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***A Multi-Level Study of 137 Canadian
Communities***

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COMMUNITY CONTEXT AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES: A MULTI-LEVEL STUDY OF 137 CANADIAN COMMUNITIES

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It is now well established that Canada has one of the highest rates of voluntary association participation in the world, sharing this distinction with the United States and a handful of northern European countries (see Curtis, Baer, and Grabb, 1992, 2001; Baer, 2006, Hodgkinson, 2003; Kaariainen and Lehtonen, 2006). Less well established are answers to certain questions having to do with the future of this high rate of associational participation. For example, as Canadians show declines in levels of religious identification and involvement that probably exceed those found in the United States, one expected outcome of secularization may be a decline in voluntary association involvement, given the strong association between religious engagement (usually measured as church attendance) and other forms of

civic engagement at the individual level (see Ruiter and de Graaf, 2006)¹. And, while the “Putnam thesis” regarding generational decline seems not to have been supported during the period 1980-2000 in the Canadian case (see Baer et al., 2001; Andersen, Curtis, and Grabb, 2006), the longer-run concern over the health and vitality of non-government organizations (NGOs) and, to a lesser extent, civil society in general, seems to have underwritten much of the government-promoted research in the area (Hall, McKeown, and Roberts, 2001; Hall et al., 2006). One under-investigated area of research that relates to the overall question of the future vibrancy of voluntarism in Canada is the extent to which immigrants to Canada become active in voluntary associations. This question, while related to the more widely studied concern over the social integration of immigrant communities, has, in the words of Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen (2007) “received only limited attention” in the Canadian context.²

There are various reasons for expecting that immigrant groups will display lower levels of voluntary association engagement than native-born individuals within host countries; at same time, these usually lead to the expectation that some immigrant groups will be more engaged than others. The first explanation might be referred to as *status/compositional*: since immigrants from most groups tend, on average, to have lower social statuses, at least in terms of wealth and income, in the Canadian context, (see: Lautard and Guppy, 1999; Kazemipur and Halli, 2000; Frenette, 2005; Reitz, 2001) and since social status is clearly related to associational involvement (Moya, 2005: 553; see also Wilson, 2000; Smith, 1998; Halpern, 2005), it can be expected that many immigrant groups

¹ To be sure, Ruiter and de Graaf (2006) find contextual (country level) effects that point, if anything, in the opposite direction, as well as interactions between country level and individual level effects. See also Ruiter and Baer (2007).

² For similar comments regarding the study of association activity among immigrant groups around the world, see Moya (2005: 838).

will display lower than average rates of voluntary association engagement. To be sure, this argument runs into some difficulty in the Canadian context with respect to education: many if not most immigrants, at least from more recent cohorts, are better educated than the Canadian-born average, so this would lead to the otherwise unexpected prediction that immigrant voluntary association involvement would actually be *higher* in relation to those who are Canadian-born. It is, however, also clear from the same literature that immigrants not only suffer from an occupational status and income disadvantage, but appear to suffer further from a decreased economic return on educational credentials, at least in the short run (see, especially, Frenette, 2005).

Another possible explanation for lower-than-average voluntary association involvement also attempts to explain potentially large differences *among* immigrant groups. This *origin civic culture* argument suggests that the levels of social capital in the country of origin are strongly correlated with levels found among immigrants in host countries (Rice and Feldman, 1997; for an overview, see Johnston and Soroka, 2001³). While adding the caveat that “of course, these patterns for different nations may not correspond to ethnic differences in association membership within Canada,” Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen (2007:7) set out to explore the idea that one possible manner in which between-group differences occur on a systematic basis might relate to country of origin.⁴ Using this criterion, these authors suggested that lower levels of engagement might occur in the case of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, as well as some parts of Latin, Central or South America, and in the case of Japan.

³ As Johnson and Soroka note (2001:33), Helliwell’s research may also fit into this line of thought, as it “suggests that the increase in social capital from the south to north-central US, and from east to west in Canada, may be a product of the inhabitants’ countries of origin” (see Helliwell, 1998; Johnston and Soroka cite an earlier [1996] version of this paper).

⁴ This line of investigation is not pursued or commented upon in the Discussion/Conclusions section of Grabb, Hwang and Andersen(2007) however.

Yet another explanation for differences in levels of associational involvement *between* immigrant groups and between some groups and the Canadian-born reference point has to do with the importance of linguistic barriers to participation. Language is clearly an important element in processes of assimilation and integration (see de Vries, 1999; Froschauer, 2001), and some groups display markedly different degrees of English language proficiency as well as levels of non-English (or non-French) language usage. Without detailing the contextual social factors leading to differences between groups, it can easily be argued that those immigrant groups with low levels of English use will be less civically engaged, even when organizations in which the primary language of engagement is neither English nor French are included in the count.

An important counter-current in the literature is outlined by Moya, who observes that, in the United States, “the American environment [has] stimulated associational activities among newcomers,” (2005: 837), concluding, “the principal stimulus for associational activity thus derived not from cultural backgrounds of the emigrants or the civic habits of their hosts but from a more universal source: the immigration process itself [which] tends to intensify and sharpen collective identities based on national, ethnic or quasi-ethnic constructs” (2005: 839). Moreover, Moya adds, the process is hardly unique to the United States, having been observed in immigrant societies in countries as diverse as France, Uruguay, Australia, Ecuador, Mexico and, finally, Canada (2005:838). To be sure, the claim has been based largely on one-shot case studies of particular immigrant groups in particular societies rather than a systematic comparison involving representative samples and a native-born control group (Moya’s past work, included in his discussion, involved a comparison of emigrants to Argentina from six villages and towns in Spain with those who did not emigrate from those same six communities). But this work

leaves open the possibility that, while perhaps explaining some differences between immigrant groups, the explanations proffered above have “got it wrong” in a fundamental sense, by viewing multiculturalism as an impediment to associational engagement (at least across the first, immigrant, generation) rather than perhaps its opposite.

If the lines of research discussed above lead to predictions regarding differences *between* immigrant groups, there are additional questions concerning variability in associational involvement as a function of immigrant group status that can be asked. It is possible that, adjusting for the effects of various individual-level controls, there could be substantial within-group variability that is, in turn, systematically related to the status of the immigrant group in its community. In the present research, the major question to be posed is whether the relative size of an ethnic group in a community affects the extent to which its members get involved in civic life. For the most part, the proposition has been discussed in the positive sense: that is, by providing contact persons and organizations within the ethnic group, groups that are denser (involving a higher proportion of community residents) facilitate the integration of immigrants into the wider society (see Johnson and Saroka, 1999; Cardak and McDonald, 2004; Sanders, 2002) and reduce the likelihood of social isolation. A contrary view on the effect of group densities might be derived from Fong and Ooka’s (2006) discussion of patterns of informal participation among Chinese immigrants in Toronto. While neither the available evidence nor the authors themselves tended to give strong support this perspective, an assimilationist or “zero sum” pattern was identified as “the predominant framework used to describe immigrant social incorporation” (2006: 351). In this perspective, there is a trade-off between ethnic group adherence (involvement) and integration into the wider society, and it follows that higher immigration (ethnic)

group densities are expected to lead to higher levels of involvement in within-group activities but lower overall levels of civic engagement outside the ethnic group, as the ethnic group “crowds out” contact with the wider community. Subjecting this perspective to a test is not easy, because such tests require: (a) surveys with sufficiently large numbers of cases in a sufficiently large number of communities to construct a “multi-level” model; (b) community-level identifiers in the individual-level dataset so that aggregate and individual-level data can be linked and (c) a (likely separate) source of data concerning community attributes. These requirements have been met with the research to be undertaken here.

