

# PERCEPCIONES DE BIENESTAR SOCIAL, ANOMIA, INTERÉS E IMPOTENCIA POLÍTICA EN RELACIÓN CON LAS ACTITUDES HACIA LA DEMOCRACIA

## PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL WELL-BEING, ANOMIE, POLITICAL INTEREST AND POWERLESSNESS IN RELATION WITH ATTITUDES TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

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### RESUMEN

Este estudio empírico de corte transversal pone a prueba el supuesto de que las percepciones de bienestar social, anomia, interés político e impotencia política condicionan las actitudes hacia la democracia. Se tomó el modelo de cinco dimensiones de Keyes (1998) para medir el bienestar social y se midió el constructo anomia desde la perspectiva psicosocial de Srole (1956). La muestra conformada por 568 sujetos mayores de edad de diferentes estados de México contestó una batería que contenía cuatro cuestionarios: La Escala de Actitudes hacia la Democracia de Morales, Las Escalas de Bienestar Social de Keyes, La Escala de Anomia de Srole, La adaptación al español de la Escala de Impotencia Política y un ítem de valor único sobre Interés por la Política tomado de la Encuesta Social Europea 2006. Las correlaciones de bienestar social e interés por la política son positivas para la aceptación de la democracia. Los resultados muestran que a mayor percepción de anomia e impotencia política mayor rechazo de la democracia.

**Palabras Clave:** Actitudes hacia la democracia, bienestar social, anomia, interés por la política, impotencia política.

### ABSTRACT

This empirical and transversal paper tests the hypothesis that perceived social well-being, anomie, political interest, and political powerlessness condition attitudes towards democracy. We adopted the Keyes' five-dimension model to measure social well-being and the Srole's (1956) psychosocial perspective for anomie. A sample of 568 legally adult subjects of different states of Mexico filled out a battery containing four questionnaires: Morales' Attitudes Towards Democracy Scale, Keyes' Social Well-being Scales, Srole Anomie Scale, an adaptation into Spanish language of The Powerlessness Scale, and one item of unique value for Political Interest taken from the 2006 European Social Survey. Correlations between social well-being, political interest and acceptance of democracy were positives. Results show that higher perception of anomie and political powerlessness indicates more rejection of democracy.

**Key words:** Attitudes Towards Democracy, Anomie, Interest in Politics, Political Powerlessness, Social Well-being

The presence of positive attitudes towards democracy in the population is a necessary precondition for the start of a democratic political system, but its existence is important for it to develop and consolidate (Catterberg, 1989). The increase in voter turnout rates in Latin America, in Mexico in recent years is almost 50% of the voter-inducing involve a weakening of attitudes towards democracy. If, as is Bobbio (1986), "the democratic regime is a set of procedural rules

for making collective decisions, " the high absentee rates would undermine the very essence of these collective decisions-is not uncommon for a president in Latin America it is with the support of just over 20% of the electoral roll.

The participation of citizens in the collective decision-making electoral processes, is fundamental for an inclusive democratic system, ie a regime that can not limit them to

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promote minority interests is to include the majority participating in decisions affecting them, provided that the most part. Woldenberg (2007) emphasizes that it is through citizen participation and democracy acquires its full meaning.

In 2002 Zovatto points out that much of Latin American populations have a concept of democracy merely formalistic, limited to the plurality of party options and choices. Without the requirement of, a rule of law, no one above the law, "and effective accountability" Accountability, "democracy is an empty form content for citizens (Nohlen, 2002 September).

Attitudes have been studied for social psychology for almost a century (Bravo, Prieto and Rodriguez, 1996). To consider almost determinants of behaviors and predictors of these, we have moved to a more limited understanding them as mediated or influenced by the situation or scenario (Baron and Byrne, 1998; Laca, 2005). Somuano (2005) notes that the study of attitudes towards democracy in a population helps to understand their political behavior, as they have traditionally been an indicator of the political culture of nations.

