them to engage with stronger intensity. In contrast, neither the interest in the issue, nor the delegitimation of authorities/legitimation of citizens, nor subjective availability influence the level of participation. These factors might be instrumental in bringing people to act in the first place, but we found no evidence that they lead some participants to become more deeply involved than others do.

In order to check for spurious relationships or hidden variables, we introduced several interactive terms into the regression.¹² Only one of them turned out to be significant and hence is shown in the table: the interaction of individual effectiveness and objective availability. This suggests that to have time to be spent in political activities only leads to stronger involvement to the extent that prospective participants feel that their engagement will matter. This is an important result and confirms Marwell and Oliver's findings (Marwell and Oliver, 1993) that resources in terms of free time influence participation in combination with other motivational factors, namely interest. Thus, the perception of being effective affects differential participation both separately and in interaction with objective availability.

The fact that most individual-level variables have no significant effect might lead us to conclude that authors who have stressed the role of such

¹¹ It should be noted that our measure of individual effectiveness is somewhat problematic, for we cannot determine the direction of causality. Nevertheless, in-depth interviews conducted with BD activists (see Passy, 1998, and Passy and Giugni, 2000 for analyses) suggest that individual effectiveness was crucial to join the organization. Although the perception of individual effectiveness changes in the course of participation, the interviews indicate that a positive perception *before* getting involved in the BD was a major determinant of participation.

¹² The interactive terms were first introduced in a regression that included only the individual-level variables.

aspects have been overly optimistic. However, the impact of some of these variables might depend on the type of movement. For example, it can be argued that the delegitimation of authorities/legitimation of citizens is more relevant in the case of “poor people’s movements,” such as those studied by Piven and Cloward (1979). People who have little cultural and political resources at their disposal, and hence are less ready to become involved in politics (Bourdieu, 1980; Campbell *et al.*, 1960), are more dependent upon the process of cognitive liberation (McAdam, 1982) than are relatively well educated people such as most members of the solidarity movement.

The Effect of Social Networks

Next we test the effect of social-network variables, again by looking at the full model in Table I. To be recruited (that is, structurally connected to the opportunity to participate) by an activist is by and large the stronger predictor of differential participation. In contrast, the simple fact of being recruited by some kind of network does not seem to affect the intensity of engagement, as the nonsignificant coefficient attests. This result confirms Hypothesis 2b, which states that what matters the most is the status of the recruiter and points to the need of specifying the type of ties that may lead to participation in social movements instead of sticking with a rather general and abstract notion of networks.

A second important result is the significant effect of embeddedness in formal networks that are culturally close to the movement. The stronger the cultural affinity with the movement, the stronger the involvement of participants. This finding confirms Hypothesis 2c and gives us further indication of the need of specifying networks instead of treating them as if they had a homogeneous impact. Not all networks lead people to become involved in social movements with the same level of participation. The socializing function of networks is strongly dependent on their nature and content. Specifically, our findings suggest that some degree of overlapping between networks and movements is necessary for prospective participants to become strongly engaged. In the case of the BD, the networks closer to the issues raised by the organization are those related to the new social movements (this holds in particular, though not exclusively, for the environmental movement) and those pertaining to the traditional churches. This is not surprising given the religious roots of this organization and its ideological affinity with new social movement issues and frames.

Third, embeddedness in informal networks has a significant effect on differential participation. If we compare this result to the one just discussed, we see that both formal and informal networks have a socialization function

that facilitates strong involvement in social movements. In regard to the informal side, to be embedded in a network of family members, friends, or acquaintances who are already involved in movement activities is not only a condition for participation, but also affects the intensity of engagement. Furthermore, socialization seems to follow both formal and informal channels. The former have a slightly stronger effect, but, as we have just seen, only to the extent that they are culturally close to the movement. This calls for further specification of the content of networks. On the other hand, recruitment to strong participation relies mainly upon informal ties, with the qualification that this function is fulfilled by the critical role played by activists as recruiters.

