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**Institutions, culture and democratic consolidation in
Latin America.**

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Dedicatoria:

A mi querido padre, que aunque lejos siempre está conmigo.

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Resumen:

El presente ensayo tiene como objetivo principal analizar la relación causal existente entre la cultura política y las instituciones, con referencia a la consolidación democrática. En este caso y contrario a lo que se propone en la literatura disponible, la cual otorga valores predominantes a cada uno de los elementos mencionados, se muestra una relación de dependencia entre ambas variables, la cual tiene como consecuencia la consolidación democrática. El estudio realizado se centra en la región de América Latina y se pone especial énfasis en los siguientes países: Chile, Ecuador, Perú y Uruguay, La primera hipótesis analizada, es entonces: que el establecimiento de instituciones democráticas fuertes como por ejemplo partidos políticos estables y un sistema judicial independiente, crea una cultura política democrática. La segunda hipótesis propuesta en este ensayo es que la existencia previa de una cultura política democrática conlleva a la consolidación del sistema democrático.

Abstract:

This essay aims to analyze the relationship that exists between a democratic political culture and strong democratic institutions. In this sense, this paper focuses on the fact that there is a correlation between those two variables, and that only by that, democratic consolidation can be reached. This paper, then, contradicts the existent literature that affirms that either one of the two variables is always predominant in comparison with the other, with regard to democratic consolidation. This study, then, focuses on the Latin American region, making special emphasis on the Chilean, Ecuadorean, Peruvian and Uruguayan cases. The first hypothesis tested along this paper focuses on the fact that previous establishment of strong democratic institutions such as an independent judiciary and stable party systems create a democratic political culture. The second hypothesis tested is that a democratic political culture that involves tolerance, trust in democratic institutions and preference for democratic values, derives in democratic consolidation.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Latin America is often recognized among scholars because of its variant and undefined political regimes, which is why it has become a main source of inquiry and research. However, even if most of papers written about the region explain the development of each democratic regime, they do not necessarily focus on the reasons why these phenomena occurred; neither do they explain the prominent differences that exist between Latin American democracies. As the literature suggests, democracy can be created without the necessity of strong political institutions and/or the existence of a democratic political culture amongst its citizens; however if it does not become consolidated, its lifetime is debatable, because of the legitimacy problem that weak democratic institutions will imply and because of the discontent that underrepresentation and ineffectiveness of the latter, will cause among the citizens. Thus, in various cases, where the conditions for consolidation are not met, democratic regimes cease to exist.

This paper, however, focuses on the necessary conditions for democratic consolidation, which only happens when a democratic political culture develops amongst its citizens. This means that citizens trust a particular system of institutions that make up the government and they respect the opinions that differ with their own, thus they believe that acting outside the democratic framework is somewhat unimaginable, and consider democracy as the only viable way of government. In this sense, I will argue that strong political institutions such as stable party systems and an independent judiciary constitute an important element on the creation of democratic political culture, and only when this two previously stated conditions are met, democracies become consolidated. In order to test my hypothesis I will emphasize the cases

of Chile, Ecuador, Perú and Uruguay, as they represent the divergent spectrum of democratic political regimes among the region, mentioned before.

For the purpose of relating both of the conditions with the existence or absence of democratic consolidation, I will distribute the contents of this paper as follows: in the second chapter, I will briefly state what other authors have said about democratic political institutions, democratic political culture and democratic consolidation; analyzing each variable in different sections, in order to take into account most of the relationships others have found between democracy and each of the above mentioned variables. In the third chapter, I will explain the methodology used, such as the opinion survey results of the Latin American Public Opinion Project, 2012 and the results obtained in the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report, 2012. The fourth chapter of this paper will focus on the discussion, which can also be interpreted as a comparison between what others have said and the results obtained in this research. Chapter five contains my concluding remarks.

Chapter 2: Institutions, Culture and Democracy

As it was explained earlier, both culture and institutions represent the ground stones upon which democracy is built, however the importance attributed to each of them, varies according to the current of thought through which it is analyzed. In this sense, there are various perspectives such as the “non-culturalist” or “institutionalist” view, the “weakly culturalist”, and the “culturalist” view, each of them will be better explained in the next sections of this chapter, however I intend to introduce the three of them here.

According to Pzeworski, Cheibub and Limongi, the “non-culturalist” point of view, establishes that institutions are the only factor that determines whether a democracy exists or it doesn't, “institutionalists”, thus argue that there is no need of a democratic culture in order to create and establish democratic political institutions given that culture has no effect in the latter. The “weakly culturalists”, in the other hand, state that a democratic culture is necessary for the establishment or creation of democracy, however this approach argues that customs and preferences are malleable, meaning that even if a democratic political culture is necessary, it cannot be determined, because there is no constant parameter to measure it. Finally, the “strong culturalists”, believe that culture is the determinant factor for the existence of democracy; they argue that in some countries, democracy is just not plausible, because there is no cultural background that can support it.

Once these differences have been clarified, I will proceed to state the reasons why the Latin American continent has been chosen to be the protagonist of this paper. As Vinicio Cerezo

stated during the XXI Iberoamerican Summit, Latin America has experienced a radical shift in the composition of its political institutions, governments have worked over the past decades towards the strengthening of its institutions, however, countries find themselves living in the same situation they have lived in the previous years. Additionally, the democratic regimes in the Latin American region have not experienced a process of fortification, in fact, democracy has deteriorated. Given to the increasing inequality that characterizes the region, the concentration of wealth in few hands, the increase of extreme poverty, and the few opportunities regarding education, health and security that have been granted to the population, the political culture of the region has experienced a decay, with the deterioration of trust and tolerance.

In fact, as it has been stated by Juan Rial in the same summit, the democratic stabilization of the region depends enormously on the social response to the politics created by the already strengthened institutions. In this sense, the middle and lower economic classes, represent a great risk for the democratic consolidation in the region given to the great discontent they have experienced for the economic redistribution and accumulation. As it has been stated before, the democratic regimes need among other things, stabilization, which can only come through the combination of institutions and culture.

Nowadays, there are different conceptualizations of citizenship, and thus, this represents a different behavior from them towards democracy in general, and institutions specifically. So as it has become evident, citizens from lower classes have responded in a negative manner to this emerging economic inequality. As the author suggests, countries like Bolivia, have become more acceptant of their multinations and multicultures, inside their own territories and

they had incorporated into their political spectrum, policies that include and represent these “contradictive cultures”.

As to other Latin American countries, it can be said that they have been turning in the same way that Bolivia; most of them have tried to create democratic cohesion by the implementation of leftist policies. In this sense, Ecuador, has implemented the “revolucion ciudadana” model, in which the policies are directed towards the citizens of lower classes that worship the Ecuadorian leader; coupled with the reinvention and restoration of the political regime, granting an enormous amount of power to the executive branch of government over other powers. Venezuela too, has had policies that are implemented with the premise that, in spite of his dead, Chavez is the center upon which the new model of institutionalism which is based on the weakening of the democratic political culture, because it creates political intolerance between the upper and middle classes citizens towards lower class citizens, and viceversa.

According to Daniel Zovatto, even if almost all Latin American countries enjoy of the existence of democratic regimes, their consolidation is debatable. He argues that at least a minimalist conception of democracy is guaranteed in the region; however, he doesn't really know up to what point these democratic regimes will last. As he mentions,

“Latin American democracies show varying degrees of fragility and face important challenges, such as institutional problems that affect governance and the rule of law, the independence of and relationship between the different branches of government, the operation of electoral systems and the political party system, as well as major problems in the security of citizens.” (Zovatto, 2011).

Then, if a non-minimalist conception of democracy is to be implemented in the region, the author argues that there are several characteristics that should be changed and reinforced. In this sense, he says that re-election should be re-thought, because nowadays

“re-election is allowed in 14 of the 18 countries, and only four of them ban it: Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Paraguay. In Venezuela indefinite re-election is permitted. In Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, The Dominican Republic, and Colombia consecutive re-election is allowed, but not indefinitely. It is possible with at least one intervening term in seven other countries: Costa Rica, Chile, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay” (Zovatto, 2011).