To Zovatto, acceptance resulting from the positive assessment of the public to a political system is reflected in the behavior of supporting it. In societies like Mexico, where the membership card to political parties is very low, the only reliable index of system support is voter turnout. This author indicates that the acceptance of democracy depend on the support of democratic values, freedom, tolerance and consensus, "the political system performance and support for democratic institutions, health services, education and judicial. Other authors (Diamond, Linz and Lipset, 1989, Lipset, 1993; McAllister, 1999) suggest that a favorable and sustained performance over time and especially a successful approach to economic and social problems contribute to the development and wide acceptance a faith in the legitimacy of democracy.

Moreover, Zovatto and Lagos (2005) mention that there is a difference between the feelings of the citizens with respect to democracy as an ideal and as a form of government and the aspect of satisfaction with the practical functioning of the democratic system. In Mexico, according to Latinobarómetro 2009, only 22% of the population is satisfied with the functioning of democracy because it has

not resulted in the reduction of poverty, unemployment and corruption. The same authors believe that all this is creating among the public disenchantment with democracy. To Woldenberg (2009) and Muñoz (2007), these reviews are reflected in the disaffection and distrust of citizens towards the institutions, for example political parties, "even though they are increasingly considered a valid and institutions of democracy (Latinobarómetro 2009). Pereira (2000) notes that the discrediting of politics and its institutions is an obstacle to the consolidation of this political system.

### *Social Welfare and Anomie*

In its original meaning in the field of Political Economy, Social Welfare-Social Well-being "is understood by Salcedo (1994) as an index of economic inequality in the distribution within a society. From social psychology, opinions, perceptions and attributions by means of which people are managed in the world are interpersonal and social welfare indicators (Blanco and Diaz, 2006). It is from this second sense that we approach the construct of social welfare.

The need to take into account the individual and society has led to the generation of a given social welfare. For Keyes (1998), social welfare is "the assessment we make of the circumstances and functioning in society" and argues that consists of 5 dimensions: a) social integration, evaluating the quality of our relationships, b) Acceptance social, a feeling of belonging to a community, c) social contribution, balance the usefulness of our contributions to the community and this makes the assessment thereof; d) Updated social confidence in the future of society, confidence in it develops and offers opportunities to develop with it, and e) social coherence, dimension to the previous evaluating our ability to understand the dynamics of society would allow us to move ahead. Both the update and the coherence appear as opposite dimensions to construct social anomie (Laca, Mejia and Yáñez, 2010). Black and Diaz (2006) found significant correlations between the five factors of social welfare and involvement in solving social problems.

Anomie describes the concept of negative integration processes of individuals to the social world to which they belong (Aceituno, Asún and Ruiz, 2009). Collectively, anomie describes the low cohesion of a society with low integration

of individuals and groups or classes, individually designated antisocial behavior and unsupportive of people (Laca et al., 2010). Term introduced in sociology by Durkheim, characterized at times of transition when social-normative model, political and especially economic-are being left without a new one has been fully replaced. Merton (1965) redefined anomie as "the discrepancy between the goals set by society and lack of access for many people the means to achieve those goals." Rodríguez (2006) argues that the relationship between ends and means is weakened, the end appears as incongruous for a large portion of the population due to lack of real possibilities for achieving them.

Like other developing countries or emerging economies, Mexico has embraced the consumerist and achievements for individual characteristics of neoliberal societies. Added to this, Trejo (2010) reports that approximately 50% of its population lives in poverty and nearly twenty million in extreme poverty. It is obviously a mismatch for at least half of the Mexican population between ends and means, between social goals and personal potential. In addition to a collective scenario perceived by individuals, anomie also describes individual behavior in that scenario. To Benbenaste, Etchezahar and Del Rio (2008), where anomie in society appears too high to citizens, individual anomie is not considered by many of them as negative in itself and appears justified as astuteness to survive.

In the implementation of the concept to Latin American issues, Parales-Quenza (2008) indicates that anomie has been considered mainly with regard to illegality, corruption and disregard of rules and regulations and thus acquires a special significance. In this context, anomie emerges not as a result of changes related to industrialization, but incomplete and exclusionary national projects. This author argues that the consequences are apparent in the number of homicides, death rates from accidents, cases of corruption and phenomena such as drug trafficking, all widespread problems in the region.

