



Profiles of Attitudes Toward Gender Equality among Latin American Adolescents

Perfiles de actitudes hacia la equidad de género entre adolescentes latinoamericanos

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Abstract

Attitudes toward gender equality are critical to citizenship outcomes because they can promote more egalitarian living conditions. Evidence suggests that attitudes that oppose equal rights between men and women are negatively related to gender equality. Moreover, these attitudes may reproduce stereotypes among youth that limit young women's opportunities and lead to risky behaviours, especially among young men. However, knowledge about adherence to gender attitudes among adolescents is still scarce in Latin America. This study attempts to identify profiles of compliance with attitudes gender equity attitudes in five Latin American countries: Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Peru. A Simultaneous Latent Class Analysis across Groups analysis was conducted using the Students' endorsement of gender equality scale from IEA's International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), an analytical approach that allows comparing different contexts using a structurally equivalent (homogeneous) model. We identified four different profiles based on the items included in the analysis, with varying prevalence levels in every country analysed. These profiles are fully egalitarians, normative sexists, hesitant egalitarians, and political sexists. This paper's relevance lies on the idea that active citizens need understanding concepts, principles, and skills to be responsible and thoughtful but also committed to democratic values. In this scenario, it is essential to understand the current state of adherence to gender equity to construct fairer and more inclusive societies.

Keywords: Multigroup Latent Class Analysis, gender attitudes, young people, ICCS

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Resumen

Las actitudes hacia la igualdad de género son fundamentales para la ciudadanía porque pueden fomentar condiciones de vida más igualitarias. La evidencia muestra que las actitudes que se oponen a la igualdad de derechos entre hombres y mujeres se relacionan negativamente con la igualdad de género. Asimismo, entre los adolescentes, estas actitudes pueden reproducir estereotipos que limitan las oportunidades de mujeres jóvenes y crean conductas de riesgo, especialmente entre hombres jóvenes. Sin embargo, el conocimiento sobre la adherencia a las actitudes de género entre los adolescentes aún es escaso en América Latina. Este artículo busca identificar perfiles de adhesión a las actitudes hacia la equidad de género en cinco países de América Latina: Chile, Colombia, República Dominicana, México y Perú. Se desarrolló un análisis simultáneo de clases latentes a través de grupos considerando la escala Aprobación de la equidad de género por parte de los estudiantes del Estudio Internacional de Educación Cívica y Ciudadana (ICCS) 2016 de la IEA. Este enfoque analítico permite comparar diferentes contextos utilizando un modelo estructuralmente equivalente (homogéneo). Identificamos cuatro perfiles diferentes en función de los elementos incluidos en el análisis, con diferentes niveles de prevalencia en cada país analizado: completamente igualitarios, sexistas normativos, igualitarios vacilantes y sexistas políticos. La importancia de este trabajo radica en la idea de que los ciudadanos activos necesitan comprender conceptos, principios y habilidades para ser responsables y reflexivos, pero también necesitan estar comprometidos con valores democráticos. En este escenario, es fundamental comprender el estado actual de la adhesión a la equidad de género para la construcción de sociedades más justas e inclusivas.

Palabras claves: análisis de clases latentes multigrupo, actitudes de género, jóvenes, ICC

Introduction

To safeguard democracy, future citizens must be knowledgeable about civic structures and participate, but they also must be tolerant to answer thoughtfully in front of discrimination, such as sexism or racism (Kennedy, 2019).

Attitudes are at the base of behaviours and social identity because they are a person's understanding of the social contract (Allen et al., 2016). As Allen and colleagues (2016) indicate, "the formation of attitudes about political issues such as poverty, defense, or even the meaning of citizenship is at the core of development of citizenship and its related knowledge and behaviors" (p. 3.)

Thus, attitudes toward other groups are critical to citizenship in democratic societies (Isac et al., 2018; Kennedy, 2019). They are related to guaranteeing other social groups' democratic and political rights, contributing to political tolerance (Isac et al., 2018)

The work of Brandt (2011) evidences that attitudes that oppose equal rights between men and women (sexism) are negatively related to gender equality. These attitudes have been associated with fewer opportunities for women in different arenas, such as in the number of parliamentary seats, salaries and, in general, access to positions of power (Brandt, 2011).

