

The impact of cognitive mobility and the media on the political participation of mexicans

El impacto de la movilidad cognitiva y los medios de información en la participación política de los mexicanos

O impacto da mobilidade cognitiva e da mídia na participação política dos mexicanos

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ABSTRACT

This document focuses on the importance of cognitive mobility on political behavior (to vote or not) and the its influence on the voting decision of the Mexican voter. It also investigates the impact of traditional media and new media on the voting option of the electorate. Moreover, it explores the implications of birth cohort for political participation and the impact these distinct forms of information have on each generation's political behavior. The variables of cognitive mobility are generated using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. The hypotheses are tested using logit models. For the analysis of different generations, multigroup logit models are used.

Keywords: social media, traditional media, cognitive mobility, voting, vote choice.

RESUMEN

Este documento se centra en analizar el efecto que tiene la movilidad cognitiva en el comportamiento político y su influencia sobre la decisión de voto del votante mexicano. Investiga el impacto de los medios tradicionales y los nuevos medios de comunicación en la opción de voto del electorado. Además, analiza el efecto tanto de la movilidad cognitiva como de los medios de comunicación sobre los ciudadanos, dependiendo de la generación a la que pertenecen. La variable de movilidad cognitiva es generada a partir de modelos exploratorios y confirmatorios. Las hipótesis son probadas generando modelos logit y logit por multigrupos.

Palabras clave: redes sociales, medios tradicionales, movilidad cognitiva, voto, decisión de voto.

RESUMO

Este artigo centra-se na análise do efeito da mobilidade cognitiva no comportamento político e sua influência sobre a decisão de voto do eleitor mexicano. Investiga o impacto da mídia tradicional e das novas mídias na opção dos eleitores. Também analisa o efeito tanto da mobilidade cognitiva como dos meios de comunicação sobre os cidadãos, em relação à geração a que eles pertencem. A variável mobilidade cognitiva é gerada a partir de modelos exploratórios e confirmatórios. As hipóteses geradas são testadas por modelos logit e logit para grupos múltiplos.

Palavras-chave: redes sociais, mídia tradicional, mobilidade cognitiva, voto, decisão de voto.

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INTRODUCTION

The role of the media in Mexico's democratic development has become increasingly important in recent decades. They are decisive for electoral processes, have witnessed the weakening of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* [Institutional Revolutionary Party] (PRI) and participated as a key factor in Vicente Fox's 2000 presidential victory and Calderón's "agony" victory in 2006, both candidates of the *Partido Acción Nacional* [National Action Party] (PAN). Nowadays, television, radio, print media (magazines and newspapers) and social networks play a crucial role in political campaigns (Dalton, 2004).

In Mexico, the various sources of information, including heuristics¹ (Lupia & McCubbins, 1998; Popkin, 1991; Sniderman, Brody & Tetlock, 1991) are gradually being analyzed in greater depth. For example, Lawson (2002) argued that in the 1994 presidential election the media bias in favor of the official party (PRI) increased the vote for this political option. Ramírez (2005) affirmed that in the presidential election of 2000 the mass media established the agenda of the two debates. On the other hand, Aceves (2004) concluded that, in Mexico, the debates have an effect on the perceptions of political parties and candidates. In a deeper analysis of the 2000 presidential election, Lawson and McCann (2005) noted that exposure to news (television) has an effect on the voter's political behavior. The population segment that watches Televisión Azteca was more likely to accept the change, to vote for Vicente Fox (PAN candidate), compared to those who followed the news on Televisa. The effect of Televisión Azteca is much greater than that of Televisa in the probability of modifying the preference of the elector. For the 2006 election, McCombs and Valenzuela (2007) found that the two most important mass media, Televisa and Televisión Azteca, gave much more coverage to the winning candidate, Felipe Calderón (PAN candidate). In the same vein, news coverage was in favor of Calderón and PRI candidate Roberto Madrazo in comparison with López Obrador (candidate of the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* [Democratic Revolution Party], PRD), facilitating the increase of preferences in favor of the candidate of the Party in government. Lawson and McCann (2005) concluded that the candidate with greater presence in the media will be more likely to win the election.

The analysis of the effect of the mass media on participation and voting decisions is constantly under scrutiny by social sciences researchers. In this regard, the questions analyzed are:

- Q1 Does cognitive mobility play a decisive role in political participation in Mexico?
- Q2 Do the media, both traditional and alternative, influence the political decisions of the electorate?
- Q3 Are there marked differences between different generations?
- Q4 What is the impact of traditional media and social networks in these generations?

This project tries to answer each one of the questions and to open the debate on the scope, the impact and the relevance of the cognitive mobility and the media in the democratic development of the country between its different generations.

DETERMINANTS AND IMPORTANCE OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

One of the most important questions in Political Science is: who participates in political issues? This can be answered by knowing the characteristics of those who participate, a simple way to interpret the population's political activism.

On the one hand, political dissatisfaction can encourage the citizen to participate, as he will seek to reduce this problem, aligning it with the priorities and needs of the population (Dalton, 2007). On the other hand, citizens will participate when they consider that electoral decisions have a real impact on policymakers.

The model of civic voluntarism defined by Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) concludes that individuals participate in political affairs since they are influenced by factors such as personal characteristics (sociodemographic), group effects (belonging to certain groups, clubs, non-profit associations, etc.), and political values.

In terms of personal characteristics, education and income are decisive for the political participation of the

population. Those with education and high social status have more time, money and access to political information, which means they are more likely to participate.

Social class² as such does not influence; however, skills obtained at higher economic levels imply greater attributions to participate in political issues (Nie, Junn & Stehlik-Barry, 1996). Thus, any model of political participation should include the social class or social status variable (Verba & Nie, 1972), since it effectively simplifies the linkage with the skills and aptitudes necessary to understand and analyze political issues.

Dalton (2007) emphasized that age plays a key role. Young people view politics as an issue beyond their reach. For this reason, participation in political issues will increase along with the individual's biological development (Franklin, 2004; Wattenberg, 2003). The gender variable also has an important effect on political activism. Men, compared to women, are more likely to be involved in these issues (Norris, 2002), since education, income and co-workers have a major effect on approaching political issues (Schlozman, Burns & Verba, 1994).

