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To Rosa Emma and Carmen Elisa

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*“Soy el desarrollo en carne viva
Un discurso político sin saliva
Las caras más bonitas que he conocido
Soy la fotografía de un desaparecido
La sangre dentro de tus venas
Soy un pedazo de tierra que vale la pena
Soy una canasta con frijoles
Soy Maradona contra Inglaterra anotándote dos goles
Soy lo que sostiene mi bandera
La espina dorsal del planeta es mi cordillera
Soy lo que me enseñó mi padre
El que no quiere a su patria no quiere a su madre
Soy América Latina
Un pueblo sin piernas pero que camina, oye*

*Tú no puedes comprar al viento
Tú no puedes comprar al sol
Tú no puedes comprar la lluvia
Tú no puedes comprar el calor
Tú no puedes comprar las nubes
Tú no puedes comprar los colores
Tú no puedes comprar mi alegría
Tú no puedes comprar mis dolores*

*No puedes comprar al sol
No puedes comprar la lluvia
Vamos caminando
Vamos dibujando el camino
No puedes comprar mi vida
Mi tierra no se vende”*

Latinoamérica, Calle 13

Table of contents

List of tables.....	vii
List of abbreviations	viii
Introduction.....	1
Literature review	5
Chapter 1 Political interest and trust	22
1.1 Political trust	25
1.2 Political distrust	33
Chapter 2 Mass media use: Internet political participation and collective action	38
2.1 Internet and political participation	40
2.2 Internet as a tool for collective action.....	48
Chapter 3 Political participation	55
3.1 Institutionalized political participation	55
3.2 Protest and unconventional political participation.....	62
Methods.....	77
Results.....	81
Conclusions.....	85
References.....	90
Abstract.....	106
Abstract (German)	107
Appendix.....	108

List of tables

Table 1. Multiple regression model predicting unconventional political participation	83
Table 2. Multiple regression model predicting willing to participate in protest.....	84
Table 3. Gender.....	108
Table 4. Descriptive Statistics, dependent variable protest	108
Table 5. Anova dependent variable protest.....	108
Table 6. Descriptive Statistics, dependent variable unconventional participation	109
Table 7. Anova dependent variable unconventional participation.....	109

List of abbreviations

CORPEI	Coordinadora contra la Represión Policial e Institucional
ECLAC	Economic Commission for the Latin America and the Caribbean
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NSMs	New social movements
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
OAS	Organization of American States
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organization

Introduction

Latin America is considered as a land full of contradictions, namely the kind of things that may work in other regions seem not to have the same effect in Latin America (Eckstein, 1989; Burchardt, 2010). For instance, it was expected that the socioeconomic conditions of the majority of Latin American citizens will improve with the shift to a more democratic regimes, as well as the entry of most of the countries of the region in the global economy (Oxhorn, 2003; Burchardt, 2010). Many of these changes, though some of them positive in the realm of political freedoms, might not have the same effects in the economy realm, being that income inequalities in the region have just increase (Kirby, 2002). Consequently, this situation hinders the intentions of Latin American citizens to participate in politics.

Apart from that, Latin American countries show low levels of trust in fellow citizens as well as in government, because of this some scholars point out that it is difficult that living standards and politics improve in the region, being that trust is needed, in order to achieve better outcomes in politics and economy (Lagos Cruz-Coke, 2001; Neace, 2004; Klesner, 2007). According to Putnam (1993) trust is a key element in order that citizens engage in community activities, the fact that citizens are active in their communities mean that citizens will also participation in politics. Even more, many scholars agree that societies that show high levels of trust have better outcomes in economy, as well as in politics. Even more, this societies have low levels of crime rate, better education and health systems (Putnam, 1993; Adler & Kwon, 2002 Knack & Zak, 2003).

Apart from that, the economic performance is a significant predictor of political trust, as well as political participation (Norris, 1999; Benton, 2005). Indeed, bad outcomes decrease the trust in government, not only in developed countries (Dalton, 2004; Hardin, 2013), but also in developing countries (Ross & Escobar-Lemmon, 2011). On that matter, according to

scholars Latin American countries have a dependent economy (Boyer, 2016). Because of this the majority of countries in the region cannot control much more the economy performance to create more effective and fair policies for all the citizens (Barrera & López, 2010; Guillén, 2013). This situation makes it harder that Latin American citizens can trust in government, being that the economic conditions seem to shape politics and its outcomes. Furthermore, another feature that seems to discourage citizens to trust in the incumbents is the relatively high levels of corruption in the region (Seligson, 2006).

Taking into consideration all these aspects, this project seeks to contribute in the conversation of political distrust in the Latin America region, since scholars argue that without trust is difficult to build a better function society (Putnam, 1993; Lagos Cruz-Coke, 2001). However, there is a not so positive feature of trust and it is the fact that it can create exclusion, namely people just trust in others that belong to their own social group (Ullmann-Margalit, 2001). In doing so, trust appears to help the more influential forces to exclude some groups of the society that do not possess enough economic power to be represented, in this case, in the political sphere (Portes, 1998). Even more, as scholars point out, building trust in an unequal society is a difficult task, and since trust is paramount for a better government, these unequal societies will be trapped (Rothstein, & Uslander, 2005). This means that distrustful societies will never build the necessary trust to improve the political institutions that could grant better life conditions for the entire population. And this is the case of Latin America.

This is why it is significant to understand how political distrust could be a positive force in emerging democracies, like those of Latin America. For instance, researches show how distrustful citizens will have more incentives to go to vote for new parties rather than the traditional ones (Hetherington, 1999). Even more, political distrust can create new social forces, which is positive for the democracy, namely, people has more options (Bélanger &

Nadeau, 2005). In the case of Latin America, this aspect is relevant, being that in the region some groups of the society have been ignored by the main political forces (Madrid, 2005). That is why it is relevant that citizens find a way to make their voices heard by the state.

On the other hand, since the inception of Internet, the way people participate in politics has changed, since the Network has expanded the ways people consume and participate in politics (Gil de Zúñiga, Veenstra, Vraga, & Shah, 2010). The Net provides users new tools, which help them to express their opinions and views about politics. Even more, Internet provides visibility to parts of society that tend to be neglected in mainstream media (Balkin, 2004). Additionally, Internet reduces the costs to participate in politics, namely, aspects like reading news or discuss about politics become easier. In that way, Internet now seems the place where people exchange their ideas and thoughts about politics (W. L. Bennett & Iyengar, 2008).

Thus, the aim of this research is to test two related situations. Firstly, to what extent can distrust in government be related to promote unconventional ways of political participation in Latin America? And secondly, to what extent Internet help citizens to engage in unconventional ways of political participation in Latin America?

The following hypotheses were formulated in order to measure the effects of political distrust and Internet in Latin America:

H1: The lower levels of political trust, the higher individuals participate in unconventional politics.

H2: The lower levels of political trust, the higher individuals participate in a protest.

H3: The lower levels of trust in government, the lower levels of voting.

H4: The higher levels of political interest the more citizens will participate in unconventional politics.

H5: The higher the political interest, the higher citizens will use internet to search information about politics.

In order to answer these questions, the content of this master thesis is presented as follows: the first chapter of the document takes care of the concepts of political interest, political trust and distrust. These concepts are relevant to understand why people choose to participate or not in political activities. The following chapter focuses on Internet as a tool that can help citizens to organize collective action, and how this tool has reduced the cost of participation in politics (Micheletti, 2002; Gil de Zúñiga, et al., 2010). For instance, Internet makes the circulation and exchange of information between individuals easier. Apart from that, it is also important to highlight that the inequalities persistent in the region represent a disadvantage at the time to get profit from the tools provided by Internet. Namely, the socioeconomic factors of citizens may condition their participation in politics (Norris, 2001). On the other hand, it is relevant to say that for the purpose of this research the term of Internet will refer to all the activities that users can do online, like posting a comment, sending or receiving an email, reading online newspapers, among others.

Then, in the third chapter, the concept of political participation is explained in two different forms: the conventional and the unconventional form. In the realm of conventional action there are vote, signing a petition or contacting a representative, among others (Almond & Verba, 1963). On the other hand, among unconventional activities there are actions like refusing to pay taxes or the use of violence for a political cause. Those activities might carry a sanction from the government, since those activities are considered as actions of civil disobedience (Paige, 1971; Rawls, 2013). In addition, for the purpose of this research it is important to talk about the political action of protest. It is worth to say that nowadays protest is considered as part repertoires of conventional political participation (Dalton, Van Sickle & Weldon, 2010; Tarrow, 2011). Nonetheless, in some cases, as well as in different countries of

Latin America, there are many policies that regulate the activity of protesting (Bertoni, 2010). This situation makes it sometimes more difficult for people to participate in politics, even though the majority of countries in the region are democratic (Almeida, 2007; Bertoni, 2010).

After that, in the methods section, the dependent and independent variables of this research are explained, as well as how they were measured in order to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses. This research relies on a cross-sectional survey of 2013 from Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro is an ONG that carries out surveys about public opinion, democracy, society and economy every year in Latin America. In the next section, the results of the two different regression models are presented.

Finally in the conclusion section, I explain the findings of this research, those were not statistically significant as I expected for the relation between political distrust and unconventional political participation. In spite of that fact, there are some positive results such as distrustful citizens in Latin American participate in politics in a conventional form, namely distrustful citizens vote and use other conventional channels such as signing petitions or participate in a protest to express their discontent with the government. Even more, Latin American citizens seem interested in politics, that it means that they seek information about political affairs on Internet and vote. It is worth to say that political and economic conditions in the region probably impose certain limits in the intentions of citizens to participate in politics.

Literature review

In a democracy all individuals are considered equals and have the same opportunities to be a part of the political arena (Dahl, 1971). In addition, democracy, in Balkin (2004) words, is “a form of social life in which unjust barriers of rank and privilege are dissolved,

and in which ordinary people gain a greater say over the institutions and practices that shape them and their futures.” (p. 35). However, in the case of the Latin American region there has been certain social and economic inequalities that have made it difficult over the years to fulfill the ideals of Democracy (Oxhorn, 2003). Even more, nowadays the levels of political participation in Latin America are not precisely high (Klesner, 2007), since the levels of voting has decreased in the region since the 1980’s (Zovatto, 2003). For instance, in the region the young population is more willing to take part in protest (S. Valenzuela, Arriagada & Scherman, 2012) or confrontational political activities rather than participate in the conventional channels such as voting (Booth & Seligson, 2009; Córdova & Seligson, 2010). There are many factors that can explain this phenomenon like the low levels trust people have in politicians and in government institutions (Lagos Cruz-Coke, 2001; Lafuente, Rojas & Agosta, 2012), as well as low trust in the democratic process itself (Carreras & İrepoğlu, 2013), and the lack of accountability by the government (Del Tronco, 2013).

Additionally, as the surveys on trust report Latin America is the region with the lowest level of trust, for instance in countries like Brazil, Colombia and Peru only 10% of the individuals show high levels of trust, while, in contrast, the level of trust in countries such as Norway, Sweden or Finland is around 60% (World Value Survey, 2014 as cited by Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2016). These numbers evidence a widespread distrust in Latin America.

On that matter, there are two different trends in the field of the study of trust, on one hand, there are the cultural theorists, they claim that political trust is the consequence of interpersonal trust, which means that individuals cannot trust their government whether they do not first trust their peers (Putnam, 1993; Fukuyama, 2001). On the other hand, there is the institutional trend that argues that social trust is not totally connected with institutional trust, given that institutional trust is related to the outcomes of the policies of the government and the economy (Norris, 1999; Newton, 2001; Mishler and Rose, 2001). Namely, it is the

experiences citizens have with politics that define whether or not political institutions and politicians are worth to be trusted. Evenmore, as E. A. Bennett, Cordner, Klein, Savell & Baiocchi (2013) argue citizens could be skeptical about the government and institutions, but at the same time people is willing to participate in politics. Even more, Eder and Katsanidou (2014) argue that low levels of trust give citizens the opportunity to choose other paths to express their concerns to the government.

Additionally, in the Latin American context studies about trust, it is possible to distinguish this two gradients, there are scholars that observe that the low levels of trust in political institutions are connected with the history of the region, the political culture of the region and the low levels of interpersonal trust among citizens (Lagos Cruz-Coke 1997; Lagos Cruz-Coke, 2001; Jamison, 2011). On that matter, researches pointed out that in the region there are more vertical relations among citizens, that is to say patron-client relation, this kind of relations are asymmetrical, as well as promote corruption, in contrast with horizontal relations that are the ones that promote trust (Lagos Cruz-Coke, 2001; Fukuyama, 2001). On the other side, researches, who follow the institutional trend, remark that the low levels of trust in Latin America, nowadays, has to be with the poor performance of the government in aspects like economics and the lack of responsiveness from the government to the citizens demands, this means that the interpersonal trust has not a great effect in the trust of political institutions (Cleary & Stokes, 2006; Catterberg & Moreno, 2006; Del Tronco, 2012; Lafuente et al., 2012). Even more, political distrust is related to the lack of accountability by the government, which it means that the government sometimes does not offer much information on the development of its policies (Del Tronco, 2013). In addition, the sanction mechanisms do not appear to be sufficient to ensure positive changes in the quality of the performance of the incumbents (Del Tronco, 2013). Furthermore, as evidence

shows trust in institutions is the one that determines the political participation in Latin America and not the interpersonal trust (Del Tronco, 2014).

In addition, according to Cleary et al., (2006, p. 8) social capital theorists fail to explain why interpersonal trust improves democratic governance. As the researches point out in certain regions of Argentina, the fact that the citizens belong to a social networks of civic participation makes easier the vote buying, being that politicians and parties can know who voted for them. For this reason, according to the authors and, in order to achieve and improve democratic standards in the region, it is better that political participation remains anonymous (Cleary et al., 2006). That is to say that, politicians should not control or monitor the decisions of civil society. Even more, the authors remark that Latin America region needs political institutions that “generate trustworthiness by making governments more transparent and leaders more responsive to the interests of their constituents.” (Cleary et al., p. 190). In other words, political institutions are responsible for creating confidence in citizens towards politics.

On that matter, in Latin America the low trust in political institutions is the consequence of the lack of stability of the democratic system, being that sometimes the new president will change the constitution in order to extend their time in office (J. M. Carey, 2003; Waisbord, 2011).

In addition, the lack of trust harms democracy being that:

When people do not trust their fellow citizens, elections and transitions of power appear to be far more dangerous. Citizens may fear that losing an election will mean losing all access to political power. Without trust, it is easy to imagine that one's opponents would not cede power after losing an election and might even resort to force to stay in power. When one believes that this is the political situation, democratic compromise is a dangerous option. (Sullivan, & Transue, 1999, p. 641)

In the Latin American context this given situation represented a problem like in the case of Venezuela under the mandate of President Chavez. He changed the constitution in order to remain more years on the presidential seat. In doing so, President Chavez diminished the power of any other opposition political force in the country (Corrales, 2008; De la Torre, 2013).

Another aspect that is necessary to taking account, it is how media in general portrait politicians, for instance in non-western democracies the information available on media many times appears to increase the distrust in government (Hanitzsch & Berganza, 2014). According to scholars this situation it could be relate to privilege access to information that journalists have of the political affairs, and the knowledge they have about how things are done in the government (Hanitzsch et al., 2014). On that matter, according to Delli Carpini (2004), television and in general media is in part responsible of the political distrust because whether media portrait politicians and institutions in a negative way; citizens will not trust them, besides that would increment the cynicism towards politics among citizens. However, as Norris (2000) argues information available on media does not increase the distrust of citizens in politics.

Apart from that, Latin America is still an unequal region, that is to say the gap between rich and poor is huge. This phenomenon affects many citizens, since many of them do not have access to the basic services like health or education (De Ferranti, Perry, Ferreira, Walton & Coday, 2003; Oxhorn, 2003). This given situation makes difficult for citizens to organize and participate in politics (S. Valenzuela, Somma, Scherman & Arriagada, 2016). On that matter, according to the report presented by ECLAC in the World Economic Forum of 2016, Latin America is the most unequal region in the world. The numbers speak by themselves 10% of the population have the 71% wealth of the region (Bárcena, 2016), which it means that the wealth is concentrated just in a few citizens. While, compare to the

Scandinavian region, where the 10% of the population has between 50% and 60% of the wealth (Shorrocks, Davies, Luberas & Koutsoukis, 2016).

Added to that, inequalities in the region seem to be persistent given that the labor markets and the public institutions are not efficient as they supposed to be, in order to grant better conditions for the entire population (Graham & Felton, 2006). For instance, inequalities do not allow access to qualified education and as a consequence people cannot access to more qualified jobs (Arocena, & Senker, 2003). However, there have been major economic changes, as well as political changes in the last decade in the region, which is reflected into better economic conditions for a vast part of the society (Lustig, Lopez-Calva, & Ortiz-Juarez, 2013). In spite of this positive fact that the inequalities, for instance in the income distribution, are still high (Bárcena, 2016). It is worth to say that inequalities affect the political participation, being that citizens are not going to participate, whether they believe that the government is not responsive to their needs and demands (Solt, 2008). Namely, the levels of satisfaction with the political system in an unequal society will be low. Therefore, as some researchers point out that some citizens seem not much interested in participate in politics, because they think that their vote is not enough to influence the outcome (Theiss-Morse, 1993; Weeks, 2013).

