Identifying Political Subcultures in Mexico[1]

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ABSTRACT: In response to many of the deficiencies in current research, this study proposes Q methodology as an appropriate technique for the analysis of intra-national political subcultures. Q offers the important advantage of allowing respondents to define and to place themselves into subcultures. Data collected in Puebla, Mexico illustrate the argument. Four political subcultures are revealed: the allegiant participant, the distant participant, the alienated participant, and the subculture of mistrust and individualism. While respondents display many of the cultural attitudes scholars have already identified in Mexico, a clearer picture of political culture in Mexico emerges because none of the subcultures displays all of these attitudes. Instead, important traits or attitudes are often mutually exclusive, such that a single trait is generally the defining variable of only a single subculture.

Introduction

The concept of political culture—the relatively stable and enduring meaning people attribute to politics and political roles—has undergone a "renaissance" (Inglehart, 1988) in contemporary political research. This rekindled interest, however, has brought few new methodological tools to aid in its investigation (for exceptions, see Merelman, 1991 and

Putnam, 1993). Much of the recent literature (Inglehart, 1988; 1990; Kornberg & Clarke, 1992; Seligson & Muller, 1994; Lagos, 1997) has relied on survey research and thus followed in the methodological footsteps of its intellectual forefather, *The Civic Culture* (Almond & Verba, 1963). While research in this tradition has recently reemerged, the study of cultural pluralism remains a popular and important line of research in political science. This approach concentrates on "ways of life" and certain "cultural traits" that vary within and across countries. Traits such as religion, language, race, and ethnicity are analyzed to see how they interact with the political realm (*e.g.*, Laitin, 1986; Young, 1993). Despite the value it adds by focusing on important within-country cultural differences, this line of research has rarely conducted empirical analyses of the deeper and more stable political attitudes investigated by the civic culture research program. The following is an effort to reconcile these two lines of research and correct the deficiencies in both, suggesting Q methodology as a means to examine both intra- and international differences in political culture. Data collected in Puebla, Mexico support and illustrate these methodological points.

Methodology in Political Culture Research

In a recent review of the literature inspired by *The Civic Culture*, David Laitin (1995) criticizes the enterprise by pointing out its "clear signs of degeneracy" (p. 168), including its tendency to derive descriptions of national political cultures from single-figure indicators gathered through survey research. For example, Almond and Verba (1963), whose study draws from surveys conducted in 1959 in Great Britain, Italy, Mexico, the United States, and West Germany, label the U.S. as a "participant" political culture because "respondents in the United States, compared with those in the other four nations, are very frequently exposed to politics" (p. 440). In support of their conclusion that "the role of the participant is highly developed and widespread" (p. 440), Almond and Verba report that 83 percent of Americans feel obligated to participate in some outgoing activity. While the U.S. has the highest percentage of obligated participants among the five nations in the study, Almond and Verba's conclusion overlooks the large number of persons (17 percent) for whom participation is not important. The oversight of a vital subculture of nonparticipation and the tendency to label the U.S. as participatory based on its relative position among the five nations exemplify two problems that future research

needs to address.

Another problem with Almond and Verba's approach is that by describing national political cultures according to aggregated survey results, the wholeness of the individual is lost. The aggregation of survey responses to one question into a single percentage allows for neither a complete analysis of how an individual answered all the questions in a unique way nor how he or she responded to one item relative to the other. Survey research tends to produce unidimensional results for multidimensional individuals. Even Almond and Verba turn a critical eye toward their dimension by dimension presentation of results, saying that it "tends to obscure the wholeness of individual countries and realities of the individuals who constitute them" (p. 402).

In an attempt to clarify and revitalize the concept of political culture, Ruth Lane (1992) argues that researchers should refer to the "political cultures or political subcultures of specific groups, rather than the nation, and the components of these subcultures [should] be defined from *the viewpoint of persons within that society*" (p. 365; emphasis added). By advocating a comparison of intra-national cultural differences instead of national ones, Lane joins a host of political scientists who have criticized Almond and Verba for their characterization of national political cultures as being relatively homogenous (Scott, 1965; Elkins & Simeon, 1979; Pateman, 1980; Craig & Cornelius, 1980; Gaenslen, 1986; Thompson, Ellis & Wildavsky, 1990). In fact, Lane claims that the inappropriateness of describing single, national political cultures is now an area of agreement within political science. Carole Pateman (1980, p. 75) provides the most eloquent version of the argument, claiming that Almond and Verba's descriptions of the five nations assume that the attitudinal traits of each country's political culture are randomly distributed among all citizens of each nation. She also adds, "[t]hroughout *The Civic Culture* it is assumed that there are no problems in talking about *the* political culture or *the* civic culture of Britain and the United States" (p. 76; emphasis in the original). In light of Almond and Verba's definition of political culture, their tendency to commit this over-generalization is not surprising: "The political culture of a nation is the particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of the nation" (p. 15).