The fourth and last relevant result concerning social networks is the larger effect of recruitment through strong ties in comparison to weak ties, though the level of the significance test is lower than that of the previous ones. This confirms Hypothesis 2a and is in line with the argument put forward by Pizzorno (1986) in regard to the role of a trust relationship between recruiters and recruits. Strong informal ties have been shown to play a decisive role in the recruitment of people in underground organizations. For, as della Porta (1990, 1995) has pointed out, recruiting through one's closest ties reduces the risk of a flight of information to the external world that would endanger the organization's survival. Our findings point to a more general impact of strong ties on participation, regardless of the risks involved. In addition, we find that acquired ties, not ascriptive ones, affect differential participation in social movements. Confirming the results obtained by Kriesi (1993), close friends are more effective than family members in pushing an individual to become very active in a movement. Although we do not have an explanation for that, the interviews we made with members of the BD suggest that demands for participation from family members tend to be felt as a sort of moral obligation and therefore one's engagement is at best weak, while interactions with friends entail trust and hence are more likely to lead to strong involvement.

To summarize, a better understanding of the mechanisms that lie at the heart of individual participation in social movements stems from a clearer specification not only of the nature of networks, but also of their distinct functions. On the one hand, while both formal and informal networks do have a direct impact on the intensity of participation, they intervene in distinct ways. Informal ties influence participation through both their socialization and structural connection functions, whereas formal ties intervene only through embeddedness in networks. On the other hand, both to be embedded in and to be recruited by social networks has a significant impact on differential participation.

The Effect of Social Networks on Individual Perceptions

The second step in our analysis is based on the structural equations model estimated with the LISREL method. The main purpose of this approach is to discuss the third function of networks, that is, their effects on individual perceptions. Figure 1 provides the final model, which is built upon the correlation matrix shown in Appendix C.¹³ According to our argument, social networks also influence the intensity of participation indirectly, via their impact on the cognitive parameters related to participation. The results indicate that social networks significantly affect individual perceptions, the only exception being subjective availability. This impact stems above all from the process of structurally connecting prospective participants to the opportunity to participate, as shown by the significant coefficients of both formal and informal recruiting networks. Specifically, recruitment through informal ties affects the perception of being effective in case of involvement (.31), which in turn is a strong predictor of differential participation (.37), confirming our previous findings. Networks also have an impact on collective effectiveness and on the delegitimation of authorities/legitimation of citizens. In regard to the former aspect, both structural connection and socialization by networks matter. The fact of having been socialized in formal organizations leads individuals to perceive the role of organized citizens as effective in bringing about social and political change. Unexpectedly, to be structurally connected by networks has a negative effect on the perception of collective effectiveness. This might once again be a result of the very skewed distribution of this variable, but it might also be that individuals who were recruited through formal networks (i.e., organizations), in spite of sharing a positive evaluation of collective effectiveness, are more realistic about the limits of organizations than people who have become involved through other channels. For contacts with active organizations expose one to information about such limits. At the same time, people become aware of the limitations of citizens to change political decisions. Therefore, a similar explanation could be advanced for the negative effect of recruitment

¹³To keep the model readable, Fig. 1 shows only statistically significant coefficients. In order for the model to be positive definite and hence testable, variables to be included in the model were selected according to their theoretical relevance and/or statistical significance in the OLS regressions. The probability test (P) of the model is not statistically significant. However, if the chi-square/degree of freedom ratio varies between 1 and 3, the model can nevertheless be accepted. The number of variables and their measure quality weaken the test of significance considerably. However, when we reduce the number of variables in the model by removing the social-cultural factors, which have an indirect effect on the dependent variable, the model becomes statistically significant.