Zovatto argues that re-election is a characteristic of weakened institutions, and centralization of power in the executive branch of government, which often derives into the development of personality cults towards the president. He also argues that for this state to be achieved it is necessary to guarantee certain kinds of freedom to the citizens, specially freedom of speech, as to which he describes that the present state of the South American region is very fragile. He claims, “The relationship between the media and the government is under increasing strain”. (Zovatto, 2011) As he states it, the region has faced several problems of transparency and accountability, and thus it has also provoked governments to state that media is their true enemy, instead of opposition candidates; as to this governments have decided to create new ways of information “by establishing their own media to use as propaganda machines, or by using official advertising as an indirect means of censorship” (Zovatto 2011).

Finally, I consider it of outmost importance to state that the literature confirms the fact that Latin America is a region in which political parties and congress are inefficient, they have less

political power, and thus Latin Americans trust less in these institutions. As it has been stated in this chapter, culture too, has been shaped by the preferences of the region's citizens, who besides their economic situation and political ideology, are reluctant to the fact that the democratic regime is the solution to their problems, or the better option for their country, some in a bigger scale than others.

2.1: Strong Democratic Institutions

A democratic regime is characterized by the fact that the population of a determined country, gets to actively participate in the decisions and events that shape the country. In this sense, political institutions are designed, in a democratic regime, to represent the needs and desires of its population, or at least of the vast majority. In this sense, Przeworski (2003) argues that citizens are organized, in a democracy, as groups that follow certain interests and work together towards the achievement of the latter. He says that citizens are arranged inside this groups working under the umbrella of the democratic institutions of their country, both following their rules and principles, and simulating the manner in which the latter work towards the enforcement of their projects or laws.

Thus political parties are the greatest representation of a democratic institution, because in their purest form and from a theoretical perspective, they are designed to be the representative institutions that guide the interest of the population towards the implementation of citizens' desires towards the formulation of public policy. Their structure is supposed to be designed in a hierarchical manner, so it can have both leaders and followers, not being integrated by the

groups of people mentioned above, but by individuals who feel that they are fully represented by the institution they have choosed.

It is important to understand, before getting any further, that the functionality of democratic political institutions is to represent individual,s who are not going to stand for their beliefs or desires by their own. Citizens who choose to live under a democratic regime, are fully aware that what they do is not excersising their power in a direct manner, but rather through voting, they delegate their responsibilities and decision-making capability to whom they believe are going to represent them in a better way. As Samuel Huntington (1991, 109) states “[...] of greater importance is that in all democratic regimes the principal officers of government are chosen through competitive elections in which the bulk of the population can participate. Democratic systems thus have a common institutional core that establishes their identity.”

As Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti (1993) expose, the institutionalist perspective has three main concerns: first, to study the way in which institutions shape politics, in this sense they have come to the conclusion that it is not institutions per sé that shape them but rather the rules and procedures that guide them, in this sense both the rules and the procedures of institutions in a democratic regime, are extrapolated to the cultural aspect of the regime in general, shaping too the behavior and preferences of citizens; however, they argue that culture has no effect on politics; “institutions influence outcomes bacuase they shape actor’s identities, power and strategies” (Putnam, et al. 1993). Second, the authors argue that institutions are the only factor that shapes politics, however intitutions themselves are influenced and shaped by the context in which they are created, in this sense, the historical circumstances influences the character of the institutions that are chosed by the citizens of a determined country. Third, the belief that

institutions are shaped by the social context of the country is less common but also exists, arguing that all contrare to the second approach, behavior shapes institutions and not viceversa.

In either approach taken, the main factor needed for the existence of a solid democratic regime are strong and stable democratic institutions; they are the only sufficient condition for the existence of a consolidated democratic regime. As Wiarda and Kline (2006, 180) state: “in most consolidated democracies with presidential systems, such as the United States, the chief executive is usually elected as the candidate of a political party. The president is checked and balanced by a congress, and whether the president’s party has a majority in that legislative body is crucial for decision making.” In light of this, it can also be stated that for institutionalist approaches, the most important institutions for the consolidation of democracy are Political Parties and Congress.

Having already explained some of the general beliefs about the importance of institutions, I will proceed to analyze Latin American institutions, as they are one of the two objects of study in this paper. Wiarda and Kline (2006) argue that institutions in Latin America are struggling for their survival, they say that even though there have been strenghthenment processes applied to them, they still lack of legitimacy and popular support to their proper functioning. They focus their study on political parties, and they say that even though they have played an important role in political processes that have taken place in the more or less democratic countries, however it has also happened, and more frequently that “the parties have frequently been peripheral to the main focal points of power, and the electoral arena has been considered

only one arena among several. Many Latin Americans have viewed political parties as divisive elements and hence have not held them in high esteem” (Wiarda and Kline, 2006, 200).

As a result of these weakened political parties, there have been two approaches, firstly, people tend to ignore them and repudiate them because they don't feel represented by these unpaired institutions; second, there has been a tendency to shape democracy around other institutions, lowering the importance of the parties and pretending that a democratic regime can work without them (Wiarda and Kline, 2006). As stated by Dieter Nohlen (2007), political institutions have suffered a great decay in the past 4 decades; in light of this, the personalization of politics represent the situation described above. Presidents become the main source of attention and the responsables for the future of the country, however, the institutions that back him up, seem to be, from the public perspective, of little or no use. This sets the road for Latin American presidents to try and erase political parties from the political map, while they strengthen institutions that are immediately below the executives mandate.

Thus, Nohlen (2007) proposes the fact that the major problem confronting Latin America is the lack of legitimacy of governments, precisely because of the fact that as political parties are not representative institutions as the theory mandates it should be, citizens lack interest on the political outcomes. The author states that there should be a differentiation between the lack of participation and the lack of interest, because the first one has to do with the number of voters, and quantitative data, however, the latter has to do with the perception of effectiveness of democracy as a regime. Nohlen then suggests that the main reason why legitimacy becomes a problem to Latin American democratic governments is because they don't change democratic institutions, there are no substantial reforms; the president's figure is still and more than ever,

the one that glues all of the governments policies, and mantains the nation-states together, as a whole, instead of the original institutions that were created to meet this end such as political parties and congress.

Institutionalists believe that if institutions are strengthened and reformed, the problem of legitimacy could be solved, and thus the level of satisfaction with the democratic regime will be higher, helping to stablish and maintain the democratic consolidation. According to Nohlen (2007), the presidential “lame-duck” is a phenomena derived form the equitative distribution of power between all of the State’s branches, when they lack the capacity to cooperate between themselves. It is only logical, then, to say that what institutionalists argue is that without the proper consolidation of the basic democratic institutions, democratic consolidations is not viable.

The institutional perspective, in this manner, argues that institutions are built with the purpose of achieving the implementation of certain policies and projects, guided through the interests of the citizens. Thus, what is expected in order to trust in the democratic institutions is the effective manner in which they can implement the latter. A consensus has not been made on which of these interests should be met firstly, wether it is education, representative laws, etc, neither has there been a consensus on how to implement these projects and laws. Political institutions are then expected to act in the name of the citizens, and their needs. However, one of the most prominent issues present in Latin America nowadays, is the inefficiency with which they implement these projects: “It’s easier to build a road than to create an institution or organization to maintain that road” (Putnam, et al. 1993).

In this sense, as mentioned by Przeworski (2003), every single democratic regime is uncertain; but it works because citizens know what to expect from it. “Democracy only exists if there is real competition between candidates, and throughout the world political parties have been the organizations that have presented such rival candidates.” (Wiarda and Kline, 2006, 203) Then, citizens know that they have the same chances of losing than the chances they have of winning, they chose the institutional framework under which these decisions are taken, and they know that they are fully represented by the people they chose to be in power; thus, if there are strong institutions instaurated in the country, uncertainty will not be a problem. Democracy is a system of “organized uncertainty”, but it works if there are strong and stable institutions that can regulate these outcomes.

