

## ARTICLE

## Socialization and Political Regimes: the Impact of Generation on Support for Democracy in Latin America\*

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Studies on democratic attitudes in Latin America indicate that older citizens are more likely to express a preference for democracy. This contradicts part of the literature, which suggests that the greatest support should come from younger generations, who were socialized under democratic regimes. One possible explanation for the greater support for democracy among the older generation is that they experienced the repression of political and civil rights under authoritarian rule, thus creating an aversion to such regimes. In this article, we replicate tests conducted by other studies in evaluating the effect of generation on support for democracy, using data from the 2012 Americas Barometer. In addition, we add a new factor to the analysis: the country's authoritarian legacy, measured as to the duration and intensity with which individual and political rights were curtailed in the past. The results show a complex picture. First, they confirm that the generations that have lived under authoritarian regimes are more likely to support democracy. However, we find no evidence of an increase in the difference in support between generations in countries where the authoritarian legacy is stronger. Finally, the data indicate that countries with stronger authoritarian legacies exhibit less support for democracy, while stronger democratic legacies have the opposite effect.

**Keywords:** Political legitimacy; support for democracy; political socialization; generations; political attitudes.

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A major, recurring theme in political socialization studies is the relationship between the experiences of different generations and their political attitudes and behavior (INGLEHART and WELZEL, 2005; JENNINGS and NIEMI, 1981; MANNHEIM, 1952; NEUNDORF and NIEMI, 2014). However, most studies in the field have been based on empirical research conducted in countries with long democratic traditions, which precludes the comparison of generations that have lived under different political regimes. Responding to this lacuna, recent studies have turned their attention to the role of the generational differences in the context of new democracies, such as the countries from the former USSR (MISHLER and ROSE, 1999, 2001, 2007), Asia (CHU et al., 2008) and Africa (BRATTON, MATTES and GYIMAH-BOADI, 2005). Studies conducted in Latin America have also considered the generational question, focusing on its effects on the formation of attitudes (MORENO and LAGOS, 2016) and, more broadly, on the development of civic and democratic political culture (BAQUERO, 2004).

Are there differences in democratic attitudes between generations that have only lived under democratic regimes and those that have also experienced authoritarianism? If such differences exist, in which direction do they tend to go? Do younger cohorts, socialized only under democracy, have more democratic attitudes? Or, on the contrary, is it older cohorts, who also lived under authoritarian regimes, that are more attached to democracy? These are some of the questions raised by studies on generations and democratic legitimacy in the context of new democracies.

Opinion is divided over how to answer them. The study by Mishler and Rose (2007), for example, shows that there are small but significant differences between generations in Russia, with those cohorts who lived under the communist regime showing a certain nostalgia for it and less satisfaction with democracy. In studies conducted in Asia and Africa, respectively, Chu et al. (2008) and Bratton et al. (2005) find few differences between generations, and little change in this over time.

In Latin America, few studies have investigated generational effects on support for democracy. One exception to this is a study by Moreno and Lagos (2016), which tests the hypothesis that individuals socialized under democratic regimes have more democratic attitudes. In general, their results confirmed this hypothesis. However, they also found that cohorts socialized under democratic regimes that existed prior to the authoritarian period displayed a greater commitment to democracy than cohorts that

have spent their formative years during the most recent democratic period. One of the explanations suggested by the authors is that, because they have experienced the 'horrors' of the military rule, those among the older democratic cohort are more likely to recognize the virtues of democracy.

In this article, we return to this explanation, which we will call the 'argument of aversion to authoritarian rule'. However, unlike Moreno and Lagos (2016), our aim is not to compare generations who spent their formative years under different political regimes, but rather to compare those generations that were socialized only under democracy with those that also experienced authoritarianism. By comparing these two groups, it is possible to answer our two research questions: 01. does experience of authoritarianism and, therefore, the ability to compare it with democracy, increase support for democracy? 02. is this effect greater in contexts where authoritarian regimes were harsher and more repressive?

In order to answer both questions, we used the data from 17 countries of the 2012 Americas Barometer survey. First, we discuss, operationalize, and test the effect of generation, comparing those that lived only under democracy with those that lived under both regimes (democratic and authoritarian). Then, we refine the 'aversion' argument by adding a new element to the analysis: the role of the 'authoritarian legacy'.

