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Special issue  
*Political communication in  
Uncertain Times*

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## Measuring Political Attitudes in New Democracies: The Case of Chile

### Abstract

The aim of this work is to analyze three political attitudes: internal efficacy, external efficacy, and political interest, as variables that can explain people's disaffection. We aim to determine the impact of short-term and sociodemographic variables on these three political attitudes in the context of Chile. A survey, carried out by GFK-Adimark between March 3, 2016 and April 6, 2016, was used to answer our main research questions. In the survey, 1,651 inhabitants participated from the Chilean region of Valparaiso. Using this data, a hierarchical multivariate analysis was used for each attitude studied. In these terms, our results suggest that education and previous participation explain internal efficacy and political interest, but not external efficacy. Additionally, gender explains the perception of self-competence but not political interest. On the other hand, the perception of corruption is not related to any of the three political attitudes analyzed. These results are in line with the idea that political attitudes are stable variables not related to short-term variables. Although political malaise is usually studied by scholars, their work is normally considered under the conditions of a consolidated systems. In this framework, the Chilean data presented is going to help us understand the behavior of political attitudes in new democracies.

### Keywords

**Political attitudes, disaffection, political efficacy, political interest, engagement.**

### 1. Introduction

Over the last four decades, political engagement has been a frequent issue in the areas of political science, sociology and public communication, among others. The root of this interest is based on the phenomena of political malaise (P. Abramson, 1983; Banducci & Karp, 2003; Craig, 1980, 1993; Norris, 1999; Nye, Zelikow, & King, 1997). By the 1970s, scholars started to pay attention to the fact that citizens in several western democracies felt powerless and indifferent toward politics (Easton, 1975). Within this context, different studies focused on explaining the reasons for the decline of people's engagement in

politics. Researchers focused on the behavioral aspects of political malaise (P. R. Abramson & Aldrich, 1982; Marsh & Kaase, 1979; Shaffer, 1981), and on the attitudinal variables, such as confidence, dissatisfaction or lack of representation in political systems (P. Abramson, 1983; Almond & Verba, 1989; Easton, 1975; Farah, Barnes, & Heunks, 1979; Miller, 1980; O'Keefe, 1980) that could explain the decline in people's political engagement.

The studies previously mentioned have significantly contributed to the understanding of political attitudes; however, some authors have pointed out that the conclusions of these works are frequently restricted to the context of developed (Prior, 2010) and industrialized democracies (Powell, 1986). In the United States, political attitudes (i.e., internal and external efficacies) started to attract the attention of many scholars by the mid-twentieth century, after these attitudes were included in questionnaires by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center (Campbell, Gurin, & Miller, 1954). Outside the U.S., interest for political efficacy grew after a study conducted by Samuel Barnes and Max Kaase known as the Eight Nation Political Action Study (Barnes & Kaase, 1979). Both studies used data from different countries, such as Austria, England, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the U.S. Conversely, there are few researchers analyzing data from new democracies (Torcal, 2006). Since scholars understand that political attitudes depend on sociopolitical contexts (Catterberg & Moreno, 2006; Farah et al., 1979; Powell, 1986; Prior, 2010; Torcal & Montero, 2006), years of democracy, and the economic development of each country (Madsen, 1978), we argue that it is essential to analyze these attitudes in new democracies such as Chile.

This work aims to analyze the dynamics of attitudes towards disaffection. We try to determine how short-term variables (e.g., people's perception of corruption and previous participation) and sociodemographic variables impact internal and external efficacies and people's political interest. We have selected Chile as a case of study for three main reasons. Firstly, Chile is considered a new democracy (Carlin, 2010; Gunther & Montero, 2006; Torcal & Lago, 2006), and new democracies are those political systems that have emerged from the so-called third wave of democratization (Catterberg & Moreno, 2006; Foweraker & Krznaric, 2002; Gunther & Montero, 2006; Mainwaring & Scully, 2008; Montero, Gunther, & Torcal, 1997). Thus, we may compare our results with those results in existing widespread literature that has analyzed political attitudes in western democracies. Secondly, Chile has become a stable democracy since its return to democracy in 1990 after General Augusto Pinochet's regime, which allows for a comparison with already consolidated democracies (Carlin, 2010). Consequently, Chile has shown to have a strong legislative system, a guarantee for free and fair elections, low levels of corruption, high levels of economic growth, and successful social policies over the last thirty years. In this sense, Chile is considered an exception among Latin American countries (Mainwaring & Scully, 2008). And thirdly, Chile's macroeconomic stability is a contrast to the existence of high levels of discontent among its citizens (Gamboa & Segovia, 2016; Mainwaring & Scully, 2008), which has led to significant protests over the last decade (Segovia & Gamboa, 2012; Valenzuela, Arriagada, & Scherman, 2012).

This work begins by highlighting political disaffection as a component of political malaise. Then, we take a closer look at the theoretical grounds for external and internal efficacies and political interest, as variables related to political disaffection. Finally, we focus on the impact of short-term and sociodemographic variables on these three political attitudes.