On the other hand, judicial independence is a crucial element that constitutes strong democratic institutions; in this sense, I deem it necessary to expose some of the ideas shared by other authors regarding this perilous concept. In this sense, a judiciary system is considered to be independent when it does not rely on external factors such as other democratic institutions or agencies. In addition to this, as in any other definition, there are several approaches, some more radical than others; in light of this, “independence from ideology” (Kahn 1993:89) is a requisite for some, mainly, party detachment, which guarantees impartiality. For others, political insularity is absolutely necessary, meaning that the judicial branch of government should not respond to or depend upon any other branch of government or political institution, however, according to Juan Carlos Donoso (2009, 2)

“While the judiciary must be autonomous from other political institutions and the public, to safeguard horizontal accountability and the rule of law, the judicial system and all of its members are also accountable to the constitution.”

In this sense, a precise measure of judicial independence would require some sort of statistical comparison between judicial preferences and judicial results (Linares Lejarraga 2004), however, the existing literature has opted for more indirect forms of measurements.

Institutionalists, then, assert that democracy can be created and maintained without the necessity of a previous democratic political culture. They don't deny that democracy can shape the culture of a country and create new sets of values that are going to help democracy endure; however, they do believe that democracy by itself cannot create democracy and neither can it guarantee democratic institutions survival.

2.2: Democratic Political Culture

Political culture is thought to be by both the “weakly culturalist” and the “strong culturalist” point of view, the main source for democratic consolidation. In the words of Samuel Huntington (1991, 258):

“The democratic culture issue focuses attention on the relation between the performance or effectiveness of new democratic governments and their legitimacy – in other words, the extent to which elites and publics believe in the value of the democratic system”.

Likewise, he states the fact that legitimacy is intertwined with the effectiveness of the democratic regime; for this purpose, he uses the same definition of legitimacy that was used in the previous section of this chapter, by authors like Przeworski and Putnam. However, the difference between his argument and the institutionalist argument, lays on the fact that he exemplifies it as a vicious circle, where legitimacy produces regime's effectiveness, thereupon, effectiveness endures the regime's legitimacy.

In this sense, culture plays a dominant role regarding democratic consolidation, given that every single one of its components, such as: tolerance, trust, participatory values, democratic preferences, and well-being, determines if there is a crucial characteristic of any democratic regime. Harrison and Huntington (2003, 68), present the idea that in the long run, democracy is not attained simply by making institutional changes, or through elite-level maneuvering. Its survival also depends on the values and beliefs of ordinary citizens”.

Going back to Pzeworski, Cheibub and Lemongi’s statement: both culturalist approaches, state that the existence of determined cultural patterns are essential for democratic establishment and maintenance, for instance, un-educated population, extremely passionate citizens (who can’t control their emotional reactions towards government’s new policies), among other factors, seem to play a characteristic role in the installation of democracy. The authors argue that attitudes and behavior, which come along with these characteristics, could jeopardize the duration of a democratic regime. Furthermore, culturalists believe that citizens, who don’t have a democratic political culture, won’t be able to meet with the conditions required by the regime even if they do wish to live under a democratic rule.

When a democratic regime has been established, and no previous democratic political culture was met, weakly culturalists, believe that it can be learned and adopted, because no condition is permanent: for them, as it was mentioned earlier, everything is constantly changing. Even if, at the beginning, citizens will keep on practicing whatever it is they are accustomed to do, that will find the ways to incorporate the new habits into their day-to-day life: not only are they capable of learning, but they will learn how to act as democrats. Consequently, institutions are not a sufficient condition for the instauration of democracy.

A political culture favorable to democracies is needed in order to endure a democratic regime. As mentioned by the authors, democracy is considered to be the psychological ground towards the incorporation of democratic values to the political regime. Thereupon, democracy depends mostly on the fact that citizens believe that democracy is the only and the best option for their government, this can be expressed in several manners such as feelings, evaluations, cognition, and orientation towards the political issues of the country. Correspondingly, Inglehart (1990) mentions that in order for a democratic regime to reach stability, a democratic culture should be already established; he says that the main factors for this culture are inter-personal trust, satisfaction with the regime, and support for revolutionary change (which is supposedly damaging for any kind of democracy). Inglehart (1996) also states that the amount of the first and second characteristics share directly proportional relationship with the number of years of democracy enjoyed in a country, while the latter has an inversely proportional relationship.

Accordingly, Weingast (1997), asserts that the creation of a common set of values within citizens, is a necessary tool for democratic institutionalization; in this sense, citizens should not only grant power to the government but they should also set limits to their actions, and most importantly, they should be willing to stand up against the possible abuses that governments could commit, both resulting from and generating interpersonal trust and tolerance. According to the author, then, democratic stability is reached only when three conditions (that make up political culture) are met: firstly he refers to the citizens sticking up to the limits that they themselves have created and imposed through the Constitution; second, when citizens decide to get together against possible abuses the government could commit, and finally, democracy becomes stable when citizens are willing to actually act in order to stop if the abuses were to be made.

In contrast with the institutionalist perspective already exposed, culturalists hold the idea that culture plays a more significant role towards democratic consolidation. Even, if as Harrison and Huntington (2003, 85) expose, economic development plays an important role in the process, it ends up contributing to the implementation of a democratic political culture. Chiefly, its role is to:

“bring gradual cultural changes that make mass publics increasingly likely to want democratic institutions and to be more supportive of the ones that are in place [...] development tends to make mass publics more trusting and tolerant and leads them to place an increasingly high priority on autonomy and self-expression in all spheres of life, including politics, and it becomes difficult and costly to repress demands for political liberalization. With rising levels of economic development, cultural patterns emerge that are increasingly supportive of democracy, making mass publics more supportive of democracy and more skillfull at getting it.”

As Diana Orcés (2009, 142) claims, factors such as perception of threats, are substantial for the creation or stablishment of democratic culture, however, it is only through the effects these factors bring to political culture, that they are able to influence democratic consolidation or not. In this sense, if they can “lead to an increase in political intolerance, activat[e] authoritarian attitudes, and thus support an authoritarian system”, it becomes evident that they are generating a profound change in political culture and in light of this change, they are affecting, in an indirect manner, to democratic stabilization or consolidation. In addition to this, the author also argues that a democratic regimes’ lifetime, relies upon the support for democratic values.

By the same token, other culturalists such as Muller and Seligson argue that democratic stability is the previous characteristic for the creation of political culture and not viceversa; they expose the idea that if a stable democratic regime has not been created, citizens will not have any incentives or examples that would help them create this democratic culture needed for the preservation of the consolidation of a democratic regime. As it becomes evident, then, when analyzing the component of political culture, it is of utmost importance to state a clear differentiation between the approaches that are supposed to represent the regime's stratification.

Summing up all of the culturalist approaches, what we get is that there are three momentums in political culture that are most prominent for its study. Firstly, when citizens want to live under a democratic regime, when they believe that independently from the results that it can throw it is the better option, or at least they act as if they believed that democracy is the least bad regime, and so they seek its implementation and consolidation. Second, when citizens don't get the results they were aiming to obtain, they still accept whatever outcome that has resulted from the democratic process; as long as decisions are taken through the application of democratic procedures, citizens accept it as an obligation not to like it, but rather to follow it; it should also be mentioned that sometimes, even though citizens don't believe that this obedience is derived from the applicability of the procedures, they respect contrare decision because they believe on participation, meaning that if they have been an active part on the process in which the results were decided, they are open to accepting them. Thirdly, if individuals possess a democratic personality, that implies great deals of republican virtue, trust, tolerance, empathy, moderation and patience, they will be contributing to the process of democratics stabilization. In this sense, what the three momentums bring with them is the fact

that citizens trust the system of government, they accept that if decisions taken through democratic process such as voting procedures were taken they are also to be complied, not only if the outcome was the expected, but always; characteristics that derive from the existence of a system of common democratic values, are the ones that lead to democratic consolidation.

