Article

Differences in Civic and Citizenship Education between Latin American and European Countries

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Abstract: The objective of this research article is to determine if social and cultural capital are factors that cause inequalities in the level of knowledge in civic and citizenship education, between Latin American and European countries. To achieve this purpose, information from the National Study of Civic and Citizen Education -ICCS-, of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement -IEA-, of the year 2016, is used. Methodologically speaking, the Educational Production Function -EPF- is estimated and subsequently, the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition technique is applied to quantify the differences in civic and citizenship education and see how much they are explained by the characteristics of the student and their family. the school, the social and cultural capital. As a main result, educational inequalities were found in favor of European countries, and are due to a greater extent to differences in school resources, between Latin American and European countries, followed by differences in social and cultural capital, therefore, it is the European students who make the best use of and benefit from the differences in school endowments and in social and cultural capital.

Keywords: civic education; cultural activities; social behavior; Latin America; Europe

1. Introduction

Aside from the increasingly rapid pace of the world today, globally countries have been experiencing a growing problem of state legitimacy since modernity. Most countries do not only have problems of state efficiency, but also of citizen participation, to the extent that the substantive realization of democracy and its adaptation and conditioning to each particular environment in which it develops.

Similarly, a sector of society and the reflection of inefficiency itself are pressing for dynamic changes. These changes legitimize the state through reforms that regain citizen confidence and have a positive impact on the state's image and management, the modern capacity of the state apparatus, and therefore, through participation, achieve its effective immersion in social processes. The intention has long been to create new forms of dialogue between the state and society with the idea that improving a two-way communication, needs and solutions can be interconnected in new and agile ways.

However, such required citizen participation does not only refer to traditional politics in elections or the usual public opinion spaces. It also refers to the processes of constant feedback that allow management, monitoring, and collective establishment of problems and solutions; to citizens' true influence in shaping and managing the common good.

A long time ago, in his book III on "Politics", Aristotle answered the question of Who is the citizen? as the holder of an unlimited, permanent public power. A citizen is the person who participates in a stable way in the power of collective decision, in the political

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power [1]. Aristotle always emphasized the importance of only calling a citizen an individual who is capable of being a citizen. The youth of today will be the citizens of tomorrow and that citizenship is understood in its totality as the condition of the individual who actively develops, in all areas of the political life of their society, the ability to seek the general welfare for others in their society [2]. Citizenship must be formed and built as the young person grows and develops intellectually and socially, because without it, citizens will not exist. Active participation in all aspects of public spaces allows us to try to solve the problems that afflict us as a society.

Civic education for citizenship seeks to strengthen the spaces of social coexistence among people through the study of the theoretical, political and practical aspects of citizenship, as well as their rights and duties (among themselves and with the government). With the basic purpose of forming citizens with civil commitment who are useful in society and who can relate socially with their fellows in the search for development and a harmonious and peaceful environment in a democratic manner. Therein lies the importance of the matter, since this relationship between democracy and the resolution of strategic problems of society is evident [3].

In this order of ideas and knowing that there is no magic formula to train citizens, various theories of civics from Confucius and Plato to our present have tried to define the how, what, when and where of such pedagogical action. To date, recognizing on a more macro level, each country gives importance to such training and governments have been in charge of doing it in their own way based on what they consider correct.

For example, Germany, which has a federal system of education, in most of its states applies a form of social studies "Sachunterricht", an anti-fascist and pro-democracy approach due to its own history as a nation [4]. In Spain, the subject "Education for Citizenship" was taught in the last cycle of primary school and throughout high school in which democratic and constitutional values were taught. However, in 2016 during Mariano Rajoy's government, this subject was completely removed due to the discussion and misgivings of conservative sectors which did not agree with the state assuming the moral education of individuals. Since 2001, the "Civic, legal and social education" subject has been taught in the last years of secondary school in France. In the case of Latin America, Argentina has incorporated civic education in some public and private schools, and in Peru only in private schools, relating these subjects to the areas of social and civil sciences.

That being said, it is necessary to measure the level of knowledge in civic and citizenship education that each region holds, according to the particularities of each educational system. This, taking into account measurement parameters that adjust not only to the degree of "civics and citizenship" of the people in each country, but also the context in which they find themselves [5]. For this reason, the International Association for the Evaluation of Academic Achievement- IEA-, has been applied for more than 10 years, the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study-ICCS, with the objective of measuring the level of knowledge in civic and citizenship education of young people, and to know how prepared they are to exercise their role as citizens [6].