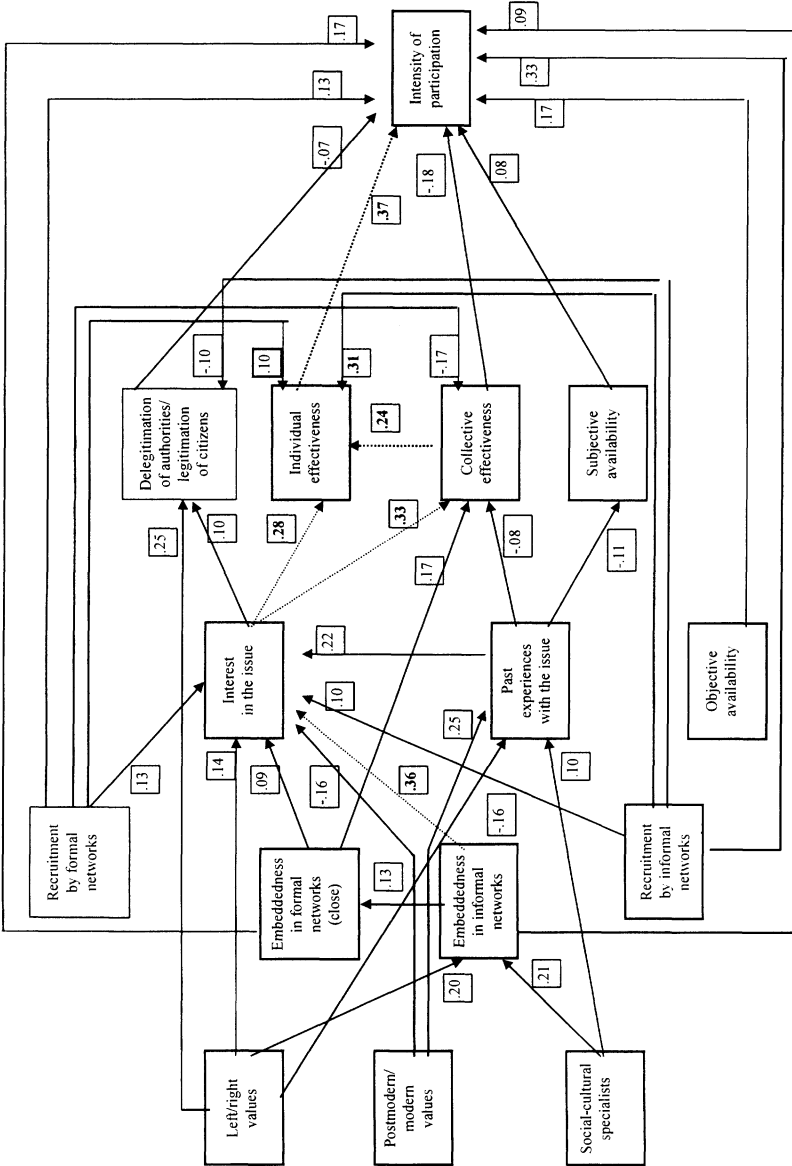


Fig. 1. LISREL estimates of structural equations model of differential participation in social movements (standardized solutions).
Note. Degrees of freedom = 147; Chi-square = 413.93; Goodness of fit = .949; Probability = 0.00.

by formal networks on the delegitimation of authorities/legitimation of citizens.¹⁴

On the other hand, the socialization function of networks does not directly affect individual perceptions. However, embeddedness in formal and informal networks has an indirect effect on the cognitive parameters mediated by a crucial intervening variable: the interest one has on the mobilization issue. In this regard, informal networks (.36) are more important than formal ones are (.09). The interest in the issue, in turn, largely shapes both sides of the perceived effectiveness of the action (.28 and .33). Here we see the emergence of a privileged path to strong participation in social movements. This path is highlighted by dotted arrows in Fig. 1. An individual is first embedded in formal networks. This embeddedness strongly shapes her/his interest in a given political issue. Then the enhanced interest affects her/his projected personal contribution to the cause, that is, the perception of individual effectiveness. At the same time, it increases the perception of collective effectiveness, which in turn reinforces the perceived individual effectiveness. Finally, a positive evaluation of both sides of effectiveness affects the level of participation. However, while individual effectiveness facilitates strong participation, the negative coefficient for collective effectiveness indicates that the latter has the opposite effect. Hence, it is the perception of one's own contribution to the cause and not the evaluation of the contribution by the organization that induces prospective participants to become strongly engaged. While this sequence can be seen as a privileged path to strong participation, it should not make us forget that informal networks, because of their structural connection function, also have an important direct impact on differential participation (.33), in addition to their indirect effect.