Therefore, the previous existence of a democratic political culture is necessary for the establishment of democratic regimes, and in some of the cases as Lipset (1960) argues, this is only derived from the proper economic development. It is argued that the main reasons why this works successfully, (economic development transforming into a democratic political culture), happens because of the creation of better and more levels of tolerance and trust in general. In the same sense, John Stuart Mill argues that the previous conditions necessary for the creation of a democratic political culture are strong political institutions. He says that in order to prolongue and maintain a democratic system, institutions are meant to create a democratic political culture first, thus, as institutions are equal in theory, there should be a parameter by which democratic political culture can be met or achieved.

2.3: Democratic Consolidation

Once political culture and institutions have been covered and explained, it is important to determine what democratic consolidation is. As we have seen so far, there are different approaches, and each of them attributes a different scale of importance to each characteristic in relation with democratic consolidation. But when is a democracy consolidated? In this

section, I will focus on the various definitions that have been given throughout the years, but firstly I believe it is necessary to explain in a very short manner, what democracy is.

According to Linz (2001), a democracy is created when the citizens/electoral body, can freely choose their representatives, and when these democratic processes are not jeopardized or controlled by authorities or institutions. It is important to set a limit to the years that a person or organization can rule a country; because this limits the enormous power they would have had over the population and the country in general. According to the author two things are essential for the establishment of a democratic regime: rule of law and legitimacy.

As Huntington (1991, 258) argues, both institutions and culture play a determinant role towards democratic stabilization. According to him,

“the legitimacy of authoritarian regimes (including, in the end, communist regimes) came to rest almost entirely on performance. The legitimacy of democratic regimes clearly rests in part on performance. It also rests, however, on processes and procedures.”

The most interesting part of Huntington's approach, however, is the fact that he assures that the essence of a democratic government is the way in which leaders respond to their own inability to solve the problems that affect the regimes rather than preventing or solving the problems.

According to him, there are a few more factors that guarantee democratic stability, for example the cohesiveness with which they are able to establish relationships with other governmental institutions and as a consequence the strength with which they rule. The stability of democratic regimes, then, depends on: first, the ability of the principal political

elites – party leaders, business leaders- to work together to deal with the problems confronting their society and for these actors to be able to abstain from exploiting those problems to their immediate material or political advantage. In this sense, democratic stability depends upon the manner in which political parties above other institutions, but along with them, are able to handle this situation. Therefore in stable democracies:

“No national political party, [...] attempted to exploit the issue in order to delegitimize the democratic regime... no party persisted in blaming the various governments for creating the problem. No party claimed that the problem could be handled better outside of the democratic regime.” (Huntington, 1991, 260)

As to what it is safe to say, that stable democracies are built upon two things: strong, stable and organized institutions, and a political culture that favours democratic values above others.

Huntington also states that the ability to distinguish between the regime and the government or rulers is an intrinsic characteristic of democratic stabilization. Therefore, the case of Venezuela can be brought to attention to exemplify this characteristic, because in spite of the fact that there was discontent with the results of elections, citizens believe that there is no way more legitimate than voting procedures, and thus they remain supportive towards the regime, even if they are not as supportive, towards the government per sé.

Therefore it can be argued that citizens should know that the regime is made up of rules and procedures that they had chosen in order to guide the political processes of the country. Governments will eventually fail, as Huntington asserts, and the only viable solution for this phenomenon would be the implementation of institutionalized manners that can regulate the process. Hence, both institutions and culture are determinant for democratic survival. As it is

evident from the political culture aspect: democracies will not necessarily solve the problems that are brought about in the political sphere by many and diverse factors, but it means that if there are governments and/or rulers that are damaging the political environment and jeopardizing the lifetime of the regime, there will be ways in which they can be removed, as mentioned by Huntington (1991, 264)

“the essence of democratic behavior is doing the latter because it is impossible to do the former. Disillusionment and the lowered expectations it produces are the foundation of democratic stability. Democracies become consolidated when people learn that democracy is a solution to the problem of tyranny, but not necessarily to anything else.”

As it was stated in previous sections of this chapter, political participation is too, thought to be one of the determinant constituents of democracy, however as it has been stated several times, political participation is only a supplementary element to it, consequently, it cannot threaten the stability of the democratic regime, nor can it cause it. On the other hand, what can provoke a destabilization of the regime, would be the weakening of political institutions, particularly political party systems. Regarding the Latin American case, a profound change in these institutions can be observed: when democratic regimes were first established, citizens were reluctant to let the same leader stay in office for more than one term, thus, the policies adopted by them, were more moderated in order to adapt themselves to the mainstream of opinion in their country; nowadays, however, incumbent leaders in the region adopt more extremist policies, and are more commonly elected for their personality traits than by the political organizations they represent, in fact, the region has experienced a wave of outsiders' elections.

As stated by Huntington (1991, 270) “voters not only rejected the incumbent party; they also rejected the principal alternative party or group within the political establishment and threw their support to a political outsider. [...] [This phenomenon] tended to be more prevalent in Latin America where it was identified as populism.” In this sense, several presidential candidates that were elected in the region represent all that was contrary to the initial principles promoted in the region. It is important to note, that political outsiders are elected with a broad multiclass support, and as literature about populism suggest, in the pre-electoral stage outsiders show leftist tendencies, however, once in office they tend to follow non-populist economic policies that were designed to cut government spending, promote competition and hold down wages. When there are disillusionment, intolerance and unhappiness towards the policies implemented by the government and the politicians, the solution posed by the citizens should rather be to use the democratic system’s instruments in order to remove them from office, and lead to changes in their policies. In this sense, “democracy is consolidated to the extent these in-system responses become institutionalized” (Huntington, 1991, 282). Keeping up with the premise that democracies are successfully established when electors and incumbents accept that they can lose as well as win, and when they know that when things go wrong it is not the regimes’ fault, but it rather is because the government is inefficient, and as to this the ruler is the one that’s changed, not the regime.

The literature suggests that consolidation is brought upon thanks to several factors: firstly, prior democratic experience; second, more industrialized modern economy and education; third, foreign governments supportive of democracy; fourth, snowballing effects; fifth, that democracies are created through peaceful processes such as negotiated placements and transformations; lastly, citizens’ attitudes towards governments’ inability to resolve problems.

In light of this, it can be argued that it is not only citizens who need to have democratic values, but leaders should too have the proper attitudes and values towards the democratic regime, they should have always in mind that the goals they should seek need to be intrinsically related to the maintenance of the democratic regime and not to the personal goals they usually seek. As Arturo Nuñez mentioned during the XXI Iberoamerican Summit, the necessary conditions for the stability of the democratic regime are socio-economic development, legitimacy and efficiency of the democratic political system.

Correspondingly, in the Latin American Public Opinion Project: Ecuador 2010, Juan Carlos Donoso, Daniel Montalvo and Diana Orcés mention that education is likewise, one of the most efficient ways of building up democratic political culture, however, they do not find a significant relationship between economic recession and decay in democratic support. As mentioned by the authors, democratic consolidation happens whenever citizens believe that in theory, democratic regimes are the best option of their country, in spite of feeling discontent towards the results produced by their governments. The authors also make allusion to the fact that even if economic development has no significant relationship, economic policies do. In this sense, the president's economic policies whenever they are efficient (regarding the solutions they bring to economic problems), citizens will defend and support democracy as the political system that rules in their country, if this is not the case, it is most probable that they would start thinking about the implementation of punishments to the ones in power; summing it up, democratic consolidation is also affected by transparent and efficient policies in the economic aspect.

Comparatively, the authors mention that democratic stability comes hand in hand with the development of a political culture inside a determined society (where they too measure political culture in terms of political tolerance, and political system support), in this sense, the level of legitimacy that a democratic regime receives is a determinant element for democratic stability. Correspondingly, if citizens do not support the political system and they have freedom of acting, a change in the regime would become an inevitable outcome. Stable regimes, in the other hand, need strong institutions and political tolerance towards minority groups; in this sense, political stability comes from the establishment of a political culture based on tolerance towards minority groups.