In 1971, the IEA carried out the Civic Education Survey, CIVED, in which nine countries participated. Later, in 1999, this participation was 28. The ICCS originates from this survey, which was applied for the first time in 2009 with 38 countries around the world participating, who came together not only to apply the test, but to collaborate in the design of a global assessment framework. In 2016, 24 countries participated in the ICSS. The idea was to evaluate content domains, cognitive domains, affective behavioral domains and contexts that explained the living conditions, community, educational centers and classrooms, family and individual environment of each student [6].

The results obtained in the ICSS have made it possible to establish a diagnosis in relation to how the participating countries are standing in terms of the development of citizen skills. In fact, there have already been some studies for European countries; however, none evaluate the regional differences, for example, between the group of Latin American and European countries. Therefore, the main objective of this article is to measure the inequalities in the level of knowledge in civic and citizenship education, between

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the countries of Latin America and Europe by analyzing the results of the 2016 ICCS tests and determining what factors cause those inequalities. Knowing whether or not citizens are trained well allows for the reorientation of the educational and pedagogical path, in addition to the social one, to promote the necessary requirements for greater social development. This work will serve, based on the results, for public policy decision-making in favor of a future improvement in civic spirit and citizen participation of Latin American and European citizens [7].

However, the studies about the quality of education systems and the development of competencies from social sciences such as Economics, are framed within the Economics of Education, theoretical approaches stemming from Becker [8] Denison [9] and Schultz [10]. For the first time, they consider the expenditure made on education by individuals or the state is an investment, and as such, a return or benefit should be expected from it. Since then, research that seeks to relate students' academic performance to its determinants has been growing dramatically especially in the last twenty years thanks to the availability of information and/or data, such as the International Program for Student Assessment –PISA –, the International Survey of Trends in Mathematics and Science –TIMSS–, the Regional Comparative and Explanatory Studies -ERCE-, and of course the ICCS.

These studies have shown that in the development of competencies there are three factors that influence their academic performance: a) the individual characteristics of the student, b) the characteristics of their family and c) the characteristics of the school they attend (see Giménez, Barrado and Arias [11] and Castro, Giménez and Ximénez de Embún [12]). Recently, within each aspect, studies have also considered the effects of school and family environments, i.e., they take into account what happens inside and outside the classroom as a factor that influences the learning process of students. [See Arango-Londoño, Farkas, Castillo and Castro-Aristizabal [13] and Castro-Aristizabal, et al. [14]). In addition, these studies have also incorporated as determinants of competencies, variables associated with the social and cultural capital that both households and schools may have. The objective here is to determine whether these two types of capital cause the divergences in the level of civic knowledge between Latin American and European countries, these two concepts are defined below.

Based on Bourdieu's theoretical approaches [15] social and cultural capital has its foundations in sociology. The author states that cultural and social capital are different aspects. The first corresponds to the accumulation not only of knowledge but also of social assets such as intellect (culture) and education, which allows each individual to develop skills and aptitudes that in turn make him/her take part and take place in society. For Bordieu [16] this capital can be acquired through the embodied state or unconscious acquisition, the objectified state that has to do with the possession of material goods and the institutionalized state, which is nothing more than what each person develops in skills, duties and abilities, through their educational training. That is why the author highlights it as a differentiating factor, as well as economic capital [17].

On the other hand, social capital has more to do with the conjunction of current or potential resources, related to an enduring network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual knowledge and recognition. Therefore, social capital depends on the capacity of the individual, on their ability to expand their social networks, and moreover on the volume of social capital that belongs to them[18].

Empirical studies have tried to establish the effect of social and cultural capital on the performance of each individual within the educational process. These analyses considered socioeconomic conditions, the student's origin, the educational level of the father and mother, the possession of educational, cultural and artistic materials, the relationships of each student with their parents and classmates, their teachers and their educational strategy. Chacón, et al. [19], Salazar, López and Romero [20] and Fuchs and Woessmann [21] endorse the results of these analyses, showing how these social and cultural capital variables affect the development of competencies. In addition, the literature also states a positive effect on the number of books at home (a proxy for cultural capital) on school

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academic performance, a finding that is supported in the works of Castro, Gimenez and Perez [22] , Castro, Castillo and Mendoza [23], Romero [24], Freeman [25], López, Riado and Sánchez [26], among others.