PREVIOUS CANADIAN RESEARCH

Previous research on this subject has been conducted by Johnson and Soroka (2001) and by Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen (2007). One of the major problems with survey research involving the assessment of differences among immigrant communities is that, unless over-sampling has been conducted for specific ethnic groups, the number of respondents within each of all but perhaps the largest one or two immigrant groups will not be sufficiently large to provide tests with sufficient power to uncover anything other than extremely strong effects.⁵ Johnson and Soroka used 1991 World Values Data and limit themselves to a division between French, “Non-White Ethnic,” “White Ethnic” and “White Non-Ethnic” groups, finding that the “white ethnic” group actually had higher expected voluntary membership levels with controls for immigrant status, religion, education, job status and age (2001: Table 3). Coefficients for “non-white ethnic” individuals were negative (indicating lower voluntary asso-

⁵ Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen (2007:3) explicitly note this problem, arguing that, until recently, “no nation-wide surveys ... included a sufficiently large sample size” to permit analyses of any sort.

ciation participation), but, given the modest Ns (total survey N of 1579), these coefficients were at best 1.5 times the size of the standard error for the coefficient and, with controls for age, smaller than the standard error. Non-white ethnics had significantly lower scores than white ethnics, but scores that were not significantly different from the reference category, "white non-ethnic."

Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen (2007) make a valuable contribution to the investigation of ethnic group differences by using a larger sample (N=4,473) and distinguishing between those respondents who identified themselves as Canadians, those who identified as British (including Australians), French, North/West European, South/East European, Latin/Central and South America, East Asia and South Asia.⁶ Aboriginals were separately identified, as were those whose self-identification was Jewish. The dependent variable in this investigation was number of association memberships reported by respondents, aggregated across nine different types of associations (including "other").⁷ With controls for home language, region, religion, nativity (foreign-born/not), community size, region, education, gender, marital status and income, these authors found that only East Asians had membership levels significantly below the reference group ("Canadian"), and only Jews and the "All Other Groups" category were significantly higher (2007:16). This finding is important, because it establishes a baseline for further research, and because it directs the research questions that can be asked. A major finding is that, with the exception of East Asians, members of ethnic groups do not engage in significantly less voluntary association activity than those identifying as "Canadian".

⁶ These were not, generally, respondent enunciated categories, but represented categories collapsed from the original survey responses (for example, "North/West European" would include "German," "French," etc.).

⁷ The count was constructed with the restriction that no more than two memberships counted for each "type" of association.

Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen extend their analysis to divide memberships into ethnic memberships (responses to a single survey item asking respondents, “how many organizations connected with your own nationality or ethnic or racial group are you a member of?”) and all other types of memberships, finding that a number of ethnic groups show above-average levels of ethnic or racial minority group involvement (Jews, Aboriginals, Other Minorities, Latin/Central/South Americans, East Asians and South Asians). Overall, across all organization types *except* racial and ethnic organizations, Latin/Central/South Americans were significantly lower in association activity than the Canadian reference group (in addition to East Asians, identified above).⁸

This work has, to be sure, some limitations. First, as with the previous work by Johnson and Soroka, the independent variable was conceptualized as “ethnic group” and then operationalized as “ethnic group identification” rather than “country of immigration.” While the ESC survey used in the analysis included a country of birth variable, limiting the analysis to immigrants would, perhaps, have reduced the already-small Ns for some immigrant groups, so there is some justification in studying self-identified ethnic groups. Still, using “ethnic identification” as the basis for categorization restricts our ability to make inferences about immigrant groups, since the translation between past ethnic origin and present identification is likely to be far from perfect — without even considering the problem of second generation individuals whose ancestors come from different points of origin. The translation between ethnic origin and ethnic identification is likely to vary across groups. In the 2000 ESC

⁸ One problem with the construction of the variables in Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen relates to the fact that the “ethnic groups” question was asked later in the questionnaire than the items for the other types of associations, including “other.” It is thus possible, if not likely, that associations listed in the “ethnic group” question had already been included by respondents when they answered the previous bank of questions, leading to possible double counting of associations. This would not be a problem with the “Non-ethnic” membership variable, though it appears as if this variable also includes at least some ethnic memberships.

survey, most individuals who were born in China self-identified as Chinese (131 out of 141). Although small Ns make comparisons difficult, the same high proportions may not apply to other groups: with 34 born in Jamaica, only 20 individuals identified themselves as Jamaican, and with 10 born in the Netherlands, only 1 self-identified as from the "Netherlands".

A second limitation has to do with the use of "memberships" as the form that the dependent variable took. To be sure, there were no separate measures of "active participation" in the 2000 ESC survey, so the researchers were limited in this regard, but most of the contemporary research in the area of voluntary association involvement has involved the use of measures such as number of memberships involving unpaid voluntary work (see Curtis, Baer, and Grabb, 2001; Ruiter and de Graaf, 2006) or actual hours of activity (Andersen et al., 2006).

A final limitation pertains to the overall sample size available to the researchers. However advantageous the sample size of over 4,000 is in relation to previous samples in the 1,000-2,000 range, in the absence of specific ethnic group oversamples, it provides insufficient Ns to perform analyses on specific countries of origin, with the possible exception of China (N=141), India (N=82), the Philippines (N=57), England or Scotland (N=117) or the USA (N=57). Echoing Lee and Angel's call for U.S. researchers to differentiate between Asian groups on the grounds that "important differences are lost when different nationalities are pooled" (2002: 560),⁹ it seems likely that the untested assumptions about regional homogeneity could, at least in some instances, be assessed if separate country categories were employed wherever possible.

⁹ Lee and Angel (2002) did not study voluntary associations, but rather the relationship between citizenship status, living arrangements and U.S. social security use. But their observations and comments seem germane here.

The present investigation will, then, extend the previous work of Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen in a number of directions. First, by employing a (much) larger sample size, it will provide for tests regarding 14 countries, each of which provided the birth place for a substantial number of present Canadian residents. Second, the analysis will focus on immigrants only, avoiding the thorny question of the translation between ethnic origin and ethnic self-identification. Third, a set of two measures of *active* voluntary association participation will be employed as dependent variables (in addition to a measure that more closely approximates the measure employed by Grabb and his associates). Fourth, models that control for aggregate (community-level) factors *in addition to individual-level* factors, will be estimated. These models allow for a modest improvement in the assessment of the effects of community size and a new variable which is demonstrated to have an effect on voluntary association involvement — community population stability/change. Finally, hypotheses regarding the relationship between ethnic community group density and voluntary association involvement, not previously tested in the literature, will be included in the investigation.

DATA AND METHODS

The primary data source for the analysis conducted here is the Statistics Canada Research Data Centre version of the 2003 General Social Survey (GSS 17)¹⁰; the analysis is conducted on the respondents located in the 137 communities (Census Metropolitan Areas or Census Agglomerations) identified by Statistics Canada in the data file, covering communities over approximately 10,000 in population size. Slightly over eighty per cent (80.4%) of all respondents in

¹⁰ I am indebted to Statistics Canada for providing access to these data as part of the Research Data Centre Program. The 2003 GSS has an excellent overall response rate of 78% (Statistics Canada, 2004).

the survey, and 94% of those born outside the country, lived in urban centres fitting this definition. Publicly available aggregate community-level (CA/CMA) Census data (from the 2001 Census) were merged with the individual-level data found in the GSS file to create a multi-level file suitable for use with hierarchical models. The resultant individual-level N was 18,903.

Three dependent measures were used in the analysis. Two represent measures that have been fairly commonly employed in past Canadian or comparative research on voluntary associations, albeit from different item pools or using different forms of variable construction (see, for example, Baer et al, 2001; Curtis, Baer, and Grabb, 2001; Grabb and Curtis, 2005). One is the number of voluntary associations the respondent reported belonging to. While previous research has tended to involve counts of the number of *types* of associations that, when given a list, respondents acknowledged membership in (usually with a final type, "other"), the GSS 17 question simply asked, "Of how many such groups were you a member or participant in the last 12 months?" This question was posed after respondents were asked yes/no questions about 7 different types of organizations and then "any other type of organization that you have not mentioned," but yielded responses that were higher than those that would have been obtained by simply adding the number of "yes" responses to the individual organization type questions (means of 2.248 versus 1.228 respectively) and is probably a more accurate measure of total levels of voluntary association involvement — at least within the limits imposed by a measure that counts nominal, non-active memberships. Models involving this dependent variable involve a log link function and a poisson distribution, with corrections for over-dispersion when required.