If the case were to happen, where the political system counts with popular support but it doesn't have political tolerance, as Donoso, Montalvo and Orcés call it: "authoritarian stability context", in the short term, the political system has the support of the majority of people, however, it could be jeopardized in the future. In light of these assertions, the authors make allusion to this a possible scenario of political instability, which could carry significant violence along with it.

Thereupon, when a regime has low legitimacy given that they have low support from the citizens and low levels of tolerance, democratic breakdowns are expected to happen. In this sense, if democratic institutions such as the judiciary and political parties are not supported by public opinion, then democracy becomes risky and unstable. Additionally, other factors that support democratic consolidation are: the number of political parties that are actively acting inside the Congress and how short are the periods in which a President is removed from office, and other is elected. Therefore, according to the authors democracy lasts given that citizen

support, tolerance and democratic values are present, they understand that even if they lost or their election was not the most popular choice, the chances of winning are still as big as their chances of losing, hence they don't find it difficult to keep on interacting under the democratic regime; it is important to note that according to the authors, it is important to maintain a variety of forces that work together instead of a political party that predominates over the rest, as well as how frequently is the leader removed, the period between governments cannot be less than 2 years and more than 5, given that this would lead to the delegitimization of the government.

Chapter 3: Methodology & Results

In this chapter I will test the following hypotheses: first, *democratic political culture is caused by the establishment of democratic institutions*; second, *when a political culture has already been established, it provokes democratic consolidation*. In order to elaborate this analysis, I have decided to use data collected with public opinion surveys, by projects such as LAPOP (Latin American Public Opinion Project) – Vanderbilt University, and the Global Competitiveness Report – World Economic Forum. Both surveys consist on the study of the interests and perceptions given out by citizens regarding their country's situation in the political, economical, institutional and social sphere; answers that for the effect of this analysis will be translated as factors that influence political stability and consolidation.

3.1 Data and Methods

As explained earlier, this paper's hypotheses were tested utilizing two main data sources, both of them based on public opinion surveys carried out in the region. It is important to mention that given the short length of this paper, only 4 countries in the region have been chosen as examples to interpret the findings: Uruguay, Ecuador, Chile and Perú, countries that have been chosen given the wide range of differences existing between them and because they represent a perfect resemblance of the political scenario explained in the previous chapters of this paper.

In one hand, the political culture component was tested with the utilization of the results that came from a survey carried out in 26 countries throughout 2012, as part of Vanderbilt University's Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). On the other hand, the

institutional component was divided into judicial independence and strong political parties; in order to test the first factor, the results of the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2012-2013 were used, as to the latter factor, the author has designed a dichotomic model in which countries are classified into two categories: strong political parties or weak political parties.

3.2: Dependent Variable

For the purposes of this paper, the dependent variable 'democratic consolidation' has been operationalized as a dichotomic variable, meaning that it has two possible values: it either exists, or it doesn't. In this sense, both values come from a thorough socio-political analysis, in which citizens show interest or not in the democratic regime. Chiefly, for the existence of this variable, citizens of a determined country, need to believe that democracy is the best regime possible for their country, and they don't think that problems in any sphere, are the regime's fault, thus they don't intend to change it. Moreover, citizens are able to differentiate between the democratic regime and the government or leader that rule the country.

3.3: Independent and Interdependent Variables

The interdependent variables in this paper are institutional features; specifically, strong political parties and judicial independence. Coupled with this, the hypothesis proposed, suggests that strong and stable political parties, along with an independent judiciary, are the responsible for the creation of a political culture, which comprises diverse elements that will be explained in the next pages. And as it has been mentioned throughout the paper, political

culture that comprises democratic values is the responsible for the creation of democratic consolidation.

To illustrate the first case, political parties, I have thought it necessary to give a broad definition of what strong and weak political parties are. As it can be seen in Manuel Alcantara and Flavia Freidenberg's work about political parties in Latin America, citizens criticize the institutions, and as this happens, they promote other ways of representation, fact that weakens the institutionalist approach to democratic consolidation. In the authors' perspective, political parties are still the institution that serves as the democratic pivot that glues it all together, and are supposed to settle political agreements, establish actions for the legislative production, provide institutions with personnel and make the political system operative. Political parties know how to mobilize societies in order to look for strategies that allow them to win elections.

According to both of the authors, the effective number of political parties in a presidential democracy can be measured after the elections, with a procedure that is as simple as analyzing the number of parties existent and making a ponderation between this and the function of different weights, that these parties have. According to them, Latin America tends to be represented by multipartidism, which means that there are huge levels of polarization and bifurcation in the Latin American political sphere. However, if the institution per sé meaning the political parties, is strong, they are going to be able to control and adapt to this up and down levels of polarization, resulting in a stable democratic environment. However, if like the Ecuadorian or Peruvian case, the institution is not capable of controlling these divergent opinions, stereotypes, and the cleavages form people who have not been able to incorporate them into the national community; institutions fail to guarantee the gobernability it is

supposed to guarantee. In this sense, I have decided to classify the political parties institutions into two categories: strong political parties and weak political parties, creating each category based on the characteristics given before.

Country	Party System
Chile	Strong Party System
Ecuador	Weak Party System
Perú	Weak Party System
Uruguay	Strong Party System

Figure 1 - Party Systems

As Figure 1 illustrates, both Chile and Uruguay have strong political party systems, given the fact that in the first country, since 1990 (after Pinochet's regime): parties have become traditional, there are no significant new emergent organizations and ideologically, they can be set apart one from another, in this sense, Concertación (coalition of parties for democracy) (center-left parties unified), UDI (Independent Democratic Union) and RN (National Renewal) (parties from the right). In the latter country, which has the oldest two-party system of the region, Colorados (left) and Blancos (right) represent the ideological polarization that characterizes the country; it is important to note that no new organizations have been created and thus, these parties generate a huge level of custom among citizens. On the other hand, Ecuadorian political parties are shown as weak, given that they are created in order to serve specific purposes such as the fact that they are built around the image of its leader in order for him/her to get to power and then they disappear and new parties are created, there is no

consistency in the political parties' ideology nor in the representation they offer, because there are too many political parties, resulting in lack of legitimacy; meanwhile, the Peruvian party system shares more similarities than differences with the latter: the political outsider phenomenon explained in chapter 2, applies perfectly here, while the institution does not count with the support or legitimization necessary for it to persist, thus it may be possible that instead of generating new political parties, the institutions' crisis could lead them to vanish.

Now, I will present the second value of the interdependent variable "strong democratic institutions" in the following lines. First of all, I deem it of absolute importance to state what I understand as an independent judiciary, and how where the results of the World Economic Forum's Competitiveness Report 2012 taken and interpreted. In this sense, the judiciary independence definition used here is the following, according to Prillaman (1967): a non politicized court system, where external forces have little to no influence towards the measures adopted by them. "Judicial independence is not something that exists or does not exist. Each country's political-judicial accommodation must be located along a spectrum that only in theory ranges from a completely unfettered judiciary to one that is completely subservient" (Prillaman 1967, 17). In this sense, the World Economic Forum, measures judiciary independence in a scale that goes from 1 to 7, where 1 means extremely politicized and 7 stands for totally independent.

Country	Independent Judiciary
Chile	5.3
Ecuador	2.5
Perú	2.5
Uruguay	5.2

Figure 2 - Independent Judiciary

As shown in figure 2, judicial independence possesses a wide variation among the Latin American region countries, as we can see, Chile and Uruguay have got, once again, stronger democratic institutions, while Ecuador and Peru were situated again in the measurement of weak political institutions.

Moving on, the independent variable in this study is ‘political culture’, which has been measured according to its three most important elements: tolerance, trust in the institutions (political parties and judiciary) and democratic values; as it was mentioned earlier, the results come from an opinion survey that was held in 2012 throughout Latin America.