Hypothesis 3 is thus confirmed: the more central an issue is to the prospective participants' life, the more positively they evaluate the cognitive parameters related to participation and, consequently, the stronger they will become engaged. The crucial point here is that this effect is only an indirect one. The interest in the issue modifies the other cognitive parameters, which in turn lead either to weaker or stronger participation. Such indirect impact is particularly important as regards both individual and collective effectiveness. This finding contradicts the claim that interests or grievances are a sufficient condition for collective action. As can be seen in the regression analysis shown in Table I, the fact of being interested in a protest issue has no direct impact on participation. Yet interest in the issue is crucially related to activism to the extent that it affects the most important cognitive parameter

¹⁴Here we should note that most of the organizations that have recruited BD members belong to the new social movement family, in particular to the ecology movement. These organizations, which are reformist and often cooperate with the state (Giugni and Passy, 1998), tend to be less critical toward political authorities than antisystemic movements do. This is particularly true in a consensual political context such as Switzerland's.

related to participation, namely the perceived effectiveness of engagement. Similarly, past experiences with the issue have no direct effect on the intensity of participation, but intervene indirectly mainly through their impact on the interest in the issue (.22). To have been in contact with a protest issue raises the interest on that issue, which can lead to strong engagement. Thus, Hypothesis 4 also finds some support from our data.

To summarize, the LISREL analysis suggests that, in addition to providing a socializing setting and to facilitating the structural connection of participants, social networks contribute to the definition of a number of individual perceptions which, in the last analysis, lead people to decide to what intensity they are going to participate. Here, however, we must raise the problem of causality in our empirical analysis. With cross-sectional data such as those we use here, we cannot be sure that social networks affect perceptions. The reverse might also be true, that is, as their perceptions change, individuals change who they associate with through selection biases. Similarly, individual perceptions could be a consequence rather than a cause of the level of participation in social movements. While we acknowledge the difficulty of attributing causality in the absence of longitudinal data, we think that the causal sequence assumed here is more plausible for at least two reasons. First, our results are consistent with the causal image of structure preceding perceptions (and both preceding levels of participation). This, at least, holds for most measures of networks. Second, the interviews we made with several activists suggest that they were brought to participate at a higher level *because* of their proximity to social networks and not the other way around. This does not mean that we can definitively state that the causal sequence goes from social networks to individual perceptions and to the level of participation, but we can reasonably argue that this is the most likely path. In any event, in spite of this empirical limitation, our analysis has shown the importance of looking not only at direct effects of various variables on participation, but also at intervening factors such as networks, the interest in the issue, and past experiences with the issue.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our analysis supports both an explanation of differential participation that focuses on individual perceptions and one that underscores the impact of social networks. First, individual perceptions have a substantial impact on the intensity of involvement in social movements. One aspect is of outmost importance: the perception of one's own effectiveness in case of engagement. This confirms what has been found by a number of studies: the feeling that one's involvement would matter to the cause at hand is a strong incentive for actually becoming involved. Second, embeddedness in social networks has an equally relevant impact on individual engagement. Again, this is in line

with a well-established avenue of research. Thus, the general conclusion that can be drawn from our analysis is that both intentional and structural factors are crucial to understanding differential participation in social movements.