A second dependent measure is a dichotomous item asking respondents if they had done any unpaid voluntary work for "any organization" within the

past 12 months. Models involving this dependent variable, which is identical to or at least similar to a frequently-used measure for “active” associational memberships (see, for example, Curtis, Baer, and Grabb, 2001; Ruiter and de Graaf, 2006), involve the use of logit modeling.

A final dependent measure represents what may be an improvement in the assessment of active association participation, since many individuals who are civically engaged (not merely passive members not expending any time on organization activities) will be counted with this measure but are likely to be missed with the more common “unpaid voluntary work measure”. It is the responses to an item which asks, “Altogether, about how often do you participate in group activities and meetings?” Respondents were given five response points: a) at least once a week; b) a few times a month; c) once a month; d) once or twice a year and e) not in the past year. Many individuals who were very active in voluntary associations nonetheless indicated that they had not done “voluntary work” for these organizations: 46.8% of those who participated in group activities and meetings on a *weekly* basis indicated that they did *not* do “unpaid voluntary work” for any organization. This measure was used in ordered logit models.

The main independent variable is the country of (immigration) origin for the respondent, with Canadian-born respondents forming the reference category for a series of dummy variables capturing origin country for those non-native respondents whose countries of origin were identified in the GSS. Statistics Canada separately identified the following countries: China, Hong Kong (collapsed into a single category), England and Scotland (collapsed into a single category), Germany, Greece, Guyana, India, Italy, Jamaica, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the United States, Vietnam and “other” (due to a fairly small N, Greece was pooled with “other”). While the

majority of immigrants are classified according to country of origin (weighted N=3194), the “other” category is still substantial (N=1865), implying that a separate investigation of the relative status of some of the newer immigrant groups (for example, those from the middle east) is not possible with the GSS data. The Ns (weighted) for the various countries included in the analysis as dummy variables are shown in Table 1¹¹.

At the first stage of the analysis, differences among immigrant groups, controlling for differences in social and economic status, religion and home language are assessed. The status variables include education (coded: 6=graduate degree; 5=bachelor’s degree; 4=some university or college diploma; 3=some college/high school grad; 2=some high school; 1=elementary or none), occupation (professionals/managers, clerical/sales, manual workers, housework, retired, student and not in the workforce) and income measured in exact dollars (logged). Other variables included in the level-1 (individual-level) model were: marital status (married; single; separated/divorced; widowed), religion (no religion, catholic, Protestant, other religions, not stated/DK), gender, age (both a linear term and a quadratic to deal with possible non-linearity) , number of children, and whether the respondent spoke French at home (reference=English). A final variable, relevant to immigrants, was whether or not the respondent spoke a non-official language (language other than English or French) at home. With this variable included, the assessment of between-group differences takes into account language acquisition (at least as measured by language spoken at home¹²). For groups that have high levels of non-Canadian language use inside the home, it must be kept in mind that

¹¹ The main models reported here do not use the separate categorization for “born in Europe,” “born in Asia,” etc., though results from separate models using this alternative categorization will be reported briefly.

¹² Admittedly, individuals who are very proficient in English or French at work could still speak a non-official language at home, but the retention of a non-Canadian language at home is likely to constitute a possible barrier to social engagement outside the home.

the typical group member's expected level of civic engagement in the tables reported below will be affected by *both* the language dummy variable and the dummy variable representing that respondent's country of origin.

One of the research questions to be addressed here is whether immigrant group size in the community (that is, immigrant/ethnic group density or the proportion of respondents in the community from the same country of origin) has an effect on civic engagement. Conceptually, what is being modeled here is a cross-level interaction between the individual level variable, immigrant group membership, and the community-level variable, proportion of respondents in the group. For *each* of the immigrant groups (except the "other" category), a level-2 variable is constructed representing the proportion of individuals in the community in that group. If the level-1 equation is:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1 (\text{French}) + b_2 (\text{German}) + b_3 X_3 + \dots + b_k X_k + \mu$$

Then a level-2 equation models the b_1 and b_2 coefficients as functions of aggregate-level variables¹³: $b_1 = g_{01} + g_1 (\% \text{French}) + v$, where v is a level-2 disturbance term and

$$b_2 = g_{02} + g_2 (\% \text{German}) + v$$

Note that *each* of the dummy variables for origin country involved the use of a different aggregate level-variable (proportion of the relevant group in the community). The model also includes a level-2 equation for the intercept, b_0 . As mentioned above, the exogenous variables in this equation are: 1) region (5 dummy variables), 2) community population size (logged), 3) population change (%), 5 years 1996-2001¹⁴.

¹³ Models were estimated using HLM 6 (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2003 see also Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002 and Snijders and Bosker, 1999). A penalized likelihood function is used in the estimation of parameters, and all variables except dummy variables are mean-centred.

¹⁴ In earlier work, not reported here, various community status indicators have no effect on rates of involvement for any of the three dependent measures used in the present analysis. These include: a) median income, b) percentage in the community working in blue-collar occupations, and c) percent-

Generally, the variables used in the analysis had very low reported rates of non-response. For example, for the educational variable, fewer than 2 per cent of the respondents gave a “don’t know” answer or refused to respond to the question. Still, as is almost always the case with survey data, one variable, income, had a substantial non-response rate, so missing data imputation using EM-imputation (single imputation) was employed to prevent an unacceptable loss of sample respondents and to reduce biases that might be created due to non-response¹⁵.

Level-2 variables are used for an additional purpose: to model community-level (“context”) effects that are not captured with a level-1 model. In previous research, community size was found to be related (inversely) to voluntary association engagement (see Curtis, Baer, and Grabb, 2001; Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen, 2007). The models employed here use a more exact measure of community size (logged), based on the exact 2001 population of the community in question. One additional measure, *population change* (percentage of change from 1996 to 2001) is included in the model to test the proposition that there is less civic engagement in rapidly changing (growing) communities and to adjust for the effects of this “instability effect” in models seeking to examine the impact of immigrant group size (since immigrant groups are likely to be larger/denser in communities with a lot of recent immigration and this in turn implies growing, less stable, communities). Finally, reflecting past research in Canada, dummy variables are added to account for any *regional*

age in the community with university education. At the individual level, all of these variables usually have effects on volunteering (though findings vary with the income variable).

¹⁵ The length of time required to estimate numerous models and time/resource limitations at the Research Data Centre used for this analysis made it impractical to employ a slightly superior multiple imputation strategy (see Little and Rubin [1987]). The strategy employed here used SPSS’s MVA algorithm and provided for estimates in which, conceptually, error is added to imputed case values so as not to bias model variances and covariances.

differences not covered by the variables introduced into the model thus far (see Hall, McKeown, and Roberts, 2001; Reed and Selbee, 2000¹⁶).

A Preliminary Examination of Immigrant Group Attributes (Table 2) provides some information on the attributes of individuals who have immigrated from the countries that can be studied with the 2003 GSS survey data, as well as some other general regions (e.g., "other European"). Relative to native-born Canadians, most immigrant groups have lower incomes, as has been reported elsewhere (see Nakhaie, 2006), but it is also the case that there is considerable variation between groups, with Asian and Indian immigrant groups not doing as well as those from Europe (except perhaps Portugal), and with U.K. immigrants and individuals from the Netherlands earning, if anything, more on average than native Canadians¹⁷. The use of English or French at home is quite variable across immigrant groups: it is particularly low among those from China/Hong Kong and India.

Table 2 also suggests that even those immigrants coming from African countries bring with them (or, in some instances, subsequently acquire) human capital (in the form of university credentials) to match or exceed the average expected levels of education found with Canadian-born individuals. The exceptions to this pattern are Italy and Greece, immigrants from which tend to have arrived in Canada in over 30 years ago (see the column "% immigrated prior to 1971"), and Poland, which, unlike western European countries, continues to supply immigrants to Canada, though not to the same extent as is the case with Asian continent migrants. For these groups, large proportions of the immigrant community are comprised of recent immigrants.