In consolidated democracies³, voters have the skills and resources to define themselves politically and electorally without depending on factors such as political campaigns or political party positions (Dalton, 2000). These politically and electorally skilled citizens are more committed and more participatory in political affairs. This is due to a greater capacity to process political information based on educational level and interest in politics or, on the other hand, by the ability to reduce the costs of channeling the information received by the media. The union of these factors –education and interest in politics– was defined by Dalton (2004) as 'cognitive mobility'⁴.

The influence of social groups is based on psychological effects; for example, sympathy for a political party. Partisan sympathy or identification encourages electoral participation. That is, the population that does not identify with any political party will be less likely to participate in electoral competitions (Dalton, 2007). Subscribing to social clubs or associations creates skills and aptitudes that facilitate the understanding

of politics and the importance it has in the development of society (Uhlener, 1989). As a result, Putnam (2000) concluded that a citizen who is involved in unions or associations is more likely to participate.

Dalton (2007) argued that political values are determinant in the political participation of the population. The citizen's sympathy with the performance of the government and the public policies implemented will increase the likelihood for him to participate and go to the polls. High levels of electoral participation suggest high levels of party approval in the government. Also, Verba et al. (1995) concluded that participation is also related to the political and ideological characteristics of political parties.

The belief that political participation may have little relevance to the nation's political development means that citizenship decreases their probability of voting (Pettie, Seyd & Whiteley, 2004). In other words, Pettie et al. (2004) and Dalton (2007) concluded that voters who believe their participation will have a real effect on the political process will be more likely to vote.

OPTIMIZATION IN THE USE OF INFORMATION

In modern democracies, citizens must actively participate, so being informed becomes an obligation. However, they invest little energy and time in political issues (Lippman, 1992). The electorate seeks mechanisms to maximize the benefits of suffrage by optimizing the cost of knowing and staying informed of the political platforms and topics represented by the different campaign proposals (Downs, 1957). However, there is a wide variety of studies that conclude that voters lack political information (Lippman, 1992; Zaller, 1992).

Heath, Jowell and Curtice (1985) concluded that, in modern societies, the citizen receives information through a great diversity of media. However, each voter chooses the amount of information they want to process. In this regard, he will seek to ensure that the cost of the information received is equal to the benefit of voting (Downs, 1957). To reduce the cost of acquiring information (Popkin, 1991; Zaller, 1992), the rational citizen will use free information, which he will obtain

from social interaction (Downs, 1957), thus accepting information from third parties.

All voters will have equal opportunity to access information, but the realization of such an opportunity will depend on their abilities and capacities. The heuristics used will be as sophisticated as their capacity. Several researches have concluded that there is a positive relationship between information –constantly being informed about political issues– and the decision to vote (Blais, 2000; Hochschild, 2010; Gerber, Karlan & Bergan, 2009; Pande, 2011). Downs (1957) argued that the greater the amount of information a citizen has, the more influence he will have on government policies. On the other hand, if a voter knows little of his political alternatives, the probability of ignoring the government is greater and therefore he will not vote.

THE MEDIA AND THEIR TRANSCENDENCE IN POLITICAL DECISIONS

The impact of mass media on electoral behavior has been analyzed since the 1940s (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee, 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet, 1948). The results indicate that the media have a real effect on citizens' electoral behavior through persuasion (Haug 2004; Iyengar & Simon 2000; Kinder, 1998). Drew and Weaver (2006) concluded that people who read news related to presidential campaigns have a higher probability of voting. Bartels & Brady (1993) stated that in the 1980 presidential campaign in the United States, the media (television) had an impact on the approval of President Carter's performance. From a daily analysis in the American media, Shaw (1999) found that newscasts had some relevance in changing electoral preferences during the presidential elections of 1992 and 1996. Therefore, there is an extensive literature that presents empirical evidence (Bennett & Entman, 2001; Eveland & Hively, 2009; Shah, Cho, Eveland & Kwak, 2005).

Criticism of the effect of the media on electoral process lies in the degree of persuasion they may have. Although there are studies that validate the effect of the media and their persuasive effectiveness (Fan & Tims, 1989; Kleinnijenhuis & Fan, 1999), there are

others that point out that the relationship is superficial and determined by other factors (Stevenson, 2002).

Despite this, the media play a key role in the process of describing political reality to citizens (Martínez, 2011; Trejo, 2000), becoming the main source of information (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2012; Muñiz, 2012). Thus, the framing that they use has a fundamental weight in shaping public opinion (De Vreese, Boomgaarden & Semetko, 2011). Framing is a process that allows the creation, selection and framing of news content; not only does it sets the agenda of the issues that are being debated by the population, but it can also influence the way these issues are perceived by the audience. From this notion, four elements are distinguished: sender, receiver, text and culture. Frames are emphasized in the news to give different points of view to a given note (Matthes, 2012). In this regard, McCombs, Llamas, López-Escobar and Rey (1997) point out that framing is an extension of the agenda setting model. For all of this, it is important to study the content that the media presents to citizens, and even more when there are electoral competitions (Dimitrova & Kostadinova, 2013; Rinke, Wessler, Lob & Weinmann, 2013; Schuck, Boomgaarden & De Vreese, 2013). In other words, the impact of the message depends more on how its content is presented than on the content itself (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

A large number of studies have focused on analyzing which channels of communication have the most influence in the political arena (Weaver & Drew, 2001). Bennett and Entman (2001) point out that the most influential media are the traditional ones (newspapers, television and radio). There are also studies that show that the impact that television has on the decision to vote depends on the television channel that is watched; for example, Alcalde (2003) suggested that Spaniards who see Antena 3 are less likely to vote for the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* [Spanish Socialist Workers' Party] (PSOE, while being a follower of TV1 increases the sympathy for this political option regarding the *Partido Popular* [Popular Party] (PP).