The most recent research conducted along the same lines as this paper, it is worth mentioning that the literature is relatively scarce, there is little empirical research on the determinants of civic and citizenship education, and even less research that attempts to identify the causes of inequalities in the development of civic and citizenship competencies among Latin American and European countries as a whole. Javornik, Mirazchiyski and Trunk [27] and Schulz [28] used information from ICCS 2016 found in the first case, that students in Slovenia with lower socioeconomic status do not tend to be more frequently subjected to peer bullying or any kind of violence. Secondly, for European countries, more passive forms of legal or illegal activities to express opinions, such as conversations with other people, occur in higher proportions, and more active forms of participation, such as organizing an online group, occurred less frequently. Subsequently, from this perspective, one of the contributions of this article is to fill this gap in literature.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Data

ICCS 2016 is the fourth study conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement IEA. The assessment investigates how education systems prepare young people to assume their present and future roles as citizens and help them to thrive in a world that requires an open and culturally oriented approach, a moral orientation that emphasizes human rights, and an approach of social justice and active political participation [29]. Some of the issues addressed in ICCS 2016 include:

1. How civic and citizenship education is implemented in the participating countries, including the purpose and principles of this learning area, the curricular approaches chosen, and changes and/or developments since 2009.
2. The degree of students' knowledge and understanding of civic education and citizenship. Students' current and future participation in citizenship-related activities, their perceptions of their own ability to participate in such activities, and their perceptions of the value of civic participation.
3. Students' beliefs about contemporary civil and civic issues in society include those related to social institutions, norms, and principles (democracy, citizenship, and diversity) as well as their perceptions of their communities and threats to the future of the world.
4. The ways in which schools organize civic and citizenship education, with a particular focus on general approaches, the processes used to facilitate civic engagement, interaction with their communities, and school and teachers' perceptions of the role of this learning area [30]

In the assessment, data were collected from more than 94,000 students in their eighth year of school belonging to more than 3,800 schools in 24 participating countries and/or economies. Most of these countries participated in the 2009 ICCS tests. As the aim of this research is to determine the factors that influence the differences in the development of civic and citizenship education between Latin American and European countries, Hong Kong, Korea, Russia and Taipei (China) were excluded. **Error! Reference source not found.** shows the distribution of schools and students by country and/or economy.

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Table 1. Distribution of Schools and Students. Countries participating in ICCS 2016.

Country	Schools	Weight	Students	Weight
Latin American Countries				
Chile [CHL]	158	18,99%	5.081	20,07%
Colombia [COL]	128	15,38%	5.609	22,15%
Dominican R. [DOM]	127	15,26%	3.937	15,55%
Mexico [MEX]	213	25,60%	5.526	21,83%
Peru [PER]	206	24,76%	5.166	20,40%
Total	**832**	**100,00%**	**25.319**	**100,00%**
European Countries				
Belgium [BFL]	149	7,25%	2.931	5,55%
Bulgaria [BGR]	145	7,06%	2.966	5,62%
Croatia [HRV]	174	8,47%	3.896	7,38%
Denmark [DNK]	181	8,81%	6.254	11,85%
Estonia [EST]	105	5,11%	2.857	5,41%
Finland [FIN]	174	8,47%	3.173	6,01%
Italy [ITA]	163	7,94%	3.450	6,54%
Latvia [LVT]	137	6,67%	3.224	6,11%
Lithuania [LTU]	183	8,91%	3.631	6,88%
Malta [MLT]	47	2,29%	3.764	7,13%
North Rhine-Westphalia [DNW]	55	2,68%	1.451	2,75%
Netherlands [NLD]	103	5,01%	2.812	5,33%
Norway [NOR]	142	6,91%	6.271	11,88%
Slovenia [SVN]	135	6,57%	2.844	5,39%
Sweden [SWE]	141	6,86%	3.264	6,18%
Total	**2.054**	**100,00%**	**52.788**	**100,00%**