Following McAdam and Paulsen's suggestion (McAdam and Paulsen, 1993) about the need of specifying the relationship between social networks and activism, we looked at the varying impact of different types of network ties. First, formal and informal networks have been shown to have distinct effects on the intensity of participation. In other words, membership in movement organizations or in other associations and the embeddedness in a web of interpersonal relationships act differently in the micromobilization process. Second, the equally well-known distinction of strong and weak ties (Granovetter, 1973) also seems justified. However, our study points to the "strength of strong ties" as the former have a greater impact on differential participation. Third, not all interpersonal relationships lead to strong activism. Involvement is likely to become more intense if prospective participants are recruited by strongly involved activists. Finally, cultural and ideological affinity plays an important role as well. Intense participation becomes more likely when networks in which individuals are embedded are culturally close to the organization in which they are going to engage. Fourth, we introduced a distinction between three basic functions of networks. Structural connection refers to the role of the structural location of social actors in a network structure. In this case, people are mainly brought to act collectively through other people or organizations related to a given movement. Socialization, on the other hand, refers to the formation of individual values and beliefs as well as to the production of shared identities. These two processes make individuals more sensitive to certain issues and, hence, more inclined to engage in social movements. Previous research has often failed to distinguish between these two functions of networks and, above all, to acknowledge their varying impact on micromobilization. Our analysis, in contrast, suggests that structural connection and socialization have a different weight in the explanation of differential participation. In addition, we propose to see them as intervening at different moments in the micromobilization process, although the lack of longitudinal data prevents us from providing a strong test of this hypothesis. Nevertheless, on a theoretical ground, we suggest to view the socialization function of networks as a long-term phase that precedes the structural connection phase, which takes place right before involvement.

In addition to structural connection and socialization, we stressed a third crucial function of social networks, one that, in our view, has not received enough attention in previous work. Networks have an indirect impact on differential participation, profoundly affecting the cognitive parameters that, in turn, have a direct effect on the levels of involvement. But again, they act differently in this process. For they affect individual choices and perceptions

above all at the moment in which prospective participants are structurally connected to an opportunity to participate, while they seem to play a smaller and mostly indirect role in the socialization stage. The impact of social networks on individual perceptions suggests that the former work as a bridge between structure and agency, insofar as they shape the decision of prospective participants to become involved. Networks do not only affect political participation directly, but also indirectly. Individual intentions do not affect behavior independently from the structural components of social action. These two aspects are part of the same process and are closely intertwined. Actual social action is the product of both structural constraints and the subjective assessment of those constraints allowed by agency. On the one hand, as Emirbayer and Goodwin (1994) have pointed out, social interactions become incorporated into the self in a creative and often unexpected manner during moments of freedom that characterize human agency. On the other hand, networks are crucial to understand the origin of perceptions. To overlook one or the other of these two aspects means, in the end, to miss the full mechanism that lead people to participate in social movements.

APPENDIX A: OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

Intensity of Participation (Dependent Variable)

A question was asked that included the range of activities carried within the BD: (1) to pay membership fees, (2) to subscribe to the annual fundraising, (3) to participate in campaigns, (4) to participate in the annual meeting, (5) to participate in the organization of campaigns on a regular basis, (6) to be a member of working groups, and (7) to be a member of the central committee. The first two activities only involve contributing financially to the organization, the following two imply active participation on an irregular basis, and the last three call for active and regular participation. The variable has three categories:

- (a) Subscribers: activities 1, 2, or both;
- (b) Adherents: activities 3 or 4 but not more, regardless of whether they also carry activities 1 or 2;
- (c) Activists: activities 5, 6, or 7, regardless of whether they also carry one or more of the other activities.