Attitudes toward gender equality can also influence young people's experiences. Previous evidence shows that adolescents are influenced by the predominant discourse about gender inequality in their contexts (Dotti Sani & Quaranta, 2017). They internalise and reproduce gender status beliefs creating more (dis)advantages (Dotti

Sani & Quaranta, 2017). These attitudes can be related to stereotypes that affect their relationships with their peers based on the representations of women and men (Zosuls et al., 2011), violent behaviours (Varela et al., 2022), and affect the academic achievement of young women at schools (Nuamah, 2019).

However, previous research on civic education is not often concerned with this outcome, which is related to an affective behavioural dimension of citizenship. Instead, a good part of the analyses in this field has focused on cognitive or engagement aspects, such as civic knowledge and participation (Amná, 2012; Ekman & Amná, 2012; Miranda et al., 2020).

This paper seeks to identify profiles of adherence to attitudes toward gender equity across five Latin American countries: Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Peru. To do that, we used a Simultaneous Latent Class Analysis across Groups, a technique that allows us to compare contexts by restricting the model and making it structurally equivalent (Kankaras & Vermunt, 2014). We used data from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) 2016 (Schulz et al., 2018) conducted by the IEA.

Apart from this introduction, this study is divided into six parts. The first one presents a synthesis of the literature on attitudes toward gender equality, concentrating on its relevance and conceptual dimensions. A second section focuses on previous empirical studies that analysed profiles on attitudes toward gender equality, with a focus on their strengths and limitations and how this paper contributes to filling the gaps that they left. The third part of the article explains the methodology, including data, analytical approach, and measures. Then, a fourth section presents the results, including the identification of classes, the argument followed, and their distribution by country. The paper finishes with the fifth and sixth segments, the study's discussion and conclusions.

Literature review

Attitudes toward gender equality among adolescents. Why are they important?

Attitudes toward gender equality can be defined as dispositions to support gender equality. Previous research has examined gender role attitudes as the views regarding women's and men's roles in society (Van der Host, 2014) or as the perceptions about the gender division of labour that assigns the public sphere as a masculine domain and the home as the women's space (Davis & Greenstein, 2009; Yu & Duan, 2021). In this regard, surveys try to capture gender role attitudes to measure the degree to which individuals support traditional gender roles (Davis & Greenstein, 2009; Yu & Duan, 2021).

Attitudes toward gender equality are critical to citizenship outcomes because they can promote more egalitarian living conditions. There is evidence that attitudes that oppose equal rights between men and women are negatively related to gender equality (Brandt, 2011; Dotti Sani & Quaranta, 2017). As Yu and Duan indicate (2021), "(...) understanding attitudes related to the traditional gender division of labor is important, as disapproval of this division serves as the cultural foundation for women's equal access to education, jobs, and political offices" (p. 2).

Among adolescents, this is a critical phenomenon. The propensity to support traditional gender attitudes can affect young men and women (Kågesten et al., 2016). Adolescence is a period of expectations for boys and girls to adhere to social norms, most of which are stereotyped (Kågesten et al., 2016). Notably, these can be associated with stereotypes about gender groups, implying evaluative representations such as boys are violent, creating evaluative responses (I do not like them) (Zosuls et al., 2011). Furthermore, traditional gender stereotypes are connected to riskier behaviours because of their association with a more significant agreement of gender violence (Varela et al., 2022) and a more passive role of women, limiting their alternatives (Kågesten et al., 2016; Nuamah, 2019).

Previous research has shown the association between the status of gender inequality in some contexts and the adherence of adolescents to more unequal attitudes toward women's rights (Dotti Sani & Quaranta, 2017). The explanation is that they internalise the contextual disposition and reproduce gender status beliefs creating fewer advantages for women (Dotti Sani & Quaranta, 2017).

Thus, it is feasible to expect a positive relationship between following traditional attitudes and gender inequality in some backgrounds. The beliefs about gender status can encourage institutional measures and social structures, constructing advantages for men over women (Kroska, 2014; Ridgeway, 2011). Traditional gender stereotypes can foster lower educational attainment expectations, specifically for women and girls (Davis & Greenstein, 2009). They can be positively associated with poorer academic and labour performances (Logel et al., 2009). Likewise, gender biases during adolescence can affect decisions about their lives.

