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Assessing two Theoretical Frameworks of Civic Engagement

The purpose of this study was to empirically test two major theoretical models: a modified version of the social capital model (Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley, 2003), and the Informed Social Engagement Model (Barr and Selman, 2014; Selman and Kwok, 2010), to explain civic participation and civic knowledge of adolescents from Chile, Colombia and Mexico, using data from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2009 (Schulz, et al., 2010). The models were used to identify factors associated with different levels of knowledge and civic participation: expected participation in legal and illegal protests, and electoral participation.

Data were analyzed using regression analysis. Results show that the Informed Social Engagement approach (ISEM), explains better the observed differences in civic knowledge and civic participation, than the Social Capital Model (SCM). That is, the expected values associated with the variables included in the ISEM are closer to the observed values, than those predicted by the SCM. This is true for the three outcomes (expected participation in legal protests, illegal protests, and electoral participation) and in the three countries analyzed (Chile, Colombia and Mexico).

Le but de cette étude était de tester empiriquement deux grands modèles théoriques: une version modifiée du modèle de capital social (Pattie, Seyd et Whiteley, 2003), et le modèle de l'engagement social renseignée (Barr et Selman, 2014; Selman et Kwok 2010), pour expliquer la participation et les connaissances civiques des adolescents en provenance du Chili, la Colombie et le Mexique, en utilisant les données de l'étude internationale sur l'éducation civique et la citoyenneté 2009 (Schulz, et al., 2010). Les modèles ont été utilisés pour identifier les facteurs associés à différents niveaux de connaissance, ainsi que des différents formes de participation civique: participation attendu à des manifestations légales et illégales, et participation électorale future.

Les données ont été analysées en utilisant une analyse de régression. Les résultats montrent que le modèle de l'engagement social renseignée (MESR), explique mieux les différences observées dans les connaissances et la participation civiques, que le modèle de capital social (MCS). Autrement dit, les valeurs attendues associées aux variables incluses dans l' MESR sont plus proches des valeurs observées, que celles prédites par le MCS. Cela est également vrai pour les trois résultats (de participation attendue à des manifestations légales, manifestations illégales, et la participation électorale future), et dans les trois pays analysés (Chili, la Colombie et le Mexique).

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Keywords:

Civic education, students' participation, models of civic engagement, social capital, social engagement

1 Introduction

According to data available in different democratic countries, young people do not seem to be interested in public and political life, and this is a matter of concern since young people's civic behavior, knowledge, attitudes and perceptions have been found to be a strong predictor of citizens' engagement in adulthood (Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Amadeo, 1999, Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001, Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

The importance of getting involved in society has been addressed by Oser & Veugelers (2008). The authors consider involvement as a central process in becoming a human person: doing something for others allows an individual to be connected to mankind and society, and for youngsters, involvement in society facilitates the development of a feeling of agency. According to Oser & Veugelers (2008), in modern, multicultural societies, getting involved is even more important than in the traditional monoculture societies, because societies' transcendence is linked to people's connectedness.

The skills and dispositions required for democratic participation (Perlinger, Canetti-Nisim, Pedahzur, 2006), enable people to think for themselves and critically, to communicate properly, to access and use available knowledge on various topics, to work with others, to

understand the importance and mechanisms from such participation, and to understand and appreciate the differences that distinguish closed, totalitarian societies from open and democratic societies (Reimers and Reimers, 2005). These skills are learned and perfected in different social institutions: family, work, religious institutions and educational institutions (Reimers and Reimers, 2005).

It has been recognized that civic activism can be developed through different routes (Davies et al., 2013). However, fostering "a feeling of efficacy and ability to benefit from networks and individuals" (ibid, p. 6) has been pointed out as an important element to make "engagement a pleasant, and achievable reality" (ibid, p. 6).

Recent research on civic knowledge and civic engagement in schools has shown that civic participation is encouraged through class participation supported by constructivist practices. For example, Pritzker (2008) found that encouraging discussions about volunteering, increases the likelihood that students continue to participate in this type of community service. The author emphasizes that discussions allow students to become more aware of the need and value of their work, so this service can be viewed less as a charity and more like a moral or civic value. The authors point out that community service, considered as a civic duty is the only attitude that correlates significantly with the level of volunteer activity, as it allows the students to integrate it within a broader moral framework and to reflect on their future responsibilities in society.

Although civic knowledge does not necessarily lead to civic engagement, the two are interrelated (Galston, 2001). If students are well informed about the values and processes involved in democratic governments, it is more probable that they will participate in one way or another in political life (e.g. joining a political party, voting, organize civic initiatives in their communities).

The opposite also seems to be true; *ie* civic knowledge is the result of participation in civic life. In a study by Patrick (2002), the results showed that involving students in public policy analysis and decision making, is an effective way to develop their knowledge base and their willingness to participate in civic life.

In recent years, there has been a revival of interest in civic education in many Latinamerican countries; and in this sense, Colombia, Chile and Mexico's educational systems have made important efforts to promote initiatives related to the improvement of the quality of civic and citizenship education, particularly through different curriculum reforms that reveal different approaches to civic and citizenship education. In the following paragraphs we describe these differences.

In Colombia, the educational programme for Civic and Citizenship Education is focused on three competencies: *Coexistence and Peace, Participation and Democratic Accountability, and Plurality, Identity and Appreciation of Differences*. These are complemented by the cognitive, emotional, and communicative, competencies, which together form an integrated competence. Civic education

is taught from first grade to eleventh. Primary school includes children 6 to 10 years old (first to fifth grade); secondary school comprises children 11 to 14 years old, spanning from sixth to ninth grade, and high school (baccalaureate) includes children 15 to 16 years old (tenth and eleventh grades). One important feature of the Colombian Educational System is that teachers and principals, can decide together if Civic and Citizenship Education can be taught as a separate, or as a transversal subject, or rather adopt a mixed approach to teaching these contents.