Social and Cultural Characteristics

1. Social characteristics
 - Social class (see Kriesi, 1993:28, 270–272, for more details). This variable takes into account both the respondents' occupation and

their effective control over productive assets. Occupations are measured through an open question and grouped in seven more general categories: farmers/large employers, petty bourgeoisie, traditional professionals, managers, (other) technocrats, social and cultural professionals, and working class. Following Wright (1985), we distinguish between three types of assets: (a) assets in the mean of production, (b) organizational assets, and (c) skills or credentials. This dimension is measured through two indicators: the position in the working relationship (employee or employers) and the decisional power of individuals (i.e. participation in the strategic decisions of their firms or organization). On the basis of these criteria, we obtain three social classes: the old middle class/petty bourgeoisie (individuals who own the means of production, such as the self-employed in general and the large capital owners), the new middle class (individuals who do not own the means of production but have effective control over organizational assets or skills/credential), and the working class (individuals who do not own the means of production and have no effective control over organizational assets or skills/credential). We created four dummy variables. Two of them correspond, respectively, to the categories of the old middle class/bourgeoisie and the working class. The other two dummies are obtained by splitting the category of the new middle class in order to have a separate variable for the social-cultural specialists. The old middle class variable does not appear in the analyses because it is used as the reference category.

- Age (ratio).
 - Education (highest school degree).
 - Gender (1 = female).
2. Cultural characteristics
- Opinion scales. Question: “What do you wish for Switzerland? A country where low priority is given to [items listed below] or a country where high priority is given to [items listed below].” Example: “What do you wish for Switzerland? A country where low priority is given to order and security or a country where high priority is given to order and security?”
 - (a) Order and security;
 - (b) Precepts of the Church;
 - (c) Strong army;
 - (d) Equal opportunity (in general);
 - (e) Income equality;
 - (f) Equal opportunity between women and men;
 - (g) Participation of citizens to important decisions for the country;
 - (h) Equal opportunity between foreigners and Swiss citizens;

- (i) Environmental protection;
- (j) State intervention.

The following items are significantly correlated with the left/right axis: order and security (factor loading = .60), strong army (.68), Church (.47), income equality (.50), state intervention (.45), equal opportunity between foreigners and Swiss citizens (.43), environmental protection. The following items are significantly correlated with the postmodern/modern axis: equal opportunity in general (.68), equal opportunity between women and men (.60), participation of citizens to important decisions for the country (.47), equal opportunity between foreigners and Swiss citizens (.16).

- Religion Question: “How frequently do you attend religious services?” Ordinal variable of decreasing frequency of attendance to religious services.

Social Networks

1. Socialization

- Formal networks. Question: “In the following list, are there organizations or movements to which you have belonged in the past?” List of types of organizations. Networks close to the movement are identified by religious and new social movement organizations. The latter include the following thematic areas: ecology, antinuclear, development aid, human rights, political asylum and immigration, antiracism, peace, women, gay, and lesbian.
- Informal networks. Question: “Are your friends or acquaintances engaged/interested in Third-World questions?” Ordinal variable of increasing level of engagement/interest.

2. Structural connection

- Formal networks. Question: “Can you say how you came into contact with the Bern Declaration for the first time? Is it through . . . [list of potential recruiters]? We selected from this list of formal networks, that is, recruitment through churches and organizations.
- Informal networks. Question: “Were there one or more persons you knew personally before you joined the BD (relative, friend, acquaintance), who were members and who incited you to join the organization?” We further specify the relation between recruiters and recruits according to two criteria:
 - (a) The nature of the relationship: strong acquired ties (close friends), strong ascriptive ties (relatives), weak ties (acquaintances, colleagues, neighbors);
 - (b) The level of involvement of recruiters in the BD (subscribers, adherents, activists).