In addition to this, the independent variable of the present study is democratic political culture, which for the purposes of this study is defined as the ability of in order to measure tolerance, the following questions were used as a basis for the creation of an index that has been recodified into a 0-100 scale, where 0 is nothing and 100 is everything: “There are people that always say bad things about the Government, and about the political system, in general. How strongly do you approve or disapprove, that these people have the right to vote?”, “How strongly do you approve or disapprove the fact that these people can go out in public

demonstrations to express their opinion?”, “Thinking about the people that have poor opinions on the Government and are willing to express them publicly, how strongly do you approve or disapprove, the fact that these people have the right to run for office in any public institution?”, “Thinking about the people that have poor opinions on the Government and are willing to express them publicly, how strongly do you approve or disapprove, the fact that these people’s opinions are broadcasted via television?”

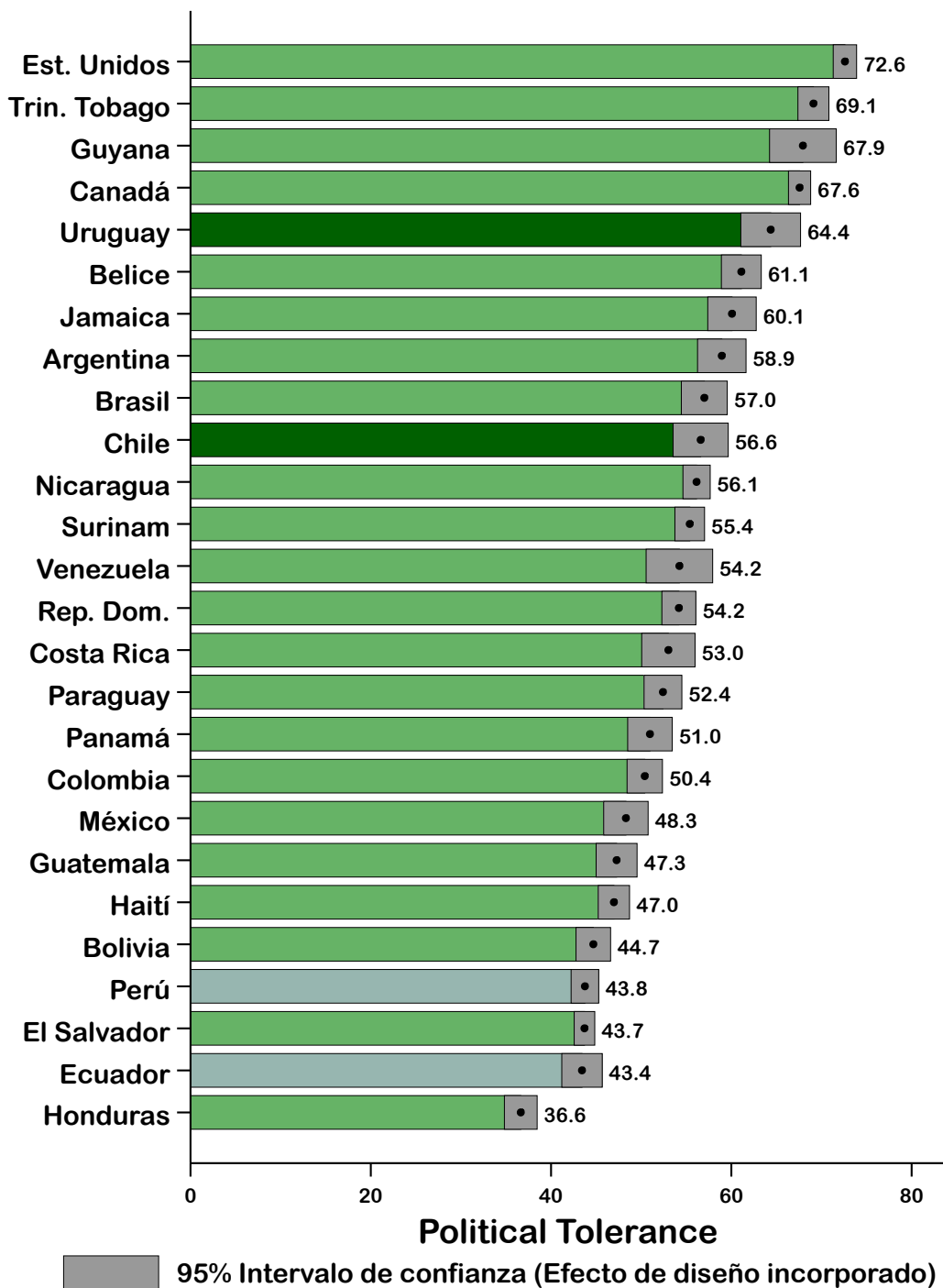
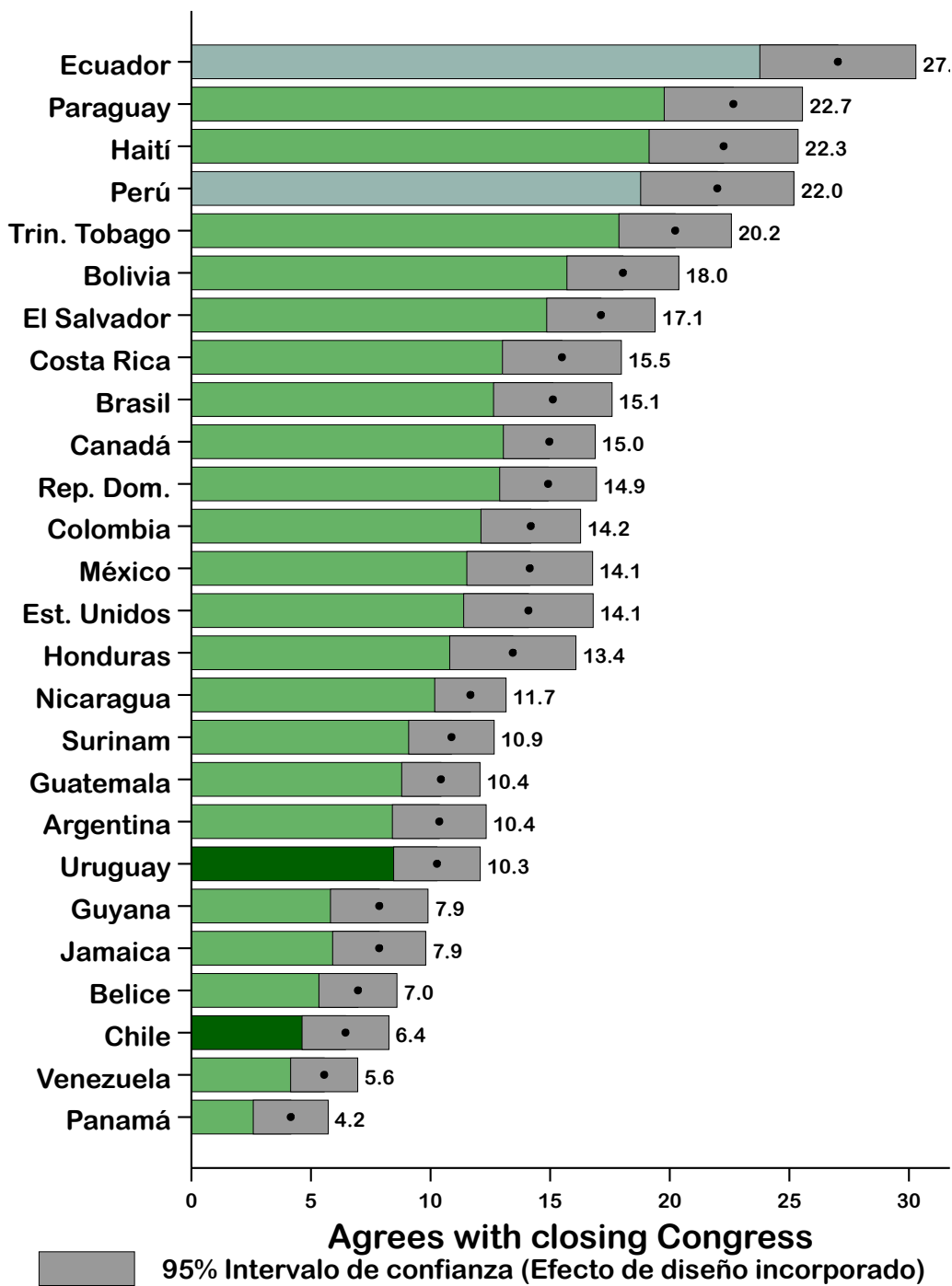


Figure 3 – Latin American countries comparison in Political Tolerance

As shown in Figure 3, political tolerance in the region, is proportional to the strength of the democratic political institutions; in countries such as Uruguay and Chile the average upriser 50 points, with 64.4 and 56.6 points, respectively. In the other hand, countries such as Peru and Ecuador are located below the average 50 points, with 43.8 for the former and 43.4 for the latter. As to this, it can be argued that the establishment of stable political institutions has led to the creation of more tolerance inside the democratic regime; as it was mentioned before, then, this relation should be explained taking as point of departure political parties. Whenever there is a custom that is generated because of democratic institutions, the customary practices that they imply and the clear division between ideological positions, lead to citizens to try to trust more in each other, and to understand that relations should exist among individuals whether they differ or they don't.