Despite this, not all research refers to the relevance of traditional information media as determinants of political participation. The creation of the Internet

and, later, of social networks, has generated important transformations in the political sphere; for example, Bernal Triviño (2015), Willnat, Wong, Tamam and Aw (2013), Lee and Shin (2014) and Ceron, Curini, Lacus and Porro (2014) suggest a positive relationship between the use of these technological tools and political participation. In this regard, Obama's presidential campaign in 2008 made an extensive use of the Internet and social networks (Cogburn & Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011; Gibson, 2010; Robertson, Ravi & Medina, 2010). Micro-blogging services (e.g., Twitter) and social networks (e.g., Facebook) increased levels of political participation (Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013). Similarly, McClurg (2003) and Zhang and Seltzer (2010) find a positive relationship between the use of social networks and political discussions, leading to an increase in political participation. Different studies support the argument that the use of alternative media increases social capital (Ellison, 2007; Karahasanovic & Brandtzæg, 2009; Tomai et al., 2010; Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009), which is related with an increase in political participation (Zhang & Seltzer, 2010).

On the other hand, Cappella, Price and Nir (2002) and Price, Capella and Nir (2002) concluded that the use of social networks can cause a greater polarization on political issues, without implying an increase in participation. In addition, Panagopoulos, Georgieva, Slotnick, Gulati and Williams (2009) pointed out that these media do not affect citizens' levels of participation and, therefore, they have no impact on election results.

Political parties have systematically used social networks to get closer to the electorate; for example, in the Obama presidential campaign in 2008, they used fifteen social networking sites (Christakis & Fowler, 2009; Citron, 2010; Greengard, 2009; Lalbot, 2008; Lutz 2009). Another success story was Ségolène Royal's campaign in France in 2007, in which, by using social networks, she increased the number of supporters of her party from 120,000 to 200,000 members, of which 90% had no party affiliation (Effing, Van Hillegersberg & Huibers, 2011; Montero, 2009). Other examples of the success of new technologies are mass mobilizations in the countries of the Middle East and Latin America, where social networks are changing the way they do politics. In spite of this, the use of social networks does not always have a positive impact on campaigns and

on the political participation of the electorate. Effing, Van Hillegersberg, and Huibers (2011) made several empirical analyzes during the 2010 and 2011 Dutch elections, and concluded that the impact of alternative media depends on their instrumentation.

The citizens use these new media to inform themselves and to debate on the subjects of political character; however, Barredo, Arcila, Arroyave and Silva (2015) suggest that traditional media have a more significant effect on participation. Despite the relevance of alternative media, they are still studied in less proportion than those related to traditional media. Currently, Crovi, Toussaint and Tovar (2006) argue that digital media have a greater audience than traditional ones.

Several researchers conclude that when traditional and alternative media are used, the effect on participation is uncertain (Barredo et al., 2015; Jennings & Zeitner, 2003; Kenski & Stroud, 2006; Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2009). However, if one studies the relevance of the interest in having political information, it is concluded that this interest increases the use of alternative media, which in turn is related to an increase in political participation (Barredo et al. 2015; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000; Tian, 2006). Consequently, it is important to continue with research lines that invite and provoke new reflections.

DATA, HYPOTHESIS, VARIABLES AND MODELS

This project has four main objectives:

1. Generate the latent variable of cognitive mobility for the Mexican case.
2. Identify the effect of this variable on the political participation of citizens and the influence they have on the voting decision.
3. Investigate the impact of traditional media (radio, television and newspapers) and modern media (microblogging and social networks) on voting and on the choice of political options at the polls.
4. To study the implications of different generations in political participation and the impact of this forms of information on the participation and political behavior of each generation.

Before presenting the results of the different models, the following section describes the data used, the hypotheses proposed and the models and variables that this research uses.

DATA

This research will use data published by Latinobarómetro from 2000 to 2010 (Latinobarómetro, 2010). Studies conducted by the Latinobarómetro Corporation investigate the economic, political and social development of Latin American countries, focusing on information on values, preferences, opinions, attitudes, assessments and their association with different forms of political behavior, including the choice between parties or candidates in different elections.

In the case of Mexico, the surveys were developed by Mori Mexico (1996-2000), Mundamericas (2001-2005), BGC Mexico (2006) and Olivares Plata Opinión y Mercado (2007-2009). In each of the surveys, more than 1200 people were interviewed. The samples are representative of the adult population (over 18 years) of the country. In general terms, they are also a representative sample of the population in Mexico, with a margin of error of less than 3%.

The data collected are comparable in scope to the American National Election Studies and British Election Studies. Latinobarómetro is a resource for research related to issues of campaigns, public opinion, behavior and political communication, and voting within Latin American countries, whose data allows the development of research over time. In this regard, the information obtained is relevant to the integration of the database that allows to develop the empirical analysis of the hypotheses presented below.

HYPOTHESIS

This research focuses on the analysis of the relationship between cognitive mobility, the different sources of information (traditional and social networks) and political participation. To this end, the following questions will be empirically answered:

- H_1 *Ceteris paribus*, Mexicans with greater cognitive mobility are more likely to vote.

On the other hand, by including the source of information (the heuristics), research suggests that:

- $H_{2,1}$: Citizens with high cognitive mobility whose sources of information are social networks will be less likely to go to the polls to vote.
- $H_{2,2}$: Keeping the rest of the factors the same, citizens with greater cognitive mobility whose sources of information are social networks are less likely to vote for the party in government, compared to those who consume traditional media.

New democracies are not as representatively effective as those previously established (Neundorf, 2010). Political socialization is a crucial process in the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime (Neundorf, 2010). Generally, adults have learned to accept and live with the political system they once confronted (Mishler & Rose, 1996). This document distinguishes three generations defined by transcendental political events for the development of the political system in the country.

- The generation of the party system: those who lived adulthood during the political domination of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* [Institutional Revolutionary Party] (PRI) from 1921 to 1976 (representing 28.41% of the sample).
- The generation of political pluralism: it comprises the adult population between 1977 and 1988 (28.48% of the sample). This generation is characterized by the political reform of 1977, which has as its axis the extension of political representation at the national level, giving representation to minorities within the Chamber of Deputies and in the local congresses, thus guaranteeing greater plurality and encouraging political participation of all existing trends.
- The generation of political alternation (43.11% of the sample) includes adults from 1989 to date, during which period the *Partido Acción Nacional* [National Action Party] won the first state elections.

To define these generations⁵, researchers have used various tests designed to establish when individuals begin to acquire political attitudes and skills. Usually,

it is suggested that adolescents begin to be aware of the political world between the ages of 14 and 15 (Mishler & Rose, 2007; Neundorf, 2010). Therefore, the rank of the generations is: a) generation of the party system: those who were born before 1962; b) generation of political pluralism, those born between 1963 and 1974; and c) generation of political alternation, those born after 1974.