Individual-Level Variables

1. Perceptions

- Interest in the issue. Question: “What role do Third-World questions have in your life?” Ordinal variable of increasing importance.
- Individual effectiveness. Question: “How do you evaluate the contribution of your engagement in the BD?” Ordinal variable of increasing effectiveness.
- Collective effectiveness. Question: “Do you think that the action of the BD is effective to ameliorate the situation of Third-World countries?” Ordinal variable of increasing effectiveness.
- Delegation of authorities/legitimation of citizens. Question: “Here is a list of authorities, organizations, and citizen groups that worry about (or should worry about) the situation in Third-World countries. Can you indicate to what extent these authorities, organizations, and citizen groups are, in your view, apt to ameliorate the situation of Third-World countries?” We first created two intermediate dummy variables, one by aggregating respondents who think authorities (national or international) are either totally apt or quite apt to ameliorate the situation, the other by aggregating respondents who think that citizen organizations are. Then we created the dummy to be used in the analyses by combining these two intermediate variables. The latter equal one when respondents think that the authorities are not apt to ameliorate the situation, while the citizens organizations are.
- Subjective availability. Question: “Among the following reasons, which are the ones that can explain the fact that sometimes you do not engage or, more exactly, that you do not engage more?” Ordinal variable of increasing agreement with the reasons listed. We selected from the list the following reason: “my available time is limited.”

2. Objective aspects

- Objective availability: percentage of time in paid employment. Categories: less than 30%, 30–50%, 50–80%, 80–100%.
- Previous contacts with the issue. Question: “What has pushed you to become active [related to Third-World problems].” List of items. We selected from the list the following items:
 - (a) “I am born/I lived in a Third-World country”;
 - (b) “A journey in the Third-World”;
 - (c) “Friends or acquaintances coming from a Third-World country.”

APPENDIX B

Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable	Type	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
Dependent variable					
Intensity of participation	Ordinal	1	3	1.34	0.62
Social and cultural characteristics					
Social characteristics					
Old middle class (petty bourgeoisie/ traditional professionals)	Dummy	0	1	0.13	0.33
New middle class (excl. social- cultural professionals)	Dummy	0	1	0.17	0.38
Social-cultural professional	Dummy	0	1	0.59	0.49
Working class	Dummy	0	1	0.11	0.32
Age	Ratio	20	94	46.59	14.27
Education	Ordinal	2	7	6.06	1.24
Gender (1 = female)	Dummy	0	1	0.46	0.50
Cultural characteristics					
Order and security	Ordinal	1	7	4.86	1.69
Precepts of the Church	Ordinal	1	7	5.01	2.07
Strong army	Ordinal	1	7	5.86	1.60
Equal opportunity (in general)	Ordinal	1	7	6.71	0.95
Income equality	Ordinal	1	7	5.50	1.29
Equal opportunity (women/men)	Ordinal	1	7	6.80	0.81
Participation of citizens	Ordinal	1	7	6.63	0.86
Equal opportunity (foreigners/ Swiss citizens)	Ordinal	1	7	6.20	1.30
Environmental protection	Ordinal	1	7	6.14	1.15
State intervention	Ordinal	1	7	4.43	1.64
Religion	Ordinal	1	6	3.97	1.60
Social networks					
Socialization					
Formal networks close to the movement	Ordinal	0	2	0.54	0.60
Other formal networks	Ordinal	0	7	0.52	0.98
Informal networks	Ordinal	1	4	2.51	0.90
Structural connection					
Organization	Dummy	0	1	0.35	0.48
BD member	Dummy	0	1	0.36	0.48
Activist	Dummy	0	1	0.18	0.38
Adherent	Dummy	0	1	0.05	0.22
Subscriber	Dummy	0	1	0.13	0.34
Strong acquired ties	Dummy	0	1	0.14	0.35
Strong ascriptive ties	Dummy	0	1	0.06	0.24
Weak ties	Dummy	0	1	0.17	0.37
Individual-level variables					
Perceptions					
Interest in the issue	Ordinal	1	5	3.36	0.87
Individual effectiveness	Ordinal	1	5	2.71	1.12
Collective effectiveness	Ordinal	1	5	4.00	0.92
Delegitimation of authorities/ legitimation of citizens	Dummy	0	1	0.47	0.50
Subjective availability	Ordinal	1	5	1.87	1.17
Objective aspects					
Objective availability	Ordinal	1	4	1.58	0.83
Past experiences with the issues	Dummy	0	1	0.24	0.43

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