Although she provides a useful reconceptualization of political culture, Lane does not mention any methodology that would allow respondents to define and indicate, from their own viewpoint, subcultural orientations. In fact, in political culture studies researchers have rarely adopted such a methodology. While some scholars have labeled

different subnational cultures, these studies have been deductive in nature, classifying different regions or groups according to a predefined typology (Thompson, Ellis & Wildavsky, 1990; Ellis, 1993). This method does not allow people to express their unique and sometimes unexpected views of the world. In the survey research approach, attempts to analyze subcultures have usually consisted of dividing samples along demographic lines (Almond & Verba, 1963; Kahl, 1968; Fagen & Touhy, 1972; Cornelius, 1975; Booth & Seligson, 1984; Camp, 1993; Domínguez & McCann, 1996). While this may identify variables that correlate with differences in political attitudes, it still does not allow the respondents themselves to define the nature and boundaries of a nation's subcultures.

Q methodology, however, offers a solution to the problem of empirically identifying political subcultures. In Q, individuals control the stimuli, responding to the set of statements in their own, unique way. Furthermore, respondents, not the researcher, define and place themselves into subcultures.

Design of the Study

Despite these limitations in Almond and Verba's research, they do provide a convenient starting place for an analysis of political culture. According to their definition (1963, p. 17), political culture consists of orientations toward four political objects: the political system as a whole, inputs to the system, system outputs, and self as participant. The various patterns of orientations, indicated in Table 1, determine the political culture type. In the table, "0" signifies no orientation toward the object while "1" indicates that an orientation toward the object exists. Orientation does not necessarily imply acceptance or affirmation—only that a cognitive, affective or evaluative interpretation of the object exists.

Table 1
Almond and Verba's Political Culture Types

	System as general Object	Input Objects	Output Objects	Self as active participant
Parochial	0	0	0	0
Subject	1	0	1	0
Participant	1	1	1	1

Using Table 1 and the definitions above, the types of political culture emerge. The parochial political culture consists of citizens whose frequency of orientation toward political objects is almost nonexistent. They are neither active nor do they have knowledge or opinions of the political system. In the subject political culture, citizens are oriented toward the government in general and its outputs, but not toward its inputs or the self as a participant. Therefore, "subjects" defer to their political leaders instead of being active in the governing process. The participant political culture is one of citizen orientation toward all aspects of the political system. Using this framework and its definitions, Almond and Verba define the civic culture, the political culture type they deem the most conducive to democratic stability, as a mixture of these three culture types. In the civic culture, the propensity to act within the system (participant) is tempered by tendencies to defer decision and policy-making power to politicians (subject) and by familial and social ties (parochial). Additionally, members of the civic culture are allegiant to their government.

This classification scheme provides a convenient guide for selecting a set of statements that is representative of diverse political cultures. The model can be broken down to its essentials and represented in the balanced factorial design presented in Table 2. Three statements were selected to represent each of the 3 x 4 = 12 combinations of the two main effects for a Q sample of 36 statements.

Table 2
Factorial Design of Almond and Verba's Political Culture Types

MAIN EFFECTS	LEVELS	No.
A. Types of Political Culture	(a)Parochial (b)Subject (c)Participant	3
B. Objects of Political Orientation	(d)System as General Object (e)Input Objects (f)Output Objects (g)Self as Active Participant	4

The statements selected for the Q sample came from the following sources: (1) responses to open-ended questions reported in *The Civic Culture*, (2) statements in Daniel Elazar's *American Federalism: A View from the States* (1966), (3) a Q sample in William Stephenson's *The*

Play Theory of Mass Communication (1967), and (4) interviews with numerous Mexicans about these matters. The entire Q sample along with the classification of each statement is included in the Appendix. The statements were translated into Spanish and this version is available from the author on request.

The Q sort was administered to 29 people in Puebla, Mexico during May of 1993. They were asked to rank the statements on a scale from +4 (most like or most characteristic of their beliefs) to -4 (most unlike or uncharacteristic of their beliefs) following the format in Figure 1. In choosing respondents, an effort was made to select persons from a broad range of socioeconomic and demographic categories including various levels of economic status, educational status, political activism, political power, and gender.