Consequently, generational hypotheses suggest that:

- $H_{3,1}$: Mexicans who belong to the generation of political alternation and who use social networks as a source of information are less likely to vote. Similarly, citizens of the party system generation and political pluralism who use traditional media will be less likely to go to the polls to vote.
- $H_{3,2}$: Compared with other generations, Mexicans belonging to the generation of political alternation with high cognitive mobility and using as information sources the new technological tools (social networks: Twitter, Facebook, YouTube) are less likely to support the party in government.

These relations propose that the citizens of contemporary generations have lost credibility in the traditional media as a tool to enrich themselves of the subjects of political character. Therefore, in the identification of the effects of cognitive mobility, information sources and different generations on political participation and decision, this research studies the discrepancy in the weights that each generation gives to these factors related to political participation and the decision at the time of voting. It also evaluates the way in which the structure of the determinants of political participation varies according to these generations and, consequently, according to the individual's process of socialization.

VARIABLES: DEPENDENT, MAIN AND CONTROL

The *dependent variables* are: a) go to the polls to vote; and b) the decision of who was voted between 2000 and 2010. The codification for those who went to the polls is 1 and 0 for those who did not vote. On the other hand, for the analysis of the voting decision, it those who voted for the PAN were codified with 1 and 0 for any other political preference.

On the other hand, the *main variable of cognitive mobility* will be a latent variable whose factors are: a) the observed variable of political interest; and b) the individual capacities variable as latent variable. On the other hand, the latent variable of individual capacities will be generated from the observed variables of socio-economic level, subjective income and education. This paper will consider the use of the education variable to measure the political sophistication of the Mexican electorate, including variables such as interest in politics and social class. However, the work does not stop there; it also analyzes the role of information and, mainly, of the impact that the mass media have on the decision of the electorate.

In this regard, the *main variables of type of media*⁶, both traditional and alternative (social networks) are constructed as dummies variables, where values of 1 are obtained if the person is informed by the radio, magazines or newspapers and television for traditional media; and Internet for the modern media. The question used is: How do you inform yourself of political issues?

Control variables are divided between positioning variables and evaluations (Franklin, 1992); for example, democratic satisfaction, future labor status, presidential approval, confidence in government, both egocentric and sociotropic economic evaluations (Campbell, Converse, Miller & Stokes, 1960) and ideological positioning. In addition to these control variables, the models incorporate sociodemographic variables; for example, gender, age, marital status, employment, religion, social class, education and income (Lijphart, 1981).

Latinobarómetro always asks the question of ideological self-positioning (with eleven options of response from left to right); however, it does not formulate questions regarding partisan identification. Inglehart and Klingemann (1976) suggest that ideological self-positioning is related to partisan identification, as people learn to associate right-left positioning with their political parties. Therefore, this variable can serve as a variable of appropriate political control. In addition, Lancaster and Lewis-Beck (1986) and Lewis-Beck (1988) concluded that ideological self-positioning is a preferable measure of political predisposition in a multi-party system, since it is more stable over time than the partisan identification variable (Van der Eijk & Niemöller, 1983).

MODELS

The latent variables are generated from an exploratory analysis (EFA) and a confirmatory analysis (CFA). It is necessary to explore the relationship between the observed variables and constructs. The EFA determines the minimum number of latent variables to be used, while the CFA establishes the relationships between the indicators and the latent variable.

After generating the latent variable of cognitive mobility, the research can begin. In hypotheses 1, 2.1 and 2.2, logit models will be used (Wooldridge 2002, 2006). On the other hand, for the analysis of the different generations we will present logit models by groups (hypotheses 3.1 and 3.2). The EFA, CFA models were estimated using M-Plus version 7. The logit and logit by groups models were generated using STATA version 11.

RESULTS

To test the hypotheses of this research, it is necessary to generate the latent variables linked to the variable of cognitive mobility. Therefore, the first objective is to establish the viability of the generation of these variables.

For Brown (2006), there are three methodologies to determine the number of latent variables necessary for the different data: a) the Kaiser-Guttman rule; B) graphic analysis; and c) a parallel analysis. In this study, the first methodology will be used to constitute the required number of latent variables. In the case of Kaiser “criterion”, this model has a value greater than 1 (eigenvalues=1.63).

In order to evaluate the adjustment level of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Yu (2002) considered that the best method is based on WRMR analysis (which should be less than 1) and the Root Mean Square Error (RMSE), which should be lower than 0.06. On the other hand, Bentler (1990) pointed out that the best model adjustment is when the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) approaches the interval between 0.90 and 0.95. Yu (2002) concluded that the fit of the model must have a Comparative Adjustment Index close to 0.96 when the samples are greater than 250 observations. In this model we have a RMSEA equal to 0.00; while IFC is 1.00; TLI is 1.00 and the WRMR is 0.00. Therefore, the model is set correctly. In this regard, all factors involved in the generation of the latent cognitive mobility variable are statistically significant, with a significance level of 99% (see table 1 for details).

Variables	Standardized estimation	Standard error
Cognitive mobility [CM] (by)		
Political interest	0.385***	0.020
Individual capacities	0.732***	0.070
Individual capacities (by)		
Socioeconomic level	0.301***	0.051
Subjective income	0.526***	0.055
Education	0.318***	0.035
Socioeconomic level (with)		
Subjective income	0.226***	0.036
Education	0.234***	0.019
RMSEA	0.000	
CFI	1.000	
TLI	1.000	
WRMR	0.000	

Table 1: Latent variable. Cognitive mobility
*The levels of significance are + p<.10. * p<.05. ** p<.01. *** p<.001.*
 Source: Own elaboration.

