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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### YOUTH AND EXPECTATIONS ON DEMOCRACY IN SPAIN

#### The role of Individual Human Values Structure of Young People in Dimensions of Democracy

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**ABSTRACT:** Democracy is a form of social organization based on popular sovereignty. The rise of democracy has run in parallel to economic growth in society and this system of government has been increasingly adopted in other countries (Inglehart, 2005). The same concept has been defined over time in different ways according to their historical characteristics. According to Kluckhohn (1958), humans react to external stimuli as well as to their own interpretations of stimuli as per a cognitive framework defined by the culture in which the individual is inserted. This research is aimed at learning how values influence the concept that young Spaniards have of democracy and determine how these affect each dimension, factor or element in which the study of this type of social organization can be divided. In order to carry out this research we are using data from the sixth round of the European Social Survey (ESS) conducted in 2012. The sample consists of two groups, one with individuals aged 18 to 30 and a second group with people over 30 years of age. Results indicate that democracy —and its elements— is not an ideal concept, or it should not be seen as an invariable, objective concept, external to citizens. It is rather an adaptive and evolving instrument, consubstantial to each individual's vital experience and society's in its whole in which values have a joint function between the macro and the micro-social groups.

**KEYWORDS:** Human values, structural modelling, democracy, youth, politics, attitudes, democracy's dimensions, citizens, government, social change.

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## 1. Introduction

Studying democracy is a complex task, as any, in which social scientists try to approach a subject from an empirical perspective. The indicators commonly used to measure the support and satisfaction of democracy—democracy as the best political system and satisfaction with the way democracy works— disclose partial or indirect results, without knowing exactly which facets of democracy are supported or valued —either positively or negatively— by citizens.

Easton set the conceptual bases for the empirical study of democracy and he has been the reference author for research production in this field (Easton 1976). Nonetheless, the obtained research results based on his criteria are limited and political-oriented.

Other researches, which are reference in this field, have been the ones carried out by Stein Ringen (2007) opening a line of work based on the statement «What Democracy is for». His approach also yielded limited results because it concentrates the citizens' assessment in only one dimension, insufficient to analyse the quality of a democratic system.

Suitable questions have been asked in empirical research about attitudes towards democracy in specific societies. We can use as an example the researches in Latin American countries (see Ai Camp 1998, Baviskar and Malone 2004 or Lagos 2005), in Africa (see Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi 2005) and the ones carried out with the ex-URSS as a society of study (see Reisinger, Miller, Hesli and Miller 1995, Whitefield and Evans 1996).

These countries have in common either the fact that they all hold democracies with a low democratization level or are in a transition period. However, despite their virtues, they lack comparative capability.

The following proposed research aims at learning about how values determine the concept that Spanish citizens have of democracy and how these values affect each dimension, factor or element in which the study of this type of social organization can be divided. We will also see how in Spanish society age is a distinguishing fact in the collec-

tive building of democracy. The research consists of a comparative analysis of two samples, one including citizens aged between 18 and 30 and a second with adult interviewees.

## **2. Values and the definition of democracy**

Values are deeply rooted abstract motivations that serve as guide to the individual as well as justification or explanation of attitudes, rules, opinions or actions, as defended by Halman and De Moor (1994), Rokeach (1973), Schwartz (1992) or Williams (1968). Values can be a reflection of important social changes in communities and countries. Literature regarding values defines them as desirable, with trans situational goals, of variable importance; serving as guiding principles for the lives of people. The essential content that distinguishes them is the sort of motivational aims they express.

We have chosen Shalom Schwartz's theory because it is a solid and consolidated empirical reference, which facilitates the analysis of causal relationships between values and dimensions defining democracy. Values act as intermediate variable between economic development and democratization process. As showed by Inglehart and Welzel (2006) the improvement of economic conditions in the population produces changes in society's value system which, in turn, influences the institutional sphere. Unlike Inglehart's findings regarding the influence of values in the institutional sphere, Schwartz's structure of values gives us an insight into the relationship between the micro and macro level of society's analysis. Is, therefore, an ideal tool to learn which are the values close to a democratic political regime and which are far away.

Shalom Schwartz's work means a remarkable and relevant effort to achieve a universal theory of values. He establishes ten essential values that gather the main orientations acknowledged in all the cultures around the world to address the issues of human condition. Cultural dimension reflects basic aspects that societies must face to regulate human activity.

As per Schwartz's theory, these basic values may be grouped in four higher value domains (table 1), wider and more universal orientations, according to the affinity of motivational contents. In this way we have the following categories or domains: Openness to change, self-transcendence, conservation and self-enhancement. In the same way, each category contains basic values opposed to others given the incompatibility of their simultaneous activation. Once the 10 basic values are identified, Schwartz's theory contemplates a structure in their relationships that characterizes each one of them, interactions

that carry social, psychological and political consequences by means of causal links and conflicts.