Additionally, low levels of political trust in young democracies are related to high rates of corruption in government perceived by citizens, that is the case as researches remark in some former communist countries in eastern Europe (Hacek, Kukovic & Brezovsek, 2013). Namely, the perceive corruption of the political elite discourages people to trust in the incumbents. In addition, citizens tend to believe that the government work for their own benefit, instead of working for the wellbeing of all citizens, due to perceived high levels of corruption in politics (Seligson, 2006). Even more, as Seligson (2006) argues this is a fact that delegitimizes the government, as well as corruption erodes the legitimacy of political

system. This means that, it would be difficult that citizens trust in a political system that seems easy to manipulate (Seligson, 2002). Because of this, low levels of trust are connected in Latin America with corruption.

On that matter, researches point out that in the Latin America the judiciary control and persecution of corruption cases among official holders is not efficient (Colazingari, & Rose-Ackerman, 1998). Since, in general, in Latin America presidents hold much executive power, so they can take many decisions without asking the congress. Additionally, there is not a clear separation of political powers between executive, legislative, and judicial branches, which has as consequence little control of corruption cases within the government (Colazingari, et al., 1998). It is worth to say that extreme cases of corruption and poor economy outcomes have cost some presidents their seat. Like in the case of President Collor de Melo in Brazil, President Abdalá Bucaram in Ecuador or President Fernando de la Rúa in Argentina among other cases (A. Valenzuela, 2004).

Moreover, corruption affects profoundly the function of politics, for instance democracy in Latin America is linked with high levels of corruption (Weyland, 1998). According to Seligson (2006) this occurs in the region, because with the shift to a democratic system in the region, there are now more political institutions, unlike totalitarian regimes, where used to be few, therefore, nowadays there are more institutions and opportunities to bribe. Corruption is defined, by Transparency International (2017) as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain”. This means that, people who hold the power, use it in order to get benefices for them or their friends. Or in the opposite direction some one pays to an incumbent a bribe to get public benefits (Rose-Ackerman, 1997). According to Transparency International (2017), in their report of 2016 about corruption, most of Latin America countries receive a score about 30 in corruption (the measurement is made in a scale from 0 to 100, 0 (zero) means that there are high levels of corruption and 100 means that there is no

corruption), with the exception of Chile, Costa Rica and Uruguay with a score around 70. The results suggest that corruption in the region is still a great deal.

On the other hand, democratic states are responsible to expand the political rights to every citizen, being that civil rights are key issue, in order that people take part in politics (Verba, Nie & Kim, 1978). According to McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) citizenship means “mutual rights and obligations binding governmental agents to whole categories of people who are subject to the government’s authority” (p. 266). Namely, the states as well as the citizens have rights and obligations to one another. However it is the government the one that have the power to grant the rights of citizens. In addition, according to Oxhorn (2003) citizenship “is associated with the modern welfare state” (p. 36), therefore the state must guarantee to every citizen “access to health care, various state policies to ensure a minimal standard of living” (Oxhorn, 2003, p. 36). Even more, political rights must be independent of economic status, that is to say that every person in a democratic country should have the whole civil rights granted and their socioeconomic condition do not prevent them to be entitled of those rights (Oxhorn. 2003). Furthermore, violation of these rights reflects the low levels of democracy in a state (Altman, & Pérez-Liñán, 2002).

Apart from that, the United Nations (UN) in their Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹ in 1948 establishes in the articles 19 the freedom of speech, 20 the right of people of public association, and 21 the need for fair elections to choose the representatives (UN General Assembly, 1948). In that sense, in a democratic political system, everyone is free to

¹ **Article 19.** Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21. (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

express their thoughts about any matter, like political orientation, without any fear to be repressed. Additionally, every country that adheres to this agreement should follow these principles in their nations.

In the Latin American context, also the Organization of American States² (OAS) establishes in the article 13 of the American Convention on Human Rights in the pact of San José, Costa Rica, the right of freedom of speech and thought (OAS, 1969). This means that all Latin American republics that sing this agreement must follow this ideal, as well as guarantee to all the citizens right of freedom of speech.

Two different features come with the idea of freedom of speech, on the one side there is the freedom of information and on the other side the freedom of communication (Fuenmayor, 2004). The state must guarantee both of them. Since those are essential for the exercise of democracy (Fuenmayor, 2004). Information is the representation of thought and knowledge of any given society, even more information is generated either in an individual or collective level, moreover information can be requested, needed and used by individuals or groups such as the state, political groups or any individual in the society (Balkin, 2004; Fuenmayor, 2004). That is to say that, information must be available to the whole society, for this reason, information is transmitted by mass media, in that sense every citizen supposed to have the opportunity to access the information, in this case the political information (Balkin, 2004; Fuenmayor, 2004).

Even more, access to information is a fundamental right in a democratic system, because “It provides openness, transparency and accountability” (Hugelier, 2011, p. 88). In that way, the incumbents must provide information about their administrative management. In addition, freedom of expression guarantees, as an individual right, that all persons have the

² **Article 13.** Freedom of Thought and Expression (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and expression. This right includes freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing, in print, in the form of art, or through any other medium of one's choice.

possibility of expressing themselves without prior censorship and without disproportionate restrictions, as well as it protects the right of the whole population to access to the largest amount of information, in doing so, citizens can choose their own life plans and exercise their collective right to self-govern (Balkin, 2004; Rabinovich, 2011). That is to say that, citizens can request information to the government, in that way they know what the government is doing and how that may affect their lives. On the other hand, freedom of expression is considered as one of the fundamental rights that all human beings should have, since the expression of the thought is the one that allows the constructions of ideas that might benefit and contribute to the culture to which each person belongs (Fuenmayor 2004; Balkin, 2004). Moreover, according to Balkin (2004) democracy culture promotes the right of freedom of speech, that is to say that every person has the “opportunity to participate in the production of the culture, and in the development of the ideas and meanings that constitute them and the communities” (p. 4). Namely, freedom of speech is a main feature in a democratic society, because allow individuals communicate and exchange of information with others members of the society. Additionally, as Verba et al. (1978) remark the exercise of political participation require that the state granted certain rights such as “the right to vote in meaningful elections, the right to join and form political associations, the right to petition the government, couple with the auxiliaries rights of free speech, a free press, and free assembly.” (p. 48). The fulfillment of each of these rights determines the level of democracy in a country and the opportunities that citizens have to take part in the political life. In that way, in a democratic system all these rights must be guarantee to the entire population, in order that they can exercise their citizenship (Oxhorn, 2003).

Apart from that, Latin American democracies are still young, according to Huntington (1993) the region is part of the third wave of democratization that took part between 1970s and 1980s. This process meant the end of totalitarian regimes in the region and open new

opportunities for citizens in the realm of political participation. However, the poverty, and therefore the low economic development in the region, it is a factor that hinders democratic development (Huntington, 1991).

On the other hand, nowadays, as scholars point out political parties in Latin America fail to link voters with the state, that is to say that parties sometimes do not take in account citizens demands or even worst do not represent the demands of the whole groups of the society (Madrid, 2010; Luna & Zechmeister, 2005). In fact, political parties are the ones who have the responsibility to represent the interests of the people in government (Roberts & Wibbels, 1999; Arce 2010). Because of this, the state might not answer the grievances and demands of the people that are not represented by a political party. For instance, in many Latin America countries indigenous citizens demands most of the time are not taking account by traditional parties, because of this, the indigenous voters choose to vote for new parties (Madrid, 2010). This given situation might create certain instability in the government, because it is more difficult to achieve consensus within the government with many small parties, as well as it becomes more difficult that the government can create the necessary laws to resolve the demands of the people (Madrid, 2010; Arce, 2010).

Another aspect that seems to affect political participation nowadays in Latin America are the neoliberal policies, because of this there are not strong labor unions connected to parties. According to scholars, many of the protests and collective mobilizations in the region are community-base (Portes & Hoffman, 2003). This means that citizens can mobilize collectively and protest, in doing so, they can raise different demands. However, wether there is no party that represents them and their demands in from of the state, it will be difficult to achieve the desire result (Portes et al., 2003). As Roberts et al., (1999) highlight in Latin America “Fragmented and heterogeneous lower classes have periodically protested free-market reforms, but they have not built sustainable representative institutions to articulate

alternative development models in electoral or policymaking arenas.” (p. 587). Namely, the fragmentation of politics brings new social actors to politics, however those new stakeholders are not strong enough to pressure the government to create and implement policies that resolve their concerns. Additionally, as Oskarson (2014) remark “If the weakest groups detach from ordinary politics, their interests might not articulated or mobilized and their interests overlooked in policy making, which might further deepen the social cleavages” (p. 153). Namely, people can choose different paths to participate but the institutionalized forms of political participation, as well as strong parties appear to be the most efficient way to gain attention to their demands. On that matter, social movements or interest groups that want to achieve any gains should address their needs towards a party, the kind of political party that offers a strong voice within the government. Since stable party system and strong parties are needed to articulate in an effective way those demands with the state (Mainwaring & Zoco, 2007).

On the other hand, activities such as voting, being a member of a party, contacting an official, work for a party are considered part of institutional or conventional political participation (Marsh & Kaase, 1979). Those activities are considered elite directed (Inglehart, 1977). This means that the member of the organizations such as parties will agree with the government, as well as they are going to be supportive with the performance of the incumbents. However, citizens that are not part of these organizations, like young ones, will opt to participate in politics in other ways such as signing a petition, boycotting or in street demonstrations. Those activities are considered elite challenging (Inglehart, 1977), unconventional political participation (Marsh et al., 1979) or contentious actions (Booth & Seligson, 2009). Namely, citizens are aware that there are other ways to influence government, besides voting (Marsh et al., 1979). This is the relevant aspect of unconventional

participation, the fact that enhances the political action, because it gives citizens the opportunity to participate and be influential beyond the voting (Kaase, 1999).

On the realm of political action, Tarrow (2011) posits that there are “three basic types of collective action: violence, disruption, and convention.” (p.104). The first one, violence is limited to small groups and is linked to damage of property, moreover whether the individuals opt for this one, they face the risk to be repressed. The next one, disruption disturbs the routines, since it is an unexpected action that leaves political elites disoriented. The last one convention, unlike the other ones, this could create and build routines, which it means that their demands are going to be taken in account by the politicians. Even more, as Tarrow (2011) explains convention is the form of participation, which most of social movements tend to use, in order to be heard by the government. Similarly, according to Tilly (1999) social movements are able to create an identity, even more social movements are in a way institutionalized, being that they have certain power to influence the government, as well as they are recognized by the government. On the core of social movement's there are actions such as public meetings demonstrations, raising money, pamphlets, marches or mass media statements (Tilly, 1999, p. 260). However they can take contentious actions like occupying buildings.

Nowadays, also, among unconventional political participation there are activities such as “refused to obey unjust laws, used civil disobedience to get public officials to correct political wrongs” (Theiss-Morse, 1993, p. 374). Namely, citizens take this alternative in order to attract the attention of the government. Additionally, people who think that rebellious actions are high-priced, are the ones that show more interest in participate in a protest than those who believe that this kind of participation costs nothing (Muller, & Opp, 1986).

On the other hand, one of the important aspects for participation into politics is to have information (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996); citizens can get this information from

traditional media such as newspapers, television, and radio. Apart from that another aspect that is important in order to participate in politics is the interest citizens may have on that matter. Moreover, when individuals have a particular interest in an issue, they will be interested in learning and knowing about that topic (Luskin, 1990).

Nonetheless, mass media in the Latin American context is conservative, concentrated and privately owned, that is to say most of the media has primary economic interests and does not reflect in many cases the plurality of the society (Delarbre, 2010; Rabinovich, 2011). Besides, media are linked to politically interests, namely, media tend to represent left or right orientation, which means that media cover the facts according to their political orientation. Because of this reason, media in Latin America is not neutral unlike the media in the Anglo-american model (Hallin, & Papathanassopoulos, 2002). This situation has as a result the lack of representation of certain parts of the population, as well as the lack of diversity of information. These features have negatives consequences for the democratic system, since it manifests the lack of plurality in the society, which is harmful to democracy (Hallin et al., 2002; Delarbre, 2010; Rabinovich, 2011).

This brings us to the question of what news means for people? And why news is important? News, according to Park (1940, p. 677), is a form of knowledge relate to the present, because of this must be put in a language that can be easy to understand by most people. Even more, news need to meet certain criteria to be publish, that is to say that news are not rumors, in that way news is “limited to events that bring about sudden and decisive changes” (Park, 1940, p. 681). In addition, news needs to be published in order to star to circulate, and then news, in a way, became a public document, being that news mentions names, dates and places, all of these data can be examined. That is to say, a piece of news is considered as an official statement (Park, 1940).

There are two different trends on how beneficial could be media in helping to engage people to politics. On one hand, some scholars posit that media has the power to mobilized people, being that citizens seek information are aware of the political affairs, that it means that they read, watch or hear news. Namely, citizens who are informed, are more prone to participate in politics (Norris, 2000; Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005; Strömbäck & Shehata, 2010; S. Valenzuela, 2013). On the other hand, some researches claim that media is responsible for cynicism towards politics, they referred to this phenomenon as “media malaise” (Capella & Jamieson, 1997). In addition, Putnam (2000) remark that television, discourages people to engage in civic activities, this is a negative aspect of media, being that be a part of civic activities is essential to develop the necessary skills to participate in politics. However as Norris (2000) notice people who follow political news in any media tend to participate in politics, namely information encourage people to participate in politics. Even more, as Lupia and Philpot (2005) remark younger adults that use Internet tend to be more interested in politics.

The creation of Internet brought technological advances on the realm of communications. These new technologies have contributed with many changes in the society, for instance, nowadays people can communicate online with many people across the world (Castells, 2010). One of the striking changes, according to researches, is the development of online communities (Wellman & Gulia, 1999), this gives people the possibility to interact in a global world, in that way, the time and space are no longer constrain to be in contact with others. The fact that the majority of people in the world can be connected simultaneously open new opportunities in the different aspects of the human life, like for instance politics (Castells, 2010). Since Internet allows the interaction between individuals like no other media, that is to say that citizens can in an easier and faster way give their opinions or feedback about any matter, like for instance political issues (Gimmler, 2001; Lupia & Sin,

2003; Gil de Zúñiga, Molyneux & Zheng, 2014). This means that Internet offers spaces, where individuals can express their opinions, share their thoughts with others users (Gil de Zúñiga, Puig-i-Abril & Rojas, 2009). In fact, activities such as sharing and reading news online can lead users to be more active in politics, being that promotes political behaviors such as posting a comment or becoming a fan of a politician (Zhou, & Pinkleton, 2012; Gil de Zúñiga et. al 2014). In doing so, Internet makes it easier to participate in politics, being that Internet creates new spaces and opportunities for political expression (Gimmler, 2001; Van Aelst & Walgrave, 2004; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2010). Even more, the Net provides heterogeneous information about public affairs (Bimber, 2001) and this is one of the advantages of online media that citizens can choose among different sources information.

Additionally, citizens can create their own content, for instance they can publish information blogs, posting photos, leaving comments, liking or following other users (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2009). Those online expressions are relevant as a first step towards civic engagement and subsequently the interest in participate in politics (Gil de Zúñiga, Jung, & S. Valenzuela, 2012; Cho, Ahmed, Keum, Choi & Lee, 2016). In addition, online activities such as posting and commenting are considered by themselves political participation (Himmelboim, Lariscy, Tinkham & Sweetser, 2012). Besides, Internet promotes political engagement, because with a click in the “like” or “follow” button icons, users can show support for a candidate (Bode, Vraga, Borah & Shah, 2014). Furthermore, using Internet as information source is considered to create more interest in young people to participate in politics, this aspect is relevant, since young citizens seems to be less involved in politics than their older cohorts (Bakker, & De Vreese, 2011; Lupia et al., 2003). It is worth to say that young individuals are the ones with the highest level of participation online, since they may be the first adopters of new technologies (Bachmann, Kaufhold, Lewis, & Gil de Zúñiga, 2010).

On that matter, Internet has open new ways for people to engage and participate in politics, as much as expose people to different kind of information including political (Gimmler, 2001; Hoffman & Schechter, 2016). Even more, Internet offer not just new opportunities for the citizens to participate in politics, but also create new channels and tools for the politicians and parties reach the potential voters (Bimber, 1998; Gueorguieva, 2008). That is to say that Internet expands political communication. This not only increases the political knowledge, but also increases the interest of citizens on be more politically active (Gil de Zúñiga, et al., 2012). It is clear that online communication allows people to discuss concerns and also to coordinate collective actions (Hwang, Schmierbach, Paek, Gil de Zúñiga & Sha, 2006; S. Valenzuela et al., 2012). As Balkin (2004) remarks, “digital technologies change the social conditions in which people speak” (p.2), namely, Internet simplifies the circulation of information and, in doing so, facilities the collective action.

Another interesting feature of Internet is that citizens that belong to online communities share interests, information and problems (Drentea, & Moren-Cross, 2005). In addition, Internet provides the possibility to discuss with others users, who might have different backgrounds or living in different countries (Chiu, Hsu & Wang, 2006). Also users have the possibility to publish and receive feedback from other community members (Drentea et al., 2005). Even more, be a part of an online community increase the likelihood of people to be expose to heterogeneous information (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2011). And in doing so, users can exchange points of view, information about events, share news, and calls to action in the offline world (Hwang et al., 2006).

Chapter 1 Political interest and trust

Political interest

A well-functioning and healthy democracy is such, where the majority of individuals are interested and willing to participate in the political arena (Dahl, 1971). To do so, individuals might have certain political behaviors such as voting, belonging to a party or participate in a political rally. Therefore, being part of all these activities shows the interest people have in politics. That is why political interest is considered relevant in order to develop other political behaviors such as voting (Brady, Verba & Schlozman, 1995).