In Mexico the subject Civic and Ethical Education is taught during the primary and secondary school years (9 years in total), and it comprises *three dimensions*. The first one is taught during the subject's scheduled time (from two to three hours a week); it covers the contents, and experiences lived that enable *ethical analysis about themselves, the values and responsibilities involved in their decisions; and finally the study of democracy*. The second comprises *the contribution of all subjects to the development of a civic and ethical reflection*, by establishing cross-links between subjects. The third refers to the school environment that gives meaning and enrich democratic behavior (coexistence, organization, rules, etc.), which can occur during everyday school experiences. The main purpose of the Mexican programme is to promote the ethical, personal, and citizenship development of students, through the following skills that will gradually move from the personal realms to those of participation and social interaction: 1) Knowledge and Self-care, 2) Self-Regulation and Responsible use of Freedom, 3) Respect and appreciation of diversity, 4) Sense of belonging to the community, the nation and humanity, 5) Management and Conflict Resolution, 6) Social and Political Participation, 7) Attachment to legality and sense of justice, and 8) Understanding and appreciation for democracy.

In Chile the central axis of Citizenship Education is aimed at students' development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are fundamental to participate actively and responsibly in a democratic society (Ministerio de Educación de Chile, 2012). These are approached through the subjects of History, Geography and Social Sciences, whose general purpose is to generate in students, a comprehensive view of social reality, both in historical and geographical terms, but also from the social sciences perspectives, in secondary and high school educational levels. Learning is divided into three main domains: 1) Society in Historical Perspective, 2) Geographic Area, and 3) Democracy and Development. The first two describe the progression of learning associated primarily with the disciplines of history and geography. The third one, Democracy and Development, comprises learning related to political coexistence and skills that favor a civic sense and active citizenship.

The three countries participated in the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (Schulz, et al., 2010). This study focuses on the ways in which 38 countries prepare young people to assume their roles as citizens of a modern society (Schulz,



Fraillon, Ainley, Kerr & Losito, 2010). It evaluates civic as well as citizen education; the first one conceived as the knowledge and understanding of formal institutions and processes of civic life, and the second, as the knowledge and understanding of opportunities for participation and engagement in both, civic acts and civil society. The study also included regional modules, which focused on particular aspects of the civic and citizenship education of three geographical areas: Europe, Asia and Latin America. For example, in these modules, students answered questions regarding their attitudes towards authoritarianism in government, their feelings of empathy towards classmates, the frequency of discussions about civic issues at school, among other issues. In Latin America, more than 140 thousand eight graders from Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, México, Paraguay and Dominican Republic participated in the general study, as well as in the regional module.

Results in the knowledge test for the 38 countries involved in the general study revealed that Finland and Denmark were the countries with highest scores (576 both), and the three Latinamerican countries selected for this study: Chile, Colombia and México obtained 483, 462 and 452 points respectively. These results show an important gap in achievement for these countries in the realm of civic and citizenship education.

Reimers & Reimers (2005) argue that education for democratic citizenship education in Latin America is a new research topic, and is often based on little empirical evidence. It is our contention that at present, there is still a need to reflect more on the variables involved in determining civic and citizenship participation, especially if we consider the low rates of involvement in civic life of adult citizens in many countries, and particularly of young people. Also there is a need to develop models for researching and assessing civic engagement in order to analyze the complexity of youth civic involvement.

Although advances have been made in terms of developing more accurate measurement instruments and sophisticated approaches to the analysis of data, and despite the important role Large Scale Assessments (LSA) have had in advancing our understanding about factors associated to student outcomes, and the influence this kind of studies have had on informing public policy around the world, significant criticisms regarding their theoretical, methodological, and policy commitments have fuelled a prolific debate about its boundaries and potentials. Caro, Sandoval-Hernández and Lüdtke, (2014), argue that both proponents and detractors of the use of international surveys concur that there is a lack of theory in most of the analysis conducted with LSA data. The authors mention that most of the analyses conducted at present, have as its purpose the 'fishing for correlations', without fully understanding why or how it is expected the theoretical constructs involved are to be related.

In this context, the present study explored the possibilities of the Social Capital (Pattie, Seyd & Whiteley (2003), and the Informed Social Engagement Model (Barr et al, 2015, Barr & Selman, 2014, Selman & Kwok, 2010),

to explain the differences in expected civic knowledge and participation of Chilean, Colombian and Mexican secondary school students (14-15 years old), according to the results obtained in the ICCS, 2009.

2 Description of the Theoretical Models

2.1 The Social Capital Model

The theory of social capital has been shaped by various approaches. Bourdieu and Coleman are considered the founding theorists, since they introduced the term *capital* systematically for the first time simultaneously. In his definition of capital, Bourdieu (1983) refers to the economic expression of capital (see Marx, et al, 1967). The capital is considered as the existing backlog in material form. The accumulation work itself is time consuming but it is worth the effort, because the capital produced by this work is beneficial and even grows while reproducing.

Consequently, social capital is a type of capital that is derived and can be said to be inherent in the maintenance of social relations and provides useful support when needed. Stable relationships generate honor and reputation among its members, and become thus effective vehicles to build and maintain trust between them (Bourdieu, 1984). Being a member of a group provides security and status; the relationships between group members are based in material and or symbolic exchanges. These exchanges reinforce existing relationships and can be used to provide social warranty or to be or institutionalized.

Coleman (1985) introduced the concept of social capital in the context of the theory of rational choice. He argued that social interdependence arises between people, because they are interested in events and resources controlled by others with the intention of maximizing their utility, rationally choosing the best solution for them. The establishment of permanent social relationships, such as relations of authority or trust, results in acts of exchange and transfer of control (Coleman, 1985). For Coleman, social capital remains optimally in relationships based on mutual trust or authority. Both create family networks and appropriable social organizations. The relations are characterized by the potential of information and current standards. Both concepts define social capital as a property of social relations, as resources in a social network that exists not only between close relationships, but also among the most distant or weak.

Putnam developed his concept of social capital after Coleman's (1985) idea that social networks are invaluable for individuals. Putnam defined *social capital as social networks that enable collaboration among individuals more effectively; social capital is a resource for both individuals and societies*. Trust and norms of reciprocity, two basic aspects of social capital, arise from networks Putnam argues that the existence of social capital allows the actors to act more effectively to achieve collective goals (Putnam, 1995). Under this idea, social capital is important for political stability, effectiveness and economic development. Putnam



analyzes the impact of social capital at the macro level of countries and regions (Krätke 2001), and deals with the impact of social capital in politics and in society as a whole.