2.2. Model and Statistical Treatment

For the study of the determining factors of the development of competencies and the measurement of the quality of educational systems in countries and/or regions, what is defined as the Educational Production Function (EPF) has been widely used. This function establishes an empirical statistical relationship between the scores obtained by students in the different performance evaluations, as an output, and a set of factors or dimensions associated with learning, as inputs [11]. Studies coincide in grouping the determinants of school performance into three dimensions, the characteristics of the student, of their family and of the school environment therefore the function sheet is as follows:

$$P_i = f(CE_i, CF_i, , CC_i,) + \mu_i \quad (1)$$

Where P_i represents the score of the i-th student (output), as a function of their characteristics $-CE_i-$, their family CF_i- and the school they attended $-CC_i-$ (inputs), and μ_i represents the residue, of which it is supposed to be mean zero and constant variance $[\mu_i \sim N\ (0, \sigma^2)]$. Empirical research on this topic has implemented variables that measure social and cultural capital as a proxy and have been included in one of the components of EPF. However, these studies have not grouped them as dimensions associated with learning. For example, in (1) they included the number of books at home (cultural variable) to measure the effect on school performance, but this variable has not been studied taking into consideration Bourdieu's approaches [15], [16] and, therefore, has not been grouped with others to form a new dimension. This paper does make this grouping, which is one of the main contributions to the empirical literature. As a result, considering (1), the specific functional form adopted for the EPF has four components:

$$P_i^h = \beta_0^h + \sum_{j=1}^{m} \beta_j^h CEF_{ij}^h + \sum_{j=m+1}^{k} \beta_j^h CES_{ij}^h + \sum_{j=k+1}^{w} \beta_j^h CUL_{ij}^h + \sum_{j=w+1}^{z} \beta_j^h COS_{ij}^h + \varepsilon_i^h \quad (2)$$

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Where P_i^h corresponds to the score of the i-th student in the citizenship and civic competencies assessment, from the h country that participated in ICCS 2016. $\sum_{j=1}^{m} \beta_j^h CEF_{ij}^h$ collects variables that characterize the student and their family (Family Dimension). $\sum_{j=m+1}^{k} \beta_j^h CES_{ij}^h$ comprises the variables for the school (School Dimension). $\sum_{j=k+1}^{w} \beta_j^h CUL_{ij}^h$ and $\sum_{j=w+1}^{z} \beta_j^h COS_{ij}^h$ contain the variables proxies that measure the cultural and social capital, of the i-th student, in country h, respectively (Cultural Dimension and Social Dimension).

To calculate each coefficient in (2), and following Giménez, Barrado and Arias [11], the Ordinary Least Squares –OLS– method will be used, taking into account school fixed effects through standard deviations per cluster of school. The choice of variables for the first two dimensions is in line with the empirical work. For the cultural and social dimensions, the grouping made by Gran-Andersen and Meier-Jaeger [31] was taken into account. In **Error! Reference source not found.** each of the inputs of the EPF given in (2) are defined.

Table 2. Definition of Variables of the Dimensions Associated with Learning.

D	Variable Factors	Definition
Individual and Family Characteristics	Gender	Dummy variable takes on a value of 1 for females and 0 for males.
	Age	Continuous variable corresponds to the student's age.
	Academic Achievements	Dummy variable takes on a value of 1 for the student expectating to achieve at least a university degree and 0 otherwise
	Respect	Dummy variable takes on a value of 1 if the student considers it very important to respect other people's rights to an opinion
	Gender Equality	Dummy variable takes on a value of 1 if the student agrees that men and women have equal opportunities to participate in government, work and should have equal rights in all areas.
	Socioeconomic Status	Continuous variable. Index constructed by the IEA that measures the socioeconomic status of the student's household.
	Mother's Educational Level	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the mother's highest educational level is high school, zero otherwise.
	Father's Educational Level	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the father's highest educational level is high school, zero otherwise.
	Internet	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the student's home has an Internet connection, zero otherwise.
Schooling Factors	School Size	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if there are more than 600 students in the school, zero otherwise.
	Autonomy of Citizenship	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the school has autonomy in the teaching of citizenship education (evaluation, texts, contents), zero otherwise.
	School Status	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if there are more students in unfavorable than favorable conditions in the school, zero otherwise.
	Rural	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the school is located in a rural area, zero otherwise.
	Crime	Continuous variable. Index constructed by the IEA that measures criminal activity around the school.
Social Capital	Immigrant	Dichotomous variable that takes the value of one if the student was born in another country, zero otherwise.
	Interest	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if parents show a great interest in social and political issues, zero otherwise.
	Politics_Parents	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the student discusses politics or the situation in other countries with parents at least once a week, zero otherwise.
	Politics_Friends	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the student talks about politics or the situation in other countries with friends at least once a week, zero otherwise
	Candidate	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the student participates in debates, assemblies or has been a candidate or class representative. Zero otherwise.