On that matter, political interest is an attitude towards politics, that it depends more on the person itself, because it relates to people's personality and political identity (Prior, 2010). Then, it would not decrease over the years. Furthermore, political interest is not related to the outcomes of the government like it is, for instance, political trust (Oskarson, 2014). In addition, the fact that citizens are interested in politics has also a positive effect in voting, Prior (2010), in his study of political interest, argues that voting is not a merely habit but rather a way that citizens show their interest in politics, namely, those citizens most of the time will be motivated to participate in politics. Moreover, being politically interested is something that individuals might learn in their early years at school, at home or later in workplace (Sears & Funk, 1991; Norris, 2001). For instance, studies show that when younger generations learn and socialize about political matters, they will be more interested in politics when they become adults (Shah, McLeod & Lee, 2009). This means that, it is important that society encourages from an early age participation in politics.

Moreover, political interest is an internal motivation, therefore people who have a specific interest in a topic will learn about, namely they will consume information related to their matters of interest (Guo & Moy, 1998). Therefore, be motivated to participate in politics

as Delli Carpini (2000) points out is the idea that be engaged in politics will make the difference, even though not always motivation is enough for citizens to decide to participate in politics. Apart from the motivation individuals need opportunities to participate, in that sense, it is pertinent the existence of political and social institutions that allow these activities to be carried out (Delli Carpini, 2000). For instance, these kinds of opportunities are offer by civic and political associations, as Bekkers (2005) shows in the Netherlands people who are part of voluntary associations as well as the citizens that attend church tend to be interested in politics. Following this idea, the fact that citizens are interested in participate in civic activities, it is a positive indicator that they will be interested and involved in politics.

Evidence shows that politically interested people are very active reading and seeking political news, not just in traditional media but also online (Norris, 2001; Strömbäck et al., 2010). Namely, politically interested people are going to be more knowledgeable about politics, given that the interest in politics is a motivator to following news in any media about public affairs (Delli Carpini et al., 1996; Norris, 2000). Furthermore citizens with high levels of education will show more interest for politics (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). This means that, educated people have more skills, knowledge and access to information.

Another aspect that shows whether citizens are interest in politics, it is the amount of time that individuals have to take part in political activities, as Brady et al. (1995) remark people can have high levels of education and therefore knowledge of politics, but whether that person is married and have children, it is likely that person does not spend much time taking care of political issues, being that this activities require time. This means that, the marital status reduces the changes to be interested in politics and therefore to participate in politics.

Apart from that, Almond et al., (1963) point out that interest in politics is related to the political culture of the country, for this reason, where people live determines, whether

they are going to be more or less committed to participate in politics. Political culture is defined by Almond et al. (1963) “as the particular incidence of patterns of political orientation in the population of a political system.”(p. 33). In other words, people beliefs, ideas or preferences follow certain patterns, and then citizens will act in the form that matches those ideas. For instance, in the comparative study carried out by Klesner (2003) about political participation in Mexico and USA, he notices that Mexicans are less engaged in public life than the Americans. One of the aspects that explain this difference is that Americans tend to be a part of different civic organizations, while the Mexicans are not much involve in civic organizations. Besides, another fact that explains the lack of commitment with politics, it is that Mexicans are poorer and younger than Americans.

On the other side, some researchers have observed that younger generations are not interested in politics like the old generations, which is by a great deal a result of the lack of investment, by political institutions, in attracting younger people not only in well establish democracies (Delli Carpini, 2000; Dermody, Hanmer-Lloyd, & Scullion, 2010), but also in the young democracies such as the case in the case of Latin America (Cuna Pérez, 2006). Because of this young people nowadays are less engage with traditional ways of political participation, that is to say belonging to political parties or participate in the elections. In contrast, other scholars argue that young citizens seem more interested in participate in street demonstrations or protest, as researches remark that young citizens are in fact interested in politics, but they choose different forms to participate in politics (Loader, Vromen, & Xenos, 2014). Namely, this given situation evidences the changes that society has been facing in the last decades and the little interest that political institutions have in integrating youth into politics.

Another reason that explains the low interest in politics, according to researchers, it is the way how citizens see politics nowadays such as “—lack of efficacy, narrow interests, and

conflict” (E. A. Bennett et al., 2013, p. 542). This means that some citizens are being skeptical of taking a part in politics because they doubt that is effective to participate, in other words political institutions, as well as the political system appear to be unreliable and work just for the interest of a few parts of the society.

On the other hand, in Latin American context there is evidence that citizens that are interested in politics will engage in “socio-political activities in his or her community, frequently seeks out news media and uses the Internet, and more often than not, is approving of the executive.” (Helms, Rosenjack & Schultz, 2016, p.6). Namely, Latin Americans that are interested in politics will engage in different activities relate to politics. Furthermore, evidence shows that in Latin America reading newspapers is positive related to political interest, however watching TV has not a significant effect in people’s interest in politics (Salzman, 2012). Additionally, citizens who show more interest in politics are the ones who have the highest level of education. Nonetheless, Latin American women tend to participate less than men in politics (Helms, et al. 2016).

Thus, political interest is an indicator that citizens are willing to take part in the political activities and might have political skills such as taking part in civic activities or go to vote in the elections (Putnam, 1993; Prior, 2010). Even more, the fact that citizens are interested proves that citizens have political knowledge, and that is indeed necessary to participate, namely people cannot participate in political activities, whether they do not have any knowledge about the topic (Boulianne, 2011).

1.1 Political trust

Nowadays it seems a part of the daily routine to trust in organizations such as enterprises or political institutions that offer different services, even more the majority of

organizations are supposed to have rules that guarantee honest practices (Wang & Gordon, 2011). That is to say that the majority of citizens assume that those organizations are going to follow the rules, namely they are going to fulfill their part of the deal to avoid any punishment.

Likewise, trust is a very important prerequisite for democracy, being that trust helps to maintain democracy; moreover trust is very relevant for the stability of the democratic system (Sztompka, 1999). That is to say trust and democracy need each other in order to connect citizens with politics and in that way have a better function society. In addition, trust is a political attitude because “usually connotes opinions on specific public issues” (Gamson, 1969, p, 40), these attitudes can be features of the left-right political orientation of the individuals (Gamson, 1969). In other words, trust is conditioned to the beliefs or experience that citizens already have about politics, in doing so, citizens are going to judge incumbents by the expectations that they have of them.

Consequently, political trust could be defined as the kind trust that is offered for a certain period of time to institutions, being that trust supposes certain risk (Levi & Stoker, 2000; Luhmann, 2000). This potential risk has to be with the fact that is not possible to know what the future will be, so individuals need to have certainties about the future, and that is why they choose to trust in government (Sztompka, 1999). As Bianco (1994) points out constituents put their trust in the incumbents, since they vote for them to represent their interests. Following this idea, trust in political institutions and in government requires that office-holders are responsive to the needs to their fellow citizens and do not betray the confidence that was put into them. Furthermore, as Hardin (2013) argue trust in government is an asymmetrical relation, being that official holders possess more power than regular citizens and also more information about political matters. Therefore, a government that can

be trusted by citizens, it is the one who attended the needs of citizens without or little surveillance (Easton, 1975).

On the one side, trust, as part of the concept of social capital, is desirable in any society and for the well function of democracy, given that it makes easier governance and it is an indicator of good performance in aspects such as economy (Putnam, 1993; Fukuyama, 2001). According to Putnam (1993) social capital means “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (p. 167). In that way, individuals that possess high levels of social capital can be more effective in participate in the life of their communities, follow the rules and therefore politics will be more effective in fulfill citizens demands.

Even more, different studies agree that trust reduces transactions between different stakeholders and increases economic investment and growth, this means the life standards of the citizens will improve (Adler et al., 2002; Knack et al., 2003). As a matter of fact, individuals that show high levels of trust will also trust in political institutions, which it means they will more active in politics and will show higher levels of civic engagement (Putnam, 1993). Even more, civic engagement makes easier the communication and coordination among individuals, as well as enhanced the access to information, in that way makes easier to trust in other individuals (Putnam, 1993). Trust is also influence by social factors such as education, membership of voluntary associations, and at the same time political trust is positive linked to political behavior such as political interest, political use of media and party identification (Christensen, & Lægreid, 2005). Namely, trust is a prerequisite to political participation. Since trust is considered a strong determinant of electoral participation, this means that citizens that trust their government will vote regularly (Norris, 1999).

On the other side, critics of the concept of social capital argue that social capital will increase the already existing inequalities in a society, because some people might have great amounts of social capital and trust within their own community, but may not have enough access to other resources, especially economic ones, and as a consequence they are going to be excluded of the political decisions (Putzel, 1997; Narayan, 2002). Because of this, according to researches, social trust just contributes to consolidate the power of the elites, in doing so, exclude a great part of the society. Namely, high levels of trust beneficiate the already dominant groups of a given society. For instance, as DeFilippis (2001) points out low income citizens possess great amounts of social capital and participate in their communities, but they do not have the necessary economic power to use their social capital and get better living conditions for their communities.

Apart from that, one of the points that some scholars believe is not totally positive of the social trust, it is the fact that individuals are just going to trust in people who are like them, such as individuals who belong to the same social strata, that is why some authors remark that social trust creates the idea of within the group and outside the group (Ullmann-Margalit, 2001). Furthermore, as Luhmann (2000) points out people need certain levels of familiarity to trust, that it means, people may have great amounts of social trust with the others that share same principles or belong to the same community, however, they are not easily going to trust in strangers.

In addition, as Brehm and Rahn (1997) show in their empirical study of social capital, that includes social trust, the relation between citizens interpersonal trust and civic engagement is asymmetrical, that it means that the intentions to cooperate with others is not related to the interpersonal trust that citizens have before participate, but it is the participation in the community and the interaction with others, that individuals learn to trust in others.

Furthermore, interpersonal trust may differ from political trust, being that in the first one there is a direct and close relationship among the individuals, in the second the relationship is mediated mostly by the mass media (Newton, 2001), that is to say that the relation of citizens with politics is always mediated, being that citizens do not have most of the times the politic information at first hand. In that way, the trust of citizens in government is linked to the outcomes of the political and economic decisions made by the incumbents (Newton, 2001). Added to that, more relevant than people is losing their trust in their fellow citizens, it is the fact that people is losing their trust in political institutions, being that politicians came and go, but the institutions remain (Newton & Norris, 1999). At the end, political institutions are the ones in certain way responsible to regulate and promote political participation. Therefore, whether citizens do not trust political institutions, it will be more difficult for them to make the decision to participate in politics (Newton et al., 1999). Even more, Muller and Jukam (1977) make a distinction between trust in the incumbents and in political institutions, as they point out citizens that show low levels of trust in political institutions are going to take part in more confrontational political actions than those citizens that distrust incumbents.

In addition, social trust and political trust are not necessarily linked to each other, being that there are societies with high levels of social trust but at the same time lower levels of political trust (Newton, 2001). In fact the poor performance of the government and corruption scandals are the reasons behind political distrust. As an example, Newton (2001) points out the case of Finland, Finnish citizens have great amounts of interpersonal trust, but do not trust in government. This given situation is explained by the poor performance and corruption scandals in the government during the 1990s. According to Newton (2001) these kinds of circumstances may decrease the confidence of citizen in politicians and in the institutions they represent, but will not affect the social capital or interpersonal trust. In others

words incumbents have failed to do their job and because of that they do not deserve to be trusted.

Moreover, in the political realm, trust is volatile, being that it depends on the perceive performance of the politicians and the economy (Norris, 1999). Indeed, trust in politicians and in political institutions, as mention before, depends on the outcome of the policies they have implemented, in fact whether the results are not what people expected, as well as have not positive consequences for the wellbeing of the individuals, the political trust of citizens will decline (Citrin & Green, 1986; Catterberg et al., 2006). This is one of the reasons why high levels of political trust are difficult to maintain, because aspects like economy cannot be totally under control of the government, even more in periods of economic crisis the levels of trust tend to decline (Hetherington & Rudolph, 2008). Moreover, political trust, as the evidence shows, may depend on which party is the government. This means that citizens that voted for the winning party will show higher levels of confidence, while those who voted for the losing party will distrust the government (Gershtenson, Ladewig & Plane 2006).

In young democracies trust in political institutions is not expected to be in high levels. For instance, as Mishler et al., (2001) point out that in the former communist countries people find difficult to trust in the new democratic political institutions, but that is not because they believe democracy is not a properly political system. Namely, it is not possible to trust in a political institution that does not have many results to show. And it is even harder to trust in a political system that is facing economic difficulties, as consequence of the regime changing (Mishler et al., 2001).

Even more, in countries where social inequalities persist, it is difficult that trust will increase between citizens and towards the government (Rothstein, et al., 2005)., in that way, socioeconomic inequalities are factors that diminish the trust in democratic institutions, being that citizens may believe that the government decisions are not fair, since the state seems not

to offer a solution to the demands of citizens (Rothstein, et al., 2005). Indeed, low levels of trust in the government implicate a great dissatisfaction with political institutions among citizens, therefore it makes difficult in some cases that the policies implemented by the incumbents have a great success (Hetherington & Globetti, 2002).

Apart from that, for some scholars trust is related to political efficacy, since people who vote feel that their political action is valuable, that is to say that for them political participation is making the difference (Craig, Niemi and Silver, 1990). That it means that citizens who trust the government believe that the incumbents are working for the wellbeing of all citizens. In that way, citizens believe that the government is aware of their demands and will act in order to beneficiate all the individuals. Namely, when people see that the political institutions are efficient people do not need to take any action to oppose the government, namely they do not have reasons to complain or to go to protest (Machado, Scartascini & Tommasi, 2011; Rawls, 2013).

Additionally, Seligson (1980), in his study of peasant movements in Costa Rica, argues that political efficacy and trust are related to conventional political participation. However, as he shows trust is not a strong determinant when citizens decide to take action in more risky political arenas. Actually, citizens that show low levels of trust are more interested in taking part in mobilized actions such as land invasion. In that way, it accounts more the levels of self-efficacy that citizens have than the high levels of political trust (Seligson, 1980).

One of the key points of democratic government is to assure from the citizens good amounts of political trust, because unlike totalitarian regimes they cannot rely on coercion to persuade citizens (Catterberg et al., 2006). Moreover, trust is also linked with political support, given that low levels of trust erodes political support. Political scandals or bad

performance of the economic are factors that might erode political support such as the case of Japan in the 1990s (Dalton, 2004).

Even more, trust is a relation of shared interests (Catterberg et al., 2006), that is to say government and citizens need each other in order to get a common good for the whole society. Following this idea, government needs the support of citizens to implement their policies, but at the same time these policies must be accepted by the majority of citizens as well for the other political forces (Gamson, 1969; Catterberg et al., 2006). Otherwise politicians of the ruling party might lose the next elections.

Apart from that, political support according to Easton (1975) has two dimensions, one side specific support is connected to explicit demands made by citizens, for instance, whether government has responded and resolved those demands, citizens will show high levels of support towards officeholder. On the other side, the diffuse support is independent of the outcomes of the government. That is to say diffuse support is linked to political institutions. This second feature of support is indeed more important, because, whether political institutions assure great amounts of trust (Newton et al., 1999), citizens will be more interest in participate in politics, as well they will show more support for the democratic system.

In addition, Muller and Seligson (1994) found evidence that democracy contributes to increase the levels of interpersonal trust, namely, interpersonal trust is a product of democracy. This means that interpersonal trust increase, when the regimes become more democratic. Furthermore, the fact that a society has high levels of interpersonal trust does not necessarily translate in more democratic regime. The authors highlight that there were relatively high levels of trust in the 1980s in countries such as Panama, around 40%, and in Guatemala, around 43%, however this positive fact was not an indicator of a more democratic state. In contrast, as the authors highlight there were low levels of interpersonal trust in the

1980s, in countries such as Belgium 29%, France 26% and Italy 27%, however they have good levels of democracy (Muller & Seligson, 1994, p. 646).

On the other hand, the economy outcomes are linked to the levels of trust in government, however in a globalize economy the state has been lose the power to control and regulate the economy (Dalton, 2004; Hardin, 2013). This means that the state has become less necessary, for this reason so many citizens believe that the government is failing them. Even more, individuals will be more or less supportive with the regime and with the political authorities, depened on the economic outcomes, when citizens are not satisfy with the economic conditions, that it means that the trust in government is going to decline (Dalton, 2004).

In Latin America, as evidence shows the poor results in economy decrease the support of the democracy and political institutions. For instance, young citizens in Latin America show low levels of trust in politics as well in the democracy, being that they are ones who are more vulnerable to suffer poverty conditions, because of this, young citizens choose more violent strategies to participate in politics (Córdova et al., 2010).

1.2 Political distrust

Political distrust may show that something is not working as the way is expected within the political institutions or with the politicians (Hart, 1978). That is to say citizens that distrust will have a negative perception of expectations put in the government. That is why democratic system must ensure that the elected representatives act honestly, as well as the political institutions are reliable (Newton, 2001). Furthermore, the loss of trust in government constitutes a problem for the politicians that behold the power, since they cannot implement many of policies that they have in their political agenda, being that other political

actors, such as the opposition party or civil society, can disapprove these new laws (Gamson, 1969). This means that incumbents lost their margin of action.

On the other hand, political distrust is necessary in the government to avoid that any of the incumbents might abuse of the political power. In Szomptka (1999) words is the paradox of democracy, this means that, there must be an institutionalized distrust in order to avoid the misuse of power. Being that, the abuse of power may have consequences such as the deterioration of the democratic system, as well as diminish the trust in the political institutions. Because of this, democracy needs distrust in order to citizens be able to control and take corrective actions of any abuse of the political power. Furthermore, there are some resources that citizens can use in order to know whether the official holders are doing their job properly. Larson and Hardin (2004) call them “indicators to distrust, such as information gathering, monitoring, protective measures, use of deterrence or refusal to enter into long-term exchanges” (p. 35). These mechanisms of control help citizens to make sure that incumbents will not take advantage of the trust deposit on them, besides incumbents are bound to give an account of their actions.