Figure 1

	Most Uncharacteristic				Neutral	Most Characteristic			
Score	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4
Frequency	3	3	4	5	6	5	4	3	3

Mexican Political Culture

Before turning to the results, it will be helpful to provide a context for the findings and the methodological arguments here by briefly reviewing the literature on Mexican political culture. The most important debate concerns the extent of authoritarian attitudes (similar to the subject culture) among the masses. In Mexico the two most important aspects of authoritarian political culture are low self-efficacy and intolerance. The earliest studies, which are largely psychoanalytical and qualitative, point out the predominance of authoritarian tendencies in the Mexican way of life (Paz, 1961; Ramos, 1962; Fromm & Maccoby, 1970; Needler, 1971). These works describe Mexicans as feeling inferior, weak and therefore unwilling to attempt to change their situations. The authoritarian nature of Mexican citizens, these authors claim, is manifested in social relationships in which inferiors are submissive and uncritical of those in authority. Parents demand strict obedience from their children, the poor are fatalistic about their plight, and women feel helpless in the face of male *machismo*, the tendency for men to be sexually aggressive and insensitive toward women (Paz, 1961).

Almond and Verba ushered in the second wave of political culture research on Mexico, an approach that relies heavily on survey research and concentrates more exclusively on political attitudes. Authors such as Almond and Verba, Robert Scott (1965) and Rafael Segovia (1975) claim that the majority of Mexicans are members of the aforementioned "subject" political culture. Like the qualitative studies that preceded them, the second wave characterizes most Mexicans as uninvolved, alienated, and fatalistic toward politics. Furthermore, Segovia (1975) and Wayne Cornelius (1975) identify attitudes of intolerance toward the political opposition and Communists.

The first empirical data indicating widespread democratic beliefs among a large number of Mexicans is in Richard Fagen and William Touhy's study of the state of Jalapa. Over 90 percent of Jalapeños support abstract democratic tenets such as "democracy is the best form of government" and "every citizen should have an equal chance to influence government policy" (1972, p. 122-123). However, much like citizens in the United States (Prothro & Grigg, 1960; McClosky, 1964), Jalapeños are more intolerant and authoritarian when asked to extend democratic principles to specific situations or to groups they do not like. For example, Fagen and Touhy report that most Jalapeños oppose the free speech rights of Communists and other critics of the government.

More recently, however, John Booth and Mitchell Seligson (1984; 1994) argue that Mexicans are not political authoritarians. They report that survey respondents (a sample of urban Mexicans) are generally favorable toward the political rights of the government's critics. In fact, support for civil liberties in Mexico nearly matches the level of support among New York residents, invoking Booth and Seligson to label Mexico's political culture as "comparatively prodemocratic" (1984, p. 112). Findings from even more recent surveys corroborate these conclusions (Domínguez & McCann, 1996). In sum, evidence points toward a slow "democratization" of Mexican political culture: as the political system liberalizes, positive attitudes toward democracy and civil liberties have become more prevalent.

While the nature and extent of authoritarianism in Mexican political culture has spawned much debate, scholars generally agree that Mexicans exhibit a limited degree of interpersonal trust. Both the qualitative and survey research on Mexico's political culture have consistently pointed out high levels of social mistrust (Paz, 1961; Ramos, 1962; Almond & Verba, 1963; Scott, 1965; Fromm & Maccoby, 1970; Needler, 1971; Cornelius, 1975; Craig & Cornelius, 1980; Kahl, 1982; Camp, 1993; Lagos, 1997). For example, 94

percent of Almond and Verba's Mexican respondents agreed with the following statement: "If you don't watch yourself, people will take advantage of you" (p. 267). More recently, a 1996 sample reveals that only 21 percent of Mexicans believe that most people can be trusted (Lagos, 1997). This social cynicism lessens Mexicans' desire to join civic associations and engage in political activism. Not only does this limit their ability to influence the government, it may also diminish the effectiveness of Mexico's democratic institutions (Putnam, 1993).

A final trait that researchers have noted in Mexicans is ambivalence toward politics. Almond and Verba argue that Mexicans display imbalances and inconsistencies in their political attitudes. They note that Mexicans express pride in their overall governmental system but simultaneously feel alienated or unaffected by many of its activities. From this data, the authors conclude that the norms perpetuated by the legacy of the Mexican Revolution instill a positive attitude toward Mexico's government in the abstract. However, real world experience with a corrupt and ineffective government alienates most Mexicans. Likewise, Joseph Kahl claims that the typical Mexican "believes in a government whose representatives he distrusts" (1968, p. 116). Finally, the data from Fagen and Touhy's (1972) study indicates that Jalapeños agree that the government does everything possible to solve problems, but the belief that politicians are corrupt is widespread.

Mexican Political Subcultures

Four factors resulted from the centroid factor analysis and judgmental rotation of the 29 Q sorts, indicating the existence of four distinct subcultures among the Puebla respondents. The factor loadings of each subject are displayed in Table 3. Loadings > +/- .32 are significant, $p < .05$ and are indicated in bold.