**Table 1 – Four value domains and ten basic values**

<i>Value Domain</i>	<i>Basic Value</i>	<i>Opposition</i>
Openness to change	Self-direction Stimulation Hedonism	Conservation
Self-transcendence	Universalism Benevolence	Self-enhancement
Conservation	Conformity Tradition Security	Openness to change
Self-enhancement	Power Achievement Hedonism	Self-transcendence

Source: Carratalá (2016)

The second element of the theoretical background of this study is Leonardo Morlino’s theory of the quality of democracy (2009). For this author, a good democracy or a quality democracy would be the steady institutional structure that by means of institutions and correctly working mechanisms guarantees the freedom and equality of citizens.

Morlino introduces three standpoints or dimensions in the analysis of democracy from which this concept and its functioning in a given society is assessed. Therefore, we can evaluate democracy according to its regulatory procedures, the content or substantive part of democracy —as a result of the aforementioned procedures— and citizen satisfaction regarding the fulfilment of their expectations.

The first dimension has democracy as a leading role as compliance of the established procedures of either legal character or other types of normative agreements. This perspective considers the level of respect for fair play rules within the electoral framework. Morlino includes different aspects of the electoral mechanism in this dimension such as deliberation processes, a varied political offer and the capability of parties in opposition to criticize the government.

In the second axis, as a substantive facet of democracy, we find the level of compliance and effective respect for citizens’ rights. This premise refers to civil, social and political rights. Civil rights being those referred to the rights to life, freedom, private property, family, etc. Political rights refers to the right to active and passive vote and the freedom to association and demonstration or speech and information. Finally, social rights

are those referring to health care, education, social services, social security and equal opportunities.

Last but not least, the third dimension is represented by citizen satisfaction on the level of fulfilment of their expectations regarding democracy. In this sense, Morlino refers to the fact that contents and procedures must lead to satisfactory results for the society, as would be the case of protecting citizens from poverty and the reduction of socio-economic inequality.

These three dimensions will be adapted in the empirical analysis for the explanatory relationships tested between Spanish youth values and their influence on the orientation of democracy's distinctive dimensions.

### **3. Objectives and hypothesis**

The general aim of this work is to learn how human values specific to young people, from 18 to 30 years-old, influence their understanding of democracy. With this purpose we will divide the analysis into two distinguished parts. The first one will delve into human values as per Shalom Schwartz's perspectives. Subsequently, the research will focus on the analysis of democracy and its constituent dimensions using the works of Leonardo Morlino as a theoretical model. Next we develop our hypotheses.

Regarding openness to change, in this study this value domain consists of the basic values that are self-direction, stimulation and hedonism. These values emphasize independence and favour change. They describe a kind of person who wants to enjoy full autonomy and freedom of thought and action, who trusts their own ideas to accomplish their goals. It is an individualistic value for people who do not like strings attached or restrictions and are seeking to take part in thrilling situations. Their individuality reaches the point of searching for pleasure and are self-indulgent when making mistakes.

This value domain, as per our hypothesis, must show a positive association with the substantive dimension. According to Morlino's theory, the essential aspects collected in this dimension are the values guiding the democratic practice, freedom and equality that later on translate to civil, social and political rights.

With respect to self-transcendence, universalism value defines the contents of this domain in the present study. It is determined by capabilities of empathy, tolerance and individuals have an interest in protecting the environment and the welfare of others.

For this value domain we expect —regarding young subjects— a positive association with the pragmatic component of democracy. In the case of universalism value, a strong

connection with the instrumental dimension is expected as it considers that governments have reducing inequalities among their functions.

With reference to self-enhancement, this domain is defined by the achievement value that emphasizes the pursuit of personal success by means of demonstrating capability according to social criteria.

It is expected from this value domain—in the case of young subjects—to show a positive relation with procedural dimension of democracy.

Finally, and in relation with conservation value domain, in this study this value domain is represented by the conformity value. Within this domain emphasis is laid on submissive self-restriction, preservation of traditional practices and customs and stability protection. The conformity value complies with the restriction of actions or any other impetus that may disturb or harm others or violate social rules. The hypothesis suggests that, in the case of young people, it is expected for the conservation value domain to show a positive association with the procedural dimension of democracy. This dimension represents the supremacy of the rule of law above all the other of dimensions, providing stability to the system and preventing any kind of change. Furthermore, it delivers security (legal) to civil society and favours the maintenance of the status quo with a system of rules and norms making it immovable.