Most previous studies on attitudes about gender inequality and gender roles have focused on the possible factors that explain these attitudes. Thus, they have included micro and meso factors, such as sociodemographic variables (sex, age, education, family background) (Boehnke, 2011; Scott et al., 2014), national indexes (Dotti Sani & Quaranta, 2017b), structural factors such as the economic or political situation (Cotter et al., 2011a), or ideological climates (Kunovich & Deitelbaum, 2004).

As well, most of the previous analyses have focused on variable-centred techniques, including descriptive approaches (Boehnke, 2011; Krings et al., 2007; Mosley et al., 2020; Scott et al., 2014; Ui & Matsui, 2008) and inferential techniques with different levels of statistical complexity, such as multilevel models (Dotti Sani & Quaranta, 2017b; Li et al., 2021), structural equation modelling (Aikawa & Stewart, 2020; Glick et al., 2004; Kunovich & Deitelbaum, 2004; Sarrasin, 2016), multigroup analysis (Valved et al., 2021), and multilevel cross-classified models (Pessin & Arpino, 2018).

In this regard, there is little interest in understanding adherence profiles guided by a person-centred approach such as latent class analysis.

Previous research about attitudes toward gender equality have focused mainly on the population from 18 years old (Chon, 2015; Glick et al., 2004; Greitemeyer et al., 2015; Lappegård et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021; Sarrasin, 2016), or 20 years old onwards (Boehnke, 2011; Miettinen et al., 2011). Thus, there is low interest in understanding how adolescents distribute themselves in different levels of adherence. However, it is critical to understand what is happening among them because these attitudes can affect their choices today and in the future (Dotti Sani & Quaranta, 2017).

Previous evidence about profiles of attitudes toward gender equality

Previous evidence on attitudes toward gender equality distinguishes between students who highly endorse gender equality and those who do not (Sandoval-Hernández & Carrasco, 2020). In the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the analyses of Sandoval-Hernández and Carrasco (2020) identified proficiency levels, which are understood as cut scores to recognise the propensity of young people to endorse categories of higher values of endorsement of gender equality. The authors used a standard-setting procedure based on item-person maps to identify students with 50% more chances to highly endorse attitudes toward gender equality. This approach effectively measures and monitors one aspect of SDG 4.7, mainly the socio-emotional and behavioural domains of Global Citizenship Education (SDG 4.7.4), including students' attitudes toward gender rights. However, while their analyses identify those students with a high endorsement of gender equality, they say little about the levels of adherence among the rest of the sample (i.e., those who do not reach the established cut scores).

There is previous evidence about the identification of profiles considering attitudes towards gender and ethnic/race equality. Inostroza Fernandez (2021) identified common support patterns toward women and ethnic groups by analysing latent classes, identifying between three and four profiles in European countries. These demonstrated different levels of adherence to the rights of women and ethnic minorities. Some profiles of adolescents accept and promote equal rights in both cases (the author called them fully egalitarians), while others disagree with them. Also, one group can support ethnic rights but disagrees with their political role, and another profile tends to favour men's rights in job and political positions. However, the discussion generally did not highlight these profiles' implications for analysing attitudes towards gender equality.

In the case of Scarborough and colleagues (2019), attitudes toward gender equality were analysed in conjunction with attitudes towards race, using an intersectional perspective in the case of the United States. This analysis demonstrated the coexistence of profiles that support progressive or regressive racial and gender attitudes. At the same time, there were discordant profiles in which progressive views on racial or gender attitudes combined with regressive views on the other.

Considering this background, it would be interesting –and it seems critical– to understand the adherence to attitudes toward gender equality among Latin American young people. Understanding the differences between those who reach and those who do not get the cut score can be substantive to unveil the mechanisms through which young people adhere to gender equality, but it also seems necessary to explore the possible configurations among those who do not fully support all women's rights statements. A profile analysis would contribute to this gap.

This study

Considering the relevance of attitudes in adolescents' lives and in creating structural opportunities for girls and women, this paper aims to identify profiles of adherence to attitudes toward gender equality among Latin American young people.

Latin America is a critical scene in terms of gender inequality. Even when women have increased their participation in political and labour spaces, there is still a maternalist structure and cultural restrictions prioritising the traditional role of women (Sánchez et al., 2021), which assumes them as the principal responsible for household chores and care of children and other family members. In this context, gender inequality is still vast and is related to social, cultural and economic structures. This situation fosters the institutionalisation of formal and informal discrimination and prejudice (Camou & Maubrigades, 2017). Cotter and colleagues (2011) called this an egalitarian essentialism, a cultural framework in which the freedom of choice for women is accepted. However, there is still a parallel belief that women have natural responsibilities and skills in care and upbringing tasks (Cotter et al., 2011; Sánchez et al., 2021).