### ***Political Interest and Powerlessness***

Any democratic system would require a minimum level of political interest for citizens to know the political process, to defend his welfare or to elect their representatives (Vilas, 2003). Laca et al. (2010) emphasize that traditionally connected a high interest in politics with a greater capacity

to understand what happens in it, and in that case, the adoption of citizens' views would be preceded by some thought. For its part, Vilas (2000) argues that people's political orientations presumably concerned not tend to be more stable than those less interested. The lack of interest regarding political phenomena is related to apathy, which is the state of indifference, alienation and passivity in relation to politics (Bobbio, Matteucci and Pasquino, 2005).

The consumption of political information is an indicator of interest in it. In 2000, Vilas noted that the frequency of use of such information, is associated with educational level. Therefore, better educated, more frequent consumption of political information. It also indicates that this association is very common for the press, except for the radio and very little for TV. In 2008, the results from the National Survey of Political Culture (ENCUP) reported that 64% of Mexicans have little or no interest in politics. Duarte and Jaramillo (2009) emphasize that the rejection and apathy towards public affairs and political participation appear to be gaining ground at a time that should advance the interest and participation.

Grossi and Shepherd (1994) understood by -Political Powerlessness "to individual feeling that their actions are not effective inputs into the system, ie influence the structure and processes of that system "(p. 147) . This subjective feeling of lack of power to the social institutions of decision making largely determines the attitudes and behavior in such instances. For Duarte and Jaramillo, among the reasons for the apathy of citizens towards politics is so outstanding, the feeling of powerlessness against political problems increasingly complex. Taking the data from the National Survey of Political Culture and Practices, 2003, these authors report that over 50% of Mexicans believe little or nothing can influence the decisions of government and in national political life, which describe the political powerlessness.

Sobral, Sabucedo and Vargas (1986) have found a relationship between feelings of political powerlessness and abstention. The first variable is considered the center of a continuum whose opposite end would be the political effectiveness, defined in 1954 by Campbell, Gurin and Miller as "the feeling that individual political action has or may have an impact on the political process; or the feeling that the political and social change is possible and that individual

citizens can play a part in achieving this change "(p. 187). Both variables are consistent with the theory of Rotter's Locus of Control as a specific form of locus of control for political activity (Grossi and Shepherd, 1994). Individuals with internal locus of control assume that they have responsibility for the events that happen around them, so they tend to intervene. By contrast, subjects with an external orientation believe that their ability to influence these events is zero, so their attitude will be passive.

Based on the foregoing, the present cross-sectional empirical study aims to: explore the effects of the five components of social welfare, anomie, the interest in politics and political powerlessness on the perception of attitudes toward democracy (acceptance or rejection). We advance the hypothesis that: a) the factors that make social welfare positively correlated with the acceptance of democracy and negatively to reject it, b) a greater perception of anomie, the more rejection of democracy, and greater perception of being greater social, acceptance of democracy; c) the greater interest in politics greater acceptance of democracy, and d) at higher political powerlessness, the more rejection of democracy.

## METHOD

### Sample

Volunteered a total of N = 568 persons of legal age from seven states in Mexico (315 h, 253 m, range 18 to 89 years to average 31). The states were chosen randomly and the sample, also randomly selected. Participation rates were: 11.27% Campeche, Colima 18.13% 10.39% Federal District, Nayarit 16.20% 10.04% Nuevo León, Puebla and Veracruz 17.60 16.37%

### Instruments

*Scale of Attitudes Toward Democracy (Morales, 2006).* It consists of 16 items as statements (eg "In a democratic system, citizens can really change society through their votes") on which the subject may choose to position themselves in a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly agree ) To 5 (Strongly Disagree). This scale measures two factors with eight items each: 1) Acceptance of democracy ( $\alpha = .87$ ) and 2) rejection of democracy ( $\alpha = .88$ ).