¹⁶ Generally, Manitoba and Saskatchewan are seen to have higher levels of voluntary association participation and Quebec to have lower levels, though most previous analyses in this area have been bivariate in nature.

¹⁷ Significance tests for these differences are not reported, but with an N of over 600,000, even very small differences in this table will be statistically significant.

TABLE 1: DESCRIPTIVES FOR VARIABLES IN LEVEL-1 MODELS

DEPENDENT VARIABLES:	N	%	MISSING	IMMIGRATION-RELATED INDEPENDENT VARIABLES:	N	%	MISSING
1. Does unpaid voluntary work: Yes	5934	31.4	150	7. Immigrant, not born in (2,3,4,5,6 above)	498	2.6	
2. Membership: No. of organizations:				8. Immigrated within last 10 years	1402	7.4	
None	7447	39.4	46	9. Immigrated more than 20 years ago	926	4.9	
One	4826	25.5		10. Immigrated as child under age of 10 (Born in):	926	4.9	
Two	3091	16.4		11. China or Hong Kong	513	2.7	
Three	1683	8.9		11a. China or Hong Kong (within last 10 yrs)	173	0.9	
4-9	1726	9.1		12. Great Britain	514	2.7	
10 or more	84	0.4		13. France	63	0.3	
3. Involvement in meetings, other association activities				14. Germany	167	0.9	
At least once/week	4461	23.6	60	15. Guyana	74	0.4	
Few times a month	2286	12.1		16. India	336	1.8	
Once a month	2034	10.8		16a. India (within last 10 years)	149	0.8	
Once or twice a year	1847	9.8		17. Italy	222	1.2	
Not in the past year	8215	43.5		18. Jamaica	69	0.4	
IMMIGRATION-RELATED INDEPENDENT VARIABLES:	N	%	MISSING	19. Netherlands	100	0.5	
1. Speak language other than English or French	1955	10.3		20. Philippines	238	1.3	
2. Born in Europe (exc. UK)	1372	7.3		21. Poland	168	0.9	
3. Born in Asia	1795	9.5		22. Portugal	131	0.7	
4. Born in Africa	260	1.4		23. USA	182	1.0	
5. Born in South, Central America or Caribbean	482	2.5		24. Vietnam	95	0.5	
6. Born in US or UK	696	3.7		25. Other immigrant (not included in 11-24)	1865	9.9	

TABLE 2: SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA BY PLACE OF ORIGIN

ORIGIN	MEAN INDIVIDUAL INCOME*	MEDIAN INDIVIDUAL INCOME	% SPEAK ENG OR FR AT HOME	% IMMIGR PRIOR TO 1971	% IM- MIGR AFTER 1990	% UNIV. DEGREE
Native Canadian	34670	30000	98.5%	14.9
Caribbean, S., Central America	27507	24312	73.0%	13.2	28.5	13.4
United Kingdom	41194	34300	99.3%	63.8	5.4	16.8
China, Hong Kong	25818	18845	13.3%	9.3	51.9	29.0
Other Europe	35117	29000	68.7%	56.7	18.9	22.2
India	28160	22312	28.6%	8.6	46.6	31.0
Italy	31749	26506	42.3%	86.1	1.5	5.0
West Central Asia, Middle East	24043	15900	30.0%	7.6	50.8	27.9
Other SE Asia	21673	16037	29.7%	2.8	69.0	27.1
United States	39551	30743	98.5%	39.1	14.2	36.6
Philippines	26743	24928	41.4%	4.0	50.4	33.9
E. Africa	31216	24742	54.0%	4.2	35.9	22.9
Other Africa	30692	22236	67.6%	16.1	49.9	38.0
Germany	36386	30124	84.7%	77.6	5.9	15.0
Greece	25914	20000	29.4%	70.1	2.9	6.4
Poland	31288	27202	40.3%	34.2	21.4	15.7
Portugal	28652	26538	39.1%	37.8	6.0	3.2
Netherlands	36558	31000	90.0%	81.9	3.5	11.7
France	35244	30000	97.4%	38.4	28.5	33.2

Source: Census 2001 Public Use Sample (weighted).

* income was truncated at \$200k in original file. Values <0 were reassigned to zero.

PREDICTORS OF VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION INVOLVEMENT

Table 3 deals largely with predictors of voluntary association involvement *other* than country of origin, though one variable (home language) is of particular importance, since, as will be seen, the table suggests that non-official language use at home constitutes a major barrier to civic involvement. Table 4 presents the dummy variable coefficients for country of origin for the same models, and Table 5 translates all of the results for country of origin dummy variables into “expected probabilities” to provide for a more meaningful interpretation of the relative size of effects.

Most of the results in Table 3 will be familiar to readers of the literature on voluntary association involvement (see Rotolo, 1999; Wilson, 2000; in Canada, see Hall, Hall, McKeown, and Roberts, 2001; Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen, 2007). The individual-level effect of education is very strong, as can be seen both by the relative magnitude of the log-odds coefficients or log coefficients presented in Table 3 and the expected probabilities shown in Table 5. The first column, involving frequency of meeting attendance or other forms of participation, is re-expressed as cumulative probabilities in Table 5. Thus, individuals who have a BA have a .488 probability of either attending “every week” or “a few times a month”¹⁸, while those with only some high school have an expected probability that is considerably lower — .272¹⁹. Surprisingly, the

¹⁸ These are the first two categories of the dependent variable. Other forms of re-expression of parameters are possible, of course (any one of four non-trivial cumulative probabilities could be presented, or indeed more than one could be presented), but these will not lead to major substantive changes in interpretation (at worst, if a cumulative probability approaches zero or 1.0, there is a floor/ceiling compression given the logistic form of the model).

¹⁹ As noted in the table, these odds were calculated at the dummy variable reference category points (and at the means of all quantitative variables). An alternative, perhaps more closely approximating the “average case” would have involved the addition of dummy variable coefficients weighted by the N of cases in each category assigned to a dummy variable. The values shown in the table might be slightly high, since the religion reference category is Protestant (high involvement) yet a substantial portion of the Canadian population is non-Catholic, not religious, or non-Christian (lower predicted involvement). Still, *differences* between calculated expected values, such as the difference between BA and some High School as shown here, fairly accurately represent the magnitude of effects.

effect of age is not consistent across different forms of the dependent variable: only in the case of unpaid volunteer work is it strong. The linear (.2515) and quadratic (-.02581) can be interpreted to indicate a curvilinear relationship with maximum involvement occurring when respondents are in their late 40s.

The finding that community size only affects voluntary association involvement in the case of unpaid voluntary work but not, with controls for community stability (population change), in the case of the two other membership dependent variables is unexpected, but explainable post-hoc. While the two variables — community size and population change — are correlated, they are not coincident: small communities in Alberta have experienced relatively high levels of population change while some larger Canadian east coast centres have not. Both community-level variables serve as potential confounds to the interpretation of immigration effects since immigrants tend to move to large centres (notably, Toronto and Vancouver) and to centres that have experienced high positive population change. Also, the coefficients in Table 5, while suggesting that population change matters, clearly indicate that this level-2 effect is not as strong as some individual-level effects, most notably education and religion.

