

Political Participation and Efficacy: Data Analysis

OVERVIEW: Participation by citizens is an essential ingredient of any successful democracy. We tend to believe our citizens participate and the system responds. How much do we actually participate? In what ways do we participate? As you will soon discover, participation varies enormously depending upon the amount of time, energy, and knowledge that is required. It also varies along demographic lines. Our feelings about the system, POLITICAL EFFICACY, also vary.

DIRECTIONS: Examine the data that appears below. The data will provide you with specific examples and insight into political participation and efficacy in America. The data is from the National Election Studies Guide to Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior- <http://www.electionstudies.org/nesguide/nesguide.htm>. Carefully respond to the questions that relate to each set of data you examine on a **separate** sheet of paper.

Part I: METHODS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Tried to Influence How Others Vote 1974-2012

	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
No :	85	63	79	64	77	68	79	71	83	63	78	72	81	66	71	52	55	60
Yes:	15	37	21	36	23	32	21	29	17	37	22	28	19	34	29	48	45	40

Worked for a Party or Candidate 1972-2012

	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
No	95	95	96	94	96	94	96	97	97	97	97	97	98	98	97	97	97	96	97
Yes:	5	5	4	6	4	6	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	4	3

Gave Money to Help a Campaign 1974-2012

	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
No :	92	84	87	92	91	92	90	91	93	93	94	92	93	91	89	87	87	88
Yes:	8	16	13	8	9	8	10	9	7	7	6	8	7	9	11	13	13	12

1. How do the results relate to the concept of participation requiring time, energy, and knowledge?
2. What is the obvious trend that appears when examining all of the data collectively?
3. For each of the four tables, provide one plausible explanation for percentages that appear.

Part II: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE

Watched Campaign on TV 1972-2012

	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
No :	12	45	11	31	14	24	14	25	**	37	11	**	26	**	18	38	14	14	24
Yes:	88	55	89	69	86	76	86	75	**	63	89	**	74	**	82	62	86	86	76

Listened to Campaign Radio Programs 1970-2004

	'70	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04
No :	**	57	**	55	54	53	54	55	59	69	**	63	**	62	**	62	**	49
Yes:	**	43	**	45	46	47	46	45	41	31	**	37	**	38	**	38	**	51

Read Magazine Articles on the Campaign 1968-2004

	'68	'70	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04
No :	64	**	67	**	52	75	65	69	65	**	75	**	77	**	68	**	**	**	72
Yes:	36	**	33	**	48	25	35	31	35	**	25	**	23	**	32	**	**	**	28

Read about Campaign in Newspapers 1970-2008

	'70	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08
No :	**	43	39	27	29	29	28	23	36	36	35	35	**	45	**	44	**	33	32
Yes:	**	57	61	73	71	71	72	77	64	64	65	65	**	55	**	56	**	67	68

What is the number 1 source of our acquisition of knowledge regarding political campaigns?
Why is this good? Why is this bad?

1. What source would you rely upon to receive the greatest amount of information? Why that source?
2. How do these tables relate to the concept of political participation requiring time, energy, and knowledge?

Part III: DEMOGRAPHICS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Gender of Respondent 1972-2012

Voter Turnout: Percent among demographic groups who responded: “YES, voted”

	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
Male :	43	42	42	44	43	45	44	44	43	45	46	48	46	46	44	44	49	45	48
Female:	57	58	58	56	57	55	56	56	57	55	54	52	54	54	56	56	51	55	52

Race of Respondents 1972-2012

Race of Respondents	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
White non-Hispanic :	88	89	87	85	84	85	80	78	76	76	77	77	75	75	74	75	70	73	71
Black non-Hispanic :	10	9	10	10	11	11	11	14	13	13	13	12	12	11	12	10	16	12	12
Hispanic :	2	2	2	3	4	3	7	6	8	8	9	10	10	12	9	8	9	10	11
Race oth/mult non-Hisp:	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	6	6	5	5	6