## **2. Measuring disaffection: Political attitudes toward the political system**

Political malaise is considered to be a general and multidimensional phenomenon (Easton, 1976; Offe, 2006; O'Keefe, 1980; Robinson, 1976), and disaffection one of its main components (Gunther & Montero, 2006; Montero et al., 1997; Montero, Sanz, & Navarrete, 2016; Offe,

2006). Disaffection has generally been understood as “*the rejection of conventional or ‘conformist’ modes of political participation such as voting, lobbying, writing letters to congressmen, and campaigning for political candidates*” (Citrin, 1974, p. 979). Di Palma (1969) related disaffection with the sense of anomie and suspicion, that is, people’s perception of politics as something distant and inconsequential for their lives. Therefore, he understood disaffection as “an alienation of feelings and so involves remoteness and estrangement” (Di Palma, 1970, p. 30). Di Palma’s understanding is the most accepted conceptualization for disaffection (cf. Marinus P. C. M. van Schendelen, 1981; Morales, 2008; Torcal & Montero, 2006).

In this context, scholars have suggested that policies and political corruption scandals – short-term variables – may have consequences on the evaluation of political leaders and on the satisfaction of citizens with politics, but do not necessarily impact disaffection (Farah et al., 1979; Montero et al., 1997). Consequently, disaffection, as a particular component of political malaise, is related to underlying attitudes that explain the gradual decline of people’s political engagement in new democracies. Disaffection is usually measured in terms of people’s interest in public issues, trust in institutions, political efficacy, cynicism, and negativism (Austin & Pinkleton, 1995; Marinus P. C. M. van Schendelen, 1981; Miller, 1980; O’Keefe, 1980; Pinkleton & Austin, 2002). As previously mentioned, the aim of this work is to analyze three political attitudes: external efficacy, internal efficacy, and political interest. Our main objective is explain two components of disaffection: (a) political disengagement, related to political interest and internal efficacy, and (b) institutional disaffection, related to external efficacy (Maldonado Hernández, 2013; Torcal & Montero, 2006).

According to Abramson (1983), the perception of political efficacy is one of the most studied attitudes in well-established democracies. For other scholars, political efficacy is considered to be one of the most relevant indicators of the health of a democratic system, and one of the main variables related to political engagement (Delli Carpini, 2004; Madsen, 1978). Political efficacy was first defined by Campbell, Gurin and Miller (1954) as “*the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e., that it is worthwhile to perform one’s civic duties*” (Campbell et al., 1954, p. 187). Although political efficacy was first considered a one-dimensional variable, it was later redefined as a variable with two separate dimensions: internal efficacy and external efficacy (Balch, 1974; Bollen, Rabe-Kesketh, & Skrondal, 2008).

Internal efficacy, the first attitude analyzed, is mainly related to the perception and confidence of citizens that they can understand public issues and are skilled enough to get effectively involved in politics (Craig, Niemi, & Silver, 1990; Klesner, 2009; Miller, Miller, & Schneider, 1980). On the other hand, external efficacy, the second attitude analyzed, is related to system responsiveness (P. R. Abramson & Aldrich, 1982; Finkel, 1985); which is, the citizens’ perceptions regarding government and institutions’ sensitivity toward their demands (Balch, 1974; Craig et al., 1990). Thus, external efficacy is considered to be a measure of people’s perceived influence on the system (Madsen, 1978). As a result, low levels of external efficacy indicate that citizens perceive their institutions and authorities to be unresponsive, and that they have no influence on political outcomes (Miller et al., 1980). Both components of political efficacy have been studied in established democracies to explain different political behaviors (P. R. Abramson & Aldrich, 1982; Finkel, 1985; Shaffer, 1981; Valentino, Gregorowicz, & Groenendyk, 2009).

Political interest is the third attitude analyzed in our study. Researchers consider political interest to be one of the most relevant attitudes in ensuring the good performance of a democratic system (Lupia & Philpot, 2005; Prior, 2010; Strömbäck & Shehata, 2010), and a key variable linked to political engagement (Eveland & Scheufele, 2000; Powell, 1986; Strömbäck & Shehata, 2010; Verba, Burns, & Schlozman, 1997; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady,

1995). In this context, political interest has usually been used as an intervening variable in analyzing the effects of media and political malaise (Delli Carpini, 2004; Lupia & Philpot, 2005; Norris, 1996; O'Keefe, 1980; Strömbäck & Shehata, 2010). Political interest has been defined by Lupia and Philpot as "citizen's willingness to pay attention to political phenomena at the possible expense of other topics" (Lupia & Philpot, 2005, p. 1122). Also, it is often understood as an independent variable (Prior, 2010; Strömbäck & Shehata, 2010). Consequently, because of the lack of studies treating political interest as a dependent variable, we do not know what other variables may impact political interest (Prior, 2010). There is some evidence that political interest is not affected by contingent variables, such as political scandals or electoral campaigns. In this sense, Prior (2010) understands political interest as a relatively stable variable; however, some studies suggest that political interest depends on age, gender and socioeconomic status (SES) (Lupia & Philpot, 2005; Oskarson, 2007; Verba et al., 1997, 1995).