'Legacy' here means the prior political experiences of different countries, taking into account both the duration of distinct political regimes and their 'quality', i.e. the degree to which political and civil rights are present or absent. These distinct trajectories constitute political legacies, which provide the contexts in which different generations are socialized. These contexts condition the socialization process and, as a result, reinforce or weaken generational differences in attitudes.

The literature on political culture has placed greater focus on the so-called 'democratic legacy'. Recent research has examined the effect of the duration of democracies (BOOTH and SELIGSON, 2009; CHU et al., 2008; SALINAS and BOOTH, 2011), the quality of democracy (MAGALHÃES, 2014), and even the joining together of both measures as an indicator of 'democratic legacy' (MAINWARING and PÉREZ-LIÑÁN, 2013), on the political attitudes of citizens and the stability of democratic regimes. Few studies, however, have looked at the 'authoritarian legacy'. In this article, we mobilize this concept and its measurement in order to explore the possibilities for further

developing Moreno and Lagos' (2016) explanation for generational effects on support for democracy in Latin America.

If it is true that people who lived under authoritarian regimes have greater aversion to them due to their experience of having their rights suppressed, our expectation is that a greater authoritarian legacy should foster more negative memories of repression in the minds of older generations and, as a result, increase their support for democracy.

Our main finding is that generations that have lived under authoritarian regimes have more democratic attitudes than those that were socialized only under democracy. However, this effect is not reinforced by an authoritarian legacy. Furthermore, general context matters: in countries with stronger democratic legacies, there is more support for democracy, while in countries with stronger authoritarian legacies, support is weaker.

The article is structured in four sections. The first and second sections present, respectively, the key debates on political socialization and generations, and on generational differences and support for democracy. In the third section, we explain how we constructed the main variables used in the study, including the division of 'generations', and the 'democratic' and 'authoritarian legacies'. In the fourth section, we present the results and discuss their implications for the study of political legitimacy.

### **Socialization, generations and democratic legitimacy**

The question of differences in political behavior across generations is one strand of an extensive literature on political socialization that originated in the 1950s. A pioneering and highly influential contribution to this literature was the work of Karl Mannheim, who argued that individual political attitudes and behavior are shaped by historical experiences in youth. Mannheim's framework had a strong impact on later studies, which set out to test his propositions empirically.

The earliest studies in the field of political socialization emphasized the importance of political learning in infancy, given the importance of the family as the primary agent of socialization (EASTON and DENNIS, 1969; HYMAN, 1959). Subsequent research, however, came to regard political socialization as a broader and more continuous process, emphasizing the importance of experiences gained at other stages of life — especially in youth, but also throughout the life course —, as well as the

importance of other socializing agents, such as universities, workplaces, or other specific political contexts, like elections (JENNINGS and NIEMI, 1968, 1974, 1981; JENNINGS and MARKUS, 1984; SEARS and VALENTINO, 1997). Our study shares this broader view of political socialization, understood as a continuous process in which attitudes developed early in life are either reinforced or altered by later experiences.

Research on political culture and democratic legitimacy has incorporated theories about socialization and generations as a fundamental element in explaining changes in values over time and in relation to democracy. In this sense, the study by Inglehart and Welzel (2005) is particularly notable. Analyzing data from the World Value Survey (WVS), they found that younger cohorts, socialized in countries with higher levels of social and economic development, are more likely to develop values of 'self-expression', such as tolerance, and political participation in demonstrations, boycotts, and other non-traditional means of participation. In another study, Dalton (2004) shows that support for democracy is increasing in advanced industrial societies, especially among young people, despite their growing dissatisfaction and distrust of democratic institutions.

However, other studies point in the opposite direction. Foa and Mounk (2016), for example, identify a decline in support for democracy in the United States and Europe in the latest WVS data. More specifically, they find that older cohorts in those countries are more likely than younger cohorts to agree that it is very important to 'live in a democratic country'.