Table 3
Factor Matrix for Mexican Political Subcultures

No	Gender	Age	Education	Elite?	1	2	3	4
1	M	41	Coll. Grad.	Y(Official)	**81**	14	-04	22
2	M	23	Coll. Grad.	Y(Official)	**76**	07	17	14
3	M	31	Coll. Grad.	Y(Prof.)	**74**	04	15	28
4	F	26	Coll. Grad.	Y(Official)	**72**	15	13	-06
5	M	45	Ph.D.	Y(Prof.)	**68**	-18	11	11
6	F	23	Coll. Grad.	N	**68**	-14	05	-05

Table 3 (*continued*)

7	M	23	Coll. Grad.	Y(Official)	63	21	06	05
8	M	44	Master's	Y(Official)	61	30	31	15
9	M	32	Some Coll.	N	40	-13	11	30
10	F	26	Some H.S.	N	03	68	-26	18
11	M	20	Some H.S.	N	13	42	07	-03
12	M	44	Coll. Grad.	Y(Activist)	17	37	02	-20
13	M	55	M. Div.	N	-06	-20	69	01
14	F	22	Some Coll.	N	25	04	63	08
15	M	22	Some H.S.	N	17	03	54	00
16	F	24	Some Coll.	N	22	-18	04	58
17	M	19	Some H.S.	N	-04	-22	18	51
18	F	20	Some Coll.	N	-01	16	-02	51
19	M	29	Coll. Grad.	N	49	69	08	-17
20	M	24	Coll. Grad.	Y(Official)	49	15	36	08
21	F	38	Some H.S.	N	57	02	41	-24
22	M	41	Jr. High	N	55	28	03	33
23	F	20	Some Coll.	N	33	-05	-05	64
24	F	28	Some Coll.	N	41	37	40	-04
25	M	28	Coll. Grad.	Y(Official)	52	-01	41	32
26	M	25	Coll. Grad.	N	24	02	-09	16
27	M	16	Some H.S.	N	01	05	22	17
28	F		Jr. High	N	-01	-14	07	-16
29	F	23	Some H.S.	N	-16	03	-06	05

Factor One: The Elite, Allegiant Participant Subculture

Sixteen persons have significant loadings on factor one; eight of these were loaded only on this factor and eight others had significant loadings on other factors as well. This factor is labeled an elite subculture because, with the exception of one person, all those considered elites in this study have significant loadings on this factor. Furthermore, every government official interviewed for this study loads on this factor. It is clearly the predominant factor that emerges in this study.

As defined by Almond and Verba, the members of the participant culture type are oriented toward the input, output and activist role of the self in the system. This factor displays these participatory norms. The members of this subculture show a strong, positive orientation toward statements that express the concept of universal participation. They also report the importance of their own involvement in the input processes of voting and political discussion.

6. Each individual should be interested in their government in an active way and should criticize it justly and severely when it is necessary (+4).

7. Politics is a matter of concern for every citizen, not just those who are professionally committed to political careers (+4).

8. Politics is dirty but necessary, better left to those willing to soil themselves by engaging in it (-4).

33. I get a feeling of satisfaction from voting. I enjoy following campaigns, and I make my voting decisions carefully (+3).

17. I never discuss politics with anyone. I neither have the knowledge nor the time (-4).

Additionally, persons on this factor support a strong and positive role for government, even if this means intervening into the private lives of individuals.

22. It is the duty of politicians to seek to initiate new governmental activities in an effort to confront problems as yet undetected by a majority of the people (+3).

30. The private concerns of the individual are the most important and government should not interfere in these areas (-2).

As indicated by the statements, these elites show confidence in politicians' (or, in the cases of several of them, their own) abilities as governors and policy initiators. These ideas are most likely fueled not only by confidence but also by elite arrogance and desire for power. In fact, this is the only subculture that views statement 30 negatively. Underscoring these points is the fact that of the four factors, this one is the most pleased with government.

14. Government is a positive instrument that promotes the general welfare (+2).

31. Generally speaking, government activities improve the condition of my country (+2).

Finally, this subculture's placement of statements 1 and 16 merits notice. It ranks the following two statements lower than do the other three factors.

1. Social and family ties should be of first importance to any person in his or her life (+1).

16. Being active in the community is only a matter of taking care of one's family by working and making one's children into decent people (-1).

The lack of strong support for these statements (especially number 1) indicates a tendency not to emphasize family and social life as much as other aspects of life which, in their case, means a political vocation.

Furthermore, they do not display a strong tendency to defer to the laws of the country, an important aspect of the subject culture.