Differences between religious groups in Canada are quite strong: consistent with earlier cross-national findings at the individual level (e.g., Ruiters and de Graaf, 2006). Protestants are much more engaged than other religious groups; this difference is both strong and applicable to all three dependent variables. Generally, immigrant groups are not predominantly Protestant, though US immigrants (40%), UK immigrants (58%), German immigrants (48%) and Dutch immigrants (50%) are exceptions.²⁰ Individual-level differences in reli-

²⁰ These percentages were obtained from cross-tabulations of the 2001 Census public use file and are not shown in any of the tables presented here. The percentage of the Canadian born population that was Catholic in 2001 was approximately 31%.

gion have already been factored into the analysis that is reported in Table 4, yet these Protestant origin countries remain ones whose emigrants become fairly highly involved in voluntary association activity upon immigration to Canada, as we shall see when Table 4 is examined.²¹

Language plays an important role in voluntary association involvement: those who do not speak English or French at home are much less likely to get involved, either at meetings, as non-paid volunteers, or simply as holders of memberships. In the case of meeting/activity involvement, the coefficient of $-.3393$ in Table 3 translates into fairly large differences in expected (cumulative) probabilities of association involvement. While an English-speaking family member would have a $.374$ expected probability of either attending/participating weekly or at least a few times a month, this expected probability drops to $.298$ for individuals whose home language is neither English nor French. This difference should be remembered when coefficients representing differences between individuals from various countries of origin and the "reference" group of Canadian-born individuals (Table 4) are assessed below. If, in these findings, it is found that there is no substantial difference between a given immigrant group and the Canadian-born reference category, it should be remembered that this "no difference" finding only applies to those individuals who have adopted English as their home language (as noted above, in Table 2, these adoption rates are high for many groups, but low for groups such as Italians, Polish and Portuguese but particularly low for individuals from India and, especially, China/Hong Kong). For individuals whose home language remains other than English or French, differences in voluntary association participation continue to exist, and these are not trivial.

²¹ Most of the models reported here were re-estimated with the inclusion of a religiosity (church attendance) variable at the individual level. The inclusion of this variable did not change any of the key substantive findings reported here.

Table 3 (and the re-expression of its coefficients as expected probabilities in Table 5) also indicates that French-speaking individuals are considerably less involved than those who speak English at home. Grabb, Hwang, and Andersen (2007) report similar effects for French self-identification (which may be collinear, in their model, with the use of the French language at home) and province. In the models shown here, the Ontario-Quebec difference is small, in the case of the number of memberships dependent variable, in comparison with the English-French language difference (-.095 compared with -.235), but in practice the major categories are English-outside Quebec and French inside-Quebec, so the difference between an Ontarian speaking English and a Quebecker speaking French would be found in taking the sum of the coefficients and then applying appropriate transformations from the logistic to cumulative probabilities. For example, for unpaid voluntary work (the middle column), the "Quebec" coefficient (-.298) would be added to the "Home lang: French" coefficient (-.320) to provide an idea of the (fairly large) differences between typical (provincial majority language) native-born residents in Quebec and Ontario. These findings thus do not contradict those of Grabb and his colleagues.

Turning next to the differences among immigrant groups, controlling for home language use (and other variables identified in Table 3), Table 4 identifies Dutch immigrants as those with the highest level of voluntary association involvement, across all three dependent measures. The coefficients shown in this table are re-expressed in Table 5 as expected probabilities, and we can see from these that immigrants from the Netherlands have a 48.6% expectation of attending meetings or participating at least a few times a week, holding all other factors constant, against 37.4% for those who are Canadian born. For the other two dependent measures, there are no significant differences between

Netherlands immigrants and native-born Canadians. In the Netherlands itself, English is taught universally, and among immigrants one sees the highest use of English at home for an immigrant group other than those (USA and UK) where the dominant language of the country of origin is English (see Table 2). It is also the case that, compositionally, this group is comprised mostly of individuals who have been in Canada for more than 20 years. There are no other patterns in Table 4 where a particular immigrant group scores higher in association involvement than Canadian-born individuals.

Using number of memberships as the dependent variable and a $p < .01$ criterion, individuals from India, France and China/Hong Kong have significantly lower levels of participation than Canadian-born individuals. In each of these three cases, the language spoken at home is likely not be English, so typical differences, even with controls, will be even larger than those suggested by the coefficients in Table 4 and the expected counts in Table 5. While native Canadians are members of an average of 1.667 organizations, for the French this number is 1.231, for individuals from India it is 1.017 and for individuals from China/Hong Kong it is

1.160. The expected count for Vietnamese-origin individuals is even lower (.841), but the difference between this group and the reference category is only significant at $p < .015$ given the smaller N for the group. Despite the fact that most Italian-origin immigrants have been in the country for more than 20 years (see Table 2) and would thus be expected to be more involved, this group may also be slightly lower than the Canadian-born baseline (expected count 1.380; prob. of difference from Canadian-born: $p < .039$).

For the unpaid voluntary work measure, Germany, India, and the Philippines are identified as countries with significantly lower levels of active volunteering

at $p < .01$, with the differences involving individuals from India being particularly pronounced. The coefficients for some other countries are of a similar magnitude, suggesting low levels of voluntary engagement, but the standard errors for these countries are higher (owing mostly to smaller N s), so these results must be seen as more tentative. Portugal ($-.718$, $p < .046$, expected probability of $.336$ as opposed to a Canadian-born expected probability of $.509$), Poland ($-.579$, $p < .042$) and possibly Jamaica ($-.578$, $p < .057$) all show what appear to be fairly low levels of engagement.

Finally, for the meeting/activity involvement measure, which is arguably the best indicator of overall engagement, exceedingly low levels of engagement are observed for individuals from Vietnam (-1.031 , $p < .012$, expected probability of $.176$ versus $.374$ for Canadian-born) and India ($-.590$, $p < .001$, expected probability of $.249$). Fairly low levels of engagement are also observed in the case of individuals from Guyana ($-.347$, $p < .036$, expected probability of $.297$), the Philippines ($-.571$, $p < .013$, expected probability of $.252$) and Poland ($.341$, $p < .056$, expected probability $.298$).

One interesting finding from the results shown in Tables 4 and 5 is a non-finding: individuals from Portugal are not less engaged than native-born Canadians, providing they speak English at home. Put in other terms, controlling for the "non English disadvantage" observed in all immigrant groups, there is no additional reduction in involvement associated with Portuguese origins (any more than, say, traditionally "high involvement" immigrant groups such as the British or Americans). This is especially interesting given the collectively low levels of university education in this group (while education is controlled for at the individual level, one might argue that "group level" attributes, such as average levels of education within a group, could also have an independent effect). Another interesting non-finding pertains to Jamaicans: while the total

number of memberships in this group (most of which probably speaks English at home) is slightly lower than it is for the Canadian-born reference group with controls, there is clearly no difference (if anything, a difference in the opposite direction) when it comes to the meeting/participation variable (coefficient of $+ .186$, $p < .075$). Not shown in Tables 4 or 5 are results from a separate model using broader country categorizations to include African immigrants in a single category and South American (including Caribbean and Central American) immigrants in a single category, rather than pooling these groups into the "other" category.²² For the meeting/activity involvement dependent variable, neither of these two combined groups was significantly different from the Canadian-born reference category. Nor were there any differences on the two other dependent variables between Africans and Canadian-born individuals, but in the case of S. American/Caribbean/Central American individuals, there was significantly less unpaid voluntary work (log odds coefficient = $-.373$, $p < .001$) and slightly fewer memberships (log coefficient = $-.109$, $p < .045$).