However, none of these studies includes 'new democracies'. Unlike the context of the old democracies, which often underwent slow and incremental processes of construction, more recent democracies were established just as the state itself was being rebuilt, and often in a context of economic, social and political upheaval. We can add to this the long experiences of authoritarianism and complex processes of political transition that these countries went through (DIAMOND, 1999; MOISÉS, 1995; TORCAL and MONTERO, 2006). These contextual differences in new democracies present specific questions to the study of generations: to what extent does the experience of having lived under an authoritarian regime affect support for democracy among older generations? By contrast, to what extent does the experience of younger generations, of having grown up and lived exclusively under a democratic regime, affect their support for democracy?

## Generations and support for democracy in Latin America

In studies on post-communist regimes in Eastern Europe, the question of generational effects on democratic legitimacy is central to the work of Mishler and Rose (1999, 2001, 2005, 2007). According to them, political legitimacy in the region is constituted through a process that includes both citizens' experiences of new institutions and their memories of authoritarian regimes. Analyzing data from the New Russia Barometer between 1992 and 2005, Mishler and Rose (2007) find a significant difference between the older generations, socialized under the communist regime, and the younger generation, socialized under democracy. While older cohorts show greater support for the old regime, the younger generation expresses greater support for democracy. The authors emphasize, however, that, although statistically significant, the impact of generation on attitudes is less significant than that of economic and political factors.

The thesis that older generations retain a sense of loyalty to the authoritarian regimes in which they were socialized makes sense when this experience refers to the collapse of an entire economic and social order that provided stability and material security to individuals, as is the case of the post-communist states studied by Mishler and Rose (2007). However, this context is far from universal. Latin America, for example, presents a much more heterogeneous scenario, with different types of military regime. In this context, it is more difficult to devise a single model capable of explaining the effect of the political context on different generations.

Unfortunately, there are still few studies that identify generation as a key explanatory variable for understanding attitudes towards democracy. In general, researchers have at most included the variable 'age', though typically this has been more to control for its effect on other variables of interest than to explore its own explanatory potential. Booth and Seligson (2009, p. 123), for example, use age as a variable in their model on the determinants of support for democracy, finding no correlation between the two variables. Rennó et al. (2011), by contrast, found a significant relationship between age and support for democracy in Brazil, Venezuela and Ecuador. Salinas and Booth (2011) also found age to have a significant effect when testing the determinants of support for democracy in Latin America. None of these authors, however, analyzed the generational question or explored these results in greater depth.

Other studies have addressed the generational question, but not comparatively for the whole region. In his thesis, Del Porto (2012) tested the effect of generation on a range of political attitudes in Brazil. The results are similar to those of Mishler and Rose (2007), finding that: "throughout Brazil's recent democratic experience, generational effects have no impact on the political values of Brazilians: the process of political socialization is lifelong and the more recent political experiences are the most important factor shaping individual political values" (DEL PORTO, 2012, p. 57). Over time, institutional learning with the democratic regime has leveled out support for democratic rule as well as political interest and engagement.

In a recent study, Moreno and Lagos (2016) gave centrality to the generational question. After more than three decades of the third wave of democratization, virtually all countries in the region are democracies. In this context, the authors ask themselves: does socialization under a democratic regime have an impact on citizens' attitudes?

To answer this question, the authors compared the democratic attitudes of two different cohorts: a 'democratic cohort', composed of individuals who spent their formative years (from 14 to 22 years) living under democratic regimes, and a second cohort of those socialized under authoritarian regimes. Across the region as a whole, the results indicate that the democratic cohort supports more democracy. However, when the analysis is done separately for each country, there is considerable variation, with several countries bucking the overall trend.

Furthermore, Moreno and Lagos' (2016) results show that the cohorts that were socialized during earlier democratic periods (the 'older democratic cohort') express greater support for democracy than those which have been socialized during the most recent democratic period (the 'younger democratic cohort'). One possible explanation for this is that the "older generations experienced periods of authoritarianism and are thus able to compare the inefficiencies of democracy with the horrors of a military regime. They seem to be choosing the lesser evil" (MORENO and LAGOS, 2016, p. 66). This 'aversion' argument suggests that greater support among older cohorts is due to the vivid, negative memories these generations have of authoritarianism, in contrast to younger cohorts who have never seen their civil and political rights threatened. Older generations, who directly experienced acts of repression by military regimes, acquired an aversion to such regimes and, consequently, an appreciation for democracy. For younger cohorts, socialized under democracy, threats to civil and political rights are

little more than historical record, which they have neither experienced personally nor witnessed.