Variables	DV: Voting		DV: voting for the party in government
	Hypothesis Model 1 ¹	Hypothesis Model 2 ^{2.1}	Hypothesis Model 3 ^{2.2}
Main variables			
Cognitive Mobility (CM)	1.055*** [0.317]		
Social networks		-0.265+ [0.157]	0.253 [0.240]
CM * Social networks		-0.390 [0.743]	-3.885** [1.194]
Traditional media		0.237 [0.232]	-0.464 [0.347]
CM * Traditional media		1.423** [0.524]	0.573 [0.785]
Evaluations			
Democracy satisfaction	0.180*** [0.049]	0.183* [0.075]	-0.032 [0.112]
Future labor situation	0.112+ [0.057]	0.135 [0.085]	0.015 [0.129]
Presidential approval	0.073 [0.081]	0.201 [0.126]	1.446*** [0.222]
Trust in government	0.225*** [0.049]	0.254*** [0.075]	-0.131 [0.113]
Egocentric evaluation	0.075 [0.069]	0.162 [0.104]	-0.324+ [0.168]
Sociotropic evaluation	0.028 [0.064]	-0.012 [0.100]	0.538*** [0.147]
Control variables			
Right-left ideology	0.0337* [0.014]	0.0719** [0.023]	0.0650+ [0.034]
Gender	-0.046 [0.078]	0.006 [0.124]	-0.083 [0.191]
Age	0.003 [0.002]	-0.003 [0.004]	-0.001 [0.006]
Marital status	0.059 [0.079]	0.156 [0.126]	-0.194 [0.189]
Employee	-0.299* [0.150]	-0.251 [0.219]	0.075 [0.332]
Catholic	0.245** [0.090]	0.371* [0.157]	0.006 [0.259]
Social class(Subjective)	-0.107* [0.049]	-0.173+ [0.091]	0.041 [0.138]
Education	-0.045*** [0.010]	-0.0750*** [0.019]	0.041 [0.029]
Income (Subjective)	-0.036 [0.069]	0.008 [0.102]	0.031 [0.153]
Dummy years	Sí	Sí	Sí
Constant	-0.555 [0.384]	-0.918 [0.634]	-2.146* [0.943]
Observations	3388	1299	688
AIC	4169	1719	819
BIC	4298	1827	915
Freedom degrees	20	20	20
McFeeden R2	0.085	0.067	0.106
PRE	0.656	0.622	0.717

Table 2: Logit model. Likelihood of voting and voting for the party in government

Notes: Standard errors are in brackets.

The levels of significance: + $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Source: Own elaboration.

As a result, it is possible to generate a latent variable related to the cognitive mobility of Mexicans.

The next step is to test each of the hypotheses posed by this document. Table 2 presents the results of the most important models to answer the hypotheses 1, 2.1 and 2.2. It can be concluded that, controlling for the rest of the variables, both of perceptions and socio-demographic, Mexican citizens with greater cognitive mobility are more likely to go to the polls to vote.

Model 1 confirms the positive relationship between the latent cognitive mobility variable and political participation. The greater the cognitive mobility, the greater the likelihood that the Mexican citizen will go to the polls to vote, controlling for evaluations, ideology and other sociodemographic variables (*hypothesis 1*).

From model 2, it can be concluded that Mexicans with greater cognitive mobility who use social networks as a source of information have a lower tendency to go to the polls to vote. In the same regard, informing from social networks reduces the probability of voting, being statistically significant. Conversely, those citizens with

greater cognitive mobility who use traditional media will be more likely to go to the polls to vote. This variable is statistically significant (*hypothesis 2.1*).

Model 3 describes the results that determine the factors influencing the decision to vote for the party in government. It shows that Mexicans with greater cognitive mobility who use social networks to inform themselves are less likely to vote for the party in government. This relationship has the expected sign and is statistically significant. From the same analysis, we conclude that citizens with higher levels of skills (cognitive mobility) using traditional media will be more likely to vote for the party in government. However, this relationship is not statistically significant (*hypothesis 2.2*).

The figure of marginal effects more clearly describes the relationships for the two variables cognitive mobility * traditional media and cognitive mobility * social networks (see figure 1). It is inferred that citizens with greater skills who use the new information technologies to learn about political issues are less likely to vote for the party in government. On the contrary,

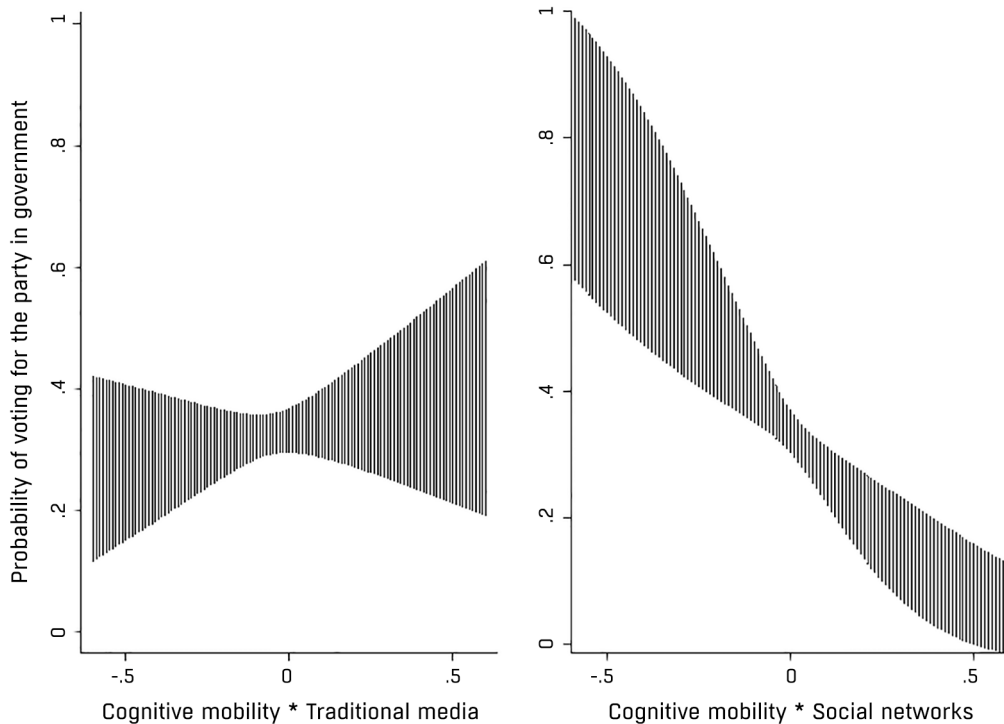


Figure 1: Marginal effects. Probability of voting for the party in government vs. cognitive mobility

Source: Own elaboration.