Moving forward, the second constituent element of a democratic political culture is the level of preference towards democratic values inside a society. In order to measure this variable, then, the Latin American Public Opinion Project, inserted a related question inside their survey: "if your country is confronting hard moments, do you think that it would be justifiable for the President to close the Congress and rule without it?" The question was measured as a dichotomic variable, therefore, the statistics that result in the graphic interpretation, represent the percentages of the population that agree with the measure. In this sense, if a citizen supports this kind of behavior, his preference towards democratic values is considered to be small, however, if he rejects these kinds of values, he is considered to have a more democratic political culture. As Figure 4 shows, 27% of Ecuadorian citizens and 22% of Peruvian citizens agree with this measure, opposite of what 10.3% of Uruguayan citizens and 6.4% of Chilean citizens prefer.



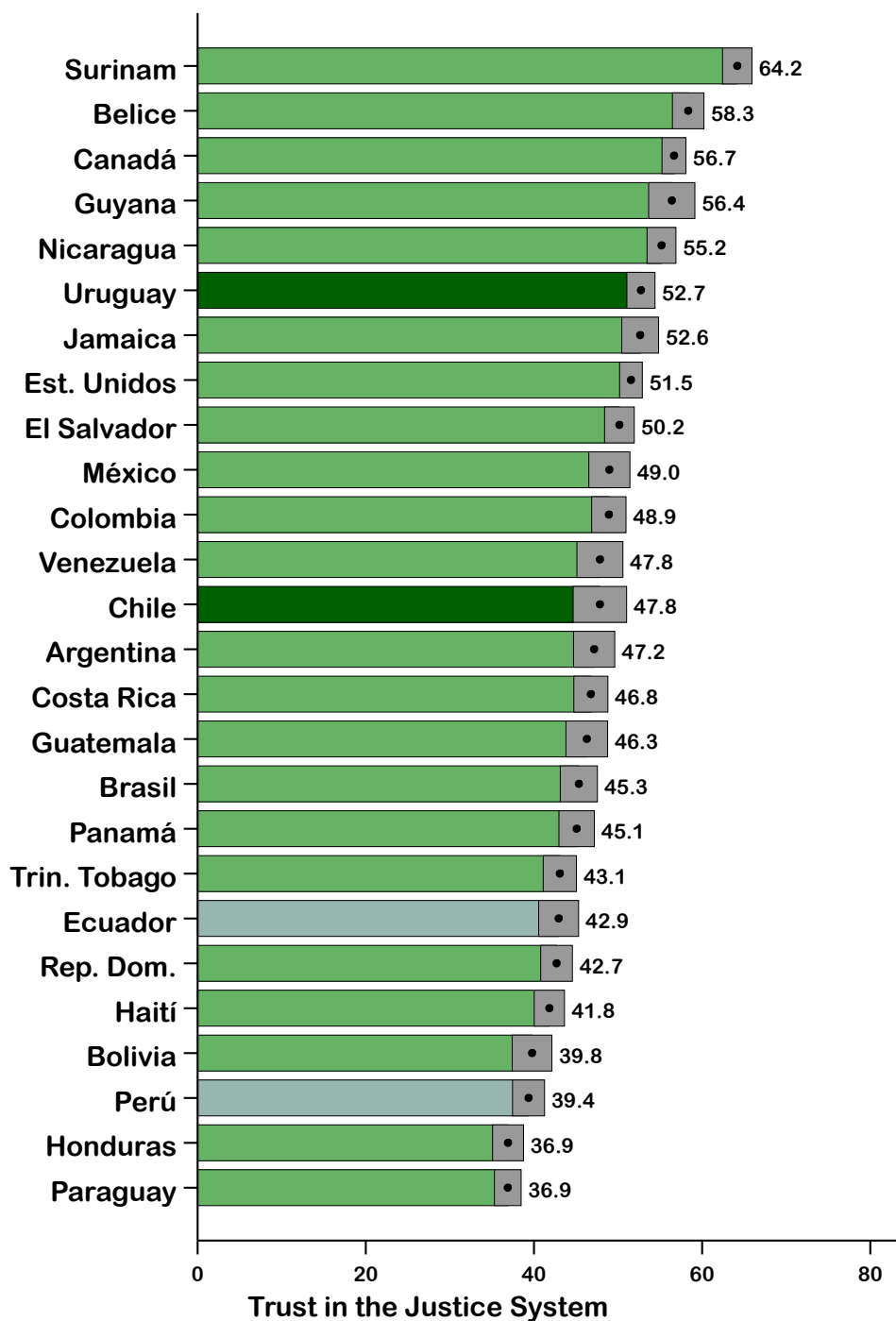
Fuente: © Barómetro de las Américas por LAPOP

Figure 4 – Latin American countries comparison in Agrees with Closing Congress

Regarding trust in democratic institutions, two related questions were created in the Latin American Public Opinion Project's survey of 2012, both measured in a scale that goes from 1 to 7, where 1 means none and 7 means a lot. The first question was "How much do you trust in the judicial system of your country?" and the second question was "How much do you trust the political parties in your country?" After the recomplilation of answers, the scale was recodified into a 0-100 scale that meets the same parameters as the first graphic dicussed.