One lesson we can take from the studies already discussed, is that context exerts an important influence in shaping the attitudes of different generations. As we have seen, a plausible explanation for the greater support for democracy found among the older cohorts is precisely the fact that they experienced the privations of the previous regime. Evidently, however, both the duration of authoritarian regimes and the degree to which they suppressed rights and committed acts of violence against their populations varied significantly between different Latin American countries (MAINWARING and PÉREZ-LIÑAN, 2013; O'DONNELL and SCHMITTER, 1986).

These differences produce what, based on Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñaz, (2013), we will call a 'political legacy'. This can be understood as a 'democratic legacy', as has traditionally been the case in the literature, or, as we shall propose here, as an 'authoritarian legacy'. We highlight two essential characteristics that constitute a 'legacy': first, the duration of a given regime, i.e. the total amount of time a country has been democratic or authoritarian; and second, the nature of that experience, that is, the extent to which civil and political rights were violated under authoritarian regimes or guaranteed under democracy.

Different political legacies, of course, produce different contexts in which citizens are socialized. For this reason, we believe that the generational effect is mediated by political legacy. Our hypothesis is a natural extension of Moreno and Lagos' (2016) line of analysis: if the experience of having lived under a regime that curtailed civil and political rights makes an individual more likely to support democracy, then the intensity of such support is likely to be associated with how long and to what extent those rights were denied. Therefore, we expect the gap between generations to be more pronounced in contexts with a greater authoritarian legacy.

In addition to this hypothesis, we tested the direct effects of the democratic legacy and, especially, the authoritarian legacy. The concept of the democratic legacy is already well established in the literature. This suggests that democratic institutions, once implemented, produce environments that socialize citizens within the norms of the democratic system. This means that, through repeated experience with democracy, individuals and generations develop bonds of loyalty to it (JACKMAN and MILLER,



2004). Over time, democratic institutions and their values and norms become a part of daily life and are internalized through a process of 'habituation' (RUSTOW, 1970).

Less obvious, however, is the effect of authoritarian legacy. Following the same line of reasoning, we might expect it to have the inverse effect of the democratic legacy. In this case, the greater the authoritarian legacy of a country, the less adherence we would expect to see to recently implanted democratic regimes.

### Data and construction of variables

Our study uses the 2012 Americas Barometer, conducted by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) in 26 countries. In most countries, the sample consists of 1,500 interviews with respondents selected using probabilistic selection stratified across multiple stages. Canada, the United States, Belize, Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica were excluded from the analysis, as they were not considered to belong to the region. Bolivia and Venezuela were also excluded, because for these countries data was not available for some of the variables we included in our model.

The first empirical challenge for the study was to construct a variable that would delineate different generations. We start from Mannheim's (1952) key proposition, that generations are formed based on the significant events that they have lived through. Using this definition, it should be possible to define different 'generations' by reference to the key events they have experienced. In our study, the event in question is a wide-ranging and drawn-out phenomenon: a transition in the political regime. As such, we compare two generational groups: one that socialized exclusively in a democratic political environment, and one that experienced two regimes, democratic and authoritarian.

It is true that many countries have had more than one political transition in recent history, and that processes of transition are varied and complex. However, we believe that our classification captures what we consider to be of greater importance in the current study, namely the experience of having, at some point over the life course, lived under an authoritarian regime.

From an operational point of view, the first step is to identify the 'cut-off point' that initiates the formative stage at which individuals are most susceptible to political learning. Since Mannheim (1952) there have been extensive debates on this question in the political socialization literature (JENNINGS and NIEMI, 1968, 1974, 1981; JENNINGS

and MARKUS, 1984; JENNINGS, STOKER and BOWERS, 2009). Jennings and Niemi (1981), for example, estimate that between the ages of 16 and 17 individuals are more open to political learning. For Sears (1983), this formation begins a little earlier, at 14 to 16 years of age. Mattes, Denmark and Niemi (2016) believe there is no 'magic number' that resolves this issue, but note that most studies point, on average, to 14 as a key age. Taking into account the range of ages identified in the literature and the need to establish a specific age, we chose the intermediate point of 15 as our cut-off for when political socialization begins.