In general, the findings for Asian countries seem to be consistent: immigrants from the three countries explicitly identified in the 2003 General Social Survey show consistently lower levels of voluntary association engagement across all three of the dependent measures used in the analysis. These are, however, all countries where immigrants are fairly new; that is, individuals from these countries are disproportionately likely to have arrived within the past 10-15 years. Could it be that, when this is factored in, the differences between Asian immigrants and Canadian-born individuals will reduce in magnitude? One way that this was assessed was through the addition of three individual-level dummy variables to the model, representing a fixed (and constant) across-

²² Statistics Canada did not break out African or South/Central American countries to any extent beyond those given in the analysis presented thus far. The continent-by-continent categorization constituted a separate variable on the GSS 2003 file.

country effect for a) those who immigrated more than 20 years ago (expected to be a positive effect, since this will be in relation to models that provide individual country-level coefficients), b) for those who immigrated less than 10 years ago (expected to be negative) and c) for those who are from the "1.5" generation and immigrated at age 10 or less. The individual level equation thus looked something like this:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1 \text{Immig20+yrs} + b_2 \text{Immig}<10\text{yrs} + b_3 \text{ImmAge}<11 + b_4 \text{England} + b_5 \text{France... etc.}$$

As noted above, a single term was estimated across all groups for the effect of "recency" of immigration. For the meeting/participation variable, only one the dummy variable representing immigration at age 10 or less was statistically significant ($b = +.171, p < .001$). The magnitude of this coefficient in relation to coefficients for countries of origin such as India, China and Germany suggests that the "1.5" generation from these countries many countries may still be less engaged than individuals who are Canadian born, despite the fact that much of their schooling and socialization has taken place in Canada. With these three dummy variables included, very little changes for the estimated effect of Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian and Filipino origin: coefficients of $-.339, -1.031, -.590$ and $-.571$ (respectively, from Table 4) become $-.326, -1.080, -.583$ and $-.541$. For the unpaid voluntary work dependent variable, though, there is some suggestion that differences between Asian immigrants and Canadian born individuals may in part be a function of length of immigration: controlling for whether one immigrated 10 years or less (estimated coefficient $-.438, p < .001$), the coefficients for China ($-.115, p < .538$) and Vietnam ($-.471, p < .281$) were cut in half from those estimated in Table 4, while the coefficient for the Philippines was also reduced substantially ($-.389,$

$p < .086$). The same was not, however, true for the coefficient associated with India ($-.544$, $p < .008$), which was only reduced slightly.²³

Not shown here are separate models in which an additional dummy variable was created to represent respondents from a) India and b) China/Hong Kong who had been in the country less than 10 years. For the meeting/participation dependent variable, for both countries, immigrants who had been in the country more than 10 years still had expected participation levels significantly less than those for Canadian-born individuals, but these recent immigrants had significantly lower expected levels of engagement than their same-country-of-origin compatriots who had been in Canada longer.²⁴ For the unpaid voluntary work variable, the same applied for China/Hong Kong but not for India, where both more recent and less recent immigrants both had substantially lower expected levels of volunteering but were not significantly different from each other.

Though recency of immigration matters, overall, it appears as if the lower levels of engagement from Asian immigrants is not primarily a function of the fact that immigrants from these countries arrived fairly recently: even older, more established immigrants from these countries display lower than otherwise expected levels of voluntary engagement.

²³ Separate tests for the "number of memberships" variable were not conducted due to Research Data Centre time constraints.

²⁴ Controls, discussed above, were included in these models.

TABLE 3: MULTILEVEL MODEL RESULTS FOR THREE VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION INVOLVEMENT DEPENDENT VARIABLES

	MEETING/ACTIVITY INVOLVEMENT (ORDERED LOGIT MODEL)			UNPAID VOLUNTARY WORK (BINOMIAL LOGIT MODEL)			NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS (POISSON MODEL)		
	COEFFIC.	STD. ERR.	PROB.	COEFFIC.	STD. ERR.	PROB.	COEFFIC.	STD. ERR.	PROB.
Level-2 (Intercept) Coefficients*:									
Region									
Atlantic	-0.16306	0.062897	0.011	-0.13356	0.077887	0.088	-0.00353	0.032504	0.914
Quebec	-0.17197	0.090805	0.060	-0.29802	0.059601	0.000	-0.09537	0.029812	0.002
Manitoba/Sask	-0.01955	0.073815	0.792	0.065657	0.062628	0.297	0.04539	0.050804	0.374
Alberta	0.102719	0.058146	0.079	0.233474	0.065339	0.001	0.07402	0.032265	0.023
British Columbia (reference=Ontario)	0.25908	0.04707	0.000	0.144642	0.059526	0.017	0.126001	0.022133	0.000
LN (Population size)	-0.00778	0.014349	0.588	-0.06244	0.013469	0.000	-0.00983	0.006553	0.136
Pop. Change (%)	-0.01101	0.004227	0.011	-0.00727	0.005695	0.204	-0.0052	0.002365	0.030
Level-1 Coefficients									
Education (1-6)	0.311114	0.015816	0.000	0.2922	0.017839	0.000	0.264165	0.013892	0.000
Age in 10s	-0.11875	0.055935	0.034	0.251467	0.068806	0.000	-0.04201	0.047168	0.373
Age-squared (10s)	0.007684	0.00645	0.234	-0.02581	0.008119	0.002	0.005607	0.005146	0.276
Marital status (ref=single)									
Married	-0.00894	0.031262	0.775	-0.12139	0.035619	0.001	-0.05826	0.018622	0.002
Separated/divorc	-0.02896	0.053572	0.588	-0.19492	0.04972	0.000	-0.06601	0.030464	0.030
Widowed	-0.05558	0.092759	0.549	-0.29117	0.089839	0.002	-0.11815	0.085783	0.169
Occupation/work status (ref=clerical/sales/service)									
Profess/manager	0.138238	0.03869	0.001	0.206557	0.040255	0.000	0.17604	0.028747	0.000
Manual	-0.15499	0.053085	0.004	-0.57308	0.058503	0.000	-0.1085	0.031777	0.001

TABLE 3 CONT.

	MEETING/ACTIVITY INVOLVEMENT (ORDERED LOGIT MODEL)			UNPAID VOLUNTARY WORK (BINOMIAL LOGIT MODEL)			NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS (POISSON MODEL)		
	COEFFIC.	STD. ERR.	PROB.	COEFFIC.	STD. ERR.	PROB.	COEFFIC.	STD. ERR.	PROB.
Housework	-0.30937	0.071797	0.000	-0.08501	0.112192	0.449	-0.13612	0.118097	0.250
Retired	0.019351	0.062694	0.757	0.073882	0.099562	0.458	-0.04594	0.044698	0.304
Student	0.103259	0.128862	0.423	0.376149	0.177696	0.034	0.088423	0.085743	0.303
Not in workforce	-0.47905	0.095466	0.000	-0.16291	0.090928	0.073	-0.24592	0.06455	0.000
Religion (ref=Protestant)									
No religion	-0.47453	0.046544	0.000	-0.46376	0.05591	0.000	-0.19101	0.023128	0.000
Catholic	-0.37321	0.046684	0.000	-0.38204	0.046862	0.000	-0.14479	0.026784	0.000
Other Religions	-0.56745	0.075285	0.000	-0.2652	0.110874	0.017	-0.15714	0.074228	0.034
Not stated/DK	-0.58261	0.07104	0.000	-0.46817	0.108202	0.000	-0.19974	0.050156	0.000
Gender (male)	0.073597	0.01981	0.000	-0.14256	0.032225	0.000	0.047434	0.018594	0.011
Home lang: other	-0.3393	0.089953	0.000	-0.25674	0.123182	0.037	-0.29143	0.045322	0.000
Home lang: French	-0.26692	0.068253	0.000	-0.32036	0.061533	0.000	-0.2345	0.028186	0.000
No. of children	0.018336	0.014686	0.212	0.119269	0.02048	0.000	0.036155	0.01128	0.002
LN (Income in \$10k)	0.040791	0.022457	0.069	-0.03801	0.027952	0.174	0.053386	0.013283	0.000
Intercepts and Threshold parameters:									
Intercept	-0.739	0.073525	0.000	0.034752	0.086771	0.689	0.510861	0.029291	0.000
Thresholds (ordinal model):									
d(2)	0.622554	0.018645	0.000						
d(3)	1.116678	0.036677	0.000						
d(4)	1.556012	0.0213	0.000						

*See subsequent tables for country of origin coefficients.