*Scales of Social Welfare.* We used the validated Spanish version by Black and Diaz (2005), from Keyes (1998).

It measures five factors as components of social welfare: a) social integration (5 items,  $\alpha = .69$ ), b) social acceptance (6 items  $\alpha = .83$ ), c) Social Contribution (5 items,  $\alpha = .70$ ), d) Updated social (5 items,  $\alpha = .79$ ) and e) social coherence (4 items,  $\alpha = 0.68$ ). It consists of 25 items as statements (eg I feel like a part of my community ") and a Likert response format of five alternatives (1 strongly agree to 5 strongly disagree).

*Anomie Scale.* We used the validated Spanish version of Rodriguez (2006), from Srole (1956). Measured by a single factor attitudes and beliefs of social disintegration or disorganization. It consists of 9 items as statements (eg Civil servants are not really interested in what happens to average people) on the subject indicates your agreement following Likert response range of five anchors (1 strongly disagree, 5 strongly agree). The scale has a reliability of  $\alpha = .67$ .

*Interest in .* European Social Survey (European Social Survey, 2006) used the question "How would you say you're interested in politics?" as a single item of value as an independent variable to measure interest in politics. Using the Likert response format from 1 (nothing) to 5 (very much).

*Political Powerlessness Scale.* With a single factor measures the belief that the person is unable to influence the government or political system is the reverse of political efficacy. To use this scale, first performed a Spanish adaptation of "powerlessness Scale" of Finift (1970), which included twelve dichotomous items. After translating and using a Likert response format of five points (from 1 = none to 5 = very much), we conducted a pilot application to 240 people over 18 years of the city of Colima, Mexico (120 h, 120 m, mean 23 years). We applied exploratory factor analysis with Varimax rotation to examine the structure of the items. We use the extraction method of principal components and used the values greater than 1 to set the number of factors to retain, obtaining the best representation of the items was achieved with a factor structure. From the twelve items, two had factor loadings less than .400 and the most cargo was out of a single component factorial, and therefore their exclusion from the scale increased the total reliability index and the variance explained. The final scale was composed of ten items (except items 1 and 10, the rest are reversed), has a Cronbach alpha of .77 and explained 67% of the variance. The final instrument was administered to all participants in this study and have

the items in the form of statements (eg "If you do an effort to change this policy: a hypothetical or alleged local legislation seen as "very unjust or harmful, " how likely is that you will make it? ") (see Annex 1).

*Sociodemographic data.* Included questions about sex, age, marital status and voting behavior in the last election, to treat them as independent variables, whose statistical analysis was done through the division into groups.

### **Procedure**

Data were collected during the months of January to April 2010. Research team members traveled to the states randomly selected for this study using the questionnaires in different public places. It was explained to the volunteer participants for the purpose of the investigation and allowed to respond to individual battery in the presence of the interviewer, ensuring anonymity and use of data for scientific purposes only. Were considered as independent variables to the five components of social welfare, anomie, the interest in politics and political powerlessness, and as dependent variables the two attitudes towards democracy (acceptance and rejection). For the statistical treatment of data is categorized into two independent variables and are applied the Student t test for independent samples and related samples, as Pearson bivariate correlations.

### **Results**

Table 1 shows the average scores on factors Attitudes Toward Democracy, Social Welfare, Anomia, interest in politics and political powerlessness. The results indicate high and intermediate scores on these constructs. Applied Student t test for mean difference between genders we found any statistically significant, so in the table, means are not separated by gender. The mean difference between acceptance and rejection of democracy is statistically significant ( $M = 3.54$  vs.  $M = 3.20$ ,  $t(567) = 8.45$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

We performed a paired-samples t test between the five factors of Social Welfare and anomie and proved the existence of significant higher perception of social welfare of anomie, social integration / anomie ( $t(567) = -25.23$ ), social acceptance / anomie ( $t(567) = -12.98$ ), social contribution / anomie ( $t(567) = -28.92$ ), updating social / anomie ( $t(567) = -21.71$ ) and social cohesion / anomie ( $t(567) = -26.34$ ),  $p < .01$ , respectively.