Having established the point at which political socialization begins, the next step was to define the year of redemocratization for each Latin American country. Once we had done this, we calculated which individuals were aged 14 or younger in the year their country redemocratized, meaning that they were fully socialized under the democratic regime; and which individuals were 15 or older and who therefore had some experience of the authoritarian regime during their formative years. It is, therefore, a binary variable distinguishing between two generational groups: one that was socialized only under the democratic regime and one that had experience of both the democratic and the authoritarian regimes.

Our definition for the years of redemocratization for each country was based on the classification proposed by Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013). Table 01 shows these years for each of the countries included in the study. The table also shows, for each country, the age that today demarcates the generation that was only socialized under the democratic regime from that which also experienced the authoritarian regime. So, for example, in Brazil, redemocratization occurred in 1985. In 2012, when the Americas Barometer was conducted, individuals aged 42 or more were those who were at least 15 in 1985, meaning that they spent at least part of their formative stage under the authoritarian regime. Individuals aged 41 in 2012 were 14 in 1985, and thus belong to the generation socialized exclusively under democracy.

Two other concepts we use in our analysis are 'democratic legacy' and 'authoritarian legacy', as discussed in the previous section. Building on the work of Mainwaring and Pérez Liñán (2013), our operationalization takes two factors into account: the duration of the regime, and its quality, understood here as the degree to which civil and political rights were guaranteed. In view of these two criteria, our measure of democratic legacy was based on the classification of political regimes in

Latin America proposed by Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013). The authors classified 19 Latin American countries, over the period from 1945 to 2012, into three types: authoritarian, semi-democratic and democratic. The authoritarian regimes received the score zero (0), semi-democratic regimes a half point (0.5) and democratic regimes a point (01). The measure of a country's democratic legacy is therefore the sum of this score for the whole period 1945–2012. As such, the democratic legacy of a country will be greater when democracy has functioned for longer, and when it has worked better.

**Tabela 01.** Parameters for the construction of the 'generation' variable

Country	Year in which democratic or semi-democratic regime begins	Minimum age, in 2012, of individuals socialized under both regimes
Argentina	1983	44
Brazil	1985	42
Chile	1990	37
Colombia	1989	38
Costa Rica	1949	78
Dominican Republic	1978	49
Ecuador	1979	48
El Salvador	1992	35
Guatemala	1986	41
Haiti	2006	21
Honduras	1994	33
Mexico	1988	39
Nicaragua	1984	43
Panama	1990	37
Paraguay	1989	38
Peru	1995	32
Uruguay	1985	42

Source: Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013).

The political legacy, however, is not restricted to the democratic legacy. Equally important for explaining individual attitudes, especially in relation to generational differences, is the authoritarian legacy. Most research on political culture has been restricted to considering how the duration and quality of democratic regimes affect support for democracy and democratic principles (BOOTH and SELIGSON, 2009; CHU et al., 2008). The authoritarian legacy, in turn, has received little attention. We believe, however, that it is relevant for precisely the same reasons: experiences of authoritarianism may create contexts that either favor or inhibit attitudes of support for democracy. These experiences also depend on their duration and nature, which, in the case of authoritarian experiences, are linked to the intensity with which civil and political rights are restricted.

In constructing our measure of the authoritarian legacy, we also started from Mainwaring's and Pérez-Liñán's (2013) classification, identifying all the years in which a country was classified as authoritarian, therefore receiving a score of zero (0). However, this classification does not distinguish between more and less repressive authoritarian regimes. For this reason, and so that we could more effectively assess the authoritarian legacy, we combine the latter with the measure of autocracy elaborated by the Polity IV project (MARSHALL and JAGGERS, 2007). Thus, for each year in which a country was classified as authoritarian by Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013), we replaced its zero score (0) with the Polity IV score, which ranged from 0 to -10. Under this measure, the closer the regime scored to -10, the more autocratic it was considered to be. Next, we added up the yearly values for the period between 1945 and 2012 for each of the Latin American countries analyzed. To facilitate our interpretation of the data, we converted the negative values of the authoritarian legacy into positive values, so that the greater the repression of civil and political rights, the greater the authoritarian legacy.