#### **4. Methodology**

The data used in the analysis has been obtained from two data sources. For the model on government preferences of young people in Spain (figure 1), data from the World Values Survey (2012 – Wave 6) has been used.

Regarding the age variable, diversity of approaches makes advisable to express the operationalization of the concept of youth in each analytical context. The conceptual boundaries between youth as a political category and adulthood have been giving place in recent decades to a variety of situations that characterize the condition of youth: cultural aspects, insertion in the productive system, emancipation, conception and experience of political system, all of them make necessary at all times to combine the social and biological fact of youth. So we can't talk of youth as a collective or as a homogeneous category, but as an aggregate of population with a set of common characteristics and others that differentiate them internally. Recognizing these difficulties, the choice in this article of the age of 30 years as a differential threshold between youth and adulthood has basically an instrumental justification related to institutional policies. This is the age below which the Spanish public administration traditionally has conceived individuals as

young and therefore it poses specific actions for this age group. In the lower threshold, the frontier is set at 18 years due to the fact that it is from this age when Spanish institutions grant full political rights to individual citizenship. Accordingly subjects ranging between 18 and 30 years will be considered younger. This will allow us to propose a comparative analysis with the rest of the population, which will be considered as adults for analytical purposes.

For the models on the influence of human values in the democracy assessment of young and adult people in Spain (figures 2 and 3), data from the European Social Survey (2012 – Wave 6) has been used. The use of these databases is justified in the fact that these sources of information are the most updated containing the necessary variables for the proposed analysis. The sample sizes used in the analysis correspond to those valid cases for the set of variables that integrate the different structural models developed. Accordingly for the model that uses WVS data, the valid sample size of cases between 18 and 30 years is  $n = 305$ ; for the model which uses data from ESS for cases between 18 and 30 presents a valid sample size of  $n = 275$ ; and for the model which uses data from ESS for cases over 30 years the valid sample size is  $n = 1327$ .

In our empirical approach to the reality of orientation of definitions and assessments of democracy and its relationships with individual human values of young people we have used a multivariate analysis method known as structural equation modelling (SEM). SEM allows the analysis of multiple relationships between subsets of variables, as well as the possibility of incorporating theoretical concepts or latent variables in the process. This allows us to propose an empirical relational structure within the context of our theoretical explanatory proposal. The LISREL software program version 8.80 has been employed to construct and estimate the SEM. We considered two ways for the assessment of the structural models results. First we evaluated the goodness of fit of the structural equation models through the examination of six fit tests: Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (values  $\leq .08$  are acceptable); Goodness of fit Index (GFI) (values greater than .90 indicate good fit); Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) (values greater than .90 indicate good fit); Normed fit index (NFI) (values greater than .80 are desirable); Non-normed fit index (NNFI) (values greater than .95 indicate good fit), or the standardized root mean square residual (SRMSR) (values close to 0 are considered to be favourable). Second, the pathways in the structural equation model diagrams were assessed in order to determine the statistical significance of each relationship. Regarding path diagrams, all pathways in the structural equation model diagrams, which are presented in their t-value solution, are significant at  $t\text{-value} > 1.96$  (figure 1).

## 5. Analysis and results

A study on the influence of human values on the dimension of democracy and how it is configured according to the concept that young people have of it should be seen in a certain context. Such context must begin by, firstly, verifying whether democracy is a government system that young people find suitable to organize the society. Secondly, it may also clarify the value of knowing young people's preferences regarding every kind of political regime, distinguishing predilections over, for instance, authoritarian, technocratic, militaristic or democratic regimes.

The question is of no small significance in a context of clear disaffection from young people towards the way politics is exercised and the meaning that politics causes to daily practice. Furthermore, such context feeds on theoretical approaches in which young people are frequently linked to a one-dimensional projection as citizens, where they appeared devoted to the private world, with a scarce will of commitment with surrounding problems and overflowed by difficulties linked to their integration within the adult productive sphere. According to these explanations, all these determinants would move the importance bestowed by young people to their own involvement in the political sphere. It is therefore appropriate to address the question of young people's government preferences from the standpoint of young people opposite to the diversity of ways of political organization, and not only from the dimension of expectations on democracy.

In light of the data, Spanish youth considers democracy to be of great importance (Carratalá, 2016). Results of ESS 2012 regarding Spain are conclusive since young people awarded 7.94 average points out of 10 for the importance of democracy. Nevertheless, as pointed out in the aforementioned study, Spanish youth vouchsafe the lesser score among the EU countries. In any case, it is far from the Swedish youth and their average of 9.14 out of 10.