These protective measures are relate to the concept of *accountability*, this refers to the ability to ensure that public officials are accountable for their conduct, namely incumbents are obliged to justify and report on their decisions, also whether they behaved inappropriately they can be punished (O'Donnell, 1999). In addition, the function of accountability is to expose and sanction any illegitimate use of power, as well as judge the decisions of the incumbents that are consider unfair, in order to impose those sanctions the political system requires institutions that conduct audits of the behavior of incumbents (Grant & Keohane, 2005). According to O'Donnell (1999) there are two different mechanisms of accountability horizontal and vertical. On the one hand, the horizontal accountability refers to the controls carry out within the government by different governmental agencies. With the

purpose of accomplish this task, there are institutions such as General Accounting Offices and Prosecution's Offices (*fiscalías*), this institutions can judge whether power holders are acting properly. On the other hand, vertical mechanisms refer to external controls over the state, in this case the electorate. This means that citizens can punish the government in elections whether they fail to do their job. This kind of accountability can also be carried out by the media, the civil society or social movements. Even more, citizens can also activate the horizontal accountability in order to punish the incumbents (O'Donnell, 1999). Additionally, high levels of political participation are considered as an effective mechanism of accountability (Grant, et al., 2005), being that citizens can vote for the opposition party, in that way they punish the incumbents for their inappropriate behaviors and poor outcomes.

The fact that citizens can request information about the performance of the incumbents, it is relevant in Latin America, being that citizens can request information in matters that they believe the government is failing or whehter the government is abusing of the political power. In Latin America, for this purpose, different civil organizations have been created, like CORPEI (Coordinadora contra la Represión Policial e Institucional) in Argentina or Alianza Cívica (Civic Alliance) in Mexico (Smulovitz, & Peruzzotti, 2000), these organizations can hold the government account for its actions. Apart from that, as scholar highlight mainstream media play a significant role bring to visibility to the claims and concerns that citizens have about the abuse of official holders in government or cases of corruption (Smulovitz et al., 2000). Namely civil organizations and media are entitled to judge government outcomes and pressure them to act in a more transparent way.

On the other side, as evidence shows political distrust might harm party support and political participation (Bélanger et al., 2005). Being that, some distrusted citizens may decide not to vote in the elections or to vote for independent parties, this second aspect is interesting, given that citizens decide to participate by choosing representatives that do not belong to the

traditional parties, in doing so, citizens are punishing the incumbents for their poor results. In that way, distrust in major parties acted in favor of third political parties, given that these parties could achieve in some cases great political support (Bélanger et al., 2005). In Latin America, there is evidence of how the disenchantment with the traditional political parties may bring to the political arena new parties and politicians, like in the case of Colombia with former president Uribe Velez and in Ecuador with president Correa (Carreras, 2012). Indeed, as the researches show low levels of trust in political institutions has as a consequence the rise of outsiders, in other words politicians that do not belong to traditional parties can win the elections (Bélanger et al., 2005; Carreras, 2012). That is to say people could blame the traditional political parties for the bad outcomes, as consequence distrustful citizens are going to trust more in a political outsider, namely someone who appears not to belong to the same political machinery. In that way, people hope that the new candidate will have better outcomes in aspects such as economy.

Apart from that, distrust and disenchant in political institutions does not mean that citizens are no supportive with democratic values, merely nowadays citizens are more critical with the parties, politicians and the political institutions (Dalton, 2004). One of the reasons that explain the low levels of trust in developed countries is the emerging of citizens with postmaterialistic values (Inglehart & Catterberg, 2002). These kind of citizens criticize and questioned the political order, for this reason they are going to be more “cynical towards political authority and political institutions” (Dalton, 2004, p. 109). For instance, in United Kingdom researches show that in spite of the low levels trust in politics of among young citizens, they are willing to participate in the elections (Dermody et al., 2010). The reason why young citizens do not trust that government is linked to the perception that the government is not doing the best for the interests of citizens (Dermody et al., 2010). Because of this, young citizens are more critical with the incumbents and their outcomes.

Even more, there are citizens who are always going to distrust government, since for those citizens the government is not taking in account their concerns about certain topics (Hardin, 2013). For this reason distrusted citizens are going have the feeling that the government does not pay attention to what they want or what they need. Furthermore, citizens that distrust the government show high levels of knowledge of political affairs. Because of this, citizens believe that they have many reasons to distrust political institutions (Paige, 1971). As Paige (1971) shows distrustful citizens are willing to take part in more risky political actions such as riots. This means that, individuals that distrust the government are no alienated from the political system. In fact, those citizens may believe that the government is no offering solutions to their grievances. Therefore they choose this kind of actions to attract the attention of the incumbents in order to find a solution to their demands (Paige, 1971).

To sum up, political trust is a good indicator that the government and the democratic system are working properly. In addition, citizens are satisfied with the political institutions and their outcomes (Dalton, 2004). On the other side, even though political distrust is a non-desirable aspect in a democratic regime (Dalton, 2004), I believe that distrust helps the government to be aware in which aspects is failing, and in doing so, distrust could offer some hints on the aspects that the government could improve in order to get better and more efficient outcomes. In other words, certain levels of distrust are indeed necessary in order to achieve democratic goals, namely to create more efficient policies for all the citizens without exceptions (Hart, 1978). Additionally, political distrust helps to control the abuse of power (Sztompka, 1999), and I consider this is one of the positive aspects of distrust, at least for Latin America, being that in the region some incumbents change the democratic rules in order to spend more time in power or reduce the power of the other democratic institutions to promote their own political agenda (Corrales, 2008; Waisbord, 2011).

Chapter 2 Mass media use: Internet political participation and collective action

Mass media

Mass media play a key role in society, being that media display information about many facts that not all the citizens can know at first hand (McCombs et al, 1972). In addition, not all facts can become news, that is to say mass media have certain rules about what is worth it or not to be publish. In doing so, media can include or exclude different topics. In that way, media creates a classification of events (Califano, 2015). Apart from that, news is valuable, for reporters, when meets certain criteria such as conflict or controversy, this means that there are features that make news more attractive to readers and viewers (B. C. Cohen, 1963). According to B. C. Cohen (1963) the fundamental role of the press consists in describing the political environment and suggesting various political alternatives, in doing so, press offers to citizens a way to manage and understand the political information. Added to that, in the sense of agenda setting mass media can put in the news the facts that are considered the relevant issues of the day (McCombs et al, 1972), then people will think about it and discuss it, namely media contribute to the creation of public opinion. Moreover, media influences the way citizens will perceive those facts (Mccombs & S. Valenzuela, 2007). Furthermore, scholars (Park 1940; Mccomb, et al., 2007) point out that citizens have certain need to be oriented about abstract information like political affairs or economy, that is to say that citizens need information to take decisions or evaluate the performance of the government. That is why citizens have the need to consume news.

Apart from that, Livingstone and Markham (2008) show that using media as a source of political information is positive related with interest in politics and engagement, thus interested citizens will participate in the political arena. Even more, there is evidence that getting news online increase the political interest and therefore the intentions to participate in

politics (Boulianne, 2011). Nevertheless, not all information available in mass media is positive and encourages people to participate in politics (Capella et al., 1997; Delli Carpini, 2004).

In contrast, there is evidence that media have an effect to mobilized citizens to participate in politics, like in United Kingdom (Newton, 1999) and in The Netherlands (Aarts, & Semetko, 2003), this means that people who read news tend to be more engaged to participate in politics. Similarly, according to Norris (2000, p. 315) information available in mass media reinforce the interest citizens have in politics, in addition citizens that follow media news and campaigns proved to be more politically engaged. Merely, according to the author mass media is not responsible for the lack of interest of people in politics. However the problem, as Norris (2000) states, is how to attract citizens that do not show any interest in politics, because they can choose not to watch, heard or read news.

Internet

Internet is the network that links all the global computer mediated-communication (CMC), with its digital language and the networking logic of communication, Internet has created the technological conditions to horizontal global communication (Castells, 2010). Internet started as military development in the 1960s in United States of America, in an effort to decentralize the communications. The idea was to create a network that could communicate with its nodes without using control centers. At the end of the 1960s decade four academic institutions, University of California, Los Angeles, Stanford research Institute, University of California, Santa Barbara, and University of Utah, were part of the first computer network known as ARPANET. The next big step toward the consolidation of Internet as we know it nowadays, was the creation of the world wide web (www) in 1990 by Tim Berners-Lee and Robert Cailliau, they also created the protocols of hypertext markup language (HTML) that allows computers to adapt their specific language with this shared

format, hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) this allow communication between web browsers and web servers, and the uniform resource locator (URL) that provided an standard address, this allow that computers communicate with the holding address that contains the information. All of this make possible that Internet could be used in an easy way by all people (Castells, 2010, p. 45-46). All these technological advances have made communication between human beings easier and faster.

2.1 Internet and political participation

One of the remarkable aspects of the democratic system is the promise to make all citizens involved in the decision making (J. Cohen, 1998). Therefore, it is necessary the existence of public forums, in which all the citizens may have access to take a part in the political discussion. In order to have a fruitful and effective political discussion, certain parameters should be followed like “mutual respect, equality, reciprocity, mutual justification, the search for fairness, and the absence of coercive power” (Mansbridge, Bohman, Chambers, Estlund, Føllesdal, Fung & Manin, 2010, p. 31). That is to say individuals must be tolerant and respectful with others opinions, whether they want to participate and be heard by their peers.

Nevertheless, to have extensive political discussions, that is to say the kind of discussions, in which every citizen has the opportunity to participate. This might not be completely possible, because individuals may not have either the necessary time or knowledge to take part of the political discussion (Coleman & Gotze, 2001; Dujisin, 2005). This given situation represents a limitation, being that many citizens are not allowed to benefit from the democratic system. However, these limitations can be overcome thanks to Internet, as researches argue the Net offer plenty of tools to be a part of the political

discussion such as blogs, instant messaging or chat rooms, as well as to get political information from different sources (Van Laer, J., & Van Aelst, 2009; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2009), it is worth to say that, Internet is not regulated, because of this could offer a huge range of information about different topics (Cho, Gil de Zúñiga, Sueng, Nhumane, Hyunseo & Rojas, 2003). This means that, the Net not just offer more information, but also different points of view about many issues.

Apart from that, tools as videoconferences can help people to communicate with many others individuals without constraints of space (Lupia et al., 2003). Even more, citizens could be more active and communicate in a direct way with the power holders (Dahlgren, 2005), as a consequence, it seems that Internet enhances the public sphere (Balkin, 2004). Moreover, one of the most striking features of Internet is that give more space to discursive contestation, that is to say the opponents of the dominant discourse can express their ideas without to be excluded, being that Internet is a space of diversity (Balkin, 2004; Dahlberg, 2007). And the diversity of opinions is very important feature to build a more inclusive public sphere.

Public sphere, according to Dahlgren (2005) is “a constellation of communicative spaces in society that permit the circulation of information, ideas, debates— ideally in an unfettered manner—and also the formation of political will (i.e., public opinion)” (p. 148). That is to say individuals need spaces, like forums, where they can express and exchanges with others their concerns and opinions about public matters. Furthermore, to be active in a deliberative democracy, citizens need information, namely without information about public affairs is difficult to have and express and opinion (Gimmler, 2001). Likewise, the Net overcomes the limitations of face-to-face communication, that is to say that matters like time and space are no longer an obstacle that prevent citizens for participating and expressing their opinions about politics (Bohman, 2004).

Even more, in a democracy is highly significant the freedom of speech, this means that people have the right and opportunity to express their opinions without any fear of negative consequences, because of their opinions (Dahl, 1971). Similarly, Bohman (2004) argues that public sphere must be accessible to all citizens, namely in a democracy there must be a freedom of speech and all citizens should have the opportunity to express their views. In this respect, Internet appears as a tool that extent not only the public sphere, but also contributes to the right of freedom of speech, being that citizens can express and exchange their opinions about different matters in the online forums, namely Internet offers the possibility to all citizens to have a voice in politics (Balkin, 2004).

Furthermore, the Net provides the online forums for public deliberation, those forums supposed to be free from state control and corporative interests (Dahlberg, 2001). Although, as Dahlberg (2001) notices online political forums most of the times reflect the ideas of the already dominant political discourse, as a consequence the online forums might not be as inclusive as they supposed to be. Even more, citizens are not much incline to use the provided online forums (Dahlberg, 2001). As a result, it seems that the public sphere does not earn much more with the Internet. That is to say that, those forums fail to offer a pluralistic perspective of the public opinion, in doing so many social actors are still left out the public sphere as the offline forums tend to do.

On the other hand, some scholars argue that Internet and more specific information available on websites can act as a civic mobilizer, in doing so, allow citizens to engage in civic activities in order to improve their communities, apart from that users can share information and send messages relate to all the civic activities (Shah, et al., 2005; Rojas, & Puig-i-Abril, 2009). This is a positive feature of Internet, being that promote civic engagement, which is a key aspect to engage political participation, that is to say that active

people in their communities are also engage in politics (Bekkers, 2005; Kavanaugh & Patterson, 2001).

Moreover, Internet could offer visibility to social groups that are usually ignored by traditional political parties or the media, namely this groups have no place or voice in the political agenda or in traditional media (TV Shows, News Papers, Radio Shows) (Balkin, 2004; Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2011). As an illustration on how internet gives voice to neglected groups of society, for instance, there is the Zapatista movement in Mexico, which won much visibility towards its cause, because they published information about their claims on Internet. In that way, they gained visibility towards their demands, as well as international support, because of this the Mexican government was forced to take in account their demands (Cleaver, 1998).

Another benefit of Internet is that may have certain influence in shifting attitudes towards politics (Gainous, Wagner, & Gray, 2016). For instance, whether users see that their online friends show interest in voting, they will probably do the same, namely, citizens will engage to do something, when they see familiar faces doing the same (Bond, Fariss, Jones, Kramer, Marlow, Settle & Fowler, 2012). This aspect of the Net is significant in the Latin American case, given that, citizens can share their political concerns with other users online and take action in the offline world. For instance, there is evidence that in Chile Internet users that participate in online politics also take part in offline activities such as voting (S. Valenzuela, 2013).

Besides, citizens that use media with informational purposes in young democracies seem more supportive with the new regime and the new democratic institutions (Loveless, 2010). According to Loveless (2010) individuals that read news and talk about political affairs they are socializing, namely they are discussing public affairs. This means that citizens that take part in a political conversation are interested and willing to participate in politics.

Namely, they have information and knowledge of the topic (Delli Carpini, Cook, & Jacobs, 2004). In fact, these evidence the importance of Internet and in general of media for public deliberation and subsequently the interest of citizens in participate in politics. That is to say that, people can discuss with others and exchange information. Likewise, they can express their concerns and views, in doing so citizens may have a better understanding about the public issues (Rojas, Shah, Cho, Schmierbach, Keum & Gil-De-Zuñiga, 2005).

Apart from that, as researches highlight people with higher income and higher level of education are the ones who are more willing to participate in politics (Puig-i-Abril, & Rojas, 2007). This means that wealthy people are the ones that possess knowledge, education, money and time to participate in politics, in contrast poor people have not the same advantages in order to participate in politics (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995; Gutiérrez & Gamboa, 2010). Following this idea, Internet might have also negative aspects such as deepening the inequalities existing among citizens, like for instance in the socioeconomic status (Yoo & Gil de Zúñiga, 2014), which it means that no everyone has the same opportunity to take advantage of Internet, being that low income citizens might not have the means to get access to the Net. Therefore, many individuals are going to be excluded of the Internet platform.

In Latin America the socioeconomic inequalities are one of the persistent problems (Oxhorn, 2003; De Ferranti et al., 2003), for this reason not all citizens will have the opportunity to connect to the Network and therefore will not enjoy the benefits offered by this one (García-Murillo, 2003; E. T. Hawkins & K. A. Hawkins, 2003; Gutiérrez et al., 2010; S. Valenzuela et al., 2016). However, in Latin America there has been other alternatives to grant people access to Internet, for instance some ONG's and social movements work together in Brazil and Peru, in order to provide to the less privileged people access to Internet (Fuentes-Bautista, Straubhaar, & Spence, 2004). Apart from that, there are

many telecenters or *cabinas*, in those places people can connect to the Network by paying a fee, in that way citizens overcome the lack of Internet connection at home (Fuentes-Bautista, et al., 2004).

Moreover, according to the ECLAC (Economic Commission for the Latin America and the Caribbean), between 2010 and 2015 the Internet connection in households in Latin America grew circa 43, 4 percent, this represent a great effort to decrease the digital gap in the region, despite this positive fact, still the half of population do not count with Internet connection (CEPAL, 2016). This means that, the poorest people still do not have many possibilities to be a part of the Network and take profit from the Net (Dujisin, 2005). This phenomenon is call “digital divided” (Van Dijk & Hacker, 2003; Hargittai, 2001; Wei & Hindman, 2011), in fact, what it evidences the “digital divided” as researches remark is the already given socioeconomic inequalities. Even more, scholars point out that online political participation might bring more political inequality, being that the same social groups that have a voice in offline forums are the same that will have more representation in the online forums (Norris, 2001; de la Selva and Rosa, 2015).