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Cultural Capital	Books	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if there are at least 201 books in the student's home, zero otherwise.
	Reading Activity	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the student reads and/or searches for information on political issues once a week, zero otherwise.
	Cultural Activities	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the majority of students support cultural and intercultural activities, zero otherwise.
	Facilities	Dummy variable that takes the value of one if the school has its own cinema, museum or music academy, and zero otherwise.

D: Dimension.

2.3. The Blinder-Oaxaca Decomposition Technique

This technique stems from labor market studies, when Ronald Oaxaca [32], of the University of Arizona, and Alan Blinder [33], of Princeton University, simultaneously but independently, sought to identify the origins of the gender wage gap and the differences in earnings by race. In the field of education, the implementation of this technique is relatively recent, which has gained an important place and the number of studies using it has been increasing. For example, the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition has been applied to explain inequalities in educational performance between public and private schools (see Castro, Giménez and Perez Ximenez-de-Embun [12] and Giménez and Castro [34]), to study differences in performance over time (see Oreiro and Valenzuela [35]), gaps caused by language abilities (see Riitsalu and Põder, [36]), as well as divergences between countries (see Gertel, et al. [37]) and regions (see Ramos, [38]).

However, the use of the Blinder-Oxaca decomposition has not been oriented to identify differences in the development of citizenship and civic competences, let alone between Latin American and European countries, an orientation that is provided in this article. This is a differentiating factor from other studies conducted, therefore, is an additional contribution. According to previous authors' work, and based on Jann [39], the gaps in the average score obtained in the ICCS 2016 tests by students from European countries [group A] and Latin American countries [group B] can be obtained from:

$$R_i = E(P_i^A) - E(P_i^B) \quad (3)$$

Rewriting the EPF formulated in (3) as $P_j = X_j'\beta_j + \varepsilon_j$, X_j, whit j = A and B, corresponds to the matrix containing the variables of the four dimensions discussed, and is defined as the *matrix of initial endowments*. β_j represents the vector of coefficients, which measures the relationship and effect of each of these variables on P_{ij} (includes the intercept); and ε_j is the model error. As a result, the difference in score between these two groups is:

$$R_i = E(X_A'\beta_A + \varepsilon_A) - E(X_B'\beta_B + \varepsilon_B) \quad (3')$$

Since $\varepsilon_i^h \sim N(0, \delta_h^2)$, then $E(\varepsilon_j) = 0$, and given that $E(\beta_j) = \beta_j$, the expression (3') now is (3''):

$$R_i = E(X_A')\beta_A - E(X_B')\beta_B \quad (3'')$$

Therefore, the gaps in citizen and civic competences between A and B groups can be separated into (See Daymont and Andrisani, [40] for a detailed formal development):

$$R_j = [E(X_A) - E(X_B)]'\beta_B + E(X_B)'(\beta_A - \beta_B) + [E(X_A) - E(X_B)]'(\beta_A - \beta_B) \quad (4)$$

Where $[E(X_A) - E(X_B)]'\beta_B$ is the EPF observed component in (2), known as the *Endowment Effect*, since it measures the difference caused by the divergences in dimensions associated with the learning process between group A (European countries) and group B (Latin American countries). The EPF unobserved component in (2), is constituted by

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$E(X_B)'(\beta_A - \beta_B)$, which measures this gap contribution between A and B, based on the differences in the coefficients. It is therefore defined as the *Coefficients Effect*, and $[E(X_A) - E(X_B)]'(\beta_A - \beta_B)$is the *Interaction Effect* because it measures the simultaneous impact of the endowment effect and the coefficient effect. For this reason, if significant differences are found in the development of competencies between A and B, the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition analysis can be used to identify whether these are caused by differences in the four-dimension initial endowment.