Hypothesis 3: Go to the polls to vote

Variables	Model 4 Party System Generation	Model 5 Political Pluralism Generation	Model 6 Political Pluralism Generation	Model 7 Party System Generation	Model 8 Political Pluralism Generation	Model 9 Political Pluralism Generation
Main variables						
Cognitive Mobility (CM)	1.528 [0.976]	1.256 [1.040]	1.409+ [0.769]			
Social networks				-0.450 [0.413]	0.043 [0.297]	-0.380+ [0.217]
CM * Social networks				-0.251 [1.757]	-1.904 [1.436]	0.794 [1.107]
Traditional media				-0.193 [0.448]	-0.009 [0.469]	0.859* [0.378]
CM * Traditional media				1.688+ [0.994]	1.495 [1.081]	0.979 [0.816]
Evaluations						
Democracy satisfaction	0.242+ [0.144]	0.420** [0.152]	-0.022 [0.116]	0.256+ [0.146]	0.420** [0.153]	-0.028 [0.117]
Future labor situation	0.090 [0.175]	0.194 [0.151]	0.132 [0.137]	0.098 [0.176]	0.160 [0.154]	0.116 [0.138]
Presidential approval	0.299 [0.254]	0.094 [0.243]	0.171 [0.195]	0.307 [0.255]	0.098 [0.245]	0.156 [0.197]
Trust in government	0.346* [0.144]	0.265+ [0.148]	0.214+ [0.118]	0.353* [0.145]	0.261+ [0.148]	0.225+ [0.118]
Egocentric evaluation	0.165 [0.207]	0.403+ [0.208]	0.071 [0.159]	0.175 [0.208]	0.437* [0.210]	0.075 [0.160]
Sociotropic evaluation	0.213 [0.195]	-0.173 [0.205]	-0.081 [0.149]	0.212 [0.195]	-0.150 [0.208]	-0.051 [0.151]
Control variables						
Right-left ideology	0.046 [0.041]	0.062 [0.044]	0.103* [0.040]	0.046 [0.042]	0.065 [0.044]	0.105* [0.041]
Gender	0.006 [0.257]	-0.341 [0.249]	0.167 [0.188]	-0.001 [0.259]	-0.352 [0.252]	0.176 [0.191]
Age	0.015 [0.014]	0.046 [0.038]	-0.033 [0.021]	0.012 [0.014]	0.046 [0.038]	-0.0354+ [0.021]
Marital status	-0.141 [0.268]	-0.047 [0.262]	0.404* [0.201]	-0.110 [0.269]	-0.087 [0.267]	0.385+ [0.203]
Employee	0.214 [0.455]	-0.313 [0.429]	-0.505 [0.336]	0.199 [0.456]	-0.246 [0.434]	-0.456 [0.340]
Catholic	0.361 [0.319]	0.355 [0.306]	0.393+ [0.233]	0.369 [0.320]	0.387 [0.309]	0.353 [0.235]
Social class(Subjective)	-0.179 [0.187]	-0.253 [0.174]	-0.150 [0.140]	-0.147 [0.191]	-0.242 [0.173]	-0.118 [0.141]
Education	-0.066* [0.0338]	-0.064+ [0.0357]	-0.128*** [0.0378]	-0.059+ [0.0331]	-0.060+ [0.0365]	-0.111** [0.0377]
Income (Subjective)	-0.008 [0.207]	0.070 [0.207]	-0.099 [0.158]	-0.015 [0.202]	0.082 [0.206]	-0.057 [0.154]
Dummy years	Sí	Sí	Sí	Sí	Sí	Sí
Constant	-2.084 [1.504]	-2.966 [1.862]	1.327 [1.116]	-1.941 [1.506]	-3.134+ [1.890]	0.246 [1.131]
Observations	369	370	560	369	370	560
AIC	485	501	761	489	506	760
BIC	556	572	838	571	588	851
Freedom degrees	17	17	17	20	20	20
McFeeden R2	0.121	0.094	0.074	0.121	0.122	0.074
PRE	0.688	0.635	0.625	0.688	0.635	0.625

Table 3: Logit model. Probability of voting by generations

Notes: Standard errors are in brackets.

The levels of significance are: + p<.10. * p<.05. ** p<.01. *** p<.001.

Source: Own elaboration.

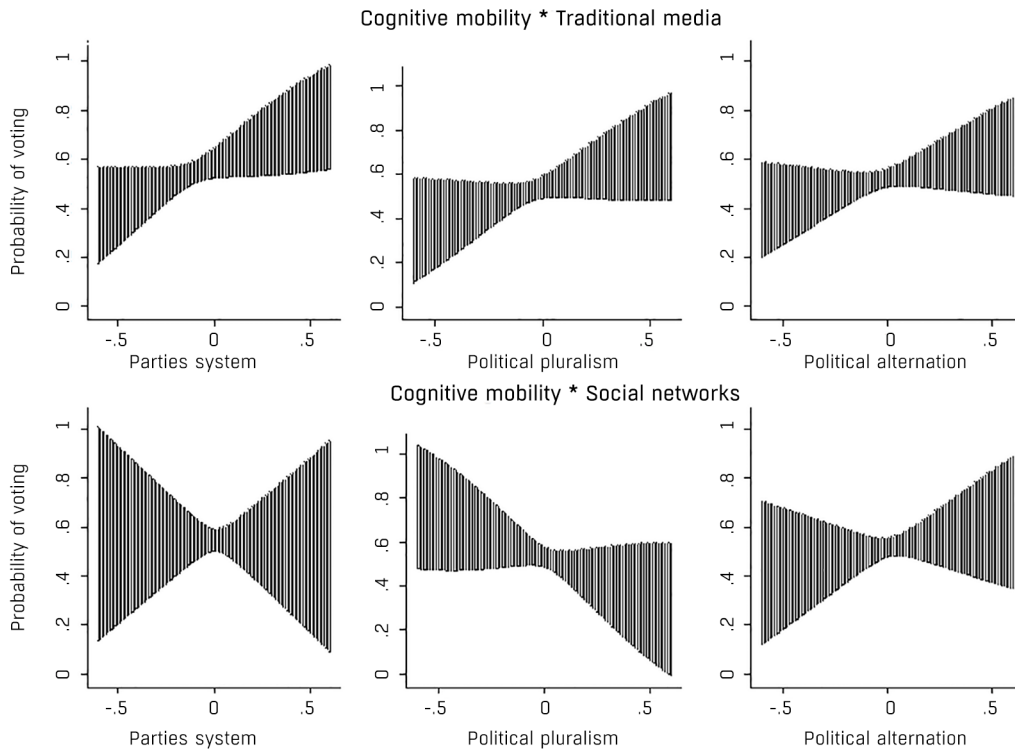


Figure 2: Marginal effects. Probability of voting by different generations

Source: Own elaboration.