Apart from that, digital divided also has negative effects on activism, because it is difficult to promote a cause using Internet, for instance whether the target audience has not access to the Net and even more, they do not know how to use the tools of the Network (Harlow, & Guo, 2014). Because of this, there would be few chances that citizens will take part in the political activities. Similarly, Hargittai (2001) argue that digital divided will persist because of the educational gap. This means that individuals, who do not know how to use Internet tools, will not beneficiate of all the information available on Internet. On that matter, de la Selva et al. (2015) remark that in the Latin American region the digital divided reflects aspects such as the lack of educational opportunities, the unemployment, the concentration of the wealth and the gender gap.

Apart from that, even if the low income citizens get better Internet coverage, they are probably not going to use the Net for getting political information. Since high income users and low income users have different interests when using Internet (Zillien & Hargittai, 2009). For instance, users with high socioeconomic status tend to use Internet for informational purposes, while lower socioeconomic status users tend to use internet for entertainment purposes (Zillien et al., 2009). Apart from that, in order to take profit from the new technologies, people should not only have access and knowledge, but also they need to have the intention and interest to use it (Grazzi & Vergara, 2014). Taking account these aspects, Internet may enhance the political participation in the developed countries with democracies well establish, but might not have the same effects in countries where democracy is relatively young (Guillén & Suarez, 2005).

Nonetheless, Gainous et al. (2016) point out that in Latin America the digital divided is decreasing, namely there are more people that have access to the Net, because of this, it is easy to search and read political information online. This is a positive feature, according to scholars, being that information help to shift attitudes towards politics, as well as it opens other channels for citizens to be more active and participate in politics (Gainous et al., 2016). This is a relevant aspect of the Net, since for a good democratic system is vital that citizens are implicated in politics.

On the other side, Internet offer tools for direct democracy like the e-government tools. Those tools help to promote transparency and accountability, namely, this helps to reduce corruption in the government, as well as help to reduces the cost of communication between government and citizens (Norris, 2001; Ho, 2002; Shim & Eom, 2008). Even more, e-government provides tools that help to bring closer citizens to the government (Norris, 2001). In that way, citizens can make suggestions or know how the budget is spend, as well as may know in which projects the government is investing (Norris, 2001; Lau, Aboulhosen,

Lin & Atkin, 2008; Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010). Besides, some governments, like in UK, are creating new online channels to communicate with citizens through the Net, like for instance e-Petitions (Panagiotopoulos, Sams, Elliman, & Fitzgerald, 2011). This means that citizens can sign an online petition on the government website to promote a cause, in doing so citizens have certain influence on the government. Namely, this tool has the potential to make an impact on policy making.

Nonetheless, many of the e-government platforms do not provide the necessary information that help people to have a direct communication with the government, as well as they do not provide the necessary tools and information (Ho, 2002). Furthermore, as Ho (2002) points out “Some basic features of public accountability and citizen empowerment, such as performance measures of public services, online discussion groups, or information about grassroots organization activities, are seldom found in city Web site” (p. 441). Therefore, it worth’s nothing to create a web page that does not provide any information. Additionally, as Shim et al. (2008) point out the use of the e-government tools is related to the political culture of the country, namely, well establish democracies will offer better and more acquire information than emerging democracies. In Latin America there is evidence of the implementation of the e-government, but as researches state some of these tools are not completely efficient, sometimes the websites do not provide full information, for instance users can find information about a topic at national level. However, users may not find the information at the local level (Lau, et al., 2008).

On the other side, the use of e-government platforms might encourage people get involved with politics and in some way boost their trust in government, being that citizens can know what the government is doing (Kim, 2010). For this reason it becomes relevant that government may a big effort to implemented online tools that allow citizens to participate in

politics in more interactive and efficient way. Namely, in this way democracy can be more representative, because people may have a louder voice in the government.

2.2 Internet as a tool for collective action

The novelty of Internet, as Balkin (2004) point out, is that gives voice to a part of the society that has been neglected or has not place in traditional media. Being that, Internet offers diverse tools to express people ideas or thoughts, as well as help users to stay in touch with people who share their ideas. Even more the Net requires less time and money to access information and to generate content (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2014). All these advantages are promising in the realm of collective action. In addition, as Van Laer et al. (2009) argue that Internet offers tools that enhance the collective action such as “online petitions bulletin boards, email bombings and virtual sit-ins to hacking the websites of large companies and governments.” (p. 231). As well as, Internet has contributed to support traditional forms of collective action including organization, mobilization and trans-nationalization of the different social movements (Van Laer, et al., 2009). The latter is very interesting, being that, Internet tools help activists to connect with other activists and supporters, in different regions and countries of the world, who may share common concerns about specific issues. In doing so, Internet may extend the net of support of different social movements. Like for instance, in the case of environmental groups that have supporters in different countries (Jacobs & Maldonado, 2005). Namely, as Castells (2007) points out, the great value of online media is that pluralizes the production of the contents, in doing so, online media allows citizens to gain visibility in the issues that matter to them.

Even more, researchers point out that the expansion of the Net have an impact on democratic and freedom of expression, because it offers a new space for people to participate

and share their ideas, namely users can discuss about different political issues online, therefore they will be inclined to participate in politics either online or offline (Shirazi, Ngwenyama & Morawczynski, 2010; Gil de Zúñiga & S. Valenzuela, 2011). It is worth to say that the Net does not replace the traditional political activities taking place in the offline world, Internet only helps to extend them. For instance, traditional forms of political engagement are becoming easier to citizens thanks to Internet that is to say that, people can take part of activities such as donating money to a political cause with just a click (Hoffman, Jones, & Young, 2013).

Another aspect relevant for collective action are the existing ties among people, that is to say people need to know others in order to take action, they cannot act alone whether they want to make any impact (W. L. Bennett, 2004). As W. L. Bennett (2004) argues personal relations are important to maintain any social movement. This means that, supporters of any movement have friends and acquaintances that activists can invite to be part of the movement. This feature shows the relevance of weak ties in order to take action in politics. According to Granovetter (1983) weak ties connect people with other type of information that they cannot have within their strong ties. That is to say, weak ties expose people to new ideas. In doing so, weak ties are relevant for collective action, being that they help with the dissemination of more diverse ideas, as well as create connections between different social groups.

Similarly, according to Castells (2010) the Net gives users the possibility to create weak ties, namely, the Net contributes to expanded social connections. Another interesting feature of the online weak ties is that they are more egalitarian, being that links people with different social backgrounds (Castells, 2010). This characteristic of the Net makes it easier to discuss and exchange ideas about political affairs with distinct people in different parts of the world.

On the other hand, nowadays users can become reporters, which it means they can broadcast and publish their own content for instance in online blogs, in doing so they can offer information about the political facts (Kahn & Kellner, 2004). Additionally, the Net has also contributed with tools, like for instance Twitter and Facebook, which helps people to organize collective actions such as protests, signing a petition, create campaigns, and raising money for different causes (Segeberberg & W.L. Bennett, 2011; Harlow et al., 2014). As well as, the Net reduces the cost of collective organization, being that, it makes easy to coordinate actions and get support from citizens (Bimber, 1998). These features show all the benefits that the Net provided to users in order to engage in the in politics.

Apart from that, Internet increases the capacity of the movements of organizing and mobilizing resources, for instance there is the case of the Dutch women's movement (Edwards, 2004). This social movement uses Internet to share information and also to meet other organizations that work in the same area, in that way, they found new supporters, and at the same time they build new connections with different organizations (Edwards, 2004). Apart from that, the Net seems to foster activism, since it helps to organize confrontational actions and revolutions, like in the case of the Arab Spring, that it means Internet helps to encourage activism and participation in the offline world (Postmes & Brunsting 2002; McGarty Thomas, Lala, Smith & Bliuc, 2014). Furthermore, the new tools provided by Internet allow citizens to be part of international politics, that is to say that they can be a part of global movements such as environmental causes, therefore they can for instance, organize protest and mobilizations to pressure multinational companies to be more responsible with the environment, as well as the to pressure the government implement more responsible policies to take care of the environment (Stolle & Hooghe, 2005; Segerberg et al., 2011). Nonetheless, Internet effects are conditioned to the use that citizens make of it, namely

whether citizens use internet to gather political information, it might have great effects on political mobilization (Quintelier, & Vissers, 2008).

On the other hand, there is evidence of the use of Internet in Latin America as a tool for collective mobilization, for instance in Mexico young students create a movement using the hashtag #Yosoy132 (#I'm132) to protest against the lack of plurality in the media in Mexico during the presidential race in 2012. The protesters claim that media did not publish much information from other political parties apart of the traditional ones (Pareja & Echeverría, 2014). Furthermore, in Chile in 2011 young citizens organized protests with the help of Internet to request that the government changes policies in education and energy (S. Valenzuela, 2013). Beyond the impact of these movements and protest, it is clear, as the authors point out that the use of Internet will help to promote political participation in the region, and the citizens will be aware that they could have certain influence on politics (S. Valenzuela, 2013; Pareja et al., 2014).

Even more, scholars agree on Internet helps activist to gain support towards their cause, as well as share information about the activities they attend to do (Cleaver, 1998; Chadwick, 2007), furthermore, the Net has improved the internal communication of the social movements, that is to say that communication becomes easier, effective and cheaper (Rucht, 2004, p. 53). For instance, during the protest in Seattle against the WTO (World Trade Organization) in 1999, activists use the Net to publish information online such as meeting points, as well as information that explains the reasons of their protest. For this purpose the organizers of the movement create online forums, online donations, as well as they share audio and videos. In doing so, the activists could gain support from other citizens (Chadwick, 2007, p. 287).

As mention before Internet gives voice to different groups of the society that are usually not represent in the political arena. To illustrate this positive feature of the Net, in the

protests of 2011 in the Middle East, so called Arab Spring, women took a very decisive role in the demonstrations against the authoritarian regimes in the region (Howard, Duffy, Freelon, Hussain, Mari & Maziad, 2011). Another relevant aspect of this protest is that the citizens used Internet tools such as Twitter and Facebook to share information about the ongoing facts, in doing so people took the role of reporters (Howard, et al., 2011). It is worth to say that, the mainstream media in the region did not cover this event; for this reason the role of the online communications were relevant in spreading the information, in order that citizens take action offline. This was particularly useful for the protesters, being that they got support from citizens of the different countries of the region (Howard, et al., 2011). It should be noted that social movements need media, in order to gain visibility. Otherwise social movements cannot create an impact. Media, in contrast, has the option to choose what to publish or not (Rucht, 2004). In this way, Internet becomes relevant, since it helps to spread ideas and news that would not appear in the mainstream media, namely, the Net opens new channels that allow all citizens to express their thoughts and concerns about politics without censor.

Furthermore, Internet helps activists to get support towards their concerns, that is to say that they can mobilize and organize protest and search for national or international support (McGarty, et al., 2014). Namely, Internet helps to mobilized and organized people in a faster and easier way than in the past (Van Laer, et al., 2009). Additionally, as Bimber, Flanagin and Stohl (2005) highlight the benefits of Internet for collective action relies on how people use and appropriate the tools provided by the Net in their daily lives, namely the new technologies are valuable for the use that people give to them. It is worth to say that people who belong to different online groups with causes like environmental issues, anti-globalization or human's rights are prone to participate in the offline world (Segeberg et al.,

2011). That is to say, citizens are not just willing to show online their support to the cause, but they will take action in the offline world (Harlow & Harp, 2012).

Added to that unlike in the past when people used to belong to churches, labor unions or political parties, today, in fact, individuals prefer to belong to organizations that are more horizontal, that is to say where everyone can raise an issue or give its opinion (W. L. Bennett et al., 2008). In consequence, nowadays citizens approach to politics in a more personalized form (W. L. Bennett, 2012), this means that citizens can choose which aspects are relevant for them according to their personalities and desires. Similarly, Micheletti (2002) claims that issues for what people will go out to protest are more individualized, that it means citizens might have different life styles and interests, which it means people will have different demands for why they will consider participating collectively. Added to that, according to Brunsting and Postmes (2002) collective action has two dimensions, on the one side there are persuasive actions such as writing a letter, lobbying, and petitioning. On the other side, there are confrontational actions like demonstration, blockade, or sabotage. Taking account this aspects, Brunsting et al., (2002) claim that Internet helps to engage citizens more with persuasive actions rather than confrontational actions.

In the realm of collective action the Net offers the possibility of bringing people together, being that users can find online other users with similar interests and join them, in order to be a part in different political activities (Lupia et al., 2003). But at the same time the use of Internet can also decrease the collective action, because subjects can achieve many goods without the help of others (Lupia, et al., 2003; W. L. Bennett, 2012). Moreover, some scholars believe that the fact that users receive many “important” messages can harm collective action, because citizens are overloaded with a huge range of information, this means that many important information might end up not being non-relevant (Fenton & Barassi, 2011). In addition, the fact that users can create their own content harms the

possibility to read messages from other users (Fenton et al., 2011). This means that, the collective interests are competing with the individual interests for the attention of users. Even more, there is evidence of the difficulties that social movements may face to get the attention of online users, as well as to engage them with the movement. Namely, some users put a like but they do not show their support in the offline activities (Fenton et al., 2011).

To sum up, since the inception of internet, the way people participate in politics has change, namely citizens have more channels to express their opinions, share and find information about any matter (Castells, 2010). That is to say that, the Net provides citizens with new tools to express their opinions and views about politics (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2014). At the same time, the Net helps to enhance the public sphere, in doing so, offer new forms of political participation (Balkin, 2004). Furthermore, the Net gives voice and allow the participation of different groups of the society, particularly those ones that are not usually taking in account for the mainstream media or political elites (Balkin, 2004). Moreover, the Net requires less time and money, which is why the Net is so useful organizing civic activities or protests. Those aspects are so promising, in special for Latin America region, since it is necessary to find new forms of engaging people with politics, as well as integrate all the groups that are part of the society. However, the fact that not everyone in the region may have the possibility to be connected to the Net, it may hampers the chances of many citizens to be a part of the political discussion (S. Valenzuela et al., 2016).

Chapter 3 Political participation

3.1 Institutionalized political participation

Political participation is a concept that aims to explain what motives individuals to be interested and involved in politics. On that matter, Seligson and Booth (1976) pointed out political participation is a “behavior that is intended to influence the political system, be it at the national, regional, or communal level.” (p. 96). Following this idea, citizens need to take part in different political activities in order to influence the system. One of the basic forms to influence the government is by voting in the election of the representatives, whether the president or congress (Dahl, 1971). Even more, “political participation is defined as behavior influencing or attempting to influence the distribution of public goods” (Booth, 1979, p. 31). That is to say, when citizens participate in politics are deciding in what kind of projects, they want the government invest such as improve public services.

Additionally, political participation according to Verba et al. (1995) requires time for political activities such as voting, engaging in informal community activity, working in a campaign or contacting the government; besides donating money, use a sticker or a button (Robinson, Rusk, & Head, 1968). Furthermore, education and income are relevant factors, when it comes to being active in politics (Verba et al., 1995). Given that, people with higher levels of education has more access to knowledge, because of this they tend to be more interested to participate more in politics. Even more, well-educated citizens believe that they can change things in their nations, as much as to persuade others to embrace their opinions (Inglehart, 1977). Namely, well-educated people have more skills and possibilities to take part in politics.

Apart from that, as Gil de Zuñiga et al. (2010) argue, political participation it cannot be understand just in these four dimensions “voting, campaign activity, contacting officials, and collective activities” (Brady, Verba & Schlozman 1995 as cited by Gil de Zuñiga et al., 2010, p. 38), being that these features do not offer a complete picture of what is political participation in the era of Internet. As a matter of fact, Internet create new spaces where people can express their political views and engage with politics, such as posting comments on a blog, this activity is only possible on the Network (Gil de Zúñiga et. al., 2010). Namely, apart from voting, there are other political activities in which citizens can engage such as participating in the online political forums. Even more, as mention in chapter 2, Internet offers many tools and opportunities that help people to engage with collective action (W. L. Bennett, 2004; Hwang et al., 2006). Namely, Internet expands the possibilities to participate in politics.

On the other side, political participation needs the existence of social and political institutions, in order that citizens can carry out all the political activities (Delli Carpini, 2000). Institutions are responsible to create the rules that govern society (North, 1990), this means that the purpose of institutions is to provide structure and predictability to all interactions between individuals in society. Therefore, there are institutions, like for instance, political, economic, educational or social, indeed, each of them has rules that must be fulfilled (North, 1990). In fact, having rules allows citizens know what they can or cannot do. In that way, when an individual does not follow the rules, he knows that his infraction can be punished. On the other side, political institutions connect citizens with the government, and the salient results of the political institutions may determine the satisfaction among citizens with the political system (Anderson & Guillory, 1997). This means that political institutions are responsible to create rules in order that citizens can be part of the political life, but at the

same time political institutions are responsible to follow rules that could ensure the well-functioning of politics.

Nevertheless, the questions are why people are willing to engage in politics, and why they want to participate, and even more, what they receive in return? On that matter, Almond et al. (1963) argue that citizens, who are satisfied with their lives, as well as with the function of the government, are the ones that usually participate in politics. Namely, citizens, who take part in political activities, believe that their participation is effective. In this regard, political effectiveness is related with the self-efficacy (Seligson, 1980), this means that, whether individuals notice that their actions are having some positive repercussions, they will continue to do the same, because of this the levels of support of political institutions will increase. Therefore they will participate in institutionalized activities such as voting. For instance in the study carry out by Booth and Seligson (2005) in Costa Rica, they notice that citizens that have a great sense of political effectiveness are frequently involved politics.