TABLE 4 VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION INVOLVEMENT AMONG
IMMIGRANTS IN RELATION TO NATIVE-BORN CANADIANS

	MEETING/ACTIVITY INVOLVEMENT (ORDERED LOGIT MODEL)			UNPAID VOLUNTARY WORK (BINOMIAL LOGIT MODEL)			NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS (POISSON MODEL)		
	COEFFIC.	STD. ERROR	PROB.	COEFFIC.	STD. ERROR	PROB.	COEFFIC.	STD. ERROR	PROB.
Great Britain	0.014191	0.082147	0.863	-0.03999	0.080201	0.618	0.017832	0.061663	0.772
France	-0.0922	0.146346	0.528	0.012492	0.234588	0.958	-0.30305	0.10777	0.005
Germany	-0.17098	0.126751	0.178	-0.40217	0.135082	0.003	-0.12672	0.081916	0.122
Guyana	-0.34654	0.16524	0.036	-0.35923	0.36391	0.324	-0.01643	0.069628	0.814
India	-0.59043	0.110864	0.000	-0.71292	0.188727	0.000	-0.49427	0.10216	0.000
Italy	-0.29028	0.135929	0.033	-0.37431	0.203122	0.065	-0.18904	0.091743	0.039
Jamaica	0.186091	0.104719	0.075	-0.57818	0.303929	0.057	-0.10214	0.043799	0.02
Netherlands	0.461436	0.185774	0.013	0.430093	0.278018	0.122	0.147037	0.177498	0.408
Philippines	-0.57132	0.229644	0.013	-0.55363	0.209022	0.008	-0.25002	0.157982	0.113
Poland	-0.34125	0.179041	0.056	-0.57865	0.284921	0.042	-0.21784	0.115702	0.059
Portugal	-0.00405	0.124338	0.974	-0.71793	0.360279	0.046	0.090308	0.093717	0.336
USA	-0.08252	0.246717	0.738	0.065768	0.179341	0.714	0.133156	0.102176	0.193
Vietnam	-1.03061	0.410198	0.012	-0.53745	0.393829	0.172	-0.6837	0.28081	0.015
China, Hong Kong	-0.33931	0.143247	0.018	-0.29298	0.14007	0.036	-0.36282	0.090228	0.000
Other Immigrants	-0.25868	0.064855	0.000	-0.36725	0.072355	0.000	-0.14839	0.040029	0.000

TABLE 5: EXPECTED PROBABILITIES CALCULATED AT VARYING LEVELS FOR KEY EXOGENOUS VARIABLES*

	MEETING/ACTIVITY INVOLVEMENT (ORDERED LOGIT MODEL)	UNPAID VOLUNTARY WORK (BINOMIAL LOGIT MODEL)	NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS (POISSON MODEL)		MEETING/ACTIVITY INVOLVEMENT (ORDERED LOGIT MODEL)	UNPAID VOLUNTARY WORK (BINOMIAL LOGIT MODEL)	NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS (POISSON MODEL)
	CUMULATIVE PROBABILITY: ATTEND/PARTICIPATE AT LEAST A FEW TIMES A MONTH	PROBABILITY OF DOING UNPAID WORK	NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS		CUMULATIVE PROBABILITY: ATTEND/PARTICIPATE AT LEAST A FEW TIMES A MONTH	PROBABILITY OF DOING UNPAID WORK	NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS
Education				Slightly above avg. growth (+2%)	0.369		1.649
BA	0.488	0.616	2.477	High growth (+15%)	0.336		1.542
Some HS	0.272	0.400	1.121	Country of immigration:			
Occupation				Great Britain	0.377	0.499	1.697
Mgr/Prof	0.407	0.560	1.988	France	0.352	0.512	1.231
Cler/sales	0.374	0.509	1.667	Germany	0.335	0.409	1.468
Manual	0.338	0.369	1.495	Guyana	0.297	0.420	1.640
Housewife	0.305	0.487	1.455	India	0.248	0.337	1.017
Retired	0.378	0.527	1.592	Italy	0.309	0.416	1.380
Student	0.398	0.601	1.821	Jamaica	0.418	0.367	1.505
Out of wf.	0.270	0.468	1.303	Netherlands	0.486	0.614	1.931
Religion				Philippines	0.252	0.373	1.298
NONE	0.271	0.394	1.377	Poland	0.298	0.367	1.340
CATHOLIC	0.291	0.414	1.442	Portugal	0.373	0.336	1.824
PROTEST	0.374	0.509	1.667	USA	0.355	0.525	1.904
OTHER	0.291	0.443	1.424	Vietnam	0.176	0.377	0.841
DK, NR	0.253	0.393	1.365	China, Hong Kong	0.298	0.436	1.160
Main home language				OTHER IMMIGRANTS (CANADIAN BORN)	0.315	0.418	1.437
ENGLISH	0.374	0.509	1.667		0.374	0.509	1.667
FRENCH	0.314	0.429	1.318				
OTHER	0.298	0.509	1.245				
Population change (level-2)							
Negative change community (-7%)	0.395	(DIFF'S NS)	1.728				

*calculated at mean values for continuous variables and for reference categories of categorical variables:

TABLE 6: VARYING SLOPES COEFFICIENTS AND TESTS FOR IMMIGRANT ORIGINS

LEVEL 2 EQUATION: $B1$ (DUMMY VAR. FOR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN) = $G0 + G1*(\%GROUP)$
WHERE $GROUP$ = RELATIVE DENSITY OF GROUP (% OF CA OR CMA POPULATION)

	MEETING/ACTIVITY INVOLVEMENT (ORDERED LOGIT MODEL)			UNPAID VOLUNTARY WORK (BINOMIAL LOGIT MODEL)			NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS (POISSON MODEL)		
	COEFFIC.	STD. ERROR	PROB.	COEFFIC.	STD. ERROR	PROB.	COEFFIC.	STD. ERROR	PROB.
GREAT BRITAIN	-0.123	0.038	0.002	-0.059	0.062	0.346	-0.071	0.022	0.002
FRANCE	0.106	0.206	0.608	-1.125	0.355	0.002	-1.280	0.190	0.000
GERMANY	0.202	0.409	0.621	0.650	0.383	0.092	0.209	0.219	0.342
GUYANA	-0.747	0.506	0.142	-3.132	0.525	0.000	-0.084	0.153	0.581
INDIA	-0.036	0.055	0.509	-0.021	0.087	0.808	-0.009	0.042	0.841
ITALY	-0.095	0.128	0.459	0.040	0.166	0.809	-0.170	0.072	0.019
JAMAICA	-0.799	0.269	0.004	-0.978	0.200	0.000	-0.024	0.053	0.654
NETHERLANDS	-0.087	0.505	0.865	0.667	0.533	0.213	-0.144	0.240	0.548
PHILIPPINES	-0.066	0.186	0.723	0.382	0.217	0.081	0.162	0.129	0.211
POLAND	-1.811	0.546	0.002	-1.714	0.535	0.002	-0.723	0.210	0.001
PORTUGAL	0.162	0.206	0.434	1.482	0.576	0.011	0.267	0.128	0.038
USA	-0.078	0.454	0.865	-0.292	0.353	0.410	0.101	0.139	0.470
VIETNAM	-0.004	0.735	0.996	0.162	0.796	0.839	-1.529	0.468	0.002
CHINA, HONG KONG	0.132	0.025	0.000	0.017	0.038	0.651	0.042	0.016	0.010

Interpretation: positive coefficient implies more association involvement within this immigrant group in communities with higher group densities; negative coefficient implies less association involvement where the proportionate group size is large.

DOES IMMIGRANT GROUP COMMUNITY SIZE/DENSITY MATTER?

Table 6 provides the results of a model where the slopes for the dummy variables associated with countries of immigration are themselves allowed to vary according to the relative group density (community population percentage). If the thesis that group density supports civic engagement holds, all of the coefficients shown in this table would be positive. For China and Hong Kong, this appears to be the case: a proportionately larger Chinese community implies more voluntary association involvement, at least for two of the dependent variables — meeting and activity participation (coefficient $+0.132$, $p < .001$) and (to a lesser extent) number of memberships. The percentage of the community population that was born in Hong Kong and China ranges from 0 (the majority of communities in Canada have values of less than 0.5%) to 5.17% (Vancouver).²⁵ Coupled with the level-2 equation intercept, -1.048 , what this tells us is that, even in the largest Chinese origin density community in Canada, Chinese immigrants have an expected probability of meeting or activity participation that is lower than those of Canadian origin. There is a difference of approximately $.660$ between the communities with the lowest percentage Chinese population and those with the highest. Put in other terms, about a quarter of the difference between Chinese origin individuals and Canadian-born individuals disappears in a city with a Chinese population density such as Toronto, and over half of the difference disappears in Vancouver. Note that a similar finding also applies to the number of memberships, but not to volunteering.