### **3. Corruption, Participation and Political Attitudes**

Although it has been recognized for decades that there could be a relationship between the elements of contingency and other components of malaise (e.g., dissatisfaction as identified by Farah et al., 1979); it has been repeatedly suggested that disaffection would respond better to different variables (Montero et al., 1997, 2016; Torcal, 2006). In this context, two aspects that have attracted the attention of Hispano-American literature, in recent years, are precisely related to a link that could exist between political attitudes usually associated with disaffection and other variables linked to participation and corruption (cf. Maldonado Hernández, 2013).

In the context of consolidated democracies, several studies have analyzed the impact of corruption on political attitudes. Thus, we can identify two different approaches in the influence of corruption on political attitudes. A rational approach suggests that corruption scandals have an influence on political attitudes. According to Wuthnow (2003), government policies can foster or corrode confidence toward the government. Under this perspective, the actions of authorities impact how people evaluate them and may also affect other underlying attitudes related to disaffection. Similarly, Offe (2006) states that corruption can explain citizens' distrust and animosity toward politicians. This approach is shared by other scholars that conclude that the evaluation of political performance has an impact on certain political attitudes (Banducci & Karp, 2003; Hetherington & Rudolph, 2008). Other studies suggest that these contingency factors can explain how governments are assessed, or even have an impact on electoral outcomes; however, the influence on such variables like confidence and efficacy would be scarce because of their stability (P. R. Abramson & Aldrich, 1982; Farah et al., 1979; Iyengar, 1980; Marsh & Kaase, 1979).

Regarding the relationship between political participation and political attitudes, Abramson and Aldrich (P. R. Abramson & Aldrich, 1982) pointed out that people with high levels of efficacy were more likely to participate in politics. Nonetheless, the mobilization of support theory suggests that the relationship between participation and external efficacy is bidirectional. Finkel states that "the individual who votes or participates develops stronger feelings that the government is responsible, which then makes future participation within the system more likely" (Finkel, 1985, p. 894). A similar pattern seems to work for internal efficacy. In this sense, Finkel (1985) held that political participation increases people's internal efficacy as a self-realization process. In a similar way, Valentino, Gregorowicks and Groenendyck (Valentino et al., 2009) argue that citizens who feel confident about their competence to participate in politics are more likely to engage in political actions, and also that this participation strengthens internal efficacy. Consequently, there seems to be a kind of virtuous circle between participation and both internal and external efficacies. Other

researchers have doubted the impact of previous political participation on people's political attitudes such as efficacy (Jennings & Niemi, 1974; Madsen, 1978). Some scholars argue that the relationships between political attitudes and behaviors should be analyzed in their own context (Farah et al., 1979; Torcal & Montero, 2006).

#### **4. Research Questions and Hypotheses**

As mentioned beforehand, we perform an empirical analysis to determine the extent that people's perception of corruption and previous participation – short-term variables – are related with external and internal efficacies and political interest in the Chilean context. Following the comparative literature, this study aims to explore the true volatility of political attitudes that have usually been associated with disaffection.

Considering the previous studies, our research questions are:

- RQ1: Does perception of corruption impact external and internal efficacy and political interest?
- RQ2: Does previous political participation impact external and internal efficacies and political interest?