Yet the appreciation for democracy as a political organization system must not be observed only in absolute terms but in relative terms, as well opposite to other ways of government. This will reveal the true place of a government among the preferences of young people. Taking the data of the World Value Survey (WVS) 2012 as a reference, data in the case of young Spanish people disclose a wide consensus on a positive perception of democracy as a form of government. More than 90% of young people find a democratic system as way of government to be fairly good or very good. However, the percentages supporting other ways of government are also significant. 44.1% value the format based on a strong leader who does not have to answer for their actions to parliament and in elections as fairly good or very good accepting; 50.2% consider having

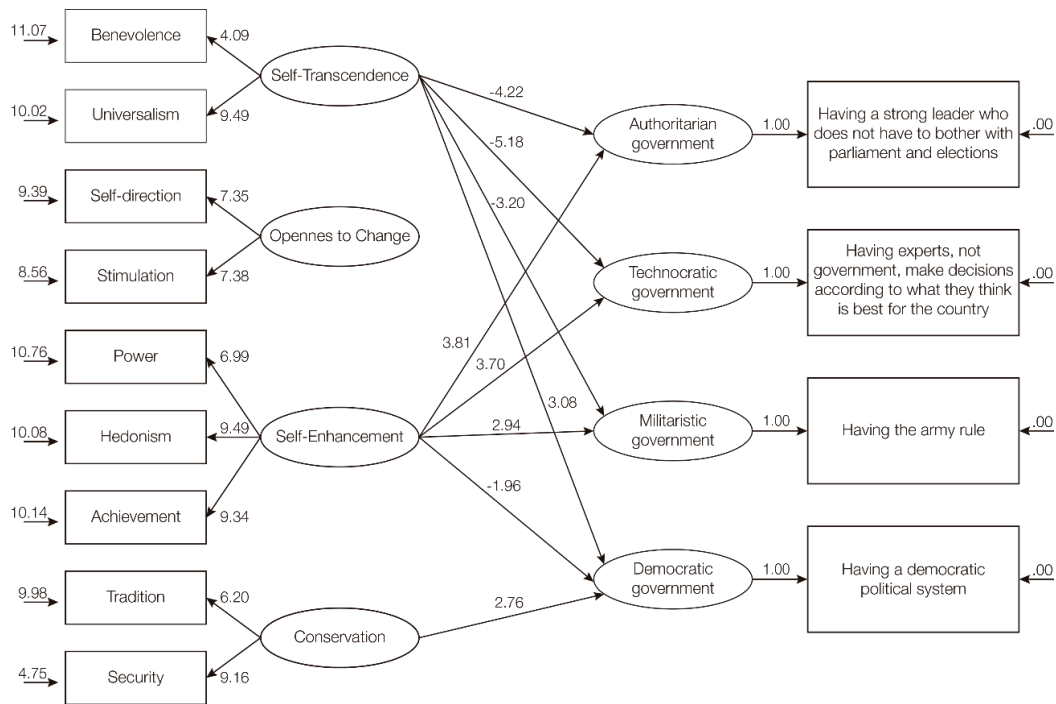


experts, not a government, making decisions according to what they think is best for the country; on the contrary, only 8.9% think a militaristic government is fairly or very good.

As we can observe, the different forms of government receive a variable but significant support from young Spaniards in options very unlike and even contradictory. We may think that each preference actually encloses or rests on particular values present in the subjects. Therefore, this paper suggests the convenience of submitting the analysis of political system predilection to values structure inherent to young people. The proposal of a structural model derives from it that, considering Schwartz's human values as exogenous variables (independent variables), differentially determines the explanatory relations that appear empirically significant on the different styles of valued governments. With this purpose, the information present in WVS' last round has been used, which constitutes the only data source harbouring the necessary variables for this analysis (figure 1).

In the resulting model, whose global fitness indexes show the empirical adequacy of the analytical proposal (table 2), we can identify different relevant findings. The first of them being that the self-transcendence value domain (formed by benevolence and universalism values) holds a relation of positive sign with the democratic type of government. However, it expresses a rejection relation with authoritarian, technocratic and militaristic types of government. On the other hand, and opposite to the previous case, young individuals who feel affinity for values within the self-enhancement domain (formed by values of power, achievement and hedonism), as expected, hold a positive association with authoritarian, technocratic and militaristic types of government while keeping a rejection or negative relation with the democratic type. For the conservation domain (formed by tradition and security values), the model expresses only a significant relation of positive character with the democratic type of government. Openness to change value domain shows, according to the model, no empirical explanatory relationship with any analysed type of government.