15. Whether I agree with them or not, I must respect and obey the laws put out by my country (+1).

The indifference toward obedience to established law, rather than reflecting a disrespect for law, probably reflects their desire to change existing policies.

The lack of parochial and subject orientations within this subculture indicates that the elites of Puebla, in spite of their allegiance and participatory nature, do not display the elements of the civic cultural mix. As Almond and Verba define it, the civic culture is comprised of active citizens whose intensity toward politics is tempered by familial ties and respect for the country's laws. Puebla's elites, however, emphasize only the participant role of the individual while remaining neutral toward familial orientations and respect for the law. In this sense, they are purely participatory and do not indicate that they might moderate their intensity for politics and their vocations.

The political culture literature on Mexico has largely overlooked the participant elite subculture. Researchers usually emphasize the numerical supremacy of the less participatory and more alienated attitudes among the masses. For this reason, arguments centering around whether Mexico is an authoritarian political culture bypass any analysis of elite orientations. Q methodology by allowing the elite respondents to define their own subculture, offers the researcher data through which this group's attitudes can be empirically examined.

Factor Two: The Distant Participant Subculture

Five persons have significant loadings on factor two. Respondents 10-12 listed in Table 3 load only on factor two while respondents 19

and 24 load on factors one and two. No pattern in the backgrounds of
the persons is evident. This subculture is labeled the distant participant
subculture because it is an amalgamation of the political culture types
in Table 1. Like the participant elite subculture represented by factor
one, members of factor two enjoy participating in their nation's
political input processes.

2. I neither follow campaigns nor do I vote. These activities are a waste
of time (-2).

3. Democracy is government by discussion—controversial matters are
discussed, and a common consensus is reached or approximated to by the
votes of the majority (+3).

17. I never discuss politics with anyone. I neither have the knowledge
nor the time (-4).

27. It is necessary to stay away from any kind of party affiliation to
enjoy a peaceful life (-2).

33. I get a feeling of satisfaction from voting. I enjoy following
campaigns, and I make my voting decisions carefully (+4).

Interestingly, however, they do not unequivocally believe that every
citizen should share such sentiments.

6. Each individual should be interested in their government in an active
way and should criticize it justly and severely when it is necessary (-2).

7. Politics is a matter of concern for every citizen, not just those who are
professionally committed to political careers (0).

These people value political participation as an end in itself (i.e., as an
enjoyable activity) and not as a manner of influencing government
decisions and outputs.

5. A person should inform himself of his rights and know the govern-
mental system. Outside of that, there isn't much the average person can
do (+3).

Further underlying this factor's low sense of self-efficacy is the
belief that government is a distant entity whose activities do not really
"touch home."

12. Government activities have no effect on me as I have nothing to do with it (+4).

31. Generally speaking, government activities improve the condition of my country (-2).

This interpretation, however, is complicated by this factor's opinion of other statements that deal with the government's role in society. In spite of the belief that government outputs do not affect them, these people acknowledge that government is necessary and believe that it has a positive impact on society.

4. Government does not affect my life very much (-2).

14. Government is a positive instrument that promotes the general welfare (+4).

23. I don't know if government is necessary or not (-4).

Although subtle, the distinction between these two sets of statements involves the level at which government is assessed. The first two statements (12 and 31) refer to government activities and outputs, which these respondents deem irrelevant to their lives. In this regard, they probably have outputs such as government policies (and the process of how they are made) in mind, considering them too esoteric and distant from their everyday lives. On the other hand, their opinions of the second set of statements (4, 14 and 23) indicate that they view government, as an abstract concept, both in a positive light and as an institution that touches their lives. These respondents, therefore, evaluate Mexico's political system on two distinct levels, giving them their apparently ambivalent nature. They consider government in general to be an indispensable institution that performs critical functions to improve daily life (possible "abstract" functions could include maintaining law and order and providing national defense). However, the specific activities of the Mexican government (*e.g.*, the policy-oriented duties performed by the Mexican president, governors, legislators and bureaucracy) are seen as distant, having little impact on their lives.

This subculture, therefore, reflects a different kind of ambivalent Mexican than what the literature has traditionally described. As already mentioned, Kahl, Almond, and Verba argue that Mexicans are positively oriented toward their government when it is referred to abstractly but alienated by most politicians and their activities. The

subculture revealed here, however, combines no orientation toward the latter with a positive assessment of the system in general. Therefore, these respondents constitute a political culture type that Almond and Verba do not consider. Referring to Table 1, the political culture type that corresponds to factor two would have a "1" in all the columns except the one labeled "output objects." I label this new political culture type, based on the orientations of the members of factor two, the "distant participant."