In order to measure 'support for democracy', our dependent variable, we use a traditional question from the literature: "Now, moving on, with which of the following three sentences do you tend to agree with: For people like me, (1) There is no difference between a democratic or an undemocratic regime, or (2) Democracy is preferable to any other form of government, or (3) In some circumstances, an authoritarian government might be preferable to a democratic one". We recoded the responses to obtain a binary variable, where options 01 and 03 = 0 (does not support democracy), and option 02 = 01 (supports democracy).

## Results and discussion

Table 02 shows the level of support for democracy among Latin Americans, presented as percentages. Columns one and two show the percentages for the generation that lived under the military regime and for the generation that has only lived under democracy, respectively, while column three shows the difference between the two generations. We also performed a chi-square test to verify whether these differences were statistically significant. The percentages of the fourth column marked

with an asterisk (\*) are those that present statistically significant differences, using a p value of  $<0.01$ <sup>1</sup>.

**Tabela 02.** Support for in Latin America, democracy by generation (%)

Country	Individuals who lived under the authoritarian regime	Individuals who have only lived under democracy	Difference
Argentina	84,0	80,4	3,6*
Brazil	69,3	64,0	5,3*
Chile	71,6	75,3	-3,7
Colombia	76,6	69,0	7,6*
Costa Rica	89,7	87,3	2,4
Dominican Republic	84,2	71,8	12,4*
Ecuador	74,0	67,7	6,3*
El Salvador	76,4	66,8	9,6*
Guatemala	65,6	65,5	0,1
Haiti	78,2	77,6	0,6
Honduras	74,8	61,8	13,0*
Mexico	78,1	71,8	6,3*
Nicaragua	87,1	82,6	4,5*
Panama	81,9	85,2	-3,3
Paraguay	64,4	61,9	2,5
Peru	70,9	72,5	-1,6
Uruguay	91,3	81,9	9,4*

Source: Americas Barometer 2012.

Note: \* Statistically significant differences ( $>0,01$ ) between the generations on chi-square test.

We note that in almost all countries, the group that experienced the authoritarian regime expresses greater support for democracy than that which was socialized exclusively under the democratic regime. In only three countries is this trend reversed, and of these exceptions only the case of Panama is statistically significant. Already, this result suggests that older generations that were socialized under the authoritarian regime are more likely to support the democratic regime. However, surely other variables also help to explain support for democracy. It is therefore necessary to construct a multivariate explanatory model.

The literature highlights the importance of socioeconomic variables in accounting for individual attitudes towards democracy. The most important of these is, undoubtedly, level of schooling, which is well established as a key determinant not only

<sup>1</sup> We recognize the inherent limitations of an observational research design of this kind. Ideally, experimental or panel studies would be drawn upon to help assess the causal relationships between the variables included in our model. Unfortunately, such data remain scarce for Latin America. Despite these limitations, we believe it is important that we seek to advance the field with the data and methods available to us.

of support for democracy, but of political behavior in general (BOOTH and SELIGSON, 2009; NORRIS, 1999). In addition to schooling, the literature identifies another factor highlighted by modernization theory: place of residence, with people living in urban areas more likely to support democracy than those living in rural areas (MOISÉS, 1995). Although it has received little attention in the broader literature, we also chose to add gender as a variable in our model as it has been identified as a factor explaining support for democracy in some Latin American studies (MOISÉS, 2008; SALINAS AND BOOTH, 2011). In addition to socioeconomic factors, other individual-level characteristics have also been highlighted. Interest in politics has, alongside education, been identified as one of the best predictors of an individual's political behavior, including democratic attitudes (DALTON, 2004, 2009). Finally, we add the individual's assessment of the country's economic situation. Studies have shown that adherence to democracy has 'instrumental' as well as 'intrinsic' motivations. That is to say, people tend to profess democratic values when they see improvements in their lives that they associate with a presiding democratic regime (BRATTOM and MATTES, 2001).