Surprisingly, this overall finding of a positive relationship between group density and social involvement only holds for one other group: the Portuguese.

²⁵ For Toronto, the figure is 2.92%.

Even here, though, the finding does not apply to the key meeting/participation dependent variable, and only to the other two (unpaid voluntary work, total number of memberships). The earlier finding that Portuguese immigrants had average levels of engagement is tempered with the caveat that, for two of the dependent variables, this result only holds for centres with higher overall concentrations of Portuguese immigrants (Kitchener-Waterloo, Toronto, Windsor for example) and does not hold for individuals living in communities with proportionately small Portuguese populations.

With some other countries of origin, the reverse finding may obtain: higher immigrant group densities lead to *lower*, and not higher, levels of voluntary association involvement. Almost all of the significant findings in Table 6 hold up to a level-2 equation control for population change. The argument here is that perhaps the negative effects of population change — observed earlier on for the overall equation intercept — also applies to the effect of immigration status on engagement, since immigrants would be particularly dislocated in communities with higher levels of population turnover and lower levels of community (and hence organizational) stability. If this is the case, this variable could act as a suppressor in the case of positive (expected) results and could explain the unexpected negative signs in many of the coefficients shown in Table 6. Only in the case of Jamaica, though, did population change matter. For this group, as population change increases, voluntary associate involvement goes down to some *additional degree* over and above that which is expected in the general population and the effect of group density becomes non-significant.

Because there is a substantial British-born population in Canada, the finding that higher concentration of British-born individuals in a community actually suppresses civic engagement on the part of British immigrants — at least in the form of voluntary association activity — is not readily explained. The absence of

a positive sign on the coefficient makes sense: possessing excellent language skills and experiencing social and political conditions that may be very similar to those found in the home country, British-born individuals do not need to rely on the social networks of fellow immigrants that might, at least in the case of the Chinese, be so important in developing community connections that could, eventually, lead to higher levels of social engagement. But the reverse sign for this group can at best be speculated upon. It occurs in the case of British immigrants but it does not, for instance, occur among American immigrants.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The picture of immigrant social engagement that emerges from the findings reported here suggests a number of things. While it remains to be seen whether immigration leads to heightened levels of civic engagement in relation to the engagement we might have expected from the same individuals had they remained in their country of origin (a la Moya, 2005), there is probably a balance of forces operating as part of the immigration process to both enhance and attenuate civic engagement. The role of language is clearly a powerful one: collectively, those groups whose members tend not to adopt English as a home language are considerably less engaged — even if we include, as was done here, ethnic organizations — than their contemporaries from the same or (as is mostly the case) from other immigrant groups who have started to use the majority language (most notably, English). Holding language constant, it is the case that overall levels of civic engagement, whether measured by an multiple-category ordered measure of participation, measured by a dichotomous indicator of unpaid work, or a count of total association memberships, tends to be lower among many immigrant groups. Since data were not available on the presence or absence of ethnic associations in the construction of

the three dependent measures, these findings do not “factor out” or subtract out ethnic group memberships, though the exercise of separating membership types is probably more useful in assessing patterns of choice among immigrants rather than making claims about reduced levels of involvement on the grounds, for example, that some types of association activity are putatively less “bridging” in nature. If we were to make estimates of the proportion of activities, unpaid voluntary work likelihoods or membership counts that were associated with ethnic group activities and subtract these from the numbers reported in the tables shown here, the effect would undoubtedly be enhanced, adding even more countries (except, probably, Britain and the United States) to those countries of origin whose emigrants participate less in Canada than do native-born Canadians.

What is of most interest, of course, is not the lower levels of engagement per se, but the differences between countries. Here, the argument of continuity between country of origin and country of destination holds some sway, but comes up short as a total explanation of between-country differences failing, for example, to explain relatively high levels of engagement in meetings and association activities among Portuguese and Jamaican immigrants. Home country levels of civic engagement are notoriously difficult to assess in some Asian countries, especially the People’s Republic of China (see, for example, the discussion in Guo, 2007), but it by most conventional standards these are fairly low, and one sees reflected in lower levels of engagement in immigrant groups which, coincidentally, appear to maintain language boundaries with the adopted country for at least a generation. In one of the groups with the lowest levels of engagement — individuals from China and Hong Kong — differences between the immigrant group and mainstream society appear to be mitigated by group density — the larger the proportionate group size,

the lower the differences in the community between Chinese immigrants and Canadian — born individuals. Perhaps there is a “floor effect” here: in immigrant groups from societies in which voluntary civic engagement is very low, given the constrained nature of civic engagement in home countries, networks of similar ethnic others are important in fostering connections to civil society, whereas in other immigrant groups social integration might be accomplished in part or in whole without a need for brokerage of the ethnic group, whether organized as formal associations or simply as informal community social networks. Ultimately, though, a full explanation of the processes suggested here will probably require an assessment of informal contacts and networks (see Fong and Ooka, 2006) as much as the involvement in more formal voluntary associations as has been investigated here, and of course this poses some interesting challenges for future Canadian social survey designers.

What of the “reverse effect,” in which the degree of involvement on the part of British and Polish immigrants is inversely related to group density? If this finding were to hold only in the case of British immigrants, it might be tempting to suggest that, for this group, informal networks might actually get in the way of more formal voluntary association involvement given that the latter is not likely to be concentrated in the immigrant group (which has the easy ability to assimilate into mainstream society and probably does). But the parallel finding for Polish immigrants will require some special attention to the particularities of this group’s presence in Canadian society, since the way in which Polish immigrants are similar to British immigrants but dissimilar to, say, German immigrants is not clear.

The present exercise has been limited by the country categories supplied by Statistics Canada. Hopefully, future surveys on volunteering and/or civic engagement will include categories which, subject to small N limitations, allow

for the assessment of the status of “new” immigration countries of origin — especially middle Eastern countries and a wider collection of European (and, especially, east European) countries. Eventually, it might be found that multi-level modeling focusing on collective attributes of the immigrant group could be as fruitful or more fruitful than multi-level modeling focusing on communities. Or, alternatively, it might be possible to construct cross-classified random effect models that take into consideration both immigrant group and community characteristics, and perhaps even neighbourhood effects.

The 2003 GSS survey did not provide a basis upon which involvement in ethnic associations could be separated out from overall voluntary association activity, as would have been the case with analysis involving the ESC survey or, to a lesser extent, the National Surveys of Giving Volunteering and Participating, but it did provide community identifiers and a sufficient sample size to examine community-level effects. The ability to extend the research undertaken here into organizational typologies, especially those distinguishing ethnically homogeneous from ethnically heterogeneous forms of association might have been helpful. As for the definition of ethnic as opposed to non-ethnic organizations that might be hoped for in future research, this is never an easy exercise, as the division between organizations that are explicitly defined, in the minds of respondents and researchers alike, as “ethnic” and those which are not can cut across categories typically used in volunteering surveys, especially when respondents are asked about “recreational” associations. Still, it is interesting to note that, in the 2000 ESC survey, only 15.6 per cent of immigrant respondents indicated that they belonged to one or more “organizations connected with your nationality or ethnic or racial group.”²⁶

²⁶ This figure involves the use of an unweighted sample, as was the case in the analysis reported by Grabb, Hwang, Andersen (2007).

Yet, in the same group, fully 62.7% reported one or more voluntary association memberships (presumably, including ethnic groups). It seems reasonable, therefore, to argue that the present exercise has not mis-stated findings because of the unavoidable absence of a separation of ethnic and non-ethnic organizations in the analysis of the 2003 GSS survey data.

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