The correlations between variables: Attitudes toward democracy, social welfare, Anomia, interest in politics and political impotence is presented in Table 2. The factor 'acceptance of democracy' has a statistically significant positive correlation ( $p < .05$ ) with all factors of social welfare and interest in politics. The 'rejection of democracy' correlates negatively and significantly ( $p < .05$ ) with all factors of social welfare and interest in politics. Correlation between anomie and acceptance of democracy is negative but not statistically significant, contrary to the correlation between anomie and rejection of democracy, which is positive and significant ( $r = .40$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The perception of political powerlessness shows a significant positive correlation with the rejection of democracy ( $r = .26$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Interest in politics is positively correlated with the acceptance of democracy and negatively with rejection ( $r = .14$  and  $r = .11$ ,  $p < .01$ , respectively).

Subsequently, the sample was divided into two groups (categorization of variables: G1 = G2 = low and high) according to their average score in each factor of the independent variables Welfare, anomie, political impotence and interest in politics. We consider the first half, whose scores were the lowest, and the rest as G1 and G2 in order to test the hypothesis that «a greater perception of social welfare and interest in politics, greater acceptance of democracy and a greater perception of anomie and political impotence, the more rejection of democracy. «The mean differences between high and low groups all factors were statistically significant variables (see Table 3).

Groups with high level in the five factors of social welfare report increased levels of 'acceptance of democracy', these differences were statistically significant, in contrast to the low level groups in factors of social welfare, who reject democracy more significantly. The mean difference between high and low groups of anomie and political powerlessness were not significant for the acceptance of democracy, as opposed to the rejection of democracy, where groups with high levels of anomie and political powerlessness most rejects democracy so significant. The group with high level of political interest to support more democracy than the low level significantly.

**Table 1**  
*Mean scores of the variables (N = 568).*

Scales	M	DT
Attitudes Toward Democracy:		
- Acceptance of democracy	3.54	.62
- Rejection of democracy	3.20	.65
Social Welfare:		
- Social integration	3.49	.76
- Social acceptance	3.05	.77
- Social contribution	3.66	.78
- Updated social	3.35	.67
- Social coherence	3.62	.82
Anomia	2.48	.50
Political interest	2.68	1.0
Political impotence	2.92	.53

Note: The response format ranged from 1 to 5.

**Table 2**  
*Correlations between dependent and independent variables.*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Attitudes to Democracy										
1. Acceptance of democracy	----	-.13**	.13**	.20**	.17**	.22**	.12**	-.04	.14**	-.00
2. Rejection of democracy		----	-.13**	-.24**	-.17**	-.27**	-.17**	.40**	-.11**	.26**
Social Welfare										
3. Social integration			----	.14**	.51**	.40**	.31**	-.11**	.22**	-.19**
4. Social acceptance				----	.18**	.41**	.29**	-.32**	.14**	-.42**
5. Social contribution					----	.49**	.57**	-.12**	.28**	-.36**
6. Updated social						----	.48**	-.33**	.20*	-.39**
7. Social coherence							----	-.18**	.21**	.17**
8. Anomia								----	-.13**	-.34**
9. Political interest									----	-.35**
10. Political Powerlessness										----

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Tabla 3**

*Means and comparisons of attitudes toward democracy in terms of social welfare level, anomie, political powerlessness and interest in politics.*

