

Nuclear Latency and the Participation Puzzle: Constructing the International Non-Proliferation Regime

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Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	7
Contents	8
Abbreviations	11
Tables and Figures	13
Diagrams	13
Figures.....	13
Graphs	13
Plots.....	14
Tables	14
Chapter 1 - Introduction: Nuclear Latency and the Participation Puzzle	15
1. A Participation Puzzle.....	18
Research Puzzle and Literature Gap	21
The Argument	24
2. Theory and Alternative Hypotheses.....	30
Alternative Hypotheses	33
3. Research Design and Empirics	43
Quantitative Methods.....	45
Qualitative Methods.....	50
Case Selection	54

Outline of the Dissertation	56
Chapter 2 - “One of Us”: Nuclear Latency and Participation in the Non-Proliferation Regime	61
1. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Institutional Complex: a panorama.....	64
Open NNP Institutions	67
Restricted NNP Institutions	73
The historical Evolution of the NNP Regime	78
2. Measuring participation in the global NNP regime	80
Coding and Participation Scores	85
3. Shades of Grey: Latent Nuclear Countries and Participation	90
Participation of latent nuclear countries in the NNP regime	98
Conclusion	107
Chapter 3 – A Role Theoretical Approach to Participation: Defining a Causal Mechanism.....	109
1. Role Theory: core concepts and discussion	117
2. The Macro-Level	120
The Situational Conditions	121
The Significant Others	135
3. The Micro-Level	137
The Corporate Self and National Role Conceptions	138
Framing and Perceptions.....	142
Conclusion	149
Chapter 4 - Into the Macro-Level: A set-theoretical analysis of participation in the non-proliferation regime	151
1. The elements of Analysis	153
The universe of cases and Outcome.....	154
Indicators and Calibration Choices	157

2. Empirical Analysis: Analysis of Necessity and Parameters of Fit	166
3. Empirical Analysis: Analysis of Sufficiency and Intermediate Solution	171
Analysis of Sufficiency for the Outcome Higher Participation	171
Analysis of Sufficiency for the Non-Outcome Lower Participation	186
Case selection and case-specific considerations	189
Conclusion	190
Chapter 5 - The Civilian Power: German Nuclear Non-Proliferation Policy and Participation Strategy (1990-2020).....	192
1. The Agents of Macro- and the Micro-level: Significant Others and Corporate Self .	197
The Corporate Self	199
The Significant Others	204
2. The Civilian Power: Concept and Dimensions	201
3. The German Institutional Participation Strategy	216
Participation in the CTBT (1985-2000).....	217
Participation in the JCPOA (2003-2019).....	224
Non-Participation in the TPNW (2016-2019).....	234
Conclusion	242
Chapter 6 - The Global Development Power: The Brazilian Non-Proliferation Policy and Participation Strategy (1990-2020)	247
1. The Agents of Macro- to the Micro-level: Significant Others and Corporate Self ...	252
The Corporate Self	254
The Significant Others	258
2. Global Development Power: Concepts and Dimensions	265
Universalism/Pragmatism, Disarmament, and Integration	268
3. The Brazilian Institutional Participation Strategy.....	271
ABACC and Non-Participation in the Addition Protocol (1991-2018).....	271
Participation in the New Agenda Coalition (1995-2018)	282

Participation in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons - TPNW (2015-2020)	289
.....	
Conclusion	299
Chapter 7: Conclusion: Limitations, Contributions, and Policy-Implications.	303
1. Key Findings	304
What is participation in the international NNP regime?	305
Why do latent nuclear countries participate in the NNP Regime?	307
How do latent nuclear countries participate in the NNP regime?	312
2. Contributions and Limitations	318
Methodology and Area Studies.....	318
Theory	320
3. Policy Implications	322
References	328
1. Primary Sources	328
2. Secondary Sources	357
3. Software – R Scripts	402
Appendices	404
Short Curriculum Vitae	462

Abstract

This dissertation employs mixed methods to investigate why latent nuclear states participate in international nuclear non-proliferation (NNP) institutions. Latency is a characteristic of nuclear-capable countries that forwent atomic weapons for political, rather than technological, reasons. My central argument is that policy-makers promote participation in international NNP institutions because of framing processes of macro-level situational conditions under a national role conception. This argument hinges on perceptual elements, which are activated at the micro-level (policy-makers) through a national role conception narrative (frames). Participation is understood as both a multi-causal and a socially constructed outcome.

This study is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 is an introductory overview of the whole dissertation, including the research puzzle, methodology, and alternative theoretical explanations. Chapter 2 employs set theory and basic statistics (the average rank method) to measure country-level participation in 35 NNP institutions. Latent nuclear countries showed statistically significant higher average participation scores in the NNP regime than nuclear-weapon and nuclear-free countries. Chapter 3 defines a macro-micro causal mechanism for participation in NNP institutions, based on role theory. Through this mechanism, policy-makers, as agents of the *self*, promote participation in the NNP regime by framing structural situational conditions under a national role conception, intervened by conjunctural influences from significant others. Chapter 4 focuses on the macro-level. It runs a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to define four equifinal combinations of conditions associated with higher participation, covering post-Cold War cases of participation. Chapter 5 conducts a process-tracing of those pathways by analysing the German participation in the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Joint-Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), framed under the role of “civilian power”. Chapter 6 addresses the remaining pathway by tracing the Brazilian participation in the Model Additional Protocol (AP), the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), and the TPNW, framed under the “global development power” national role conception. Chapter 7 highlights the main contributions, theoretical and empirical limitations, and policy implications of this dissertation.

Keywords: Role Theory; Nuclear Non-Proliferation; Participation; Nuclear Latency; International Regimes; Framing; Germany; Brazil; CTBT; JCPOA; TPNW; Additional Protocol; QCA