Education of Respondents 1971-2012

Education	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
Grade Sch./Some High Sch.:	20	18	17	12	12	11	11	9	10	10	8	6	5	6	4	4	5	2	2
High School Diploma :	51	51	50	53	51	46	48	48	48	50	46	49	47	44	44	44	41	41	38
Some College, no Degree :	16	17	18	19	21	24	25	23	22	21	23	25	27	28	28	28	29	29	30
College Degree/ Post-grad:	13	14	15	16	16	19	17	20	20	19	23	20	22	23	24	24	26	28	29

Income of Respondents 1972-2012

Income	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
0-16 Percentile :	19	16	14	17	17	17	15	17	19	18	15	17	16	15	14	**	16	15	17
17-33 Percentile :	12	16	19	18	16	17	18	15	13	16	18	15	17	18	25	**	18	17	15
34-67 Percentile :	37	40	31	31	36	30	35	36	35	31	30	35	37	34	30	**	30	39	37
68-95 Percentile :	27	25	30	27	25	28	26	27	30	31	31	30	25	26	26	**	23	23	27
96-100 Percentile:	5	4	5	7	5	8	6	4	3	4	5	4	5	8	5	**	11	7	5

Occupation of Respondents 1968-2004

OCCUPATION	'68	'70	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04
Professional:	20	21	20	22	21	25	25	25	24	26	26	24	28	26	29	29	32	**	30
White Collar:	14	14	15	16	17	16	18	20	23	21	22	20	21	22	21	23	24	**	25
Blue Collar :	31	31	32	34	34	35	35	33	34	35	34	37	34	36	37	32	31	**	31
Unskilled :	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	**	3
Farmers :	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	4	3	3	4	4	2	2	1	2	**	2
Housewives :	30	28	28	23	22	20	16	17	13	13	12	12	11	10	8	13	9	**	8

Age of Respondents 1976-2012

Age	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
Born 1991 or later:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Born 1975-1990 :	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	6	12	14	17	21	28	28
Born 1959-1974 :	-	3	7	10	16	19	22	30	30	33	34	31	32	36	30	29	27
Born 1943-1958 :	36	39	37	37	37	38	36	32	32	31	30	30	29	27	28	26	28
Born 1927-1942 :	23	25	23	21	21	20	20	19	19	18	18	17	17	13	16	14	11
Born 1911-1926 :	24	21	22	24	19	17	16	16	15	12	11	10	8	6	5	3	1

Party Identification

Party Identification	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
Strong Democrat :	15	18	15	15	18	20	17	18	18	20	18	15	18	19	19	17	17	19	20
Weak Democrat :	25	21	25	24	23	24	20	22	18	19	17	18	19	18	15	17	16	15	15
Independent Democrat :	11	13	12	14	11	11	11	10	12	12	14	13	14	14	15	16	17	17	12
Independent Independent:	15	18	16	16	15	13	13	14	12	12	13	11	10	12	13	7	10	11	14
Independent Republican :	10	9	10	10	10	8	12	11	13	12	12	12	12	11	13	13	12	12	12
Weak Republican :	13	14	14	13	14	14	15	15	14	15	14	15	15	16	12	16	12	13	12
Strong Republican :	10	8	9	8	9	10	12	11	14	10	11	15	12	10	12	15	16	13	15

Liberal-Conservative Self-Identification 1976-2012

	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
Extremely Liberal :	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3
Liberal :	7	8	6	6	7	6	6	7	8	6	7	7	9	12	9	10	10
Slightly Liberal :	8	10	9	8	9	11	9	8	10	7	10	9	9	9	12	9	11
Moderate, Middle of Road:	25	27	20	22	23	28	22	24	23	26	24	28	23	22	26	22	32
Slightly Conservative :	12	14	13	13	14	15	15	14	15	14	15	15	12	10	13	12	14
Conservative :	11	11	13	12	13	13	14	10	13	19	15	13	15	21	16	17	18
Extremely Conservative :	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	4	3	3	4
DK, Haven't Thought :	33	27	36	36	30	25	30	33	27	24	25	23	27	22	20	25	8

1. Who has the highest voter turnout based on...?
 - a. Age
 - b. Education
 - c. Income
 - d. Occupation
2. How do your answers in #1 relate to the concept of political participation requiring time, energy, knowledge?
3. Why don't independents vote as much as Democrats or Republicans?