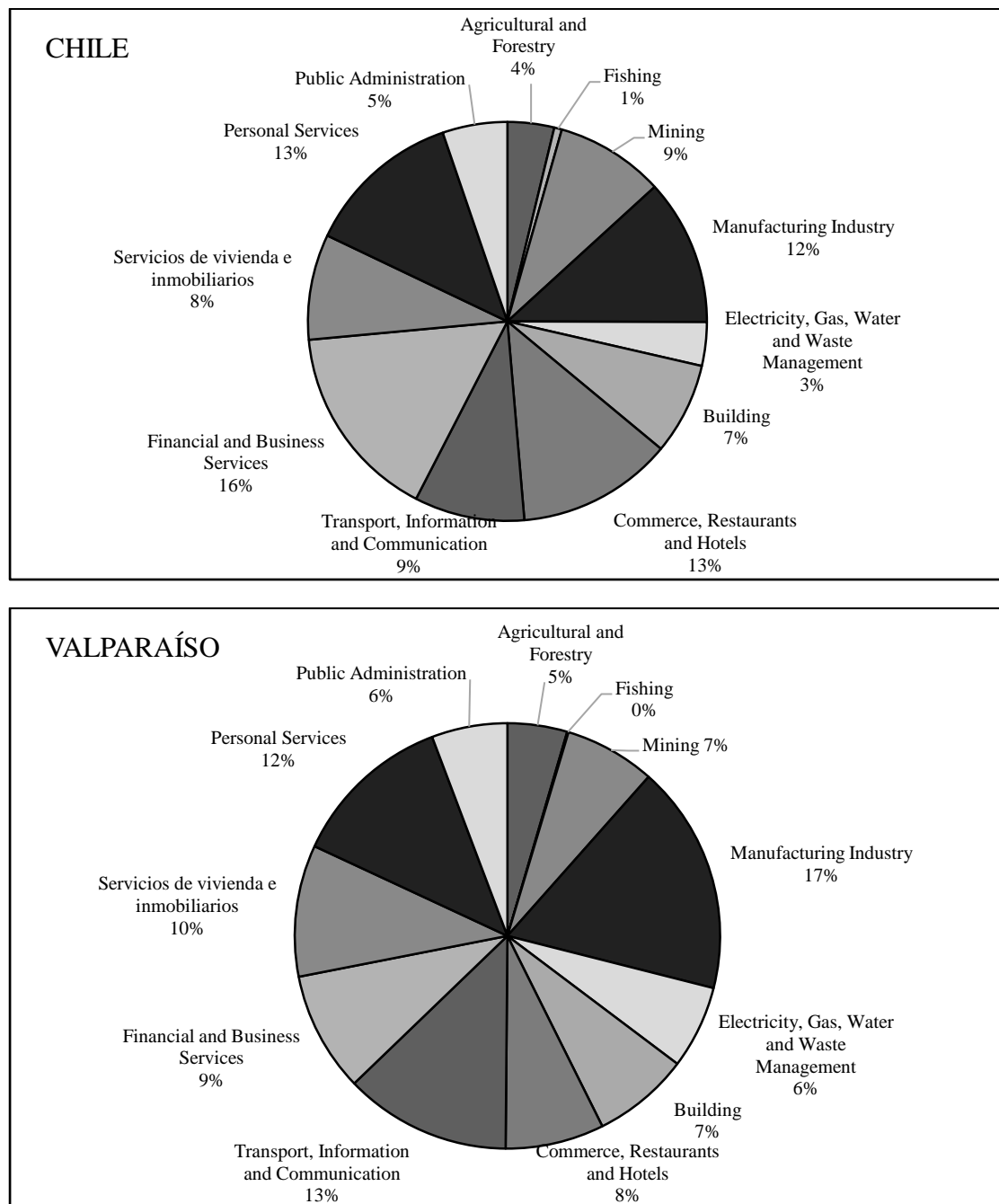
Since sociodemographic variables can also impact political attitudes (P. Abramson, 1983; Baker, 1973; Bennett & Bennett, 1989; Lupia & Philpot, 2005; Oskarson, 2007; Verba et al., 1997), we also test the following hypotheses:

- H1: Level of education is related to political attitudes associated with disaffection.
- H2: Gender is related to political attitudes associated with disaffection.
- H3: SES is related to political attitudes associated with disaffection.

#### **5. Sample and Methods**

The data is from the Piensa Foundation's 2016 political survey, which is executed annually in the Chilean region of Valparaíso. According to the 2017 Census, prepared by the National Institute of Statistics [Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas; (INE)], 10.3% of the Chilean population resides in Valparaíso, making it the third largest region, out of a total of 15 regions, with the greatest number of inhabitants. In terms of its sociodemographic characterization, the same census indicates that the territory has a masculinity index of 94.1, closely resembling the national index of 95.9. Likewise, the schooling level of the head of household in the region is 11.2 years of school completed, which is also similar to 10.9 years of school completed for the national average. Finally, the average age of a person in Chile is 35.8 years, while in Valparaíso the average age reaches 37.1 years. In political terms, the Valparaíso region has 16 deputies (out of 155) and 5 senators (out of 50), which is a political structure comparable to the rest of the country. The economic structure of Valparaíso is also representative of the Chilean reality. According to official data provided by the Central Bank of Chile, and as shown in Figure 1, the composition of the gross domestic product at a regional level is very similar to its national composition.

**Figure 1.** Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Chile and Valparaíso in 2016



Source: Central Bank of Chile

Although the main reason this work is focused on the Valparaíso region is in response to a sense of opportunity (i.e., the possibility to participate in the development of the questionnaire for the subnational survey of the Piensa Foundation), it must be recognized that the political, economic and demographic conditions of the territory make its reality quite representative of the country as a whole.

The 2016 survey used in this work, was carried out by the global company GFK-Adimark and included 1,651 (N=1,651) adult citizens from the 10 main cities in the region of Valparaíso. From this, 37.7% of the respondents were male and 62.3% of the respondents

were female with an average age of 49 years (SD=18.20). Socioeconomic status was measured in quintiles: ABC1 (3.33%), C2 (20.29%), C3 (33.01%), D (30.41%) and E (12.96%). The survey respondents displayed the following characteristics: (a) 9.22% had an incomplete primary education or less, (b) 27.41% completed primary education, (c) 34.86% completed secondary education (d) 10.32% had an incomplete higher education, and (e) 18.19% of them completed higher education.