According to Putnam, social capital persists if confidence prevails in relationships. The trust itself is generated in networks of civic engagement and through norms of reciprocity. Trust is very important in civic life (Putnam & Goss, 2001; Putnam, 2000). The higher the level of trust in a community, the greater the likelihood of cooperation; cooperation itself builds trust. Social trust in a complex modern environment can grow from two closely related sources: norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement (Putnam 1993). The uses and contradictions of the model of Social Capital, have recently been revised by O’Kane (2015), concluding that the foundational concepts of this theoretical model (trust and connectedness), are highly relevant to understand the way in which society behaves when forced to cope with health catastrophes, particularly with epidemic diseases.

2.1.1 Civic Activism as a Model of Social Capital

Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley (2003) developed a model of civic engagement or political activism, based on Putnam’s social capital thesis. In this model, they posited that Civic Activism is positively correlated to: trust in other people and institutions (T), Membership in groups (M), Networks of civic engagement (N), Years people have lived in the current address (Y), and whether people have family living nearby (F). In the model it is also asserted that Civic activism is negatively influenced by the hours people spend watching TV (TV).

The model was represented as: $A = T + M + N - TV + Y + F$. They used information collected from the Citizen Audit survey that took place during 2000-2001 in the United Kingdom to test it.ⁱ Civic Activism (A) was measured through asking people whether in the previous 12 months they had “undertaken any of a series of different forms of action aimed at influencing rules, laws or policies” (Pattie et al., 2003, p. 446). Civic activism was unfolded in three dimensions: individualistic activism; contact activism; and collective activism. *Individualistic activism* comprised actions such as: donating money to an organisation; boycotting a product; buying a product for ethical reasons; among others. *Contact activism* included actions that entail getting in touch with a public official, a politician, the media, an organisation, and a solicitor. *Collective activism*, embraced the following actions: participated in a public demonstration; attended a political meeting; participated in an illegal protest; formed a group of like-minded people.

Trust was a two-fold construct: 1) trust in others, meaning trust in people they are in contact with; and, 2) trust in institutions (political and non political institutions). *Trust in others* required respondents to focus on people with whom they have contact with, and indicate if they the level in which they could be trusted, helpful, and fair. It is important to highlight that they formulated these questions regarding people with whom the

respondents have contact with, since they assume that “trust is only meaningful where some form of reciprocal action is expected” (Pattie et al., 2003, p. 455). *Trust in institutions* was measured through asking the respondents to indicate their level of trust in political institutions (government, House of Commons, politicians, and local government), and state non-political institutions (police, courts and civil service).

Membership in groups (M) and Networks of civic engagement (N) are variables related to social activity. *Membership in groups* was measured through asking respondents whether in the last 12 months they had participated in formal groups such as a Youth Organisation or an Environmental Organisation. *Networks of civic engagement or informal networks* was measured through asking respondents to indicate if they belonged to an informal network of friends or acquaintances with whom they have contact on a regular basis, such as Pub Quiz Team, Book Reading Group, Parent and Toddler group, Child Care group.

The variables regarding the length of time people have lived in current address (Y) and whether they have family leaving nearby (F), were added to Putnam’s model, since the authors argue that “...those who are settled in an area should also have more opportunity to build social capital than those who are recent arrivals” (Pattie et al., 2003, p. 445). These variables measure social embeddedness in the local community.

The length of television watching time is claimed to influence negatively political activism, since social capital requires building community life, and watching television is generally an activity carried out individually, therefore, it seems to threaten social capital. The authors included two questions, one focused on the hours of television watched on average weekday, and the other on weekends.

In testing the model, Pattie et al. (2003) found that: a) participation in voluntary organisations and informal networks were highly significantly correlated to civic activism; b) trust was not present in the model, only trust in others was significant, but negatively signed with respect to two types of civic activism –contact and collective (“the more people trust in others, the less likely they are to contact officials or to participate in collective action” (Pattie et al., 2003, p. 457)ⁱⁱ; c) watching television was only significant and negatively correlated with respect to individualistic activism, but it was not associated with contact or collective activism; d) embeddedness was not related to civic activism, only the length of time living in the current address influenced positively people’s participation in individualistic civic action and with respect to family members leaving nearby, only was associated to contact activism.

1.2 The Informed Social Engagement Model (ISEM)

The ISEM (Selman, 2003, Barr & Selman, 2014), considers that students who are taught to think critically and reflectively about history, civic issues and ethics, will be better equipped to deal with analogous incidents, both in school and in society. The authors of this model contend

that informed social reflection is derived from the intersection of civic orientation, ethical awareness and historical understanding. Selman & Kwok (2010), postulate that students' civic, historical and ethical interpretations of the social world interweave and enrich each other, and thus, influence or hinders motivation for civic engagement. The informed social reflection framework considered as the epistemological foundation of the ISEM (Selman and Kwok, 2010), postulates that students' civic, historical and ethical interpretations of the social world interweave and enrich each other, and thus, influence or hinders motivation for civic engagement.ⁱⁱⁱ

The informed social reflection framework helps to clarify three important situations in psychological science: 1) the opposition between cognition and affects as determinants of moral actions, 2) the dilemma of teaching civic engagement in terms of either or both: understanding and acting as ethical citizen, and, 3) the possibility of informed social reflection as integrating the ontogeny of civic orientation, ethical awareness and historical understanding.

The informed social reflection construct has recently evolved into the "Informed Social Engagement" framework (Barr & Selman, 2014). The development of this framework is a work in progress, in which the main purpose is to integrate three competencies—analysis of evidence, capacity for empathy, and sense of agency—with three epistemological content domain domains—ethical, civic, and historic—in the assessment of *Informed Social Engagement*, a construct the authors have identified as critical for the development of active and constructive citizens in a democratic society. The authors contend that expanding the scope of youth civic development research to include a focus on qualities of civic skills and dispositions, would enable an analysis of how citizens' actions are animated or inhibited (Galston, 2001; Galston, 2007; Putnam, 2000). Social Engagement results from the intersection of three different skills: a cognitive skill (Analysis of evidence), an emotional skill (Capacity for empathy), and a dispositional skill (Sense of agency). Social Engagement is demonstrated when students can critically analyze evidence, demonstrate capacity for argumentation, demonstrate concern for safety, rules, social relationships and collective actions, show concern for the well being of others, not only for those they share values with, but for those considered as different, show disposition towards affirmative actions, and can lead protest against injustice, discrimination and other social problems.