Figure 1. Structural model: Government preferences of young people in Spain



Source: World Values Survey (2012 – Wave 6) N = 305

Thus, the results show the relevance values that the value structure has in the study of preferences of young people regarding government systems and, at the same time, making it clear that for the study of these political preferences it is convenient to keep in mind that democracy must not be the only alternative to explore. The prevalence of predilection for other systems different to a democratic one is patent and the nexus between the democratic expectations and the subjects' value structure is established, which makes it advisable to include these types of value structures in the analysis of new trends in young people's participation and reorientation of political imaginaries. The exercise of analysis of the interdependence between young people's value structure and the way they define and fix expectations of democracy, in the same way regarding government systems, must not be confronted in an isolated manner. Our opinion is that

understanding increases when the coordinates of young people's view are fixed in relation to other segments of population. Therefore, we find it interesting to compare the explanatory structures of young people and the adult population in the case of Spain. This will allow us to better identify young people's specificity, as well as those aspects shared with the rest of the population regarding democratic expectations. This is the reason why one structural model for young Spanish population and another for adult population are presented separately. Both models accept the values belonging to Schwartz's proposal as explanatory exogenous variables, and instrumental and procedural dimensions of democracy as endogenous variables the substantive. These last ones mean the dimensional structure for the analysis that allows to distinguish subjects' expectations from the way subjects perceive democracy. It is noteworthy that proposals portrayed in the models present correct adjustments both in terms of global fit (table 2) as well as the significance of t-values in causal relations (table 3), which endows them with the explanatory capability within the framework of the used variables.

Youth democracy model can be summarized as follows: caring, complex and integrated. The first characteristic of this one (figure 2) is that it involves a partially non-recursive causal structure set in which in some cases endogenous variables, the dimensions of democracy, hold reciprocal causality relationships. Nonetheless, this type of relation is combined with other of hierarchical type placing the instrumental dimension of democracy at the core of the analysis.

As advanced in the previous paragraph, for young Spanish adults, democracy must be structured from its social dimension. This factor allocates the function of granting protection to citizens against poverty as well as reducing social inequality levels to the government of the country.

However, it is worth highlighting that even though the substantive dimension is defined by the previous factor, it also affects the instrumental dimension of democracy. Thus, for the Spanish youth, values such as social equality and civil, political and social rights, must be reflected in the state's assistance activity and its power to refine socio-economical differences.

Finally, for young Spanish people, both dimensions of democracy have the capability to define the expectations on the democratic mechanism. Freedom and equality, and the state's effectiveness to accomplish its functions, have deliberation, political diversity and the opposition parties' capability to regulate government actions as is reflected in this dimension.

Regarding the influence that human values present on young Spaniards on the expectations on democracy, we find positive relationships between the values of openness to change and the substantive dimension of democracy, also between the conservation

value domain and the instrumental factor, as well as between self-enhancement with the procedural dimension. Inversed relationships between the domains of self-transcendence and the substantive and instrumental dimensions can be observed.

From among these relationships, as the hypothesis put forward, the associations between factors openness to change and the substantive dimension were expected; and between self-enhancement and the procedural dimension.

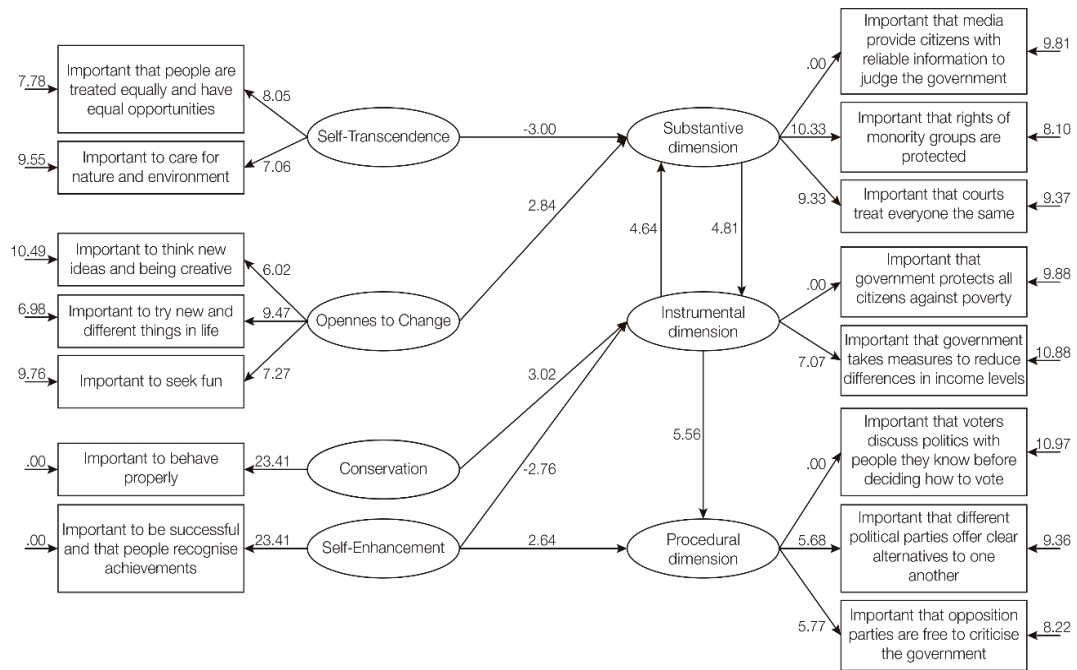
It is noteworthy that the young Spaniards that find themselves represented by values of equality, in the sense of equal opportunities, and worried about nature and environmental care, and they react negatively before the substantive perception of democracy. This relationship is justified by their insight of living in a system held by liberal values that by no means represent them or are not satisfactory enough. The legitimacy is, thus, in question as concepts of equality on the micro level have no correspondence to the macro level.