As the democratic legacy and the authoritarian legacy are contextual variables, we estimate multilevel logistic models for the 17 Latin American countries. Our level 01 and 02 model assumes the following form:

Level 01:  $Y = B_0 + B_1*(\text{lives in urban area}) + B_2*(\text{male}) + B_3*(\text{years of schooling}) + B_4*(\text{interested in politics}) + B_5*(\text{positive evaluation of country's economy}) + B_6*(\text{generation}) + R$

Level 2:  $B_0 = G_{00} + G_{01}*(\text{authoritarian legacy}) + G_{02}*(\text{democratic legacy}) + U_0$

In model 02, we include the interaction between generation and authoritarian legacy, and, in model 03, the interaction between generation and democratic legacy. Using this multilevel model, we were able to verify that the generational variable has positive and significant effect in both cases. As compared to individuals who were only socialized under democracy, individuals who had also lived under the military regime were shown to be 68% more likely to believe that democracy is always preferable to other forms of government. The persistence of such generational differences runs counter to the thesis that generational differences decline as democracy is consolidated (MISHLER and ROSE, 2007). At least in the context of Latin America, the decades of relative democratic stability experienced in most countries have not served to level out

the attitudes of cohorts socialized at different times. Most interesting, however, is the direction of this effect: it is the oldest cohort, which experienced life under the authoritarian regime, that most supports democracy.

**Tabela 03.** Determinants of support for democracy in Latin America. Hierarchical logistical regression model. Odds ratio coefficients

	Model 01	Model 02	Model 03
Constant	0,626	0,616	0,621
Individual-level effects			
Generation that only lived under democracy	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Generation that lived under authoritarian regime	1,461 ***	1,678***	1,375
Generation *authoritarian legacy		1,001	
Generation *democratic legacy			1,002
Lives in urban área	0,866***	0,866***	0,866***
Male	1,036	1,036	1,036
Years of schooling	1,034***	1,034***	1,034
Interested in politics	1,047***	1,047***	1,047***
Positive evaluation of country's economy	1,059***	1,059***	1,059***
Macro-level effects			
Authoritarian legacy	0,998*	0,998*	0,998*
Democratic legacy	1,022***	1,022***	1,022***
N Level 01	24344	24344	24344
N Level 02	17	17	17

Source: Americas Barometer 2012.

\*\*\* p<.01 \*\* p<.05. \* p<.10

Control variables generally performed as expected: 01. more years of schooling, interest in politics, and a positive evaluation of the country's economy were all associated with support for democracy; 02. being male had a positive effect, but it was not statistically significant; 03. although it is not the focus of our study, the finding that rural dwellers were more likely than their urban counterparts to support democratic regimes is surprising and deserves further investigation.

On the interaction between generation and authoritarian legacy, we can return to our hypothesis, based on the 'aversion argument'. We found no statistical significance in this relationship. We cannot, therefore, affirm that the generational effect on support for democracy is conditioned by the authoritarian legacy. In other words, we found no evidence to support the claim that where authoritarian regimes were more oppressive and longer-lasting there is a greater difference in support for democracy between older and younger generations.

In fact, the authoritarian legacy has a negative effect on support for democracy<sup>2</sup>. Each additional unit in the authoritarian legacy reduces support for democracy by 0.2%. The democratic legacy, by contrast, has a positive effect: each additional unit increases likelihood of support by 0.2%. As the measure of democratic legacy varies from 0 to 65, and that of the authoritarian legacy from 0 to 363, a citizen of the country with the strongest democratic legacy is 13% more likely to support democracy than a citizen of the country with the weakest legacy, while a citizen of the country with the strongest authoritarian legacy is 72% less likely to support democracy than a citizen of the country with the weakest authoritarian legacy.

Our findings shed light on the generational question in Latin America from a perspective that is different, but complementary, to Moreno and Lagos' (2016). The comparison between the generation that has only experienced democracy and those that were also socialized under authoritarian regimes shows that the latter do indeed express a greater commitment to democracy.