Barr & Selman (2014) argue that in order to become socially engaged citizens in a democratic society, youth must be able to: 1) analyze information from different sources and make informed decisions using critical judgment, 2) care for their wellbeing and that of others, known and unknown, and 3) feel capable of and motivated to address issues affecting their own and others' lives According to the ISEM, youngsters must develop the following competencies:

a) *Analysis of Evidence*, a primarily "cognitive" skill referring to ways in which youth understand, critique, discuss, and synthesize multiple sources of data including contradictory information. This competency gives students a complex understanding of contextual reality, whether contemporary or historical, and affects the degree to which they make informed decisions when addressing social issues. Analysis of evidence is focused on how students: 1) analyze multiple sources of information, either supplied or needed, weighing their strengths and limitations, 2) synthesize the evidence while considering individual, group, and system level causes and contexts underlying intergroup conflict, and 3) make informed decisions based on these evidence.

b) *Capacity for Empathy*, a primarily "emotional" skill referring to ways in which youth feel motivated to consider and protect the wellbeing of actors, known and unknown, similar or dissimilar in identity and values, representing different positions in a given situation or conflict. Their capacity for empathy affects the scope of their universe of moral responsibility, or the people whose wellbeing they are willing to protect when considering social problems. Capacity for empathy is focused on how students consider the perspectives and wellbeing of a greater number of (individual or group) actors, including 1) the self, 2) one's social circle, and finally 3) individuals perceived as different, including groups they may not identify with or even hold in some disregard.

c) *Sense of Agency*. Sense of Agency, is defined primarily as a "disposition" toward action referring to ways in which students understand: 1) the range of opportunities for involvement in relation to social and civic matters, 2) the potential to effect change, and 3) the quality of different strategies they imagine using to most adequately address a given social problem. Students' sense of agency affects the quantity and quality of their civic participation. Sense of agency comprises how students consider ways in which actions taken, could address a given intergroup problem and develop potential barriers to achieving the action's aims, intergroup conflict, why they would use those strategies, and potential obstacles to effectiveness.

3 The ICCS

The Civic and Citizenship Education Study (Schulz, et al., 2010) encompasses both civic and citizenship education, the first one understood as the *knowledge and understanding of formal institutions and processes of civic life*, and the second one, as the *knowledge and understanding of opportunities for participation and engagement in both civic acts and civil society*.

The ICCS is based on the premise that the learning opportunities provided to young people have the potential to influence their current and future interests and behavior. The ICCS considers that preparing students for citizenship roles involves helping them to develop relevant knowledge and understanding, and promote positive attitudes towards being a citizen and participate



in activities related to civic and citizenship education (Schulz, Fraillon, Ainley, Losito, & Kerr, 2008).

ICCS 2009 was designed to report students' achievement through a test of conceptual knowledge and understandings, student's dispositions and attitudes related to civic and citizenship education. The evaluation of 2009 was conducted in 38 countries by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

The ICCS's student population comprised students in Grade 8. The samples were designed as two-stage cluster samples: first stage sampled schools within each country, then within each school, an entire class from the target grade was sampled randomly, and all students were surveyed. Teachers' population comprised all who taught regular school subjects in the target grade; up to 15 teachers were selected randomly in each school; when schools had 20 or fewer teachers at the target grade, all teachers were invited to participate in the survey.

Data used in this study pertain to the Chilean, Colombia and Mexican effective samples. The Chilean sample included 5,192 students and 177 schools. The Colombian sample was composed of 6,204 students and 196 schools. The Mexican effective sample included 215 schools and 6,576 students.

As is common in studies of adolescent political behavior (Pritzker, 2008), the ICCS used current and intended political behavior as outcomes, therefore these constituted the basis to compare the three countries selected in this study, in terms of their adolescents' knowledge and future political participation.

3 Research purpose

The main purpose of this work was to empirically test the two theoretical models described above using data from ICCS 2009. As we analyzed the data through regression models, we used the R^2 coefficients (see the Methods section below) to evaluate which model fits better the empirical data obtained by ICCS for each of the analyzed countries.

In other words, our main hypothesis was that one of the models (either ISEM or SCM) would explain better the differences in civic engagement observed in 8th grade students. We used data from Mexico, Chile and Colombia as a means to improve the robustness of our results.

4 Method

In order to test our hypothesis we initially used data from the ICCS 2009 to operationalize the theoretical concepts postulated by the SCM and the ISEM (See Appendix 5). Then, we ran separate cluster robust OLS regression models for each country, for each model and for each outcome variable. All analyses were conducted using the IDB Analyzer (IEA, 2015), which is a software especially designed to account for the ICCS complex sample and assessment design.

4.1 The Social Capital Model independent variables

As we mentioned above, the SCM comprises three main constructs: trust, social activity, and social embeddedness

in the local community. Trust and social activity constructs were divided into different dimensions. The first one, into: a) trust in others; b) trust in political institutions; and, c) trust in non-political institutions. Social activity was divided into: group membership and informal networks. In addition to these constructs, Pattie et al. (2003) included television watching as a variable that illustrated individual activities that could hinder social capital. Based on this, we first identified ICCS items related to each construct and dimension (see Appendix 1). In this process, we decided to add an additional dimension to the social capital construct: students' civic participation, since we considered that participating in school civic activities could contribute to define this construct better. With respect to television watching, we decided to divide this construct into two variables: watching television for enjoyment, and watching television to be informed, since we considered that these variable could have different effects on civic participation and knowledge (the first one a negative effect, while the second, a positive effect).

After having done this, we applied factor analysis, using principal axis factoring and varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization, in order to test if the variables were grouped as expected. With respect to Trust variables, we found that all items were grouped into only one component (see Appendix 2), as a consequence, we decided to use the ICCS constructed variable "Trust in Institutions" (INTRUST) as the independent variable to measure this construct.