However, young adults finding themselves represented by the values of autonomy of action and thought will show a favourable attitude towards substantive contents of democracy. While in the previous case, collectivist aspect of equality would clash with the individualist tone of liberal values, in this case there is correspondence.

The association of positive character between the conservation value domain and the instrumental dimension of democracy is also remarkable. Being respectful to rules may be understood as the inclination to perform good deeds for others. This value domain has a strongly collectivist aspect and is oriented to the protection and security of the community: behaving well and obeying the rules is good to keep harmony within society, under the logic that common contribution generates protection for individuals.

As expected, young people that are identified with values of achievement (self-enhancement domain) consider themselves related to the procedural dimension of democracy based on electoral mechanisms preserving a hierarchical and elitist representation system based on individuality and leadership of the best. Also foreseeable, they oppose to a protection system for everyone with no exception and, as well, to any actions that may have as an objective to reduce the differences among the individuals that are part of society.

**Figure 2. Structural model: Influence of human values on the definition of democracy by young people in Spain**



Source: European Social Survey (2012 – Round 6) N = 275

Adult model can be summarized as follow: a widely discussed democracy electioneering style. The structural model in this case (figure 3) is of a recursive type. In this kind of models, hierarchical relations between endogenous variables, that is to say dimensions of democracy, are established. The procedural factor organizes the remaining dimensions in the democracy of Spanish people over the age of 30. In this way, the procedural dimension of democracy has an influence on the substantive one and the latter generates a causality relation on the instrumental factor. It is a model in which the deliberative capability of the system —democratic— a sharp offer between political parties and the opposition and their capability to regulate the government action define the substantive values of democracy, freedom and equal opportunities that, in turn, determine the assistance function of democracy and its role reducing social differences.

Regarding causality relationships between endogenous and exogenous variables, it must be highlighted above all the self-transcendence domain as it keeps positive associations with the three dimensions of democracy. According to our hypothesis, this relationship is only expected for this value with the instrumental dimension of democracy. This means that adult people identify themselves with values expressing equalitarian ideas with regard to other people and the natural environment. Therefore, for this group of population, equality also affects the procedural and substantive dimensions of democracy.

A positive causality relationship between the conservation and procedural dimension value domain was expected too. Indeed, the association exists in this case, with a negative sign; thus, the more the sample population identifies itself with values of self-restrictive orientation, the less importance the possibility of deliberating or choosing among a varied and well differentiated offer and opposition parties' capability of criticising the government has. They are people used to delegating decisions to other agents and feel uncomfortable in a discussion on ideas or political decisions, on deciding which party to vote for or the critics from the opposition to current government.