Part IV: POLITICAL EFFICACY-ATTITUDES ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT

Is the Government Run for the Benefit of All 1968-2012

	'68	'70	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
Few Big Interests :	40	50	53	66	66	67	70	61	55	**	64	71	75	76	69	64	61	48	56	69	79
Benefit of All :	51	41	38	25	24	24	21	29	39	**	31	24	20	19	27	32	35	51	40	29	19
Don't Know, Depends:	9	9	9	9	10	9	9	10	6	**	5	5	4	5	3	4	5	2	4	2	2

Are Government Officials Crooked 1972-2012

	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
Quite a Few:	36	45	42	39	47	**	32	**	40	48	46	52	44	41	36	30	35	51	64
Not Many :	45	42	40	42	41	**	50	**	45	40	44	39	47	46	49	56	53	42	31
Hardly Any :	14	10	13	13	9	**	14	**	11	9	9	8	9	12	13	14	10	6	4
Don't Know :	4	3	5	6	4	**	4	**	4	3	2	1	1	1	2	0	2	1	1

Do People in Government Waste Tax Money 1972-2012

	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
A Lot :	66	74	74	77	78	66	65	**	63	67	67	70	59	61	59	48	61	72	71
Some :	30	22	20	19	18	29	29	**	33	30	30	27	39	34	38	49	37	26	26
Not Very Much:	2	1	3	2	2	2	4	**	2	2	2	2	1	4	3	3	2	1	3
Don't Know :	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	**	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0

Trust the Federal Government 1972-2012

	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
None of the Time (vol.):	1	1	1	4	4	3	1	2	2	2	2	3	1	1	1	0	1	2	2
Some of the Time :	44	61	62	64	69	62	53	57	56	69	68	74	66	58	55	44	52	68	76
Most of the Time :	48	34	30	27	23	31	40	35	36	25	26	19	30	36	40	51	43	25	20
Just About Always :	5	2	3	2	2	2	4	3	4	3	3	2	3	4	4	5	4	5	2
Don't Know, Depends :	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0

1. After examining the first table, why would the average citizens think the way they do about who the government benefits?
2. Provide a plausible explanation for citizens' attitudes and the table "Trust the Federal Government".
3. Do you think the percentages in the 2nd table would be different if the question was, "Are your own government officials (your Representatives and Senators) crooked?" Why or why not?
4. What is the irony about the results in the last table?

Part V: GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS (EXTERNAL EFFICACY)

Politics is Too Complicated 1972-2012

	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'08	'12
Agree :	74	72	71	72	70	**	71	**	70	66	66	65	63	73	60	68	56
Disagree :	26	26	27	26	28	**	29	**	21	24	27	25	28	20	32	20	29
Neither :	-	-	-	-	-	**	-	**	8	10	7	9	10	7	7	11	16
Don't Know, Depends:	0	1	2	2	2	**	0	**	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

People Don't Have a Say in What the Government Does 1972-2012

	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
Agree :	40	40	41	45	39	45	32	**	41	54	36	56	53	42	41	29	43	49	48
Disagree :	59	57	56	53	59	52	68	**	50	34	57	34	38	46	50	57	45	40	35
Neither :	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**	9	11	6	10	9	12	9	14	12	10	17
Don't Know, Depends:	1	3	3	2	2	3	0	**	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Public Officials Don't Care What People Think 1972-2012

	'72	'74	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'08	'12
Agree :	49	50	51	51	52	47	42	52	51	63	52	66	61	62	56	31	50	60	61
Disagree :	49	46	44	45	43	50	57	43	37	23	37	22	24	25	33	46	34	23	18
Neither :	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	13	10	11	15	13	10	23	15	17	21
Don't Know, Depends:	2	4	4	4	4	4	1	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

1. What is the trend of people's attitudes regarding their say in what the government does? What is one plausible explanation for this trend?
2. Is the trend in the last table similar or different?
3. How might the results in the three tables above relate to voter turnout rates in elections over the past twenty years?

After examining all of the tables, is your overall feeling positive or negative? Why? Will these figures be the same, slightly different, or drastically different five years from now? Explain your answer.