Groups	n	Acceptance of democracy				Rejection of democracy			
		M	DT	t	p	M	DT	t	p
Social Integration <sup>a</sup>									
G2= High level	292	3.60	.64	-2.13	.03	3.14	.69	2.34	.02
G1= Low level	276	3.48	.59			3.27	.59		
Social Acceptance <sup>b</sup>									
G2= High level	279	3.62	.61	-2.89	.00	3.09	.64	4.22	.00
G1= Low level	289	3.47	.62			3.31	.63		
Social Contribution <sup>c</sup>									
G2= High level	296	3.63	.66	-3.74	.00	3.10	.74	4.02	.00
G1= Low level	272	3.44	.56			3.32	.51		
Social Update <sup>d</sup>									
G2= High level	278	3.66	.63	-4.42	.00	3.08	.71	4.48	.00
G1= Low level	290	3.43	.59			3.32	.56		
Social coherence <sup>e</sup>									
G2= High level	257	3.63	.69	-3.06	.00	3.09	.72	3.90	.00
G1= Low level	311	3.47	.54			3.30	.56		
Anomie <sup>f</sup>									
G2= High level	310	3.52	.66	.93	.35	3.36	.61	-6.61	.00
G1= Low level	258	3.57	.57			3.01	.64		
Political Powelessness <sup>g</sup>									
G2= High level	287	3.56	.55	-.76	.45	3.32	.63	-4.38	.00
G1= Low level	281	3.52	.68			3.09	.65		
Interest in Politics <sup>h</sup>									
G2= High level	321	3.62	.62	-3.46	.00	3.14	.68	2.46	.01
G1= Low level	247	3.44	.61			3.28	.59		

Nota: <sup>a</sup>Low level= Range from 1.00 to 3.40; M= 2.86, DT= 0.46. High level = Range from 3.60 to 5.00; M= 4.09, DT= 0.42; t(566)= -33.03\*\*.

<sup>b</sup>Low level= Range from 1.00 to 3.00; M= 2.47, DT= 0.50. High level = Range from 3.17 to 5.00; M= 3.65, DT= 0.48; t(566)= -28.51\*\*.

<sup>c</sup>Low level= Range from 2.00 to 3.40; M= 2.99, DT= 0.34. High level = Range from 3.60 to 5.00; M= 4.28, DT= 0.51; t(566)= -35.47\*\*.

<sup>d</sup>Low level= Range from 1.60 to 3.20; M= 2.83, DT= 0.34. High level = Range from 3.40 to 5.00; M= 3.89, DT= 0.46; t(566)= -31.35\*\*.

<sup>e</sup>Low level= Range from 1.00 to 3.50; M= 3.00, DT= 0.46. High level = Range from 3.75 to 5.00; M= 4.36, DT= 0.45; t(566)= -35.10\*\*.

<sup>f</sup>Low level= Range from 1.11 to 2.33; M= 2.05, DT= 0.26. High level = Range from 2.44 to 4.00; M= 2.83, DT= 0.36; t(566)= -28.87\*\*.

<sup>g</sup>Low level= Range from 1.10 to 2.90; M= 2.51, DT= 0.38. High level = Range from 3.00 to 4.50; M= 3.32, DT= 0.29; t(566)= -28.96\*\*.

<sup>h</sup>Low level= Range from 1.00 to 2.00; M= 1.74, DT= 0.44. High level = Range from 3.00 to 5.00; M= 3.40, DT= 0.65; t(566)= -34.51\*\*.

## Discussion

Confirmed the initial hypothesis. The five factors correlated positively with Social Welfare «acceptance» of democracy and negatively with 'rejection' of it. Approach has proved relevant to the study of attitudes toward democracy from the perspective of social psychology adopting the model of Social Welfare of Keyes (1998). In

intergroup comparison, subjects perceived greater social welfare show greater acceptance of democracy.

The interest in politics is positively correlated with the Social Welfare and the acceptance of democracy. Vilas (2003) finds that interest in politics increases as they are assigned any significance in being the origin of the good performance of the government. Our results show an interest

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in politics, 82.4% of the sample reported «some», «little» or «nothing» of interest, only 17.6% reported «fairly» or «plenty.» This would indicate that the subjects of this study enjoy a good political system, a functioning democracy is not directly related to their personal welfare. The evaluation of the social context by patients with psychosocial variables such as these proposals taken from Keyes (1998), is proposed as a complementary way, not only to approaches from sociology and political sciences on attitudes toward democracy. Attitudes, as noted in the introduction, influence behavior, although this relationship attitudes / behaviors is not direct (Laca, 2005).