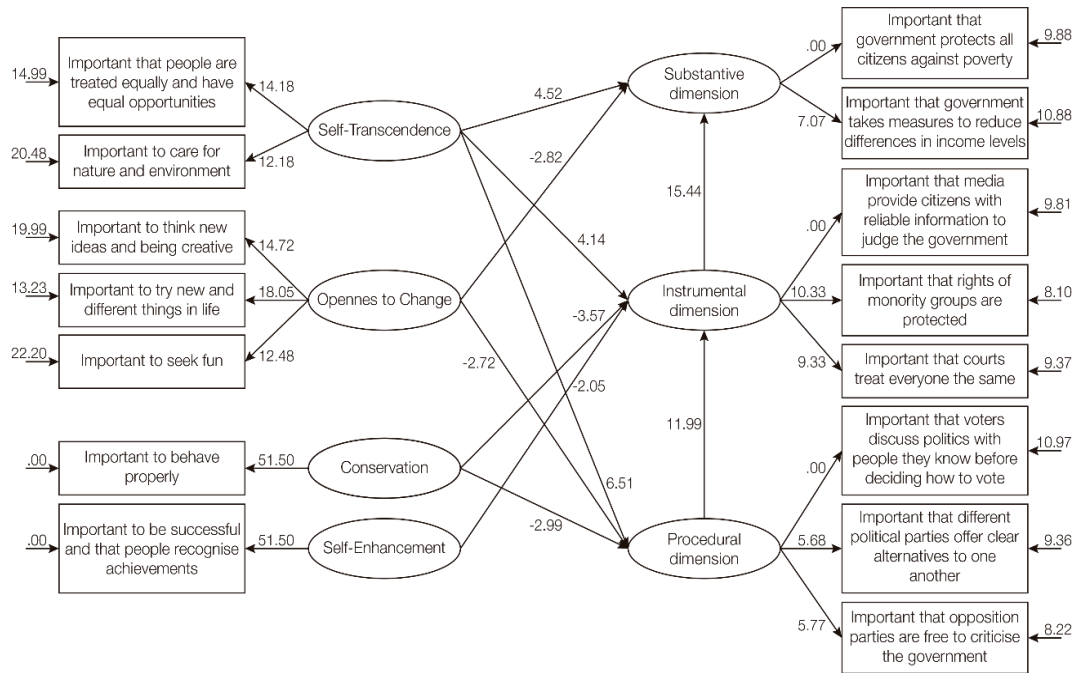
The model also expresses for this value domain an inverse character association with respect to the substantive dimension. Following the rationale of the previous case, freedom and civil rights are not important as people identified with this human value would rather obey a moral body of laws established by an authority. As per this model, people keen on this value refuse to make decisions of individual character and feel uneasy dealing with the consequences of their own free decision-making.

The population identified with the self-enhancement value domain present, as evidenced by the model, an inversed relationship with the substantive dimension. People identified with values expressing success, acknowledgement and leadership are contrary to values defining liberal democracies based on freedoms, civil rights and equal opportunities.

Finally, people who are identified with the openness to change value domain hold inverse causality relationships. Individuals defined by hedonistic values, keen on thrill and autonomous in their decisions and actions, consider of little importance the state's assistance role and orientation towards reducing inequality as well as electoral mechanisms defined by independence, government management control and the plurality of the political offer.

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Figure 3 – Structural model: Influence of human values on the definition of democracy by adults aged over 30 in Spain



Source: European Social Survey (2012 – Round 6) N = 1327

**Table 2. Values of global fit index for the models**

Statistics	Variation	Recommended values	Models		
			Government preferences of young people in Spain	Influence of human values in the assessment of democracy by young people in Spain	Influence of human values in the assessment of democracy by people aged over 30 in Spain
RMSEA		< 0.08	0.05	0.03	0.04
GFI	0 – 1	> 0.90	0.94	0.95	0.98
AGFI	0 – 1	> 0.90	0.90	0.93	0.96
NFI	0 – 1	> 0.90	0.90	0.93	0.96
NNFI	0 – 1	> 0.95	0.94	0.97	0.96
SRMR		Close to 0	0.05	0.04	0.03

**Table 3. T-value effects matrix in youth and over 30's structural models**

	Self-transcendence		Openness to change		Conservation		Self-enhancement	
	Youth	Over 30	Youth	Over 30	Youth	Over 30	Youth	Over 30
Instrumental dimension		4.52		-2.82	3.02		-2.76	
Substantive dimension	-3.00	4.14	-2.84			-3.57		-2.05
Procedural dimension		6.51		-2.72		-2.99	2.64	



## 6. Discussion

Several conclusions may be extracted from the comparison of both models:

- The first of them is that in the model with adult subjects there are more significant relationships between dimensions and value domains of democracy.
- In the youth model, subjects who are identified with self-enhancement values, represented by the achievement value, keep a higher number of significant relationships with the dimensions of democracy; refusal towards the instrumental dimension and supportive towards the procedural dimension.
- There is one exception: significant relationships expressed in the youth model do not match with those found in the model of adults.
- In the model of adults, those who are identified with self-transcendence value domain, mainly represented by the universalism value, keep significant positive relationships with every dimension of democracy.
- Universalism value keeps significant relationships in both models with the substantive dimension of democracy. Nonetheless, in the youth model, the relationship is of refusal, while the over adult's model is of approval or support.

All the above indicates that young people's expectations on democracy do not match with the view of adults. The fewer amount of relationships expounded by the youth model could indicate a minor interest in democracy from this age group as pointed out by some studies (Touraine 1996; Santoni 2013), although others (Cabrera and Muñoz 2009; Benedicto and Morán 2007) show something different.