3. Results

The **Error! Reference source not found.** depicts the main descriptive statistics of the variables included in the EPF for Latin American and European countries. Within the individual and family characteristics, both for Latin America and Europe, participation by gender was equal, and the average age of the students who participated in the ICCS 2016 was approximately 14 years. It is worth highlighting that Latin American countries not only have a higher proportion of students who wish to achieve a minimum level of professional training, but also that the percentage is higher than in European countries (68.1% and 47.4%, respectively). Despite this fact, the proportion of parents with a high school education is higher in European countries (42% compared to 11%) than in Latin American countries. In addition, the number of households with an internet connection is higher in European countries than in Latin American countries (96.7%versus 66.2%, respectively).

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of the EPF Variables.

D	Independient Variables ↓	Latin America				Europe			
		Average	S. D.	Min	Max.	Average	D. E.	Min.	Max.
Individual Family Factors	Gender	0,500	0,500	0,000	1,000	0,496	0,500	0,000	1,000
	Age	14,197	0,887	9,750	19,670	14,470	0,582	11,670	18,250
	Academic Achievement	0,681	0,466	0,000	1,000	0,474	0,499	0,000	1,000
	Respect	0,605	0,489	0,000	1,000	0,614	0,487	0,000	1,000
	Gender Equality	0,869	0,337	0,000	1,000	0,863	0,344	0,000	1,000
	Sosioeconomical_Status	0,053	1,004	-2,700	2,870	0,035	0,996	-3,700	2,430
	Mother's Educational Level	0,115	0,319	0,000	1,000	0,239	0,427	0,000	1,000
	Father's Educational Level	0,114	0,318	0,000	1,000	0,243	0,429	0,000	1,000
	Internet	0,662	0,473	0,000	1,000	0,967	0,178	0,000	1,000
School Factors	Size	0,585	0,493	0,000	1,000	0,395	0,489	0,000	1,000
	Autonomy of Citizenship	0,655	0,476	0,000	1,000	0,764	0,424	0,000	1,000
	School Status	0,668	0,471	0,000	1,000	0,218	0,413	0,000	1,000
	Rural	0,526	0,499	0,000	1,000	0,761	0,426	0,000	1,000
	Crime	58,944	11,394	34,140	81,820	48,858	8,769	34,140	81,820
Social Capital	Immigrant	0,018	0,131	0,000	1,000	0,050	0,217	0,000	1,000
	Interest	0,351	0,477	0,000	1,000	0,536	0,499	0,000	1,000
	Politics_Parents	0,410	0,492	0,000	1,000	0,547	0,498	0,000	1,000
	Politics_Friends	0,225	0,418	0,000	1,000	0,275	0,446	0,000	1,000
	Candidate	0,597	0,491	0,000	1,000	0,561	0,496	0,000	1,000
Cultural Capital	Books	0,042	0,201	0,000	1,000	0,167	0,373	0,000	1,000
	Reading	0,341	0,474	0,000	1,000	0,310	0,463	0,000	1,000
	Cultural Activities	0,442	0,497	0,000	1,000	0,422	0,494	0,000	1,000
	Facilities	0,478	0,500	0,000	1,000	0,825	0,380	0,000	1,000

S.D.: Standard Deviation; Min.: Mimum; Max.: Maximum. The number of observations for Latin American countries is 23,635; for European countries is 49,313.

Regarding the school characteristics, findings show that 58.5% and 39.9% of Latin American and European schools have more than 600 students. In addition, most of the schools have autonomy for the design of subjects and content in which civic and citizenship education is taught, and in the evaluation of themes related to this type of education. For Latin American countries, the proportion of schools with such autonomy is 65.5%, and for European countries it is 76.4%. However, in Latin American schools the