**Table 1.** Sociodemographic Description of the Sample

Sociodemographic Variables		
	n	%
<b>Education</b>		
<i>Incomplete Primary</i>	151	9.22
<i>Complete Primary</i>	449	27.41
<i>Complete Secondary</i>	571	34.86
<i>Incomplete University</i>	169	10.32
<i>Complete University or more</i>	298	18.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,638</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age</b>		
<i>18 - 29</i>	303	18.35
<i>30 - 44</i>	389	23.56
<i>45 - 60</i>	456	27.62
<i>More than 60</i>	503	30.47
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,651</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
<i>Male</i>	623	37.73
<i>Female</i>	1,028	62.27
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,651</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Socioeconomic Status</b>		
<i>ABC1 (Higher)</i>	55	3.33
<i>C2</i>	335	20.29
<i>C3</i>	545	33.01
<i>D</i>	502	30.41
<i>E (Lower)</i>	214	12.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,651</b>	<b>100</b>

*External political efficacy.* Drawing on previous works on political efficacy (Hansen & Tue Pedersen, 2014), external efficacy was measured by asking respondents to rate their agreement using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (do not agree at all) to 5 (totally agree) with the following sentences: a) politicians do not really care what the voters think, b) politicians waste a lot of the taxpayer's money, and c) citizens like me do not have any influence on the decisions of congress and government. Consequently, the external political efficacy index ranged from 3 to 15, with 3 being the lowest level of external efficacy and 15 being the highest level (Cronbach's Alpha = .711).

*Internal political efficacy.* To measure internal efficacy, participants also had to rate their agreement from 1 to 5, using a 5-point Likert scale, with the following sentences: a) generally speaking, I do not find it that difficult to take a stand on political issues, b) citizens like me are skilled enough to participate in political discussions, and c) citizens like me have opinions on politics that are worth being heard. The internal political efficacy index also

ranged from 3 to 15, with 3 being the lowest level of external efficacy and 15 being the highest level (Cronbach's Alpha = .707).

*Political interest.* Political interest is usually measured by people's exposure to media for political purposes (Lupia & Philpot, 2005; Oskarson, 2007). However, this measure only considers behavioral outcomes, but not attitudinal dimensions (Strömbäck & Shehata, 2010). Since we also consider the attitudinal dimension of political interest, our measurement focuses on people's self-perceived political interest (Glenn & Grimes, 1968; Haime, 2017; Norris, 1996; Patterson, 2005; Powell, 1986; Prior, 2010; Strömbäck & Shehata, 2010; Verba et al., 1997, 1995). Consequently, to measure political interest we asked people to answer to the following questions: a) how interested are you in politics? b) how interested are you in the events that occur in the city? c) how interested are you in the events that occur in the region? d) how interested are you in the reality of the country? and, e) how interested are you in the events that occur in the world? Answers ranged from 1 (not interested at all) to 4 (absolutely interested). Thus, political interest index ranged from 4 to 20 (Cronbach's Alpha = .867).

*Perception of corruption.* To measure the perception of corruption, we asked respondent to assess their opinion about how corrupt they consider members of congress, politicians (in general), private companies and media to be in the region. We used a 5-point Likert scale for each of the four actors, ranging from 1 (highly righteous) to 5 (highly corrupt).

*Civic and electoral participation.* To measure people's civic participation, we asked survey respondents if they were members of any the 15 social organizations on a list provided to them. Civic participation was a dummy variable: if the respondents were members of any of the associations, it took the value 1 (active citizen). Otherwise, it took the value 0 (inactive citizen). For electoral participation, we asked the respondents whether they voted in the last elections or not. This was also a dummy variable, taking the value 1 in case they voted, and 0 otherwise.

Bearing in mind the diverse literature that exists in dealing with the study of the relationship between media consumption and political unrest (e.g., Norris, 1996; O'Keefe, 1980; Pinkleton & Austin, 2002; Strömbäck & Shehata, 2010), four variables associated with the use of information tools were included in the models: TV consumption, radio consumption, newspaper consumption and digital media consumption. In each case, respondents had to answer how often they used each tool. An ordinal scale of 3 points was used, where 1 represented "never", 2 represented "sometimes" and 3 represented "always." Considering all these variables, we performed a multivariate analysis using seven different models for each of the three political attitudes to answer our research questions.

## 6. Results

Before answering our research questions, we performed a correlation test utilizing all the scale variables. As shown in Table 2, education, gender and socioeconomic status are positively correlated with internal efficacy and political interest. We found that both civic participation and previous electoral participation are positively correlated with internal and external political efficacy. Although the correlation is statistically significant; the coefficients are low. We also found that previous participation and political interest were positively correlated. On the other hand, perception of corruption – for members of congress, politicians, private companies and media – is significantly, and negatively, correlated with external efficacy. Therefore, the more people perceive corruption in these institutions, the more people feel that the political system is unresponsive; we did not observe the same pattern for political interest. Table 2 shows that the correlation between interest and perception of corruption is significant and positive.