Mexicans who are informed by the traditional media (television, radio and newspapers) are more likely to support the ruling party.

In order to verify the relation between the different generations and the weight that they give to cognitive mobility on the decision to go to vote and by whom to do it, logit models were developed by groups. Table 3 presents these analyzes. From models 4 to 6, it is inferred that the latent variable of cognitive mobility has a positive effect on the decision to participate in the elections; however, only in the generation of political alternation is it statistically significant. When analyzing the interactive variables of models 7 to 9, it can be inferred that none is statistically significant.

In spite of this, in the analysis of the marginal effects presented in figure 2, it can be observed that the relation of the interactive variables regarding the decision to go to vote changes according to one generation to another. In other words, the source of information

and the level of cognitive mobility will have different effects, depending on the generation.

A noteworthy feature of these models is the effect that sources of information have on the decision to participate. In other words, Mexicans belonging to the generation of political alternation who inform themselves through social networks are less likely to go to the polls to vote. On the other hand, the citizens who belong to the generation of political alternation that use the traditional media have a greater propensity to vote. Therefore, in comparison with other generations, the source of information influences the political behavior of Mexicans belonging to the alternation generation (*hypothesis 3.1*).

To answer hypothesis 3.2, logit analyzes were modeled by multi-groups, obtaining the results presented in table 4. From this it is inferred, from the models 10 to 12, that Mexicans of all generations with high cognitive mobility have less propensity to vote for the party

Hypothesis 4: Vote for incumbent

Variables	Model 10 Party System Generation	Model 11 Political Pluralism Generation	Model 12 Political Pluralism Generation	Model 13 Party System Generation	Model 14 Political Pluralism Generation	Model 15 Political Pluralism Generation
Variables Centrales						
Cognitive mobility (CM)	-0.032 [1.430]	-1.988 [1.625]	-1.546 [1.247]			
Social networks				-0.064 [0.678]	0.506 [0.444]	0.268 [0.366]
CM * Social networks				-1.376 [2.803]	-2.225 [2.158]	-6.328** [2.172]
Traditional media				-0.835 [0.608]	-0.952 [0.673]	0.654 [0.755]
CM * Traditional media				0.812 [1.472]	0.060 [1.690]	0.586 [1.327]
Evaluations						
Democracy satisfaction	0.321 [0.218]	0.213 [0.224]	-0.348+ [0.183]	0.343 [0.221]	0.190 [0.229]	-0.423* [0.190]
Subjective employment	0.222 [0.275]	-0.001 [0.230]	-0.052 [0.220]	0.222 [0.277]	-0.033 [0.241]	-0.052 [0.230]
Presidential approval	1.509** [0.483]	1.179** [0.415]	1.685*** [0.359]	1.535** [0.490]	1.186** [0.433]	1.784*** [0.369]
Trust in government	0.054 [0.219]	-0.556* [0.234]	0.169 [0.184]	0.028 [0.223]	-0.538* [0.235]	0.147 [0.190]
Egocentric evaluation	-0.738* [0.349]	0.119 [0.345]	-0.306 [0.253]	-0.717* [0.353]	0.123 [0.352]	-0.398 [0.261]
Sociotropic evaluation	0.408 [0.291]	0.220 [0.292]	0.702** [0.241]	0.431 [0.294]	0.128 [0.304]	0.840*** [0.254]
Control variables						
Right-left ideology	0.115+ [0.064]	0.023 [0.064]	0.067 [0.061]	0.117+ [0.065]	0.035 [0.066]	0.063 [0.062]
Gender	-0.154 [0.392]	-0.300 [0.395]	0.005 [0.297]	-0.239 [0.401]	-0.234 [0.403]	0.101 [0.310]
Age	0.013 [0.020]	-0.048 [0.057]	-0.019 [0.032]	0.008 [0.020]	-0.039 [0.058]	-0.016 [0.033]
Marital status	-0.521 [0.406]	-0.591 [0.398]	0.176 [0.321]	-0.533 [0.406]	-0.601 [0.412]	0.211 [0.332]
Employee	-0.904 [0.712]	0.141 [0.689]	0.570 [0.535]	-0.920 [0.713]	0.135 [0.712]	0.628 [0.558]
Catholic	-0.915+ [0.523]	-0.340 [0.504]	0.272 [0.403]	-0.830 [0.529]	-0.041 [0.533]	0.267 [0.418]
Social class (Subjective)	-0.162 [0.301]	0.397 [0.261]	0.013 [0.227]	-0.221 [0.311]	0.302 [0.264]	-0.125 [0.232]
Education	0.111* [0.050]	-0.061 [0.057]	0.112+ [0.058]	0.112* [0.050]	-0.086 [0.060]	0.091 [0.058]
Income (Subjective)	0.100 [0.313]	0.571+ [0.319]	0.011 [0.251]	-0.019 [0.306]	0.302 [0.323]	-0.030 [0.253]
Dummy Years	Sí	Sí	Sí	Sí	Sí	Sí
Constant	-2.800 [2.336]	-0.708 [2.764]	-3.789* [1.736]	-1.287 [2.373]	0.966 [2.868]	-3.616+ [1.906]
Observations	202	195	291	202	195	291
AIC	248	251	354	251	253	350
BIC	307	310	420	320	322	428
Freedom degrees	17	17	17	20	20	20
McFeeden R2	0.166	0.120	0.144	0.178	0.133	0.170
PRE	0.713	0.739	0.746	0.733	0.749	0.742

Table 4: Logit. Probability to vote for the party in government. Analysis by generations.

Notes: Standard errors are in brackets.

The levels of significance are: + p<.10. * p<.05. ** p<.01. *** p<.001.