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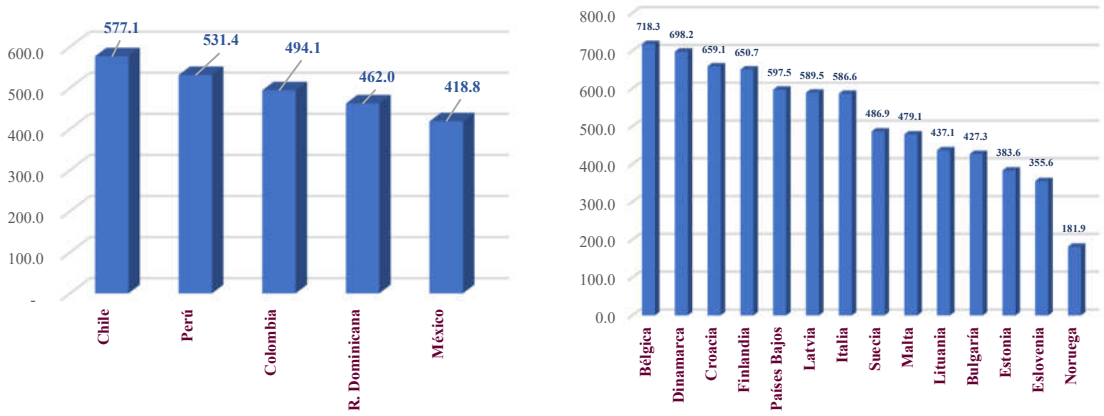
proportion that measures the number of students in adverse conditions is 66.8% higher than in European schools (21.8%). Moreover, Latin American schools show a higher rate of incidents involving criminal acts around the school than European schools (see **Error! Reference source not found.**).

With regard to social and cultural capital, Findings show that European countries have higher proportions than Latin American countries in: a) the interest shown by parents in talking about social and political issues with their children, 53.6% of parents in Europe exhibited such interest whilst in Latin America, 35.1%; b) the communication between students with their parents and friends when talking about politics and/or the situation of other countries. This implies that 54.7% and 27.5% of European students talk about these issues with their parents and friends at least once a week compared to Latin America which correspond to 41.0% and 22.5%. c) the socio-cultural level in households, taking into account that 16.7% of households in Europe have more than 201 books, while in Latin America this percentage is only 4.2%; and d) the facilities available in the school for cultural activities. 82.5% of European schools have their own cinema, museum, gallery, or music academy, whereas in Latin America it is 47.8% (See **Error! Reference source not found.**).

Alternatively, Figure 1 shows the average civic and citizenship education scores obtained by each of the countries and/or economies participating in the ICCS 2016, calculated based on the four dimensions considered in this paper. Among the Latin American countries, Chile has the highest level of knowledge while Mexico the lowest, therefore, the performance levels achieved by these two countries are A and C respectively. Peru and Colombia are at performance level B, and the Dominican Republic is at level C. Seven of the European countries achieved the highest performance level (A), with scores above 562 points. In descending order, they are Belgium, Denmark, Croatia, Finland, the Netherlands, Latvia, and Italy. Only Sweden and Malta are classified as having level B knowledge, Belgium and Estonia are classified as having level C knowledge, while Slovenia and Norway are classified as having low level D knowledge (See Latin America.

b. Europe.

).



a. Latin America. **b. Europe.**

Figure 1. Average Score in Civic and Citizenship Education. ICCS 2016.

The **Error! Reference source not found.** shows the results of the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition technique. Based on this technique, a statistically significant inequality of 70.26 points is estimated between Latin America and Europe. In other words, in European countries there is a higher level of knowledge in civic and citizenship education. This gap is explained to a greater extent by the observed [inputs of the PEF] and unobserved factors of the model in [2], that is, by the endowments effect and the coefficients effect.

Within the endowment effect, school characteristics have the greatest weight followed by cultural capital and lastly, social capital. Within the school factors, the

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differences in the level of autonomy and socioeconomic status between Latin American and European countries are the ones that are causing the greatest proportion of inequalities in the level of civic and citizenship education. Regarding cultural capital, the differences in the provision of cultural spaces in Latin American and European schools are the main reasons which explain these gaps and within social capital, it is the interest that parents show their children in talking about political issues. As a result, it can be concluded that European students are taking greater advantage of the differences in endowments.

Table 4. Causes of Inequalities in Civic and Citizenship Competencies Between Latin American and European countries, 2016.