Factor Three: The Alienated Participant Subculture

Seven persons have significant loadings on factor three, including persons 13-15 in Table 3 who load only on factor three, respondents 20 and 21 who also load on factor one, and 24 and 25 who load on more than two factors. The only apparent demographic pattern is that two of those who load on both one and three are political elites. This subculture is yet another group of people who value participation. Unlike factor two, however, they believe strongly in universal political involvement.

6. Each individual should be interested in their government in an active way and should criticize it justly and severely when it is necessary (+3).

7. Politics is a matter of concern for every citizen, not just those who are professionally committed to political careers (+3).

Along with its participatory orientations, this group of respondents displays an interesting combination of traits. As in Almond and Verba's conception of the civic culture, they moderate their participatory attitudes with parochial and subject orientations.

15. Whether I agree with them or not, I must respect and obey the laws put out by my country (+4).

22. It is the duty of politicians to seek to initiate new government activities in an effort to confront problems as yet undetected by a majority of the people (+3).

1. Social and family ties should be of first importance to any person in his or her life (+4).

Almond and Verba, however, stress that the civic culture is allegiant to its government. Unlike the civic culture described in the United

States and Great Britain (and the political culture they regard as the most conducive to stable democracy), this subculture is not allegiant. These respondents are adamant about the corruption and unresponsiveness of their government, and in general they view it in a very negative light.

10. I don't like the government bureaucracy because it generally gets in the way (+2).

14. Government is a positive instrument that promotes the general welfare (-4).

26. The thing of which I am most proud in my country are its governmental and political institutions (-3).

28. If I were to approach a government official or a policeman with a complaint, I would be treated fairly (-2).

The orientations of this group exemplify one interesting aspect of Mexican political culture that Almond and Verba describe. They claim that "[w]hat sense of participation there is appears to be relatively independent of a sense of satisfaction with governmental output" (p. 414). As illustrated by the following statements, this subculture may believe in the importance of participation even if—because of the corruption and unresponsiveness of the government—it is completely ineffective.[2]

5. A person should inform himself of his rights and know the governmental system. Outside of that, there isn't much the average person can do (+3).

9. I vote because it is my duty. In reality, it is useless (+2).

Finally, this factor's opinion of the political competency of Mexico's citizenry falls in line with its overall attitudes of participation and

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[2] The placement of statements 3 and 8 may seem to contradict my argument that this subculture is participatory. However, I would argue that when viewed in the context of this factor's entire Q sort, the disagreement with statement 3 is an indication of a perceived unresponsiveness by the government to citizen input via discussion, and that the ranking of statement 8 reflects agreement with the "politics is dirty" part of the sentence.

alienation. They believe there is no reason to discourage popular participation because the government, not Mexico's people, is responsible for the country's problems.

> 21. The country's problems are not the government's fault. They are a result of the way the people of this country think (-3).

> 25. The people of this country are too immature and uneducated to elect the right people to govern (-4).

Much of the debate within the Mexican political culture literature overlooks this particular subculture. First, these people are not well-characterized by a label of "subject" or "authoritarian." While they do feel quite powerless to change their political system, they remain very participatory, displaying attitudes of activism despite fatalism. Second, counter to the consensus within the literature, they are extremely trusting of all Mexican people. Finally, they are not ambivalent about their government. They are intensely angered by government officials and their activities. Because of the tendency to highlight only dominant political attitudes, researchers usually overlook subcultures like these that run counter to principal trends.

Factor Four: The Subculture of Social Mistrust and Individualism

Six persons have significant loadings on factor four, including three young students (16-18 in Table 3) who load only on this factor, respondents 22 and 23 who also load on factor one, and respondent 25 who loads on factor one, three and four. This factor is characterized by its suspicion of other Mexicans. Unlike factor three, they are alienated not by the government but by their fellow citizens. They go so far as to blame the country's problems on its people.

> 21. The country's problems are not the government's fault. They are a result of the way the people of this country think (+4).

> 25. The people of this country are too immature and uneducated to elect the right people to govern (+3).

Because of their lack of confidence in the competence of other Mexicans, this subculture believes that the government, not the people, holds the responsibility for being proactive in offering solutions to the country's problems.

22. It is the duty of politicians to seek to initiate new governmental activities in an effort to confront problems as yet undetected by a majority of the people (+4).

The implications of this subculture's social cynicism for collective political action is evident by its attitude toward statement 11.

11. If I wanted to influence the government in one of its decisions, I wouldn't work alone. I would enlist the help of my friends, family and neighbors, and we would write letters, sign petitions, etc. (-3).

In light of their suspicion of others, these people find refuge and security in their primary group affiliations.