The other results that draw our attention are those related to the consumption of media. As can be observed, the political interest of individuals is significantly related to the frequency of use of all the tools included in the models, i.e., TV, radio, and digital media. Although external efficacy may not be significantly related to the use of any information tool, internal efficacy is with respect to the consumption of newspapers and digital media.

**Table 2.** Correlation matrix among all variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Level of Education	X															
2. Age	-.38***	X														
3. Gender	-.06*	.02	X													
4. SES	-.62***	.40***	.00	X												
5. Civic Participation	.02	.11***	.05†	.05*	X											
6. Electoral Participation	-.07**	.38***	.04†	.12***	.14***	X										
7. Congress Corruption	.08**	-.10***	.00	-.04	-.04	-.06*	X									
8. Politics Corruption	.07**	-.08**	-.01	-.06*	.00	-.08**	.52***	X								
9. Business Corruption	.00	-.04	.02	-.01	-.04	-.05†	.36***	.46***	X							
10. Media Corruption	0.04	-.08***	-.03	-.01	-.03	-.06*	.35***	.40***	.50***	X						
11. TV Consumption	.02	.10***	.02	-.04	.08**	.05*	-.03	.00	-.01	-.04†	X					
12. Radio Consumption	.02	.13***	-.04	.00	.02	.10***	-.02	-.01	.00	.00	.25***	X				
13. Newspapers Consumption	.16***	.03	-.09***	-.09***	.07**	.04	-.03	.02	.00	-.03	.15***	.28***	X			
14. Digital Media Consumption	.42***	-.44***	.00	-.34***	.00	-.08**	.08**	.04	-.01	.07**	.03	-.01	.17***	X		
15. External Efficacy	-.02	.04	.04	0.01	-.02	0.02	-.10***	-.06*	-.07**	-.06*	.02	-.01	.03	-.01	X	
16. Internal Efficacy	.19***	-.06*	-.08**	-.12***	.09***	.06*	-.02	.00	-.02	.03	.03	-.02	.08**	.13***	-.13***	X
17. Political Interest	.18***	.03	-.06*	-.08***	.14***	.11***	.01	.05*	.07**	.08**	.12***	.09***	.11***	.11***	-.02	.26***

*Note: Spearman's coefficients are showed.*  
*p < 0.1 †; p < 0.05 \*; p < 0.01 \*\*; p < 0.001 \*\*\**

To answer to our research questions and confirm or reject the hypotheses raised, we performed a hierarchical multiple regression analysis. The proposed models included two explanatory variables, previous participation and perception of corruption. We also included attitudes, media consumption and sociodemographic dimensions as control variables. We proposed seven hierarchical models for each of the political attitudes analyzed. The first model only considered variables related to previous participation. The second model added sociodemographic dimensions as control variables. The third model considered measures of perceived corruption, and the fourth model again controlled for sociodemographic variables. Finally, for the last three models we included all the short-term variables and controlled for sociodemographic dimensions, attitudinal variables and media consumption.

As shown in Table 3, our three hypotheses (H1, H2 and H3) are not confirmed for external efficacy. In other words, the results do not allow us to suggest a significant relationship for external efficacy with the education, gender or socioeconomic status of the respondent. However, age does seem to have an impact on political attitude. Regarding our research questions, neither civic nor electoral participation seem to contribute to the

explanation of external efficacy (RQ2). In similar terms, and although the perception of corruption with respect to private enterprise would have an impact, according to our results, in the explanation of this attitudinal variable, none of the other three indicators of corruption have statistical significance.

**Table 3.** Multivariate Analysis for External Efficacy

<b>Internal Efficacy</b>	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
<b>Previous Participation</b>							
Civic Participation	.347** (.131)	.308* (.130)			.332* (.136)	.189 (.134)	.124 (.138)
Electoral Participation	.199 (.133)	.312* (.141)			.253† (.137)	.228 (.145)	.303* (.150)
<b>Corruption's Perception</b>							
Congress Corruption			-.029 (.091)	-.064 (.090)	-.028 (.091)	-.052 (.091)	-.111 (.096)
Politics Corruption			.017 (.093)	-.020 (.092)	.020 (.094)	-.024 (.093)	-.039 (.096)
Business Corruption			-.103 (.075)	-.045 (.074)	-.097 (.075)	-.089 (.075)	-.074 (.077)
Media Corruption			.126† (.066)	.106 (.066)	.144* (.066)	.074 (.065)	.051 (.068)
<b>Sociodemographic</b>							
Level of Education		.306*** (.067)		.347*** (.069)		.230** (.071)	.215** (.075)
Age		-.060 (.067)		.026 (.064)		-.043 (.069)	.043 (.077)
Gender		-.413** (.129)		-.460** (.133)		-.396** (.132)	-.366** (.138)
SES		-.073 (.079)		-.056 (.082)		-.087 (.082)	-.111 (.084)
<b>Political Attitudes</b>							
External Efficacy						-.182*** (.024)	-.187*** (.024)
Political Interest						.137*** (.018)	.127*** (.019)
<b>Media Consumption</b>							
TV							.128 (.129)
Radio							-.322** (.096)
Newspaper							.137 (.095)
Digital Media							.119 (.100)
Constant	9.518** (.112)	9.195** (.444)	9.812*** (.390)	9.324*** (.596)	9.429*** (.410)	9.361*** (.642)	9.681*** (.753)
Adjusted R2	.006	.044	.000	.040	.007	.125	.129
(N)	1500	1488	1426	1414	1410	1320	1218