With respect to social activity, four components emerged from factor analysis (see Appendix 3). The first factor, related to students' participation in school (SCHPART); the second one, participation in formal organizations (PARINFORG); the third one, political discussions with family and friends; and, the last factor (POLDISC), participation in voluntary activities (PARVOLAC). The third factor, was already a variable constructed in ICCS: Students' discussion of political and social issues outside of school (POLDISC). The rest of the variables were constructed applying the same methods used in the ICCS (IRT WLE scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 for equally weighted countries).

To sum up, the independent variables that we included in the SCM were:

- a) INTRUST: Trust in institutions
- b) SCHPART: Students' participation in school
- c) PARINFORG: Participation in formal organizations
- d) POLDISC: Political discussions with family and friends
- e) PARVOLAC: Participation in voluntary activities (VLNPARTR). The third factor, was already a variable constructed in ICCS: Students' discussion of political and social issues outside of school (POLDISC).
- f) TVENJOY: Watching television for enjoyment
- g) TVINFOR: Watching television to be informed
- h) FAMSTRUC: Family structure index.^{iv}

4.2 The Informed Social Engagement Model independent variables

As we mentioned above, the ISEM comprises three main constructs: analysis of evidence, capacity for empathy and sense of agency. As with the SCM, we first identified ICCS items related to each construct (see Appendix 4). With respect to analysis of evidence, we identified three indexes relevant to this construct: students' discussion of political and social issues outside of school (POLDISC), and students' support for democratic values (DEMVAL). We identified six indexes related to capacity for empathy: students' personal experience of physical and verbal aggression at school (EXPAGG); student feelings of empathy towards classmates (EMPATH); students' attitudes towards equal rights for all ethnic/racial groups (ETHRGHT); students' attitudes towards equal rights for immigrants (IMMRGHT); student attitudes towards neighbourhood diversity (ATTDIFF); students' attitudes towards gender equality (GENEQL). In this construct we created an additional index: student's attitudes towards homosexual orientations (PROGAY). Finally, we selected four indexes in relation to the sense of agency construct: students' expected future informal political participation (INFPART); students' perceptions of the value of participation at school (VALPARTS); Students' sense of internal political efficacy (INPOLEF); and students' citizenship self-efficacy (CITEFF).

4.2 Control variables

For both models, we included the following control variables: a) gender of student (SGENDER); b) national index of socio-economic background (NISB); and, c) expected education (SISCED).

4.3 Results

Our results show that for the outcomes of expected participation and civic knowledge the ISEM fit data better than the SCM in all countries: for students' expected participation in legal protests, the proportion of variance explained (R^2) by the ISEM, ranges from 0.37 to 0.39, while the SCM only explains among 13 and 18% of the variance; with respect to the students' expected participation in illegal protests the R^2 coefficients ranged

between 0.12 and 0.20 for the ISEM versus 0.03 and 0.07 for the SCM; in electoral participation ISEM R^2 coefficients ranged from 0.26 to 0.29, while in SCM from 0.12 to 0.20; finally, with respect to civic knowledge, R^2 coefficients ranged between 0.33 and 0.42 for the ISEM, versus 0.21 and 0.32 in the SCM.

From these results we can also argue that both models are better for predicting expected participation in legal protests, expected electoral participation and civic knowledge, than for predicting expected participation in illegal protests.

For the SCM, the variable most strongly, and positively, associated to expected participation in legal protests and electoral participation was trust in institutions (INTRUST, see Tables 1 and 2). This confirms the importance of trust highlighted in the Social Capital theory for enhancing civic activism or civic engagement. With respect to civic knowledge we found different patterns, for example, trust in institutions and participation in formal organizations, had a negative influence on civic knowledge.

For the ISEM, in predicting students' expected participation in legal protests, the most important variables were: the students' expected future informal political participation and students' citizenship sense of self-efficacy (see Table 5). The expected outcome: participation in illegal protests established the strongest associations with the students' expected future informal political participation, and it was also an important predictor (positively associated), together with the students' feelings of empathy towards classmates (negatively associated) (see Table 6). With respect to electoral participation, again the most important variables were: students' expected future informal political participation and students' sense of internal political efficacy (see Table 7). In both cases, results point out the importance of building a sense of agency in students. Surprisingly, with respect to civic knowledge, the most important variable associated with it, was the capacity for empathy: particularly student's attitude towards gender equality. We also found out a negative influence of students' expected future informal political participation for this outcome variable in all countries (see Table 8).



Table 1. Cluster robust OLS regression estimates of Expected Student Participation in Legal Protests. SCM

	Chile				Colombia				Mexico			
	Coeff.	β	s.e.		Coeff.	β	s.e.		Coeff.	β	s.e.	
(CONSTANT)	47.23	**		1.07	53.00	**		1.06	50.07	**		1.04
Control variables												
SGENDER	0.66		0.03	0.38	-0.35		-0.02	0.31	-0.33		-0.02	0.29
NISB	0.31		0.03	0.18	0.06		0.01	0.14	0.57	**	0.06	0.19
SISCED	0.79	**	0.06	0.26	0.29		0.03	0.18	0.45	**	0.05	0.15
Trust in Institutions												
INTRUST	2.41	**	0.22	0.21	2.28	**	0.26	0.19	2.55	**	0.26	0.18
Social Activity												
SCHPART	1.35	**	0.12	0.19	1.08	**	0.13	0.18	0.60	**	0.06	0.17
PARINFORG	0.06		0.00	0.19	0.60	**	0.07	0.18	0.33	*	0.03	0.16
POLDISC	1.22	**	0.11	0.19	0.93	**	0.11	0.16	1.12	**	0.10	0.16
PARVOLAC	0.87	**	0.08	0.19	0.47	**	0.06	0.17	0.66	**	0.06	0.17
Television watching												
TVENJOY	0.11		0.01	0.15	-0.21		-0.03	0.12	-0.10		-0.01	0.14
TVINFOR	0.92	*	0.09	0.18	0.45	*	0.05	0.15	0.54	*	0.06	0.13
Social embeddedness / Family Structure												
FAMSTRUC	0.09		0.00	0.33	-0.10		-0.01	0.20	0.48		0.03	0.28
p \leq 1.96 *	R2 =			0.14	R2 =			0.18	R2 =			0.13
p \leq 2.58 **												