Source: Own elaboration.

in the government; however, this relationship is not statistically significant for any of the cases.

From the models that show the interaction between cognitive mobility and sources of information for the different generations (models 13 to 15), we conclude that citizens belonging to the generation of political alternation with high cognitive mobility that use as information sources social networks, have a lower probability of supporting the party in the government, this correlation being statistically significant (*hypothesis 3.2*). In addition, the other two generations also show a negative relationship between cognitive mobility * social networks and voting for the party in government; however, this is not statistically significant. Continuing with the analysis of interaction variables, it is noted that, although the traditional cognitive mobility variable * traditional media reported the expected signs, these relationships were not statistically significant. Finally, for the variable of cognitive mobility and social networks, it is observed that the effect is more drastic for Mexicans belonging to the generation of political alternation in comparison with the rest of the generations. On the other hand, the variable of cognitive mobility and traditional media shows a similar behavior and the variation is very small. Therefore, it is concluded that this variable does not have a specific weight among the different generations.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Overall, this study concluded that the more cognitive mobility an individual has, the more likely he will vote. Mexicans with greater capacity to process political information and use social networks as information sources will vote less frequently than those consuming traditional media. On the other hand, the level of political sophistication, as measured by cognitive mobility, has an impact on the decision to vote: the lesser cognitive mobility, the greater the probability of voting for the party in government. In this regard, Mexicans who use social networks will have less sympathy for the party in government. On the contrary, those citizens who informed themselves by traditional media are more politically sophisticated and are more likely to support the party in government.

The document also analyzes the relationship between the media and three different generations. Belonging to a generation influences the impact of both cognitive

mobility and the media used to process political content. In other words, Mexicans of the generation of political alternation—the youngest in this study—who inform themselves on social networks will go less to the polls, in contrast to those who use traditional media. Likewise, young people of this generation with a high level of cognitive mobility and who inform themselves on social networks are less likely to vote for the party in government. Therefore, social networks play a decisive role in the disenchantment of young people towards the democratic system.

Studies related to the analysis of alternative information sources and political participation are increasing; however, their conclusions diverge. On the one hand, the positive view suggests that these media will foster a much more direct democracy, such as that practiced in ancient Greece, and also considers that the population will have greater capacities at the moment of participation. On the other hand, the pessimistic view describes that alternative media will negatively affect democracy, generating apathy or disenchantment towards the political system.

The empirical evidence in the US presidential election in 2008 suggests that social networks affect the participatory process of society to the extent that they reinforce previously existing social prejudices. But this study only occurs in the short term, it does not go beyond. The use of these media is more and more constant; therefore, the implementation context implies a greater capacity to mobilize society.

Nowadays, social media, blogs and online newspapers have favored political debate. “Online politics” is a phenomenon that is increasingly present in the daily lives of Mexicans. The politically active population has found in this tool a new channel of expression, encouraging a wider discussion among all web users. Meanwhile, this has facilitated access to those population groups that did not normally participate, given their geographical location. “Online politics” is more plausible among young people and those who have advanced knowledge of the Internet.

Some academics believe that these media will make possible direct democracy and the future empowerment of all citizens. On the other hand, a more moderate vision describes that the digital technology will involve a reform of the governmental apparatus, giving much greater participation to the population. The individualistic view of modern technology, on the other

hand, emphasizes that digital technology (Internet) is very dangerous, since it reduces the capacity of collective movements, eroding social capital and ties with the community.

The increase of virtual political information promotes greater knowledge, interest and activism, thus encouraging greater citizen participation and politics. The social capital of individuals has been reduced by the use of the Internet; however, little by little it will be observed that this effect is only in the short term, since social networks, microsites and blogs will create a new form of virtual social capital, which will have as main characteristic pragmatism in the use and in the management of information.

More than twenty years after the emergence of the Internet, the academic review of its effect on participation has focused mostly on a negative analysis. Analysts believe that changing the way information is delivered will reduce levels of political participation; however, they considered at the same time that politics as

such would not evolve. Nowadays, politics and information on the political issues are in constant development, and each time they comply with the needs of a digitized society.

As such, the analysis of the effect of alternative media and digital technology on politics needs to be further explored. It is necessary to make several analyzes over time to know what the real effect is on the decision and political participation of citizens.

Democracy as it is known today must be developed, and one of its first steps refers to social movements conducted through social networks. Digital social participation is much easier, direct and less expensive than any other type. Collective action in networks can have greater effects than any other type of participation, since information circulates much more easily and this suggests that actions can be instantaneous. Digital democracy will be built gradually, so these theoretical and practical explanations, as well as their implications, must be tested in other political and social contexts.

FOOTNOTES

1. Heuristics are direct information accesses, characterized by being effective and simple. They efficiently summarize the current policy options. Therefore, it can be defined as scarce information that gives simple and reliable answers to the electoral alternatives. See Sniderman et al., 1991, p. 19.
2. For this particular project, social classes will be understood as the set of social characteristics that each individual has. For an in-depth analysis on the subject of social classes, see Williams (2009); Hall (1992, 1996); and Bourdieu (1990, 2000).
3. Linz and Stepan (1996) define consolidated democracy as a complex system of institutions and norms where three requirements are met: no political act attempts to achieve its goals by creating an undemocratic regime; The majority of the population believes that democratic action and institutions are the most appropriate ways to govern; and the forces inside and outside the government resolve conflicts within the limits of the law. On the other hand, Dahl (1971) suggests five criteria for a consolidated democratic regime: 1) full rights of citizenship; 2) political equality; 3) equality of opportunity and knowledge; 4) control of the agenda; and 5) effective participation.
4. In the case of Mexico, Temkin, Solano and Trunk (2008) compared the cognitive mobility variable with the degree of knowledge about political issues and party identification. The results indicate that the statistical relevance of the variable cognitive mobility is greater when compared to the other variables. On the other hand, Cisneros (2016) built an additive index that combined education with interest in politics. For the education variable, the question asked was about the level of education of the respondent; and for interest in politics variable, he used a proxy, the involvement in political campaigns in the 2009 federal election in Mexico.
5. The definition of these generations is not based on technological aspects; On the other hand, they were established from political events that generated a gradual change in the national politics.
6. These are not exclusive; therefore, there may be cases where an individual uses the two media types.

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