1. Social and family ties should be of first importance to any person in his or her life (+2).

16. Being active in the community is only a matter of taking care of one's family by working and making one's children into decent people (+4).

Their mistrust also extends into the political realm. In tune with their mistrust of other people, they are political individualists, remaining adverse to government intrusion into their personal lives.

13. I see the government's impact when I see the deductions in my paycheck. Then I'm in touch with the government (+2).

30. The private concerns of the individual are the most important and government should not interfere in these areas (+2).

These people do not display the participatory norms of the previous three subcultures. While they do indicate some tendency to value universal participation, it is not unequivocal as in the case of factors one and three.

6. Each individual should be interested in their government in an active way and should criticize it justly and severely when it is necessary (+3).

7. Politics is a matter of concern for every citizen, not just those who are professionally committed to political careers (+1).

Likewise, it is unclear whether they are positively oriented toward political input objects. They are neutral toward statements concerning

political discussion and parties, and they do not yet seem to have crystallized thoughts on the role of voting. While admitting that they vote and that it is not a waste of time, they do not enjoy it.

> 2. I neither follow campaigns nor do I vote. These activities are a waste of time (-3).

> 33. I get a feeling of satisfaction from voting. I enjoy following campaigns, and I make my voting decision carefully (-2).

The placement of statement 9 further complicates the matter.

> 9. I vote because it is my duty. In reality, it is useless (-4).

If they do not vote out of duty or enjoyment, one wonders why they vote at all.

Social mistrust, therefore, does exist in Mexico. However, because only one factor from this study displays it, the assertion that it is widespread throughout Mexican culture is questionable. While it is not possible to generalize to the entire population with such a small sample, one would expect more indications of social cynicism from 29 people if it is as widespread as much of the literature has claimed.

Multiple and Non-Loaders

As indicated, respondents 19 through 25 are "multiple loaders," meaning that they load on more than one factor. At least two possibilities exist for explaining the presence of multiple loaders. First, people loading on more than one factor may be in transition between subcultures. Not surprisingly given its predominance, every multiple loader has a significant loading on factor one. This indicates that these people are associated somewhat with a subculture that is both participatory and allegiant. However, those who are loaded on factor two and/or three might be in the process of reconsidering their evaluations of government output. For example, these people may be moving out of a culture that criticizes government activities into one that does not (as is quite possible in the case of the two younger public officials). On the other hand, they may be moving in the other direction from an allegiant subculture into an alienated one due to their exposure to the corruption and problems of the Mexican government. Another possibility is that they are newly-politicized people who are exiting their subculture of indifference and becoming inculcated into one of allegiance.

A second possible explanation is that these people have been socialized into more than one subculture. They are therefore not in transition but continually hold to a mixture of the nation's political subcultures. For example, those who load on factors one and four are participatory and allegiant toward their government and mistrusting of other Mexicans. Perhaps it is the most ambivalent Mexicans who load on two of the first three factors. While consistent in their participatory inclinations, these people are uncertain whether they are allegiant, indifferent or alienated. (Sorting out the beliefs of respondent 24 in terms of these subcultures is an even more challenging task).

Additionally, respondents 26 through 29 do not load on any of the four factors, indicating that they have not been socialized into any of these subcultures. It is important to note that these four people constitute the youngest group among all the respondents, suggesting that their socialization into a particular subculture may yet occur.

Conclusion

The data presented here suggest some very distinct advantages in examining political culture with Q methodology. The usual approach in political culture research has been to aggregate traits across large numbers of persons without reference to the intra-individual significance of these traits. As a result, there is a tendency to make broad and often erroneous generalizations about the culture of an entire geographic area. By ignoring the relative significance attributed to these traits by different individuals, various subcultures are overlooked. For example, although much of the research has indicated otherwise, the evidence collected for this study illustrates that social mistrust and ambivalence may not be traits that all or even a majority of Mexicans share. Instead, these traits may be mutually exclusive, such that they are the defining variables for two different subcultures. Similarly, the findings here demonstrate that there are different ways to be participatory and that there are different types of positive orientations toward government outputs. Without a method that takes seriously the manner in which individuals view things from their own subjective perspectives, these discoveries are difficult to achieve. Furthermore, because survey research commonly describes national patterns at the expense of analyzing subcultures, important cultural orientations are often overlooked. Q methodology allows for the empirical validation of subcultures regardless of their size. Subcultures which are ignored in debates over the authoritarian nature of Mexican politics can be

analyzed and well-represented in Q's findings.