This result fits with the contrast that Moreno and Lagos (2016) found between older and younger 'democratic cohorts'. What is curious, however, is that a greater authoritarian legacy does not increase the gap between generations. The crucial factor, then, is whether a generation has some experience of an authoritarian regime, regardless of how severe and repressive it was. We also found evidence that general context matters: a greater democratic legacy promotes support for democracy, while a greater authoritarian legacy discourages such support.

Taken together, the data reveal the explanatory power of political legacies. Countries that combine democratic longevity and quality constitute an environment in which political socialization favors the formation of attitudes in support of the regime. This occurs through the processes of 'habituation' (RUSTOW, 1970), 'acculturation' (SALINAS and BOOTH, 2011) or 'political learning' (MATTESS and BRATTON, 2007), during which democratic beliefs and behavior are turned into habits. In the case of authoritarian legacy, the phenomenon becomes more complex. If, on the one hand, direct individual experience with an authoritarian regime fosters support for democracy, on the other, the impact of the authoritarian tradition on society as a whole

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that these tests are one-tailed, in that our hypothesis proposed that the greater the authoritarian legacy, the greater would be the support for democracy.



tends to push in the opposite direction, constituting itself as a barrier to the formation of democratic attitudes.

## Conclusions

Most studies of democratic legitimacy ignore the generational dimension, merely using the 'age' variable as a demographic control in statistical models. By contrast, our study sought to emphasize the key role of generation in the formation of political attitudes, especially in new democracies. With this aim, we analyzed the generational effect on support for democracy in Latin America, comparing citizens who have only lived under democratic regimes with those who also experienced authoritarian regimes.

First, we find that, it was possible to examine generational differences across the region and whether, to some extent, they were influenced by the countries' varied political legacies. As Moreno and Lagos (2016) already pointed out, generations that have lived under authoritarian regimes tend to support democracy more than those that have only lived under democracy. The explanation for this difference is the vivid memory the older generations still have of living under repressive authoritarian regimes.

We expected that, in line with this result, the level of support among those who lived under authoritarian regimes would grow according to the intensity of the authoritarian legacy. However, empirical tests do not corroborate such an association. By themselves, political legacies do have a broader effect on society, increasing, in the case of the democratic legacy, and diminishing, in the case of authoritarian legacy, the likelihood of support for democracy.

One important implication of these findings is that, in Latin America, generational replacement is not likely to lead to an increase in support for democratic regimes. In any case, the question of democratic legitimacy is more complex and deserves further investigation. This will allow a better understanding of generational differences in support for core democratic principles, such as tolerance, participation, constraints on power and the rule of law.

A second implication of our findings is that political legacies matter. Countries with weaker democratic legacies or stronger authoritarian ones will find it more difficult to generate a 'reserve of legitimacy' (DAHL, 1997). This is not to say that these

democracies are doomed to fail, but rather that, because of the long-term nature of the political legacy, the survival of democratic regimes are likely to depend more on institutional and economic factors.

One of the limits of the present study relates to the way authoritarian legacy has been measured. In order to move forward, we intend to elaborate more refined measures that take other dimensions into account, such as the level of human rights violations, number of people killed and disappeared, and the level of protest tolerated under the authoritarian regime. This will allow a more adequate comparison between different modalities of authoritarianism and their impacts on the political culture. In addition, our hypotheses should be tested with a larger and more heterogeneous sample of countries, and in other regional contexts.

Another important point is that our study considered only two generational groups: that which was fully socialized under the democratic regime, and that which lived under both democratic and authoritarian regimes. We believe that future studies can deepen analysis of both generations, taking into account the nuances that mark the political history of different countries in Latin America, many of which have undergone more than one authoritarian experience and process of democratization.

Similarly, different countries underwent different processes of political transition, some of these brief, but many of them drawn-out. As such, in addition to the experiences that individuals may have had with authoritarian and democratic regimes, there is a third context of socialization: in the transition process, itself. Furthermore, it is important to remember that in some countries recent events have raised questions regarding the democratic nature of their current political regimes, such as Peru, Honduras and Venezuela. It is thus also important to examine the possible implications of these experiences for democratic legitimacy.

Last but not least, future studies can also make analytical gains by using longitudinal data to see whether generational differences are decreasing or increasing over time.

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