Table 2. Cluster robust OLS regression estimates of Expected Student Participation in Illegal Protests. SCM

	Chile				Colombia				Mexico			
	Coeff.	β	s.e.		Coeff.	β	s.e.		Coeff.	β	s.e.	
(CONSTANT)	55.63	**		1.05	53.65	**		1.53	56.07	**		0.96
Control variables												
SGENDER	-1.68	**	-0.09	0.38	-1.60	**	-0.08	0.43	-2.73	**	-0.13	0.33
NISB	-0.70	**	-0.07	0.21	-0.45	*	-0.05	0.19	-0.17		-0.02	0.18
SISCED	-0.54	*	-0.05	0.23	-0.41		-0.04	0.23	-0.62	**	-0.06	0.17
Trust in Institutions												
INTRUST	0.53	**	0.05	0.19	0.27		0.03	0.19	1.67	*	0.16	0.15
Social Activity												
SCHPART	0.51	**	0.05	0.16	-0.39	*	-0.04	0.18	-0.56	**	-0.05	0.20
PARINFORG	0.83	**	0.07	0.23	0.89	**	0.09	0.24	0.88	**	0.08	0.21
POLDISC	-0.08		-0.01	0.18	-0.14		-0.02	0.20	0.15		0.01	0.17
PARVOLAC	-0.01		0.00	0.18	0.12		0.01	0.19	0.38		0.03	0.21
Television watching												
TVENJOY	0.49	*	0.06	0.13	-0.08		-0.01	0.15	0.11		0.01	0.12
TVINFOR	-0.51	*	-0.05	0.18	-0.68	*	-0.06	0.20	-0.59	*	-0.07	0.14
Social embeddedness / Family Structure												
FAMSTRUC	-0.21		-0.01	0.28	0.46		0.03	0.25	0.18		0.01	0.29
p \leq 1.96 *	R2 =			0.04	R2 =			0.03	R2 =			0.07
p \leq 2.58 **												



Table 3. Cluster robust OLS regression estimates of Expected Student Electoral Participation. SCM

	Chile			Colombia			Mexico					
	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.			
(CONSTANT)	41.19	**	1.17	49.56	**	1.03	47.17	**	0.92			
Control variables												
SGENDER	-0.20		-0.01	0.43	-0.30		-0.02	0.36	0.55		0.03	0.29
NISB	0.91	**	0.07	0.21	0.39	*	0.04	0.16	0.80	**	0.09	0.17
SISCED	0.96	**	0.07	0.21	0.43	**	0.04	0.15	1.05	**	0.12	0.16
Trust in Institutions												
INTRUST	4.19	**	0.33	0.22	2.30	**	0.26	0.17	2.02	**	0.22	0.16
Social Activity												
SCHPART	1.13	**	0.09	0.24	0.89	**	0.10	0.13	1.14	**	0.12	0.16
PARINFORG	0.09		0.01	0.25	-0.01		0.00	0.15	-0.75	**	-0.08	0.18
POLDISC	1.61	**	0.13	0.23	0.58	**	0.07	0.13	0.55	**	0.05	0.18
PARVOLAC	0.10		0.01	0.20	0.16		0.02	0.14	0.21		0.02	0.14
Television watching												
TVENJOY	-0.08		-0.01	0.18	-0.05		-0.01	0.13	0.02		0.00	0.13
TVINFOR	1.41	*	0.11	0.20	0.82	*	0.08	0.18	0.89	*	0.11	0.13
Social embeddedness / Family Structure												
FAMSTRUC	0.64	**	0.03	0.32	-0.01		0.00	0.17	0.02		0.00	0.26
p ≤ 1.96 *	R2 =			0.20	R2 =			0.13	R2 =			0.12
p ≤ 2.58 **												

Table 4. Cluster robust OLS regression estimates of Civic Knowledge. SCM

	Chile			Colombia			Mexico					
	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.			
(CONSTANT)	356.72	**	9.97	396.55	**	9.41	352.52	**	7.52			
Control variables												
SGENDER	6.78		0.04	3.55	3.33		0.02	3.70	18.12	**	0.11	2.32
NISB	25.59	**	0.30	2.19	17.74	**	0.23	1.86	17.79	**	0.22	1.99
SISCED	22.61	**	0.23	1.65	9.20	**	0.10	1.51	16.94	**	0.22	1.18
Trust in Institutions												
INTRUST	-9.82	**	-0.11	1.43	-11.13	**	-0.14	1.49	-13.24	**	-0.17	1.15
Social Activity												
SCHPART	8.16	**	0.09	1.43	17.48	**	0.23	1.44	7.60	**	0.09	1.35
PARINFORG	-15.48	**	-0.15	1.68	-14.82	**	-0.20	1.79	-11.15	**	-0.14	1.70
POLDISC	7.03	**	0.08	1.62	-0.32		0.00	1.25	-0.88		-0.01	1.44
PARVOLAC	-4.53	**	-0.05	1.61	-4.64	**	-0.06	1.59	-3.68	**	-0.04	1.31
Television watching												
TVENJOY	3.08	**	0.04	1.29	5.26	*	0.08	1.46	4.60	*	0.07	1.13
TVINFOR	12.30	*	0.14	1.35	5.64	*	0.07	1.56	6.99	*	0.10	1.18
Social embeddedness / Family Structure												
FAMSTRUC	-0.85		-0.01	2.07	3.06		0.03	1.95	2.59		0.02	2.44
p ≤ 1.96 *	R2 =			0.32	R2 =			0.21	R2 =			0.24
p ≤ 2.58 **												



Table 5. Cluster robust OLS regression estimates of Expected Student Participation in Legal Protests. ISEM