*p-value < 0.1* †; *p-value < 0.05* \*; *p-value < 0.01* \*\*; *p-value < 0.001* \*\*\*

Note: Values are b coefficients from OLS, with standard errors (s.e.) in parenthesis.

Unlike external efficacy, results in Table 4 and Table 5 show that the level of education significantly contributes to the explanation of internal efficacy and political interest. As a

result, H<sub>1</sub> is confirmed for both political attitudes. On the other hand, gender has a statistically significant impact on internal efficacy. Thus, men are more likely to feel competent in politics than women who seem to believe they are not skilled enough to participate in the political process. Nevertheless, the low values of internal efficacy for women do not affect their interest in politics (Table 5). In this sense, there is no difference in terms of gender for political interest. As a result, H<sub>2</sub> is only partially confirmed. Regarding sociodemographic status, results suggest that it is not related with any of the three political attitudes; consequently, H<sub>3</sub> is not confirmed.

**Table 4.** Multivariate Analysis for Internal Efficacy

<b>Internal Efficacy</b>	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
<b>Previous Participation</b>							
Civic Participation	.347** (.131)	.308* (.130)			.332* (.136)	.189 (.134)	.124 (.138)
Electoral Participation	.199 (.133)	.312* (.141)			.253† (.137)	.228 (.145)	.303* (.150)
<b>Corruption's Perception</b>							
Congress Corruption			-.029 (.091)	-.064 (.090)	-.028 (.091)	-.052 (.091)	-.111 (.096)
Politics Corruption			.017 (.093)	-.020 (.092)	.020 (.094)	-.024 (.093)	-.039 (.096)
Business Corruption			-.103 (.075)	-.045 (.074)	-.097 (.075)	-.089 (.075)	-.074 (.077)
Media Corruption			.126† (.066)	.106 (.066)	.144* (.066)	.074 (.065)	.051 (.068)
<b>Sociodemographic</b>							
Level of Education		.306*** (.067)		.347*** (.069)		.230** (.071)	.215** (.075)
Age		-.060 (.067)		.026 (.064)		-.043 (.069)	.043 (.077)
Gender		-.413** (.129)		-.460** (.133)		-.396** (.132)	-.366** (.138)
SES		-.073 (.079)		-.056 (.082)		-.087 (.082)	-.111 (.084)
<b>Political Attitudes</b>							
External Efficacy						-.182*** (.024)	-.187*** (.024)
Political Interest						.137*** (.018)	.127*** (.019)
<b>Media Consumption</b>							
TV							.128 (.129)
Radio							-.322** (.096)
Newspaper							.137 (.095)
Digital Media							.119 (.100)
Constant	9.518** (.112)	9.195** (.444)	9.812*** (.390)	9.324*** (.596)	9.429*** (.410)	9.361*** (.642)	9.681*** (.753)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.006	.044	.000	.040	.007	.125	.129
(N)	1500	1488	1426	1414	1410	1320	1218

*p*-value < 0.1†; *p*-value < 0.05\*; *p*-value < 0.01\*\*; *p*-value < 0.001\*\*\*

Note: Values are *b* coefficients from OLS, with standard errors (s.e.) in parenthesis.