Similarly, another aspect that is related to the intention to participate in politics is the personality of individuals. According to some scholars extroverted individuals are more incline to participate in politics, as well as they believe that their political actions are being efficacious (Vecchione, & Caprara, 2009). In other words, when citizens participate, they are aware that they are playing a key role in changing and improving social and political aspects, not only for their own benefit, but also for the whole society.

Apart from that, there are two ways in which citizens approach to politics, according to L. W. Bennett (1998), on one side there is “dutiful citizens”, those citizens participate in voting or being a member of a party, the citizens that fit more this description are the old ones. Even more, when citizens cast their votes, they are choosing who is going to represent their interests in the government (Verba, et al., 1995). Namely, if a few citizens use this mechanism, this means that just a small part of the population is choosing for everyone

(Verba, et al., 1995). As a result of this only one part of the population is represented in the government. This is why is very important that citizens go to vote, in order to have some to represent their interests. On the other side, there are “self-actualizing citizens” (L. W. Bennett, 1998) these citizens are more inclined to participate in politics in unconventional ways. This second feature is more interesting, since voting is an action that citizens do not tend to do very often (Dalton, 2008). Besides, when citizens vote, they do it in order to choose a diverse package of policies that the new government may or not follow. Instead, participate in a protest allows citizens to focus in issues that are relevant for them and need to be resolve as soon as possible (Dalton, 2008). Namely citizens cannot wait until the next Election Day to bring those issues to the political agenda.

In order to participate in politics citizens need “social networks or political organizations that coordinated the actions of many individuals.” (Inglehart, 1990, p. 371). Among those organizations are institutions like labor unions, churches and political parties, all these organizations provide citizens with skills that they can use to participate in politics (Inglehart, 1990). Apart from that, as Delli Carpini (2000) points out whether citizens want to take part in politics, they need “certain kinds of organizational, communications, and leadership skills.” (p. 343). Those skills are essential to be effective in political action, namely citizens might have many grievances, but if they have poor organizations skills, it will be difficult that they can present their requests to the government. Added to that, citizens need political information in order to take action in politics (Delli Carpini, 2000). As mention in chapter two, in order to participate in politics it is essential that citizens have information, but also another relevant aspect is the interests people might have to engage in interpersonal discussions about politics. On that matter, according to Huckfeldt and Sprague (1987) political information is not just transmitted through media, but also trough the social interactions in everyday life. Even more, citizens that discuss about politics with others might

not only have great amounts of information, but also they are more likely to engage in different forms of political action (Scheufele, 2002).

Even more, according to Verba et al., (1978) citizens might belong to groups that “can be based on economic position, race, ethnicity, language, region, religion or other factors.” (p.12), namely, groups with a common purpose have the facilities to create organizations that can be relevant for political mobilization, like for instance political parties. On the same matter, Pérez-Liñán (2001) points out that “Mobilization agents can also be individual politicians and their informal networks, local bosses, trade unions, interest groups” (p. 296). This means that citizens which belong to any of these groups will have, indeed, more chances and skills to participate in politics. In addition, these citizens might have great amounts of motivations as well as resources to participate in politics (Verba, et al., 1978).

All these groups, mentioned before, are part of civil society, because of this, civil society is considered as the pillar of democracy, since it is pluralistic and encompasses different members and groups of the society (Diamond, 1994; Brysk, 2000). In other words, civil society is responsible to promote tolerance among all the groups that are part of society. This means that, civil society promotes the respect for different points of view within the society. Even more civil society comprehends “associations, organizations, cooperatives” (Gimmler, 2001, p. 25) as much as “Citizen initiatives, round-tables, various societies, national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs).” (Gimmler, 2001, p. 25). Furthermore, civil society helps to maintain the connection between the state and citizens. As well as, it is the one responsible to limit the power of the state, that is to say civil society can denounce the abuse of political power of any member of the government (Diamond, 1994). This means that, civil society is the responsible for holding the government accountable for its actions.

Apart from that, civil society is essential, according to Diamond (1994), being that it is responsible to the shift of different nations to more democratic regimes. In doing so, civil society develops and promotes skills that latter can be useful for political participation. Furthermore, as scholars point out is relevant to understand that civil society is separated from the economy, as well as from the governmental control, even though, civil society interacts with the economy sectors and government (Diamond, 1994, Brysk, 2000). Nonetheless, in order to be effective civil society must be independent from both of them (Diamond, 1994; Gimmler, 2001). In that way, civil society could represent better the interests of the citizens.

Moreover, in Latin America as Brysk (2000) point out the civil society is not particularly strong, that is to say after the democratization of the majority of the countries in the region, it was expected that citizens will be eager to participate in the public sphere. In spite of this positive fact, many citizens had neither the knowledge nor the skills to participate in the new democratic regimen, as well as they were not represented in the government (Brysk, 2000). This given situation is related to the fact that the previous regimes never provided a completely welfare state to the entire citizens, furthermore, a vast part of the citizens were no subjects of rights during the autocratic regimes (Oxhorn, 2003). Because of this, civil society was never really consolidated in the region. Namely, in Latin America the civil rights are still not well establish, for instance, while better conditions of economy in developed world granted more rights to citizens, in contrast, in Latin America there was only a change of the economic model, but many of the civil rights are still an uncompleted task the region (Oxhorn, 2003). Therefore in order to create a more strong civil society in Latin America the different social groups must be included, as well as their civil rights must be guaranteed, in order that all citizens could participate in politics.

Nonetheless, researches show that in Argentina, for instance, civil society organizations now “are more able to hold government accountable and force change through citizen action, organised activism and mass mobilization” (Jacobs et al., 2005, p. 171). This is a positive aspect inasmuch as civil society seems to be more active in the region. Even though, as scholars point out the state cannot answers to many claims of society, because the state might have economic restrictions that depend on international forces and not from the national state (Jacobs, et al., 2005; Béjar & Moraes, 2016). This given situation might leave little space for the state to respond to the grievances of citizens.

Furthermore, there is evidence that people in Latin America as much as in other regions of the world are not going to vote for the same party or just simply they drop out to vote, if they incumbents are failing to report good economy outcomes (Lewis-Beck & Ratto, 2013). Namely, a bad function economy is an obstacle to participate and take advantages of the principles of democratic system. According to Benton (2005) Latin American citizens have experience bad economy outcomes for a long period, this has consequences on Latin American citizens political choices and therefore in their participation in politics.

On the other side, in an effort that Latin American citizens are more active in politics some countries have the policy of compulsory vote. Nonetheless, this has not been enough to engage citizens with politics and therefore to be more active in voting (Kurtz, 2004). In addition, there are low levels of voter registration in the region. This given situation has negative consequences in voter turnout, since citizens who are not registered, they will not be able to cast the ballot (Pérez-Liñán, 2001). In contrast, there is evidence that left governments in Latin America create more channels, in order that the majority citizens will participate more in politics (Luna et al., 2005). For instance, as K. A. Hawkins (2010) states a positive aspect, in Latin America, is that leftist governments want that low income citizens are more involved in politics, because of this they are creating spaces and programs, in order

to engage citizens to participate in politics. The author highlights how, in Venezuela context, women, poor people and less educated are eager to participate in politics, thanks to all the policies implemented by the government in order to persuade them to mobilize politically (K. A. Hawkins, 2010).

3.2 Protest and unconventional political participation

The only way to cause a reaction is by acting. Therefore if citizens decide to protest, they are just acting in an attempt to get benefits to the whole society. This action could be a reaction to unpopular policies imposed by the government (Farah, Barnes & Heunks, 1979). Even more, people who opt for this form of participation is consider as the “critical mass” (Oliver, Marwell, & Teixeira, 1985), this means that those citizens are capable of identify the demands of the society, and at the same time they are willing to work and organize mobilizations, in order that the government responds to their demands, in doing so they could achieve improvements for the whole society. It is worth to say that, citizens have won many rights thanks to the political actions of the activists (Young, 2001). That is to say, collective action might have benefits for all people, even if not all the members of the society are willing to be part of it.

It is worth to say that, in the past, scholars considered that protest, signing a petition or street demonstrations were part of unconventional political action (Marsh et al., 1979), however as Dalton et al. (2010) point out nowadays protest or signing petitions are part of the conventional political participation, since most of western democracies protest behaviors such as street demonstrations are as relevant as voting. On that matter, protest is seen as a way of breaking the regular social order, and at the same time protest has become normal mode of political participation, namely, protest is in the limits of the institutional

participation (Scribano & Schuster, 2001). For instance in the study about the political support in eight countries in Latin America Booth et al., (2009) find out that protest is just another channel that Latin Americans use to communicate their demands to the government.

Apart from that, according to Farah et al., (1979) protest has most of the time an specific purpose, for instance citizens protest with the intention of stop a war, increase social welfare, lower the taxes or against an unpopular policies. Similarly, according to Lipsky (1968) protest is an “objection to one or more policies or conditions” (p. 1145). Namely, unresolved demands and dissatisfaction with government performance will increase the intentions of citizens to protest. On that matter, political action is linked to political dissatisfaction, this concept refers to how citizens evaluate the governments work (Farah et al., 1979), this means that, if the assessment is positive citizens will have the feeling that the government is fulfilling their demands, when is negative citizens can use the regularized channels to communicate with public officials to express their discomfort, but if those channels are not enough to achieve their purpose, people will take another option like protest (Farah et al., 1979). However, according to Easton (1975) the dissatisfaction of citizens with politics does not necessarily translate into political change. That is to say, it is necessary something more than just disgruntled citizens to take action. On that matter, Meyer (1993) points out that “Protest movements emerge when institutionally oriented actors lose faith in the efficacy of institutional politics.” (p. 475). Namely, citizens choose to protest, because they are facing difficulties and they believe that the incumbents as well as the political institutions are not taking care of their demands. In that way, it seems that protesting, in certain circumstances, is a more efficient and faster way of being heard by the government.

On top of that, protest is seen as the political activity, that it will be chosen by the least favored members of the society, like low income ones or minorities (Lipsky, 1968). Furthermore, when citizens opt to protest, they should implicate the rest of the society in their

concerns (Lipsky, 1968; Meyer, 1993), namely, if certain group of citizens want to have impact and to force government to solve their petitions, they need that other groups of the society are aware of their demands. That is to say that, protesters need external allies such as political parties, church, the media or any organized group of the civil society (Almeida & Stearns, 1998), namely, protesters require that citizens of other social classes or groups support them, in order to be successful in pressure the government to answer their demands. On that matter, in the Latin American context as Eckstein (1989) argues the most successful social movements and protest are those that implicate all social classes. For instance, Eckstein (1989, p. 38) highlights the case of Brazil and Chile where working and low income classes joined forces, in order to protest against the military government, in doing so, protesters were more effective to address their demands, as well as get an answer from the state. Nonetheless as Eckstein (1989) remark not always is possible to force an alliance between the different socioeconomic classes, because everyone may have its own grievances, this means that in some cases the interests of a group may harm the interests of the others.

Additionally, as mention before citizens may express their political opinion mainly through voting; however there are other activities, in which citizens can engage to show their opinion about politics, among there are acts of civil disobedience such as the use of violence (Paige, 1971) or refusing to pay taxes (Lipatov, 2016). On that matter, it is relevant to know, what makes people to choose this path and not the regular channels offer by the governmental institutions.

In Rawls (2013) words:

[...] civil disobedience, when is justified, is normally to be understood as a political action, which addresses the sense of justice of the majority in order to urge reconsideration of the measures protested and to warn that in the firm

opinion of the dissenters the conditions of social cooperation are not been honored. (p. 244)

Namely, people choose this path because the incumbents are not doing what is the best for all the population. This means that incumbents are taking measurements that are not part of the political plan for which they were chosen. For instance, a political party can promise, in campaign times, not to increment the taxes. But as soon as they are elected, they chose to raise the taxes. This situation can create too much frustration among citizens, since they did not expect this to happen (Rawls, 2013). Furthermore, as Zaffaroni (2010) point out citizens do not usually pretend to opt for unconventional ways to obtain the rights. Citizens choose this way when they see that the institutions are not function according to the expectations and also are not being helpful in resolving their demands (Machado, et al., 2011).

Nonetheless, individuals that choose unconventional political actions know that they must avoid any use of violence, in doing so citizens have more chances that their grievances will be taken in account by the government (Zaffaroni, 2010). However, not always is possible to avoid violence (McAdam, et al., 2001). Even more, it is difficult to know, for instance, how a protest will develop, that is to say that the outcomes of some manifestations could end in a pacific way, while others could be more contentious and lead to violence (McAdam, et al., 2001).

On that matter, Zaffaroni (2010) makes a distinction between civil disobedience and protest. On the one side, protest intends to attract the attention of public opinion, as well as the authorities about the conflict or the needs of a specific group in the society. On the other side, civil disobedience responds to a non-violent tactic, namely, it is essential not only not to use violence, but also to take care that nothing can be misinterpreted or publicly projected as

a use of violence, because the use of violence diminishes impact of the political action (Zaffaroni, 2010).

Another aspect that leads people to be involved in a protest, it is the fact that a big part of the population believes that they are not represented in the government (Luna et al., 2005). Namely, protests are linked to unresolved issues of a given group in the society, for example in 1960's no one expected that African Americans went out to the streets to protest to demand their civil rights (Marsh, et al., 1979), therefore protests are somehow a catalyst for issues that are not in the political agenda. On that matter, demands in the way that are understood by Easton(1967) "may be quite narrow, specific, and simple in nature as when the grievances and discontents, relevant to a given experience, are directly expressed" (p. 39). Namely, demands are requirements from the citizens that need to be resolved "right now", because many of these demands are issues that cannot wait so much time to be solved.

In that way, deliberative democracy seems the better option in which citizens can solve their problems with the government, namely citizens can enter in a negotiation with the state (Young, 2001). This means that they can establish a direct dialogue with the government, in order to raise their objections. However, most of the time activists are not interested in debate and negotiate with the authorities, being that activists believe that in a negotiation always win the one who holds more power, in this case the government would win (Young, 2001, p. 671). On the other hand, political decision-making is a long process; therefore many demands may not be answered (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004). Namely, if there are many petitions from citizens but the government will not have much time to fulfill all of them.

Moreover, protest encompasses the reality of a struggle between two subjects for the appropriation and orientation of social values and resources (Favaro, Iuorno & Cao, 2006). Namely, protest evidences the conflicts between the state and different social groups.

Particularly within the groups that are not represented in the traditional parties in the government. One example, as mentioned before, is the case of the Zapatista protest in Mexico, at the beginning their claims were ignored by the government, as well as by the national press in Mexico, however with the help of Internet they gain visibility in international media, in doing so, the Mexican government was pushed to attend Zapatistas demands (Cleaver, 1998). For this reason, the intervention of mass media is significant, being that media in somehow legitimizes the protest, and in doing so, media helps protesters to put their demands on the political agenda, that is why it is relevant that media is willing to cover the manifestations (Favaro et al., 2006).

On the other side, in the Latin America context the reasons to protest are linked to different situations, for instance in the 1960s and 1970s and part of the 1980s the majority of protest were against the repressive governments in many countries of the region (Seoane Taddei & Algranati, 2005; Laclau, 2006). Then in the 1980s, 1990s as well as in 2000s people go to the streets to protest against all the socioeconomic changes that the neoliberal policies bring to the region (Morton, 2002; Seoane et al., 2005; Almeida, 2007). It is important to note that Latin American citizens protested not just against the national government, but also against the international agencies that Latin Americans view as responsible for the unfair economy measurements, such as the World Bank or the IMF (Eckstein, 1989; Almeida, 2007). For instance, in Colombia during the 1970s and 1980s peasants organize a movement in order to request government an agrarian reform and a better distribution of the productive land. Their claims were partially attended by the government, because the IMF pressures the Colombian government to take more austerity measurements, and in doing so, the state was unable to answer the demands of peasants (Zamosc, 1989).

It is worth to say that not all the movements in Latin America are economic related, for instance there are Las madres de Plaza de Mayo (The mothers of Plaza de Mayo)

(Navarro, 1989). The purpose of this social movement is to find every person that disappeared during the military rule in Argentina. For this purpose, women organize meetings and marches in Plaza de Mayo, this square is near to Casa Rosada, which is the seat of the Argentinian government. The relevant feature from this movement is the fact that is carried out by women. Since women in Latin American have not had a leading role in politics (Navarro, 1989).

On the other hand, social movements decline in Latin America after the transitions to democracy, according to Pickvance (1999), this happens because under more stable conditions certain demands are no longer an issue to solve. Therefore, the action of protest has a cycle and as soon as the protesters achieve their goals, protest are no longer necessary (Meyer, 1993). Nonetheless, with the neoliberal process that started in the region in the 1990s many new social movements has emerged as well as new repertoires of protest (Yashar, 1998; Seoane et al., 2005). Some scholars view this trend as a positive aspect, because it seems that citizens have more freedom under the democratic regime, therefore they are more willing to participate in a protest (Bellinger, & Arce, 2011). However, other scholars agree that economy liberalization of Latin America has increased the inequalities in the region. This situation has a consequence that many citizens do not have the chance to take part in politics (Kurtz, 2004; Almeida, 2007). For instance, the neoliberal processes bring to Latin America negative consequences as the precariousness of the employment and the raise of poverty (Eckstein, 1989; Espeche, 2003). In that way, the process of globalization, in the sense of the unification of the global market, has affected and changed the society in Latin America, one example here is the privatization of many public companies in the whole continent (Castells, 1999). This wave of privatization, in the 1990s, brought instability to the region, for instance the labor unions are weakened in the region, this given situation allow employers to dictate the working condition and lowered the cost of hand labor (Cook, 2004). It is worth to say

that labor unions were not particularly strong in the past in Latin America (Eckstein, 1989) and with the inception of neoliberal policies labor unions have almost disappear. In addition, as the ILO (International Labor Organization) shows in its report of 2016 there are in the region at least 134 millions of people who work in the informal sector (ILO, 2017). Informal work means “unprotected workers, excessive regulation, low productivity, unfair competition, evasion of the rule of law, underpayment or nonpayment of taxes, and work “underground” or in the shadows.” (Garcia-Verdu, 2007, p. 21). Namely, these workers do not receive any benefits from the state, as well as they do not give any to the state. Because of this, it is more difficult that people participate in politics, being that they do not belong to a group and do not have a common purpose that can unite them, for example to protest and demand better working conditions.