Focusing attention on political subcultures is extremely important. While Latin Americanists have been interested in whether the region as a whole has a distinctive political culture (Turner, 1995; Lagos, 1997), scholars should also shift research toward a greater focus on intranational differences: "[v]ariation in political attitudes and values within countries are often greater than those between countries" (Thompson, Ellis & Wildavsky, 1990, p. 219). Despite the importance of intranational cultural differences, an adequate methodology to gauge political subcultures has not been used by any of these researchers. This research intends to fill this gap. Q methodology, because it allows respondents to place themselves into groups, is a most appropriate and accurate manner of empirically identifying political subcultures.

Appendix

Factor Scores

Statement	1	2	3	4
1. Social and family ties should be of first importance to any person in his or her life. (ag)	1	3	4	2
2. I neither follow campaigns nor do I vote. These activities are a waste of time.	-4	-1	1	-3
3. Democracy is government by discussion—controversial matters are discussed, and a common consensus is reached or approximated to by the votes of the majority. (ce)	3	3	-4	0
4. Government does not affect my life very much. (ad)	-2	-2	1	0
5. A person should inform himself of his rights and know the governmental system. Outside of that, there isn't much the average person can do. (bg)	1	3	4	0
6. Each individual should be interested in their government in an active way and should criticize it justly and severely when it is necessary. (cg)	4	-2	3	3
7. Politics is a matter of concern for every citizen, not just hose who are professionally committed to political careers. (cg)	4	0	3	1

8. Politics is dirty but necessary, better
   left to those who are willing to soil
   themselves by engaging in it. (bd) -4 -1 2 0

9. I vote because it is my duty. In reality,
   it is useless. (be) 0 -3 2 -4

10. I don't like government bureaucracy because
    it generally gets in the way. (af) 0 0 2 -2

11. If I wanted to influence the government in
    one of its decisions, I wouldn't work alone.
    I would enlist the help of my friends, family
    and neighbors, and we would write letters,
    sign petitions, etc. (cg) 2 2 0 -3

12. Government activities have no effect on me
    as I have nothing to do with it. (af) -3 4 -2 -4

13. I see the government's impact when I see
    the deductions in my paycheck. Then I'm in
    touch with the government. 0 -1 -2 2

14. Government is a positive instrument that
    promotes the general welfare. (cd) 2 4 -4 -2

15. Whether I agree with them or not, I must
    respect and obey the laws put out by
    my country. (bf) 1 1 4 1

16. Being active in the community is only a
    matter of taking care of one's family by
    working and making one's children into
    decent people. (ag) -1 2 -1 4

17. I never discuss politics with anyone. I
    neither have the knowledge nor the time. (ag) -4 -4 0 -1

18. There's nothing I can do about lawmaking in
    this country. We put our trust in our elected
    people and we must feel they know more about
    these things than we do even though we don't
    always agree. (bg) -2 0 0 -3

19. In the ideal democracy there would be no
    political parties at all—instead, the people
    would elect the persons best fit to govern,
    and each of these would vote according to
    his convictions. -1 1 0 -1

20. Government works to build a good society by
    taking positive action on issues that are
    in the public interest. (cd) 2 1 -1 1

21. The country's problems are not the
    government's fault. They are a result of
    the way the people of this country think. 1 2 -3 4

22. It is the duty of politicians to seek to

initiate new governmental activities in an effort to confront problems as yet undetected by a majority of the people. (bd)	3	-3	3	4
23. I don't know if government is necessary or not. (ad)	-3	-4	-1	-2
24. The only reason I would ever contact a politician would be if a member of the family were arrested.	-2	-3	-1	-4
25. The people of this country are too immature and uneducated to elect the right people to govern. (ag)	0	-4	-4	3
26. The things of which I am most proud of in my country are its governmental and political institutions. (cd)	0	1	-3	-1
27. It is necessary to stay away from any kind of party affiliation to enjoy a peaceful life. (ae)	-1	-2	-3	0
28. If I were to approach a government official or a policeman with a complaint, I would be treated fairly. (cf)	-1	2	-2	0
29. Policemen and unelected persons operate through bribes and money. They are very corrupt.	-1	0	-2	1
30. The private concerns of the individual are the most important and government should not interfere in these areas. (ad)	-2	1	0	2
31. Generally speaking, government activities improve the condition of my country. (cf)	2	-2	1	-1
32. Part of this country's culture is corrupt government. That's the way it is so I can't change it. (bd)	-3	-1	1	-1
33. I get a feeling of satisfaction from voting. I enjoy following campaigns, and I make my voting decisions carefully. (ce)	3	4	0	-2
34. Appointed unelected government officials offer many advantages to the community. (cf)	1	-1	-1	1
35. Political parties are necessary to provide the organization for political life. (ce)	4	0	1	2
36. Interest groups don't change anything. They only make people aware of problems in the country. (be)	0	0	2	3

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