We observed that the mean scores on the five factors of Social Welfare are high and significantly higher than the average of anomie. It seems incongruent that, despite the deteriorating circumstances existing political and economic assessment of respondents on the social system is so good, but there may be reasons characteristics of Mexican culture to explain it because the Mexicans also score high in the polls global satisfaction with their lives (Diener and Eunkook, 2003). Moreover, in Latin American societies, among which is Mexico, where «the disparity between culturally prescribed goals and means to achieve them becomes permanent, latent» (Cave, 2003, p. 10), little is understood reliability in assessing the social context habituation to negative social conditions. Where, for example, social anomie has been a constant secular citizens by habituation to it are poorly positioned to identify and calibrate (Laca et al., 2010).

The mean «acceptance» of democracy tends to be high and is significantly higher than the «rejection» of it. We consider the possibility that these high scores in acceptance of democracy is due to vague ideas about it and possibly lacking a core identifiable, which identifies such sequences merely electoral democracy and with no reason for it, as the state of law and accountability, as is common in non-consolidated democracies (Schedler and Sarsfield, 2009). We would propose for further research, as recommended by Schedler and Sarsfield, including indirect but specific questions about elements of democracy in order to assess how real is the knowledge of the subject, what they mean by democracy when evaluated.

We find it significant that none of these variables are significant intra-group gender differences because, as noted

Valvieso (2004), traditionally, the policy has been considered men's business. However, in 2010, Rivero argues that the participation of Latin American women in politics has made progress since the last decade of last century.

Finally, those who perceive greater anomie and political powerlessness most reject democracy, but this is not significant intergroup difference in the acceptance of democracy. This fact is interesting since it would indicate that «responsibility» to the performance of democracy by the perception of social disadvantage, but the low perception of these conditions (and have discussed the high perception of social welfare, apparently inconsistent with the real social conditions) is not reflected in a higher rejection of democracy.

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## ANNEX

## ESCALA DE IMPOTENCIA POLÍTICA

(Adaptación al español por Santana, H. y Ochoa, B.)

**INSTRUCCIONES:**

Encierra en un CÍRCULO el número de tu respuesta a cada afirmación considerando la siguiente clave:

	1	2	3	4	5			
	Nada	Poco	Algo	Bastante	Mucho			
1. ¿Qué tan de acuerdo estás con esta frase? «Algunas personas dicen que la política y el gobierno son tan complicados que el hombre promedio no puede entender realmente qué es lo que pasa».				1	2	3	4	5
*2. Al pensar en los asuntos importantes nacionales e internacionales que enfrenta el país, ¿Qué tan bien crees que entiendes estas cuestiones?.				1	2	3	4	5
*3. ¿Qué tal los asuntos locales en esta ciudad o parte de los del país; qué tan bien los entiendes?.				1	2	3	4	5
*4. Si tú hicieras un esfuerzo por cambiar esta normativa: una hipotética o supuesta normativa local considerada como «muy injusta o dañina», ¿qué tan probable es que lo lograras?.				1	2	3	4	5
*5. Si tal caso (la supuesta normativa local) se diera, ¿qué tan probable es que tú realmente intentarás hacer algo al respecto?.				1	2	3	4	5
*6. Si tú hicieras un esfuerzo por cambiar esta ley: una hipotética ley nacional considerada como «muy injusta o dañina», ¿qué tan probable es que lo lograras?.				1	2	3	4	5
*7. Si tal caso (la supuesta ley nacional) se diera, ¿qué tan probable es que tú realmente intentarás hacer algo al respecto?.				1	2	3	4	5
*8. Pensando ahora sobre el gobierno federal (ubicado en el D.F.), ¿cuánto efecto crees que sus actividades, las leyes aprobadas, etc., tienen en tu vida diaria?.				1	2	3	4	5
*9. Ahora considera al gobierno local: ¿cuánto efecto crees que sus actividades tienen en tu vida diaria?.				1	2	3	4	5
10. ¿Qué tan de acuerdo estás con esta frase?: «La gente como yo no tiene nada que decir acerca de lo que el gobierno hace».				1	2	3	4	5

\*Ítems inversos