Another consequence of the neoliberal process in Latin America, in the political realm, is the fact that there has been a lot of protest against the neoliberal policies. Due to the intensity of the protest in the region some governments decided to take more repressive measurements against protesters (Almeida, 2007). As an example, between 1995 and 2001 Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic were among the countries that register the high levels of arrest of activist and protesters (Almeida, 2007). Even more, researchers agree that in Latin America in the decade of 2000s there was a strong trend of the criminalization of protest in the region; this means that new laws were created in order to regulate the activity of protest, because of this many protesters were arrested (Taddei, 2002; Svampa & Pandolfi, 2004; Ortiz, Burke, Berrada, & Cortés, 2013).

Added to that, the fight against terrorism that started in 2001, has not only affected citizens right to protests in developed countries (Gillham, Edwards & Noakes, 2013), but also has affected Latin American activists. For instance, as researches point out that in some countries like Colombia and Bolivia, the governments approved new policies to prevent

people to protest, these policies were justified by the governments, in order to stop any threat of terrorism (Taddei, 2002, p. 30), this given situation in the region, according to scholars, is a clear violation of freedom of expression and it represents certain levels of repression (Taddei, 2002; Ortiz, et al., 2013). Repression is defined as “negative sanctions, such as restrictions on free speech, violation of life integrity rights, such as torture and political imprisonment” (S. C. Carey, 2006). Many of these sanctions are taken by the incumbents in order to avoid the regime becoming unstable.

Taking this into account, the government can develop new policies to prevent people from protesting. That is to say that government approves laws in order to avoid the potential threat that protest represents to society and to dominant order (Waddington, 1998). However, tactics of repression reduce the legitimacy of government (Opp & Roehl, 1990). That is why nowadays many western democracies prefer to negotiate with protesters, rather than enter in a long confrontation with them (Waddington, 1998). Apart from that, democratic regimes should tolerate protests, nevertheless tolerance of protest can be conditioned to certain factors such as protest must remain peaceful, being that if there is any threat of violence or disruption, it will be very likely that the police might intervene to maintain the order in the society (Waddington, 1998).

In different countries of Latin America the protest is regulated by the government, that is to say people cannot go out to protest freely (Svampa et al., 2004; Svampa, 2007). Given that, in some cases protesters need to ask permission to the government to go to protest. This means that, if protesters do not ask for permission they will have to pay a fine or in the worst of the cases they could go to jail (Bertoni, 2010; Rabinovich, 2011). Even more, if a protest is considered illegal, there will be few chances that the government will take into account the demands of the protesters (Rabinovich, 2011). Argentina is one of the countries that reflect this situation in the region, according to scholars during the 1990s as well as in first

decade of 2000s several laws and regulations were approved, in order to prevent that people go to protest. The government justifies these measures in the name of bringing some stability to the country. Since many protests had arisen due to the bad economic conditions in the country (Svampa et al., 2004).

Apart from that, in Latin America, the repertoires of the protest include actions that can be prolonged for long periods, like blockading roads or marches that can start in rural areas and end in the city (Seoane et al., 2005). Even more, people can appropriate of the public spaces like squares or parks, as well as public or private buildings. Citizens use all of those mechanisms in order to gain visibility in the political arena (Seoane et al., 2005). One such as mechanism is land invasion (Seligson, 1979), this action is taking by poor peasants that possess no land, as a matter of fact, peasants that decide to take this action, they are aware that they can face sanctions from the government. On that matter, according to Domínguez and Sabatino (2008) land invasion reflects a conflict in the region over land ownership, as well as denounce the persistence of a problem that has not only not been resolved, but has also increased with globalization. In addition, many of the protest in the region are part of the repertoires of resistance against globalization, like for instance the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico (Morton, 2002). Apart from this, in other regions of the world, there have been mobilizations against the globalization, like the Seattle protest in November 1999 against WTO. As well as, the protest occurred during the meeting of the G8 in Genoa in July 2001 (Morton, 2002, p. 28).

In addition, as mentioned earlier, social movements have a set of different disruption tactics such as blocking traffic. This action, for instance, creates a conflict with the protesters and the government because, even if it is a pacific protest on the streets, this action changes the daily routines of other citizens (Della Porta & Fillieule, 2004, p. 217). This given situation is highlighted by Zaffaroni (2010) in Argentina, for instance, when citizens protest

and choose to block a main street, in the view of the Argentinian government, this action hinders the right of free circulation of the other citizens. On that matter, there is a case in Argentina that reflects the conflict between the right of protest and the right of circulation. The case is known as “*el caso Schifrin*” (The Schifrin case). The story behind this case is that a school teacher decided to block a main street for two hours with the support of other teachers, students and parents (Rabinovich, 2011, p. 18). The reason of her protest was based on the low earnings that she had as school teacher, namely, her salary was not enough for her to live. However, as Rabinovich, (2011) highlights the answer from the government to the Schifrin case was responded with a sentence of three months in prison and the prohibition of participate in new demonstrations for two years. In the view of the Argentinian Court, the only legitimate way that the teacher has in order to express her political opinion, it is through the suffrage. According to Rabinovich, (2011) this case is an example of the repression of freedom of expression, as well as the criminalization of the right of citizens to participate in a protest.

On the other hand, the fact that there are many protests against the neoliberal economic measures in the region, according to the scholars, has a positive aspect being that has broadened in somehow the democracy in Latin America, namely people in the region is participating in politics (Cleaver, 1998; Portes et al., 2003). For example, thanks to the protests of the Zapatistas in Mexico, it became obvious the need of a more open the democratic system in Mexico, that is to say the creation of new parties, being that in Mexico there used to be just one party (Cleaver, 1998).

Even more, as I mentioned earlier, one of the reasons citizens are willing to go protest, it is because they have a great sense of political self-efficacy (Seligson, 1980), this means that citizens are aware that if they protest their claims are going to be heard by the government, for instance, many people go out to protest in France, because they know that

the government will attend their complaints (Lindvall, 2011). Although, as researches notice nonwestern democracies may not offer to citizens so many guarantees, when they go out to protest like in developed countries (Dalton, et. al., 2010). As the scholars highlight, it is more probable that people in Sweden participate in a protest than people in Mexico (Dalton, et. al., 2010). Added to that evidence indicates that between 2006 and 2013 high-income countries have the highest level of protests 304, in contrast to Latin America that in the same period there were 141 protests (Ortiz et al., 2013).

The majority of the protests according to researchers were motivated by:

[...] grievances related to economic justice and against austerity policies that include demands to reform public services and pensions, create good jobs and better labor conditions, make tax collection and fiscal spending progressive, reduce or eliminate inequality, alleviate low-living standards, enact land reform, and ensure affordable food, energy and housing (Ortiz, et al, 2013, p. 43)

In general those demands are the consequence of the economic austerity measurements taken by different international organizations, as well as by the governments (Ortiz, et al, 2013). Namely, economic grievances are a strong reason to go out to protest. Nonetheless, it is worth to say that not always the political elites are willing to concede protesters what they want (Zaffaroni, 2010).

On the other hand, social Movements, in Latin America, present two different features, there are the ones that respond to the logic of creation and control of capital and the need that the state control and regulated the market, namely those are the “popular movements”, among their concerns there are better job conditions (Baño, 1998). On the other hand, there are new social movements (NSMs), these ones are more concerned with the individual orientations of citizens, namely, those are less related to the economy, in doing so, NSMs seek to put in the political agenda issues like women rights or environmental concerns.

In that way, NSMs seeks that the political sphere recognizes the diversity of the society (Baño, 1998). Even more, as Baño (1998) argues citizens nowadays are no longer defined through an ideology, namely, in the present time people have diverse positions to the different aspects of life, as well as NSM make their claims more based on the identity of individuals. Likewise, according to Wickham-Crowley and Eckstein (2015) new social movements “privileged ideology, culture, and collective identity as conceptual tools” (p. 20), these aspects are promising for Latin America, because there are new opportunities that enhance collective action of the less privileged people in the region, like the groups base on women rights or indigenous rights.

Nowadays, the motivations to participate in protest at least in Brazil and Argentina are less related to the issues that were the *motto* of the protests in the last decades in the region, like for instance those that were against the neoliberalism or asking for more democratic regimes. In the present, individuals have issue-oriented concerns (Ferrero, 2017). Furthermore, this new waves of protest are describing as the struggles of citizens that have nothing, that is to say they do not have work, a house or land (Favaro et al., 2006). In addition, in the present in Latin America, citizens seem more concern to resolve issues such as bad public services or the lack of transparency in the political institutions (Ferrero, 2017). This means that apart from the economical struggles Latin Americans have other concerns that are related to their personal, social and cultural needs.

Similarly, postmaterialistic values are linked in the develop world with the interest to protest, according to Inglehart (1999) economic development is responsible for the shift of values in the industrial societies. These new values are more focus on the self-expression of the individuals, that is to say individual desires are no longer related to any authority either religious or secular. In that way, individuals are more concern in fulfilling their own desires and needs (Inglehart, 1999). Furthermore, postmaterialistic individuals are more inclined to

participate in unconventional politics and in protest, since they have more resources and political skills, which makes it easier for them to participate in politics (Inglehart et al., 2002; Dalton et al., 2010). Added to that, as Norris (1999) remarks nowadays people are better educated, as a consequence they have more political skills and will be more critical with politics, at least in the developed countries.

Apart from that, as mentioned before, the concerns of citizens are less class-oriented like in the past, that is to say that people who usually tended to go to protest or strikes were individuals that used to belong to the working class (Inglehart, 1977; Stolle et al., 2005). The demands of these citizens were represented in the government by left or right parties. However, nowadays, according to Dalton (2004) the demands of postmaterialistic individuals are more complicated to solve, since these new demands are difficult to accommodate to the traditional politics, that is to say that, it is not clear if those new demands are the concern of the left or of the right parties. Likewise, these demands may have collided interests, for example, between labor unions and environmental interests (Dalton, 2004). On that matter, Inglehart (1997) point out how in different countries of Europe new political parties appear in order to take care of these issues, like for instance the Green Parties. Namely, the changes in the society have raised new concerns that citizens have like for instance the care of the environment.

On the other hand, a remarkable aspect of social movements, according to Schlozman, et al., (2011), it is that they bring outsiders into politics, and in doing so, social movements are an effective tool to reduce inequality of political voice. Nonetheless, political mobilization may have negative aspects in Latin America, like for instance political instability, which also hindered economic development (Seligson et al., 1976). Moreover, if the government fulfill the demands of one social group could be ignoring other social sectors that might need more attention, this means that some social groups may not have the capacity

and resource to organize politically, and as a consequence this social sectors are not available to address any demands to the government (Seligson et al., 1976). On that matter, as Dalton et al. (2010) highlight people who protest might not being representative of the whole population, namely the principle of equality of voice in politics is being violated. Because, individuals who tend to participate in protests are the highest skilled citizens, which already participate and use other conventional political channels.

On the other hand, protest and unconventional political participation are collective actions, as Kaase (1999) remarks people need to trust in others in order to join them and go out to the street to protest. This could be seen as a contradiction in the Latin American case, because as mention before Latin Americans has the tendency no to trust, neither the government nor their fellow citizens. For instance, in the case of Brazil the levels of interpersonal trust are low, namely, only 10% of Brazilians believe that others can be trusted (World Value Survey, 2014 as cited by Ortiz-Ospina et al., 2016). Despite of the low levels of trust, in 2013 people in Brazil went to the streets to protest against of the rise of fare in public transportation (Saad-Filho, 2013). Therefore, the main issue is not the lack of trust individuals have in fellow citizens, but the lack of trust they have in government (Norris, 1999; Newton, 2001). Since distrustful citizens are willing to participate in political activities such as protest.

To sum up, in order to participate in politics is necessary to have interest, to be informed and to have the opportunity to be a part of the political life. Namely, citizens should be involved in politics, because it is the only way they can achieve better life standards, as well as to improve democratic institutions in order to ensure their rights (Verba et al., 1978). It does not matter whether they do it in a conventional or unconventional form; the essential issue is that they do it. Additionally, nowadays people can opt to be a part of different influential movements. Most of these movements have national and international leverage in

realms such as women rights, environmental issues, and human rights and so on (Stolle et al., 2005). This is a key aspect, being that many citizens from different countries are affected by the economic decisions, which are not in control of just one state (Dalton, 2004).

Thus, the main purpose of this master thesis is to test how the low levels of political trust in Latin America can influence citizens' participation in protests and in unconventional political participation, as well as in which degree internet is a tool that helps citizens to get involved in politics, in order to take action in political arena. It is relevant to know whether Internet helps to engage Latin American citizens in politics, namely Internet seems to give voice to every citizen and reduce the cost and make easier the participation in politics (Balkin, 2004). Even more, this research takes the approach that political distrust may bring different social actors to politics, as well as open new opportunities for citizens to participate in politics (Hetherington, 1999; Eder et al., 2015). This is a relevant aspect in the Latin America region, being that the levels of political trust are low (Lagos Cruz-Coke, 2001; Klesner, 2007). Even more, it is difficult to build trust, on a society that has great inequalities and a poor performance in economy (Rothstein et al., 2005). This given situation makes relevant to know, which paths distrustful citizens would take in order to participate in politics.

Methods

To test the hypotheses and to answer the research questions, this study analyzed data from a cross-sectional survey from 2013 of Latinobarómetro. Besides, the data takes a sample from seventeen Spanish speaking countries in the region, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, República Dominicana, Uruguay, Venezuela, and in Brazil.

The main purpose of this research is to measure how the lack of political trust in Latin America affects the political participation either conventional and unconventional forms, as well as the how the use of internet for informational purposes and political interest are linked to protest and unconventional political participation.

Participants

The number of cases taking the survey is 22663 (females 52 %, $M = 2.39$, $SD = .991$; males 48%, $M = 2.35$, $SD = .994$) the valid cases were 18137. The population included in the survey is between 16 and 61 years old.

Measures

For the hypotheses H1 H2 H3 and H4, there are two main dependent variables and five independent variables. Moreover, this research includes control variables such as income, level of education, age and gender.

Dependent variables

The first one is *unconventional political participation* ($M = .0063$, $SD = .85699$), this is measure with an index based on two items: “Actions as citizens: Refused to pay taxes or fees to the government” and “Actions as citizens: Used force or violence for a political cause”. The question were in a scale of “-4 Not asked”, “-3 Not applicable”, “-2 No answer”, “-1 Don't know”, “1 Once in the last 3 years”, “2 More than once in the last 3 years”, “3 Never done”. For each of the questions of this variable a Z-score was run, in order to get a more reliable data for the analysis.

The second one is *willing to participate in a protest* ($M = -.0035$, $SD = .63407$), this one is measured with an index. The additive index is based on seven items related to the willingness to participate with questions like: “Willing to demonstrate and protest about: Higher wages and better working conditions”; “Willing to demonstrate and protest about: Improvement in healthcare and education”; “Willing to demonstrate and protest about:

Exploitation of natural resources”; “Willing to demonstrate and protest about: Land ownership”; “Willing to demonstrate and protest about: To defend democratic rights”; “Willing to demonstrate and protest about: Got together with others to raise an issue or sign a petition”; “Willing to demonstrate and protest about: Attended a demonstration or protest march”. The first five questions were in a scale from “1 not all willing to 10 very willing”, and the two other were in a scale of “-4 Not asked”, “-3 Not applicable”, “-2 No answer”, “-1 Don't know”, “1 Once in the last 3 years”, “2 More than once in the last 3 years”, “3 Never done”.

Independent variables

Political trust ($M = -.0074$, $SD = .76455$) was measure with the following questions: “Trust: The President”, “Trust: The National Government”; “Trust: National Congress/Parliament”; “Trust: Local Government”; “Trust: Judiciary”; “Trust: Public Administration”; “Trust: Public parties”. The questions had a scale of “-4 not asked”, “-3 Not applicable”, “-2 No answer”, “-1 Don't know”, “1 Lot”, “2 Some”, “3 A little”, “4 No trust”.

Political distrust ($M = .3028$, $SD = .69985$) is based in and index of four questions: “Confidence: The state”, “Government leaders do what they think is best for the people or implement what voters want”, “Government leaders implement what voters want”, “To what extent do you think the state can solve the problem of corruption?”. The questions had different scales, the first one and the third one had a scale of “-4 Not asked”, “-3 Not applicable”, “-2 No answer”, “-1 Don't know”, “1 Lot”, “2 Some”, “3 Little”, “4 Nothing”. The second one had a scale of “-4 Not asked”, “3 Not applicable”, “-2 No answer”, “-1 Don't know”, “1 Strongly agree”, “2 Agree”. The four one had a scale of: “-4 Not asked”, “-3 Not applicable”, “-2 No answer”, “-1 Don't know”, “1 All the problem”, “2 A large part of the problem”, “3 A small part of the problem”, “4 The state cannot solve the problem”.