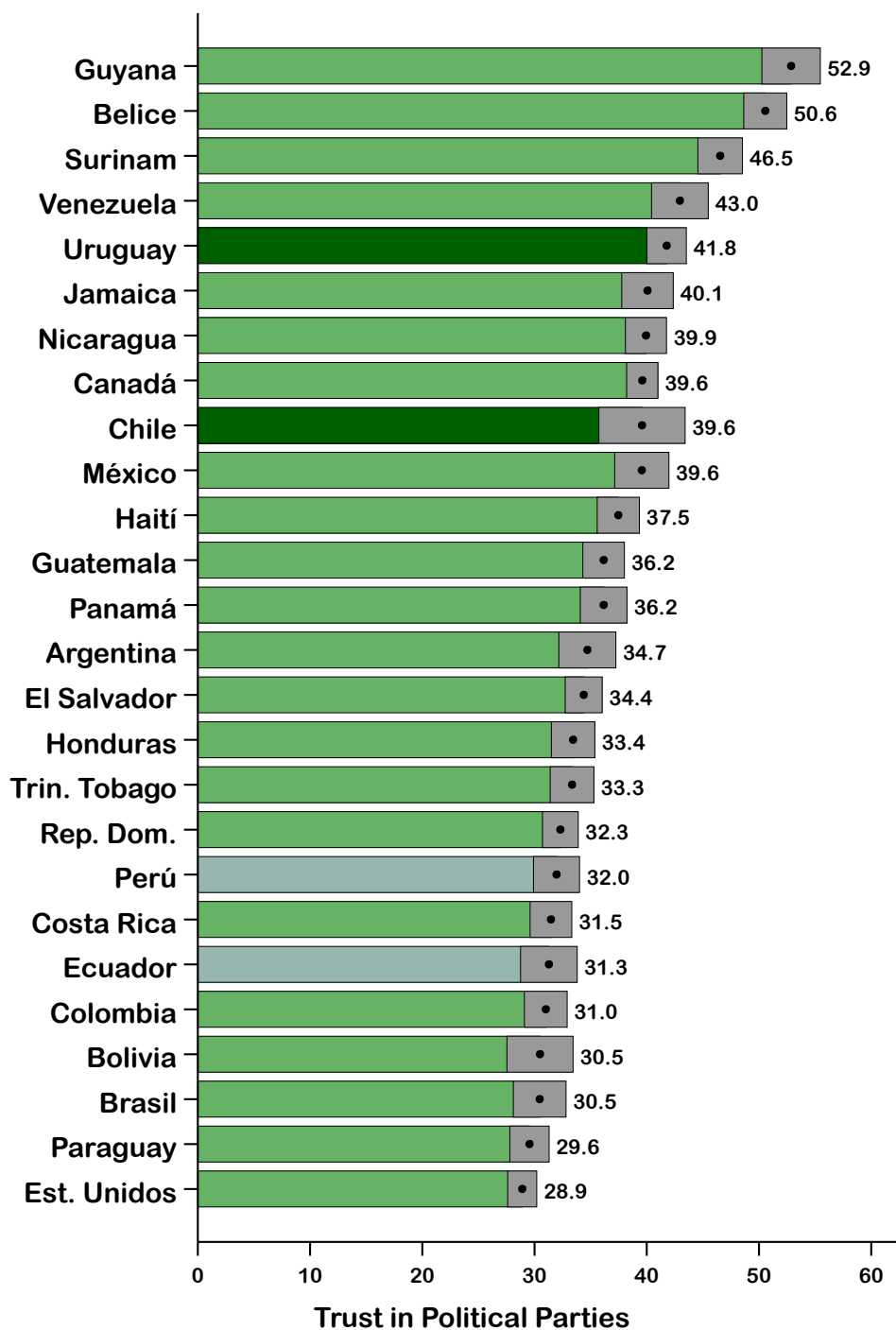
In this sense, as Figure 5 illustrates, we can observe that countries where an independent judiciary has been established, mainly Uruguay and Chile, show a significantly bigger level of trust in the Justice System (52.7 and 47.8) in comparison to Ecuador (42.9) and Perú (39.4) which, as was discussed in previous sections of this paper, have a politicized judiciary, that is greatly influenced by external factors. Subsequently, Figure 6 shows that countries where political parties are stable, representative and well ideologically defined, such as Uruguay (41.8) and Chile (39.6), trust in the mentioned institution is bigger than trust in political parties of countries such as Ecuador (32.0) and Perú (31.3).

In light of this, it becomes evident that the previous establishment of solid democratic institutions is necessary for the creation of political culture, that laterm, guides countries towards democratic consolidation.



Fuente: © Barómetro de las Américas por LAPOP

Figure 5 – Latin American countries comparison in trust in the judiciary system.



Fuente: © Barómetro de las Américas por LAPOP

Figure 6 – Latin American countries comparison in trust in political parties

Chapter 4: Discussion

On the whole, the data presented in the previous section, suggest that there is an evident relationship between both strong democratic institutions and a democratic political culture, and between a democratic political culture and democratic consolidation. In this sense, as it has been mentioned by Martín Torrijos during the XXI Iberoamerican Summit, there is a significant relationship between democratic institutionalism and democratic policies, and thus they cannot be set apart in order to create a democratic consolidation. According to this, democratic stability depends upon the level of trust upon these institutions, and the representativity that they exercise towards its citizens.

Thus, in Latin America, as it was showed in previous chapters, the growing tendency to elect political outsiders as presidents, comes hand in hand with weakening political institutions, chiefly, political parties. Therefore, it is evident to see that, as explained before, trust in democratic institutions is key for the survival of the regime as a whole. In this sense, I believe that it is important to emphasize that as showed in the methodology and results section, countries that were considered since the beginning as not completely consolidated democracies have all of this factors: they have a weak democratic political culture and moreover, they previously had weak democratic institutions. As it is illustrated in Figure 7, there is a significant relationship between the dependent, interdependent and independent variables. One of the greatest consequences, of political outsiders is that they debilitate institutions with their political inexperience, and by this, they create an unfavorable environment for democracies to survive.

Country	Party System	Judicial Independence	Political Tolerance	Trust in Parties	Trust in Judiciary	Justifies closing Congress
Chile	Strong	5.3/7	56.6/100	39.6/100	47.8/100	6.4%
Ecuador	Weak	2.5/7	43.4/100	31.3/100	42.9/100	27%
Perú	Weak	2.5/7	43.8/100	32/100	39.4/100	22%
Uruguay	Strong	5.2/7	64.4/100	41.8/100	52.7/100	10.3%

Figure 7 - Relationship Between Independent and Interdependent Variables

Rule of law, judicial security, citizenship trust in the government, are then, important factors for democratic consolidation.

In this sense, even if, as it has been said, other authors argue that only one of the previous factors exposed exerts a significant role towards the consolidation process of a political regime, what can be clearly seen in the data presented here, is that both of them are equally important, because neither of them can guarantee democratic survival on their own.

According to Donoso, Montalvo and Orcés, in order to maintain stability in a democratic regime, not only is support for a democratic political system necessary, but also support for democratic values, such as political tolerance. More specifically, support for a democratic system does not necessarily mean that citizens are tolerant toward minority groups who live under the same political system. While the majority of citizens support democratic rights, these same groups are usually considerably less likely to extend these rights to disliked

groups. Therefore, stable systems could be at risk, when the rights of the minorities are not guaranteed, given that if the support for the system is very high and political tolerance is low, the society could become authoritarian.

As stated by Robert Dahl, Ian Shapiro and José Antonio Cheibub (2003, 113):

“Democracies become consolidated if the conditional probability that a democratic regime will die during a particular year, given that it has already survived thus far the hazard rate, declines with its age, so that democracies are most likely to survive if they have lasted for some time. [...] The conclusion reached thus far is that whereas economic development [without the development of strong democratic institutions] under dictatorship has at most a non-linear relationship to the emergence of democracies, once they are established, democracies are much likely to endure in more highly developed countries.”

In this sense, strong democratic institutions and a democratic political culture, pave the road towards the consolidation of democracies.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

First, it is important to mention that as an introduction to the theory generated in this paper, a thorough literature review has been made, where different political science approaches have been summarized. Consequently, institutionalism was interpreted as the approach that believes that institutions are the sole responsible for the creation of democratic regimes and their stabilization/consolidation. Weakly culturalists, on the other hand, attribute political culture the responsibility of democratic consolidation, however, they argue that this democratic culture can be shaped by external factors such as social context. Lastly, strong culturalist approaches are based on the fact that only political culture can successfully derive into the creation and consolidation of democracies.

Evidence from the World Economic Forum and the Latin American Public Opinion Project presented in the data and methods section of this paper, demonstrates that there is a relationship between the previous existence of stable democratic institutions, such as strong political parties and an independent judiciary, along with the creation of a democratic political culture, that implies high levels of trust in political institutions, preference of democratic values above other political attitudes and tolerance to contrary opinions and points of view. In this sense, the analysis made upon the hypotheses proposed at the beginning of this paper, which was firstly, that democratic political institutions create a democratic political culture; second, a democratic political culture creates democratic consolidation occurs, has showed a significant relationship between the three variables.

In relation to the political approaches, this paper could be classified in the middle ground between “institutionalists” and “weakly culturalists”, given to the fact that it demonstrates that both features have the same importance regarding democratic consolidation. In this sense, neither of them, be it democratic political institutions alone, or democratic political culture can contribute to democratic consolidation by themselves. Consequently, only when a democratic political regime has been established, and its institutions are already solid and stable, citizens’ attitudes and beliefs would be shaped into a democratic political culture. Consolidation, then, can only come when a democratic political regime relies upon these two pillars, and citizens come to the belief, that there is no other option, that could bring a greater benefit to the political and social contexts of their country, than a democratic regime; in other words, democracy becomes consolidated, when strong democratic institutions, influence peoples preferences and they come to the believe that democracy is the only game in town.

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