The structural model regarding young people, which we have defined as recursive, focuses on elements of democracy that organize the rest. In the case of self-transcendence and open to change value domains —coincident with the definition of postmaterialist values within the Modernization theory (Inglehart and Welzel 2006; Carratalá 2016)— point to the substantive dimension. Data describes the refusal of the young people who identify themselves with equalitarian values (universalism), towards liberal democracy values. This is opposite to the case of young people who find themselves represented by the values of autonomy, stimulation and hedonism, from the openness to change value domain, who seem satisfactory as ideal referents in democracy's definition. From these findings arise a suggestion: It may be possible that youth reflects in their opinions and attitudes the liberal democracy crisis that is apparently experiencing Western society (Rodríguez 2013). This is summarized in a sovereignty, representation, participation and credibility crisis.

Young people identified with the typical values of universalism would explain this reality. It is a situation that is patent in studies on the Spanish electoral system and the opinion that young people have of it (Francés and Santacreu 2014; Ganuza and Francés 2008a), in which this question reflects a rejection of a system that favours bipartisanship. Liberal democracy, in this scenario, would be identified by young people as an audience democracy (Rodríguez 2013) in which enormous economic resources are spent. Young people that feel represented by universalism values explicitly reject a parliament acting as a mere transfer of power.

In the case of young people who relate to the openness to change value domain, it is evident that liberal democracy means the ideal model that lays the foundations for cohabitation and the organization of society. Their interest, in light of the findings, is focused on how the system guarantees the existence of civil, social and political rights to be enjoyed with equal opportunities and in an individual freedom scenario. The representative system, under the assumptions aforementioned, would allow their greater or lesser involvement according to their eventual interests.

Regarding the conservation and self-enhancement value domains, identified with materialist values (Inglehart and Welzel 2006; Carratalá 2016), these guide their relation towards the instrumental dimension. Both are focused on satisfying material needs yet in different ways. In the case of the conservation value domain (of which content corresponds to the basic conformity value), young people identified to this value would hold a positive relationship with this dimension, while the relation of the self-enhancement domain with this element would be negative.

The young people identified with the conformity value feel comfortable under a paternalistic authority system. Can democracy present such features? For part of the Spanish youth, that is how it should be. In fact, complying with the rules of coexistence in a democratic regime should be rewarded with the enjoyment of the benefits of a protection system that will ensure the survival of the ruled.

An attitude with which young individuals identified with the achievement value corresponding to self-enhancement would not agree. For these, subsistence should derive from achieved merits resulting from effort and everyone's socially recognized worth. Finally, young people identified with this type of approval of the Procedural element value of democracy clearly represent their bet on an elitist representation system based on parties and leaders who enjoy the social recognition in terms of power and achievement.

The model of adults is substantially different. It is not an objective of this search to delve into the description of this democracy model but it must serve us as a means of contrast with the one previously analysed.

The first perceptible difference is the amount of relations revealed in each proposed model. In the case of young people, they are much less than in the case of adults. This situation might be motivated by the disaffection of young people toward politics (Rodríguez 2013; Hirschman 1970) although other studies show that it is caused by a change in the conception of democracy based on other influence and inclusion spaces which transforms the so far predominant model (Francés and Santacreu 2014).

In light of everything above, we find ourselves before a concept, democracy, of complex nature, at least from a human value perspective. The comparison between the models, of which opinions and attitudes of people above and below the age of 30 years are represented, identifies age as a substantial difference in the definition of democracy and that values, which we presume are immutable guides for act and thought, are influenced by the social, economic and cultural context of those who possess them. As explained in the introduction, values respond to basic aspects of human existence (Kluckhohn 1951, 1958; Schwartz 1992, 2001, 2003, 2007; Schwartz and Bilsky 1990), among which are adaptation to social environment, relationships between the individual and the group, and the preservation of human societies. Therefore, young people and their values must give answers to needs of their youthful condition and which must be satisfied (Francés and Santacreu 2014; Ganuza and Francés 2008b; Margulis 2001; Coll 2008; Krauskorpf 2010).

We could feel tempted to consider that, for instance, the universalism value for a person under 30 has a different meaning to that of an adult. But the truth is that the difference comes not from value but from the circumstances surrounding one person and other, in conclusion, from what the youthful condition means. Democracy —and its elements— is not an ideal concept, and should not be seen as an invariable, objective concept, external to citizens. It is rather an adaptive and evolving instrument, consubstantial to each individual's vital experience and society's in its whole in which values have a joint function between the macro and the micro-social elements.

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