Political Interest ($M = -.0021$, $SD = .9968$) was measure with: “How interested would you say you are in politics?”. The scale the scale was from “1 very interested” to “4 not interested at all”. The scale of this question was recoded as “1 not interested at all” to “4 very interested”, in order to have better measurements.

Conventional political participation ($M = .0287$, $SD = .5050$) was measure with the following index questions: “Vote for winning or losing camp”; “In the past three 3 years: Contact government officials”; “In the past three 3 years: Contact officials at higher level”; “In the past three 3 years: Contacted elected officials or legislative representatives at any level”; “In the past three 3 years: Contact officials of political parties or other political organizations”. The first question was in a scale of “- 4 Not asked”, “-3 Not applicable”, “-2 No answer”, “-1 Don't know”, “1 Voted for the winning camp”, “2 Voted for the losing camp”. The questions that remain were in a scale of “- 4 Not asked”, “-3 Not applicable”, “-2 No answer”, “-1 Don't know”, “1 Very strongly”, “1 Never”, “2 Sometimes”, “3 Often”.

Finally, *internet use* ($M = 1.12$, $SD = .6998$) was measure with and index of the following three questions: “Search for or visit websites for entertainment or information”, “Activities done in Internet: Read books, newspapers, magazines, blogs directly on Internet”, “Activities done in Internet: Buy or download books, newspapers, magazines”. The questions were in a scale of “4 Not asked”, “-3 Not applicable”, “-2 No answer”, “-1 Don't know”, “0 Not mentioned”, “1 Mentioned”.

Control variables

Income ($M = .0038$, $SD = .9969$) was in a scale of “1 It is sufficient, can save”, “2 It is just sufficient, doesn't have major problems”, “3 It is not sufficient, has problems”, “4 It is not sufficient, has big problems”, these scale was recoded as “1 It is not sufficient, has big problems” to 4 “It is sufficient, can save”. As for level of education ($M = -.0134$, $SD = .9944$) as well as age ($M = -.0403$, $SD = .9789$) a Z-score was running to get the average of the

years people have studied and average age of the participants. Furthermore gender ($M= 1.51$, $SD= .500$) is coded as 1 male and 2 female.

Procedure

As I already mention the data of this research relies on a cross-sectional survey of 2013 from Latinobarómetro. In order to test the hypotheses of this research, different questions of the questionnaire of Latinobarómetro were chosen, the questions were related to independent and dependent variables. Added to that, different indexes were created for each of the dependent and independent variables. Prior to create the indexes, different Z-scores were running in order to get better measurements, being that not all the questions, in the questionnaire of Latinobarómetro are measured with the same scale.

Results

To test the hypotheses posed in this research two, different standard multiple regressions were performed between the main independent variable of political distrust and the two dependent variables unconventional political participation and protest. Additionally, for the purpose of this research was relevant to know the interest citizens have in politics, being that political interest is significant in predicting the intentions of citizens to participate in politics either conventional or unconventional way, as well as the use of Internet to seek information about political affairs, namely interested citizens need information, in order to participate in politics.

The analysis of the first multiple regression that predicts the relation between political distrust and unconventional political participation shows an equation ($F(9,18) = 32.109$, $p=.000$) with a R^2 of .015. This model explains the 1,5% of the variance of the dependent variable ($R^2=.015$, $p=.137$). This means that the first model of multiple regression predicting

the intentions to participate in unconventional political form was not statistically significant. Therefore, the first hypothesis state that: (H1) The lower levels of political trust, the higher individuals participate in unconventional politics, was not sustained. The results suggest that political distrust ($\beta=.011$, $p=.137$) has very little to no effect on unconventional political participation³. However, taking in account each of the independent variables used in the regression model, there are some relevant outcomes: political trust ($\beta=.052$, $p=.000$) predicted positively the intentions of citizens to participate in politics in an unconventional form. Moreover, the result of the variable conventional political participation ($\beta= -.085$, $p=.000$) suggests that political distrusted citizens will participate in politics. Added to that when controlling for political interest ($\beta=.029$, $p=.000$) and internet use with informational purposes ($\beta=.029$, $p=.000$), both variables are positive significant, the results suggests that citizens are interested in politics, and at the same time they will be interested to seek political information. Furthermore, the control variables results indicate that citizens with the highest incomes ($\beta= -.032$, $p=.000$), as well as the most educated citizens ($\beta= -.040$, $p=.000$) might not be much willing to participate in politics in an unconventional form. On the other hand, age ($\beta=.011$, $p=.138$) is not significant in predicting unconventional political participation, and finally gender ($\beta=.028$, $p=.000$) suggest that males are more willing than females to take part in unconventional politics. (See table 1).

³ In this particular point, further research is recommended. Although this paper's results show no statistical significance, it would be interesting to use different control variables, which are beyond the scope of this document.

Table 1

Multiple regression model predicting unconventional political participation

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Age	.010	.007	.011
Income	-.027	.007	-.032***
Education	-.034	.007	-.040***
Gender (1 male, 2 female)	.048	.013	.028***
Index political trust	.059	.009	.052***
Index conventional political participation	-.147	.013	-.085***
Political Interest	.025	.007	.029***
Index Internet use	.114	.031	.029***
Index political distrust	.013	.009	.011

Note: ΔR^2 1,5% ($ps < .137$)

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

The second regression model that tested the relation between political distrust and willing to participate in a protest shows a non-statistically significant equation ($F(9, 18) = 67.921$, $p = .000$) with a R^2 of .032. The regression model explains the 3.2% ($R^2 = .032$, $p = .051$) of the variance of the dependent variable. Therefore, the second hypothesis stated that: (H2) the lower levels of political trust ($\beta = -.014$, $p = .051$), the higher individuals participate in a protest; was supported by the statistics. Moreover, each of other the independent variables provided interesting results, for instance, the variables political trust ($\beta = .032$, $p = .000$), conventional political participation ($\beta = .032$, $p = .000$) are positive in predicting the intentions of citizens to take part in a protest. Added to that, the results of political interest ($\beta = -.064$, $p = .000$) and Internet use with informational purposes ($\beta = -.018$, $p = .029$) suggest that that distrustful citizens tend to be interested in politics as well as they will search political information on the Net. However, the level of education ($\beta = -.002$,

$p=.784$) was not statistically significant predicting the intentions to participate in a protest. Apart from that, the control variables such as gender ($\beta = -.021$, $p=.005$) suggest that females are more willing than males to take part in a protest. Even more, age ($\beta = -.157$, $p=.000$) suggest that young citizens are more interested in participate in a protest than the old citizens. Even more, high income ($\beta=.065$, $p=.000$) citizens are willing to participate in a protest (See table 2).

Table 2

Multiple regression model predicting willing to participate in protest

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>β</i>
Age	-.102	.005	-.157***
Income	.041	.005	.065***
Education	-.001	.005	-.002
Gender (1 male, 2 female)	-.026	.009	-.021**
Index political trust	.026	.006	.032***
Index conventional political participation	.041	.009	.032***
Political Interest	-.041	.005	-.064***
Index Internet use	-.050	.023	-.018**
Index political distrust	-.013	.007	-.014*

Note: ΔR^2 3.2% ($ps. < .051$)

** $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$*

In addition, for the third hypothesis that stated (H3) people that the distrust will not vote. The results were not statistically significant (see Table 1). This suggests that distrusted citizens' vote regularly. Then, the results of the fourth hypothesis state that: (H4) the higher the levels of political interest, the more citizens will participate in unconventional politics. This one was statistically significant, namely, it seems that interested citizens are willing to

participate (see Table 1). Finally, the results of the fifth hypothesis stated that: (H5) the higher the political interest the higher citizens will use internet to search information about politics, the results show that Internet use for search political information is relevant when it comes to unconventional political participation (see Table 1), but is not significant when predicting the intentions to take part in a protest (see Table 2). To sum up, these results suggest that political distrustful citizens are interested in politics, because of this they will search political information online, as well as they will participate in politics in a conventional form.

Conclusions

The main aim of this research was to measure the impact of political distrust in unconventional political participation, as well as the effect of distrust in the intentions to participate in a protest. That is to say, whether distrustful citizens in Latin America are willing to participate in politics. The results of the first regression model that measure the relation between political distrust and unconventional political participation were not statistically significant. According to this results Latin American citizens seem to prefer the conventional paths to participate in politics. Probably, citizens are aware that the conventional political channels to participate may be the ones that the government will pay more attention. Therefore, distrustful citizens might believe that participating in an unconventional way may not have a positive outcome, since it is likely that the government will not resolve their demands. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research in Latin America, which mostly argues that disgruntled citizens participate in conventional politics activities such as contacting officials, voting, and election campaigns (Booth et al., 2009).

The second regression model, which tested the relation between political distrust and protest was statistically significant; which supports the hypothesis that distrustful Latin American citizens are willing to take part in a protest. Furthermore, citizens may be aware that when they choose to protest the government will hear their demands. On that matter, as researchers point out Latin America is the second region of the world, in which individuals go out to protest the most (Ortiz et al., 2013). The fact that Latin American citizens are willing to participate in a protest is a positive aspect, being that, as some scholars argue, in Latin America sometimes the fact that citizens participate in a protest may have negative consequences such as paying a fine or in the worst case go to jail (Almeida, 2007; Bertoni, 2010; Rabinovich, 2011). Namely, to participate in a protest may represent a risk for citizens. Another positive feature, it is the fact that Latin American citizens are aware that when they choose to protest the government will hear their demands. One such as example is the case of the protest in Brazil in 2013, citizens go out to protest to demand better public services (Saad-Filho, 2013). Apart from that, Latin American democracies are still young (Huntington, 1993). Therefore, it is not possible to expect that Latin American countries have the same levels of democracy, like already consolidate democracies. Namely, it takes time to build robust democratic institutions.

Added to that, the findings suggest that interpersonal distrust is not an impediment to being part of a collective activity, namely citizens get together and join forces in order to defend their interests. These findings confirm previous studies on the field that stated that distrusted citizens participate in politics, such as that of Seligson (1980) and Booth et al. (2005).

On the other hand, the third hypothesis, that tested the relation between political interest and the intention to participative in politics in an unconventional way, the result indicates that citizens interested in politics will be prone to participate in politics in

unconventional ways, the result confirms that interested citizens are inclined to participate in politics. These results are linked to the fifth hypothesis, which measures the political interest related to Internet use with information purposes, the results show that interested citizens will use the Net as a source of information either if they want to take a part in conventional or unconventional political participation. This means that citizens who are interested in politics will seek information about political affairs online. Namely, political interested citizens have knowledge that allows them to participate in politics either conventional or unconventional way. Furthermore, these results agree with previous research on the region such as those of Valenzuela et al. (2016) that stated that use of Internet, more specific the social media, increases the chances of citizens to participate in a protest, even more, Gainous et al. (2016) argue that Internet exposes Latin American citizens to such as diverse information, because of this citizens are more willing to participate in politics. The fact that Latin American citizens are using Internet to read political information is relevant, in spite of the low coverage that still have the Net in the region (E. T. Hawkins, et al., 2003; CEPAL, 2016). In this way, Oxhorn (2003) argues that the economic inequalities are still a great deal in the region, and also affects the intentions of individuals to participate in politics.

Furthermore, this document also intended to test whether distrustful citizens drop out voting, in contrast with the expectations the results show that citizens that distrust also vote. On that matter, as previous research highlights distrustful citizens are not apathetic with politics as Booth et al., (2005) found out in their study in Costa Rica distrustful citizens participate in politics, which means that they are engaged in political participation, although they disagree or are critical with the government.

Added to that, the results of this research show that male citizens are more willing to participate in politics in an unconventional form, as previous findings remarks males are more active in politics than their female counterparts (Eder et al., 2014; Helms, et al. 2016).

However, women seem to be more willing than men to take part in a protest, this positive aspect confirms previous findings that show that women in the region are becoming more active in politics (Navarro, 1989). Even more, people with low levels of education and lower incomes seem to be more willing to take part in politics in an unconventional way. These findings confirm that more risky political actions are taken by the less privileged citizens (Lipsky, 1968; Favaro et al., 2006).

Therefore, I conclude that Latin Americans who distrust politics, are still interested in participate in politics in conventional forms, as well as they will read news online related to political affairs. Namely, distrusted citizens are not detached from the politics. This feature is at least a good indicator for politics in Latin America.

Even though the results of this research are not positive as it was expected between the relation of political distrust and unconventional political participation. I believe is a step forward to understand how the low levels of political trust affects the intentions of Latin American citizens to participate in politics. Even more, deeper research is needed in order to have a better understanding of the effects of political distrust. Apart from that I believe more attention must be paying to economic outcomes, as the literature on trust show that economic outcomes are a strong factor predicting political trust (Newton, 2001; Dalton, 2004). As well as, the interest people have in politics. I think future research should include more items to know why people are not interested in politics. As Norris (2002) point out the lack of interest is perhaps more concerning than the lack of trust in politics. Namely, citizens who show low levels of political trust have at least an opinion about politics, added to that they have knowledge about political matters, because of this they will participate in politics. Nevertheless the disinterested citizens appear to no care about politics.

On the other hand, this empirical research has some limitations. The findings relies on a cross-sectional survey from Latinobarómetro 2013, whereas the data is helpful to answer

the research questions and to test the hypotheses and give a general view of the relation between political distrust, Internet and convention and unconventional political participation in Latin America. However, this survey cannot provide, for instance, specific data about the use of the Internet to search political information. Because of this, I think, for future research it would be helpful to use more specific questions, namely, it would be interesting to know how many hours Latin American citizens spend reading political articles in newspapers or blogs online, as well as how much time they dedicated to talk about politics in online forums. Apart from that, future research on trust in Latin America should make an exhaustive comparison of the interpersonal and the political trust to see how both of them affects political participation. Even more, it would be also interesting to know the perception people have about the freedom of expression in the region. Namely, whether Latin American citizens believe they have enough guaranties to go to the streets to protest.

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Abstract

Latin America is one of the most unequal regions in the world. Apart from that, Latin American citizens show low levels of interpersonal trust as well as political trust. The purpose of this master thesis is to explore two relate situations. First, the role that political distrust plays in protest and in unconventional political participation. Second, the role of internet, as a source of information, that helps citizens to mobilize politically.

The statistical analysis of this research relies on a cross- sectional survey data from the 2013 Latinobarómetro. This dataset represent 18 Latin American countries. The population included in the survey is between 16 and 61 years old.

The findings show that distrusted citizens are interested in politics as well as they participate in conventional political forms, namely they go to the polls to vote. However, political distrust does not have a significant effect on the citizens' intentions to participate in a political protest or in unconventional politics. On the other side, citizens that are interested in politics will use the Network as a source of information.

Keywords: Political distrust, political participation, unconventional political participation, protest, collective action, political action, Latin America.

Abstract (German)

Lateinamerika ist eine der ungleichsten Regionen der Welt. Abgesehen davon, die lateinamerikanischen Staatsbürger zeigen ein geringes interpersonales Vertrauen sowie politisches Vertrauen. Der Zweck dieser Magisterarbeit ist es, zwei verwandte Situationen zu erforschen. Erstens, die Rolle, die das politische Misstrauen in Protest und in unkonventioneller politischer Partizipation spielt. Zweitens, die Rolle des Internets als Informationsquelle, die den Bürgern hilft, politisch zu mobilisieren.

Die Magisterarbeit statistische Analyse beruht auf einer Querschnittsumfrage von 2013 Latinobarómetro. Dieser Datensatz repräsentiert 18 lateinamerikanische Länder. Die in der Umfrage enthaltene Bevölkerung liegt zwischen 16 und 61 Jahre alt.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass die mißtrauenden Bürgerinnen und Bürger an der Politik interessiert sind, sowie sie an konventionellen politischen Formen teilnehmen, nämlich sie gehen zu den Abstimmungen zur Abstimmung. Das politische Misstrauen hat jedoch keinen wesentlichen Einfluss auf die Absichten der Bürger, sich an einem politischen Protest oder an einer unkonventionellen Politik zu beteiligen. Auf der anderen Seite werden Bürger, die sich für Politik interessieren, das Netzwerk als Informationsquelle nutzen.

Schlüsselwörter: Politisches Misstrauen, politische Partizipation, unkonventionelle politische Partizipation, Protest, kollektives Handeln, politisches Handeln, Lateinamerika.

Appendix

Table 3
Gender

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Male (<i>n</i> = 11019)	2.3581	.99458
Female (<i>n</i> = 11644)	2.3987	.99131
Total	2.3789	.99309

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics, dependent variable protest

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Willing to participate in a protest	-.0035	.63407
Age	-.0509793	.97402314
Income	.0038868	.99697666
Education	.0286594	.99003081
Gender	1.51	.,500
Political trust	-.0074	.76455
Conventional political participation	.0287	.50501
Political Interest	-.0021712	.99688981
Internet use	1.12	.222
Political distrust	.3028	.69985

Table 5
Anova dependent variable protest

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between groups	9	237.867	26.430	32.109	.000
Within groups	18127	7053.548	.389		
Total	18136	7291.415			

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics, dependent variable unconventional participation

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Unconventional political participation	.0063	.85669
Age	-.0403170	.97893229
Income	.62668	.99563022
Education	.0134574	.99442965
Gender	1.51	.500
Index political trust	-.0052	.76061
Index conventional political participation	.0211	.49435
Political Interest	.0079224	.99635241
Index Internet use	1.12	.220
Index political distrust	.3023	.68948

Table 7

Anova dependent variable unconventional participation

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between groups	9	208.962	23.218	32.109	.000
Within groups	18718	13534.786	.723		
Total	18727	13743.748			

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$