	Chile			Colombia			Mexico					
	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.			
(CONSTANT)	48.48	**	1.32	51.41	**	1.44	48.79	**	1.48			
Control variables												
SGENDER	0.23		0.01	0.36	-0.57	*	-0.03	0.24	-0.31	-0.02	0.27	
NISB	-0.16		-0.01	0.15	-0.05		-0.01	0.17	0.17	0.02	0.17	
SISCED	-0.12		-0.01	0.20	0.05		0.00	0.17	-0.09	-0.01	0.13	
Analysis of evidence												
POLDISC	-0.06		-0.01	0.14	0.16		0.02	0.14	0.14	0.01	0.14	
PV_CIV	0.01	**	0.10	0.00	0.01	**	0.05	0.00	0.01	**	0.08	0.00
DEMVAL	0.98	**	0.08	0.24	0.22		0.02	0.16	0.32	*	0.03	0.15
Capacity for Empathy												
EXPAGG	-0.11		-0.01	0.17	-0.05		-0.01	0.15	-0.52	**	-0.05	0.15
GENEQL	0.45	*	0.04	0.19	0.17		0.02	0.20	-0.25		-0.02	0.29
EMPATH	-0.54	**	-0.05	0.21	0.02		0.00	0.18	-0.05		0.00	0.15
ETHRGHT	0.15		0.01	0.19	0.16		0.02	0.21	0.22		0.02	0.19
IMMRGHT	0.00		0.00	0.20	0.75	**	0.08	0.19	0.40	*	0.04	0.16
ATTDIFF	0.42	*	0.04	0.18	0.23		0.03	0.15	0.24		0.02	0.16
PROGAY	0.23		0.02	0.18	-0.21		-0.02	0.15	-0.16		-0.02	0.16
Sense of agency												
INFPART	3.88	*	0.37	0.23	3.25	*	0.34	0.22	3.46	*	0.34	0.20
VALPARTS	0.58	*	0.05	0.21	0.55	*	0.06	0.20	0.54	*	0.06	0.14
INPOLEF	0.36		0.04	0.21	0.47	**	0.05	0.20	0.59	*	0.06	0.17
CITEFF	2.40	*	0.22	0.23	2.28	*	0.26	0.23	2.62	*	0.26	0.22
p ≤ 1.96 *	R2 = 0.38				R2 = 0.39				R2 = 0.37			
p ≤ 2.58 **												

Table 6. Cluster robust OLS regression estimates of Expected Student Participation in Illegal Protests. ISEM

	Chile			Colombia			Mexico		
	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.
(CONSTANT)	60.15	**	1.18	58.49	**	1.81	59.01	**	1.76
Control variables									
SGENDER	-0.35		0.40	-0.20	-0.01	0.38	-0.79	*	0.32
NISB	-0.24		0.17	0.06	0.01	0.17	0.14		0.15
SISCED	-0.34	*	0.17	-0.08	-0.01	0.21	-0.18		0.15
Analysis of evidence									
POLDISC	-0.36		0.20	-0.34	-0.04	0.21	-0.30		0.18
PV_CIV	-0.01	**	0.00	-0.02	**	0.00	-0.02	**	0.00
DEMVAL	1.09	**	0.24	0.54	*	0.26	0.37		0.19
Capacity for Empathy									
EXPAGG	-0.12		0.14	-0.21	-0.02	0.21	-0.20		0.15
GENEQL	-0.33		0.19	-1.03	**	0.25	-1.07	**	0.22
EMPATH	-1.65	**	0.20	-1.44	**	0.23	-1.37	**	0.15
ETHRGHT	-0.33		0.20	-0.68	**	0.24	-0.45	*	0.21
IMMRGHT	-0.34		0.23	0.14		0.23	-0.08		0.17
ATTDIFF	0.12		0.16	-0.15		0.16	-0.06		0.17
PROGAY	0.20		0.18	-0.66	*	0.23	-0.76	*	0.21
Sense of agency									
INFPART	2.29	*	0.24	2.06	*	0.20	2.31	*	0.17
VALPARTS	-0.31		0.24	-0.73	*	0.24	-0.28		0.20
INPOLEF	-0.26		0.20	-0.40		0.22	0.06		0.21
CITEFF	0.61	**	0.24	0.58	*	0.20	0.77	*	0.16
p \leq 1.96 *	R2 = 0.12			R2 = 0.14			R2 = 0.20		
p \leq 2.58 **									

Table 7. Cluster robust OLS regression estimates of Expected Student Electoral Participation. ISEM

	Chile			Colombia			Mexico		
	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.
(CONSTANT)	44.49 **		1.47	44.75 **		1.34	44.51 **		1.10
Control variables									
SGENDER	-0.62	-0.02	0.42	-1.04 **	-0.06	0.27	-0.68 **	-0.04	0.26
NISB	0.27	0.02	0.24	-0.10	-0.01	0.13	0.02	0.00	0.14
SISCED	0.49 *	0.03	0.24	0.05	0.00	0.13	0.24	0.03	0.14
Analysis of evidence									
POLDISC	0.36	0.03	0.22	-0.05	-0.01	0.15	-0.05	0.00	0.14
PV_CIV	0.01 **	0.07	0.00	0.02 **	0.16	0.00	0.02 **	0.16	0.00
DEMVAL	-0.17	-0.01	0.25	0.35	0.04	0.21	0.71 **	0.08	0.15
Capacity for Empathy									
EXPAGG	-0.42 *	-0.03	0.19	0.18	0.02	0.15	0.10	0.01	0.13
GENEQL	0.73 **	0.06	0.27	0.78 **	0.08	0.22	0.59 **	0.06	0.22
EMPATH	0.38 *	0.03	0.18	0.25	0.02	0.20	0.21	0.02	0.12
ETHRGHT	-0.03	0.00	0.24	0.79 **	0.08	0.22	0.82 **	0.09	0.22
IMMRGHT	0.31	0.02	0.22	0.13	0.01	0.15	0.34 *	0.04	0.17
ATTDIFF	0.07	0.01	0.22	0.24	0.03	0.17	0.38 **	0.04	0.14
PROGAY	-0.37 **	-0.03	0.19	-0.10	-0.01	0.14	0.13	0.01	0.15
Sense of agency									
INFPART	3.47 *	0.28	0.24	1.97 *	0.21	0.18	2.11 *	0.23	0.20
VALPARTS	0.85 *	0.06	0.28	0.96 *	0.10	0.17	0.62 *	0.07	0.14
INPOLEF	2.18 *	0.18	0.25	1.05 *	0.11	0.20	0.89 *	0.09	0.18
CITEFF	0.30	0.02	0.25	1.05 *	0.12	0.20	0.90 *	0.10	0.19
p ≤ 1.96 *	R2 = 0.26			R2 = 0.29			R2 = 0.29		
p ≤ 2.58 **									