**Table 5.** Multivariate Analysis for Political Interest

<b>Political Interest</b>	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
<b><i>Previous Participation</i></b>							
Civic Participation	.948*** (.188)	.859*** (.186)			.994*** (.193)	.853*** (.201)	.661** (.207)
Electoral Participation	.704*** (.189)	.649** (.202)			.890*** (.195)	.656** (.217)	.639** (.224)
<b><i>Corruption's Perception</i></b>							
Congress Corruption			-.013 (.130)	-.031 (.129)	.011 (.129)	-.048 (.137)	-.053 (.145)
Politics Corruption			.212 (.134)	.146 (.132)	.217 (.132)	.132 (.139)	.134 (.144)
Business Corruption			.055 (.106)	.122 (.105)	.099 (.105)	.115 (.112)	.124 (.116)
Media Corruption			.143 (.094)	.132 (.093)	.163† (.093)	.178† (.098)	.193† (.102)
<b><i>Sociodemographic</i></b>							
Level of Education		.573*** (.096)		.659*** (.099)		.507*** (.106)	.462*** (.112)
Age		.165 (.096)		.378*** (.093)		.222* (.104)	.354** (.116)
Gender		-.244 (.184)		-.286 (.190)		-.079 (.200)	-.078 (.207)
SES		-.028 (.113)		.036 (.117)		-.053 (.123)	.021 (.127)
<b><i>Political Attitudes</i></b>							
External Efficacy						.025 (.036)	.008 (.037)
Internal Efficacy						.308*** (.041)	.288*** (.043)
<b><i>Media Consumption</i></b>							
TV							.521** (.193)
Radio							.082 (.145)
Newspapers							.067 (.143)
Digital Media							.389** (.150)
Constant	13.146** * (.159)	11.292** * (.637)	12.467** * (.559)	9.665** * (.856)	11.142** * (.580)	6.762** * (1.023)	4.432** * (1.199)
Adjusted R2	.026	.059	.005	.046	.040	.113	.120
(N)	1619	1606	1530	1517	1509	1320	1218

*p-value < 0.1†; p-value < 0.05\*; p-value < 0.01\*\*; p-value < 0.001\*\*\**

*Note: Values are b coefficients from OLS, with standard errors (s.e.) in parenthesis.*

Our results suggest that the perception of corruption is not significantly related with internal efficacy (RQ1). Regarding political interest, only corruption associated with the media is significant. On the other hand, previous political participation seems to be an explanatory variable of political interest, but when considering internal efficacy, the results are not equally strong. Although there is a significant relationship between political

participation and internal efficacy for most of the models (model 1, model 2 and model 5), when we control by all variables the values of civic participation are not significant (RQ2).

Finally, although media consumption is not our main object of analysis, it is worth highlighting the negative and significant relationship that exists between the frequency of radio use and political efficacy, both externally and internally. In other words, those who use this information tool tend to have a greater propensity to believe that they have few competencies to participate in public discussions and to believe that the political system does not respond to citizen interests.

## **7. Discussion and Further Research**

Although political attitudes have been largely studied over the last decades, most of the existing literature is limited to the context of modern and consolidated democracies. The Piensa Foundation's 2016 annual political survey included questions about political efficacy and political interest due to the lack of data about political attitudes in new democracies. Several conclusions can be drawn from our study. Firstly, we found that the relationship between participation and external efficacy was weak which is in contrast to Finkel's (1985) mobilization of support theory. Additionally, we found that there was no relationship between the perception of corruption and political attitudes; this confirms previous studies that suggested that attitudes such as efficacy or political interest are stable in the long-term (P. R. Abramson & Aldrich, 1982; Farah et al., 1979; Iyengar, 1980; Marsh & Kaase, 1979). Even so, the perception of media corruption has an influence on people's political interest. These results suggest that the more people perceive media as corrupt, the more interested in politics they become.

Our results also show that gender has an influence on internal efficacy. As some scholars have already mentioned, the differences between gender could be grounded in the social role historically attributed to women (Carpini & Keeter, 1996, p. 206). According to Verba et al., this is the reason why women would be less knowledgeable and less interested in politics, and less likely to feel politically efficacious (Verba et al., 1997, p. 1051). Despite the fact that our results show that women feel less competent to participate in the political process, there are no differences between women and men with regard to their interest in politics. Women also have similar perceptions regarding the responsiveness of the political system. These results are especially interesting within the Chilean context. As stated by Verba et al., the fact that women hold political office may have an impact on women's political engagement (Verba et al., 1997, p. 1069). This is precisely the case of Chile, because at the time the survey fieldwork was completed, Michelle Bachelet was in full swing of her second presidential term. Despite this reality, our results suggest that there still seem to be gender differences linked to attitudinal elements underlying civic engagement.

Finally, our results suggest that political participation is strongly related with political interest and internal efficacy. These results support studies that conclude that there exists a virtuous circle between political participation and self-competence (Finkel, 1985; Valentino et al., 2009). An interesting study for further research would be to take a deeper look at this impact. Although the attitudinal variables seem to be stable in the long-term, the foregoing analysis indicates that they could be changed by the promotion of this virtuous circle. Consequently, the virtuous circle could be a way to cope with people's political disaffection in new democracies such as Chile. Along the lines of the classical work of Di Palma (1970), disaffection – and not dissatisfaction – is the specific dimension of political malaise that leads to citizen apathy. This idea could enhance the importance of the virtuous circle.

Despite the efforts of this study, our work has some limitations. In particular, a panel study may better provide answers to the dynamics of the relationship between short-term variables and political attitudes. Moreover, future research should focus on other aspects

related to political malaise. The inclusion of geographic factors and the reformulation of attitudes in consideration of the digital world (e.g., Sasaki, 2017) are just two examples that display some of the current academic challenges. Even with its limitations, our study contributes to better understanding people's political attitudes and their relationship to political disaffection in the context of a so-called new democracy.

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