Group	Coefficient	S.D.R.	Z	P>z	[95% Confidence Interval]	
European Countries	534,38	1,61	331,17	0,00	531,22	537,54
Latin American Countries	464,12	2,04	227,27	0,00	460,12	468,12
Difference	**70,26**	**2,51**	**27,94**	**0,00**	**65,33**	**75,19**
Effects						
Endowments	16,71	3,13	5,35	0,00	10,59	22,84
Coefficients	70,35	2,85	24,70	0,00	64,77	75,93
Interaction	-16,80	3,63	-4,62	0,00	-23,93	-9,68
Endowments						
Individual and Family	-2,33	2,02	-1,15	0,25	-6,29	1,63
School	12,00	1,99	6,02	0,00	8,09	15,90
Social	1,93	0,39	4,92	0,00	1,16	2,70
Cultural	5,11	1,16	4,40	0,00	2,83	7,39
Total	**16,71**	**3,13**	**5,35**	**0,00**	**10,59**	**22,84**
Coefficients						
Individual and Family	97,01	30,53	3,18	0,00	37,17	156,86
School	5,13	10,08	0,51	0,61	-14,64	24,89
Social	-0,25	1,56	-0,16	0,87	-3,31	2,80
Cultural	-3,72	4,20	-0,88	0,38	-11,96	4,52
Constant	-27,82	32,07	-0,87	0,39	-90,68	35,04
Total	**70,35**	**2,85**	**24,70**	**0,00**	**64,77**	**75,93**
Interaction						
Individual and Family	-7,31	1,70	-4,30	0,00	-10,65	-3,98
School	-8,12	2,73	-2,98	0,00	-13,47	-2,78
Social	-0,17	0,61	-0,27	0,79	-1,37	1,04
Cultural	-1,20	1,65	-0,73	0,47	-4,45	2,04
Total	**-16,80**	**3,63**	**-4,62**	**0,00**	**-23,93**	**-9,68**

S.D.R.: Robust standard deviations by school cluster.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

There are differences in the 2016 ICCS assessment results in civic and citizenship education between Latin American and European students. In addition, these differences can be explained, thanks to the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition, and an understanding that they are due to the unequal endowments in the inputs included in the production function used in the estimates. It is therefore possible to consider educational and social policies that seek to close this gap with the purpose of having citizens who participate and contribute to their own development.

It is for this reason that we urgently propose a comprehensive policy designed on the basis of the following three-pronged approach:

1. School. Whether or not the school has the freedom to teach and educate students in civics and citizenship becomes a vital factor. Designing a concrete state policy that provides precise guidelines to each school on what, how, when and to whom will undoubtedly define, in a progressive manner, important achievements when it comes to imparting knowledge and forming citizens for tomorrow. Subjects

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such as civics, democracy and society or ethics could make a difference in the understanding of the world when they are taught with a greater or lesser degree of freedom by each school.

In addition, each school is not only part of the community, but is also a reflection and projection of society, therefore it is important that the state allocates sufficient resources so that students and their families no longer live under adverse conditions. It is clear that a student's performance will not be the same if their economic possibilities are driven more by need than by opportunity.

It is important to reinforce programs such as free school meals and economic incentives for families conditioned on school attendance. By developing a more forceful fiscal policy in order to allocate resources so that proper welfare conditions exist may enable students to appreciate and understand the world correctly.

2. Culture. Much has been said about how culture influences the formation of citizens, but in this specific case, it is demonstrated the importance of the facilities and cultural endowments which students may or may not take advantage of.

   It is imperative for the State to understand the needs of each community in a continent as diverse as Latin America. These endowments must not only be more effective thanks to the allocation of financial resources but must also be built and delivered so that they are established within the amalgam of each community. Under this logic there can be no magic formulas prescribed for each place, on the contrary, unique methods designed for each place, understanding their differences and their specific needs.

   Since citizenship is the result of various cultural layers woven together, understanding why and what for will be the only thing that will lead Latin America to close the existing gap by proposing a how.

3. Society and Family: It is not solely the community that accompanies the student nor solely the economic conditions that are decisive, because, as seen in the results, parents discussing political issues with their children viewed as a crucial factor.

   From this point of view, it is of utmost importance to resume discussions such as compulsory voting in countries and to design real policies that seek to promote citizen participation in the political agora of each country.

   It is evident that under the logic of power and entrenched power in Latin American Countries, the social processes that promote political education do not work for continuity. However, it is extremely urgent that the ideal of democracy is truly understood in every corner of the continent.

It is important to allocate resources to the three axes already proposed, knowing that the investments made will not only improve social conditions in the region, but will also enable Latin America to become a truly competitive arena in the global market.

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