Table 8. Cluster robust OLS regression estimates of Civic Knowledge. ISEM

	Chile				Colombia			Mexico				
	Coeff.	β	s.e.		Coeff.	β	s.e.	Coeff.	β	s.e.		
(CONSTANT)	429.46	**		6.23	451.59	**		5.49	440.40	**		4.87
Control variables												
SGENDER	-18.10	**	-0.11	3.16	-3.12		-0.02	2.98	-3.94		-0.02	2.35
NISB	21.48	**	0.26	1.96	14.83	**	0.20	1.63	15.58	**	0.20	1.45
SISCED	17.94	**	0.18	1.61	7.82	**	0.09	1.23	9.69	**	0.13	1.22
Analysis of evidence												
POLDISC	5.89	**	0.07	1.41	-1.47		-0.02	1.21	-0.27		0.00	1.32
DEMVAL	6.61	**	0.07	1.80	6.06	**	0.07	1.54	6.93	**	0.09	1.32
Capacity for Empathy												
EXPAGG	7.04	**	0.08	0.99	-0.98		-0.01	1.32	1.87		0.02	1.20
GENEQL	27.04	**	0.32	1.50	26.27	**	0.33	1.56	23.96	**	0.27	1.76
EMPATH	4.19	**	0.05	1.61	3.32	*	0.04	1.40	6.25	**	0.08	1.29
ETHRGHT	6.29	**	0.07	1.48	7.97	**	0.10	2.29	7.35	**	0.09	1.41
IMMRGHT	-6.07	**	-0.07	1.73	-6.92	**	-0.09	1.57	-1.01		-0.01	1.43
ATTDIFF	-2.09		-0.02	1.24	4.81	**	0.06	1.23	5.03	**	0.06	1.51
PROGAY	6.50	*	0.08	1.29	7.11	*	0.09	1.44	9.28	*	0.11	1.24
Sense of agency												
INFPART	-11.07	*	-0.13	1.64	-13.07	*	-0.16	1.79	-9.65	*	-0.12	1.45
VALPARTS	5.46	*	0.06	1.48	0.09		0.00	1.57	2.43	**	0.03	1.19
INPOLEF	8.01	*	0.10	1.75	7.69	*	0.10	1.53	4.19	*	0.05	1.39
CITEFF	-5.12	*	-0.06	1.49	-5.27	*	-0.07	1.91	-8.73	*	-0.11	1.38
$p \leq 1.96 *$	R2 =			0.42	R2 =			0.33	R2 =			0.40
$p \leq 2.58 **$												

5 Discussion

This study contributes to fill a gap in the literature, as in Latin America there is insufficient evidence on the variables related to different types of civic participation and civic knowledge (Schulz, et al., 2008). It is also important in the quest for understanding data obtained through standardized tests re-framing them into specific theoretical models in order to have a more comprehensive view of the variables involved in the determination of students' civic engagement.

The main finding of this study was related to a better fit of the ISEM, compared with the SCM for explaining the outcomes of expected participation and civic knowledge in all countries. In the ISEM, variables included in the sense of agency construct were the most important ones for predicting expected participation in legal protests and expected electoral participation.

In the SCM, trust in institutions was the most important variable for predicting students' expected participation in legal protests and electoral participation. Trust in institutions is a challenge that cannot only be undertaken by schools, because it involves multiple organisations (for example, health, welfare, environmental and human rights, governmental and non governmental organisations).

Interestingly, the Social Capital Model does provide emphasis in participation in social networking and linkages with committed individuals and to make participation something enjoyable, meaningful and achievable (participation in formal and informal social networks). It also posits that trust, which really falls within the affective dimension, is a powerful tool for fostering and predict future participation, which was also a finding in this research.

What these results seem to suggest, is that the affective dimensions of both models: Trust in the SCM: and Sense of Agency in the ISEM are the variables more closely related to participation in legal protests. This suggests that school practices should include activities that lead students to feel capable of addressing issues that affect their own lives and those of their colleagues and family, so that in the future, these self-efficacy beliefs could become a platform for their civic engagement. However, this does not allow to the conclusion that knowledge should be shelved; what it's really required, is to measure the kind of knowledge that results from reflection, perspective taking (consideration of the views of others), and informed debate. Therefore students not only require learning to participate democratically, but to democratically communicate, using reflective, argumentative and deliberative

capacities allowing emotions to support their involvement and commitment.

These findings are fundamental in designing educational policies and practices that effectively promote civic engagement in a way that could help today's students to create a more democratic and just society and learn mechanisms to effectively influence their communities, other than just get involved in social protests. As Sant (2014) mentions, for students, society is composed of those who want to be heard, and those – perhaps the politicians or to a wider extent, the status quo elites – who do not want to hear them. Hence, for students, participation in protests, whether legal or illegal, and other actions included in what could be called activism, become almost the only ways to ensure their voices are visible to others.

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Endnotes

ⁱ The Citizen Audit Survey of Great Britain (2000 -2001) was a national study conducted in 2000 and 2001 in Great Britain. It was aimed at analyzing citizenship practices in British adult population. It comprised both, the description of citizenship and the analysis of the factors that influence it. It covered the following areas of study: political participation, voluntary activity and the beliefs and values of individuals related to civic society. Three main strategies for collecting information were applied: a face-to-face survey covering all the areas of interest; a panel survey component with the aim of re-interviewing a sub-sample of respondents to the face-to-face survey one year later; a mailback survey conducted at the same time as the face-to-face survey regarding the same issues in the same local authorities. Informants according to each strategy for collecting information were as follows: face-to-face survey, 3,140; panel survey, 804; mailback survey, 8,564, informants respectively.

ⁱⁱ Trust in institutions was not significant with respect to all types of civic activism.

ⁱⁱⁱ This variable was used as proxy for social embeddedness.

^{iv} This variable was used as proxy for social embeddedness.