As elaborated in Dotti Sani and Quaranta's (2017) work, adolescents could interiorise the predominant discourse about gender (in)equality in their social contexts. Exposure to more gender-traditional narratives or ideas can affect their adherence to more gender-equal attitudes.

Methodology

Data

Data from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) 2016 (Schulz et al., 2018) was used to address the main objective. The purpose of ICCS is to investigate how young people are prepared to undertake their roles as citizens in a range of countries, covering various topics such as civic knowledge, attitudes, and different types of citizenship participation.

This study considered nationally representative data of 94,000 8th-grade students in 3,800 schools at 24 countries. In addition, a specific set of questionnaires was applied to their teachers and principals. ICCS implements a two-stage stratified cluster sample design. In the first stage, schools are selected using a systematic random sample with probabilities proportional to size (PPS). In the second, an intact classroom is selected randomly within each selected school (Schulz et al., 2018). The analysis presented in this paper used the Latin American sample, including five countries: Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Peru, whose samples are shown in table 1.

Table 1.
Countries sample

Country	n
CHL	5081
COL	5609
DOM	3937
MEX	5526
PER	5166
Total	25319

Source: Own elaboration based on results obtained with ICCS 2016.

Measure

The outcome variable is the Students' endorsement of gender equality scale (S_GENEQL), in which students indicate their level of agreement to a series of seven items regarding differences among females and males (Schulz et al., 2018). We used the items of this scale and recoded them to obtain dichotomous variables where a higher value indicates more adhesion to equality (see table 2).

Table 2.
Variable of analysis

S_GENEQL	Students' endorsement of gender equality	Original categories of response	Recodes	Final variable
Item	Description			Dichotomous
IS3G24A	Men and women should have equal opportunities to take part in government.	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	0. Disagree 1. Agree
IS3G24B	Men and women should have the same rights in every way.	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	0. Disagree 1. Agree
IS3G24C	Women should stay out of politics.	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree		0. Agree 1. Disagree
IS3G24D	When there are not many jobs available, men should have more right to a job than women.	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree		0. Agree 1. Disagree
IS3G24E	Men and women should get equal pay when they are doing the same jobs.	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	0. Disagree 1. Agree
IS3G24F	Men are better qualified to be political leaders than women.	1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree		0. Agree 1. Disagree

Source: Own elaboration based on results obtained with ICCS 2016

Analytical approach

To answer the research question, latent class analysis is used. This technique identifies and describes unobserved groups or typologies in a population, characterising its heterogeneity (Nylund-Gibson & Choi, 2018). The model is based on the individual's answers to indicators (Nylund-Gibson & Choi, 2018). Particularly, for this analysis, we developed a Multigroup latent-class analysis or Simultaneous Latent-Class Analysis Across Groups. This specification is an extension to compare several groups' latent structures derived from the indicators set (Kankaras & Vermunt, 2014).

Comparing different contexts requires deciding the structural dimension of the model. A structurally equivalent (homogeneous) model (Kankaras & Vermunt, 2014) allows the identification of different classes in the population studied, each of them with a specific response pattern, which is stable across all contexts (Torres Irribarra &

Carrasco, 2021). Additionally, it allows the proportion of people in each class to be context-specific. Therefore, the prevalence of each class could vary from one context to another (Torres Iribarra & Carrasco, 2021). Contrary to this, a partially homogeneous specification allows a country-specific probability pattern for each class (Torres Iribarra & Carrasco, 2021). This last model contains more free parameters; therefore, it could imply a better fit of the data, but –as well – it loses interpretability (Órdenes et al., 2022; Torres Iribarra & Carrasco, 2021). Considering the relevance of cross-country comparability in this study, it was decided to use a structurally homogeneous specification, comparing the fit indices obtained with both models.

To confirm the most appropriate model, we followed the steps of previous Multigroup Latent-Class Analysis Studies (Órdenes et al., 2022; Torres Iribarra & Carrasco, 2021). First, to correctly identify the number of classes, the sample was divided into two random groups within the sampling unit of schools. Then, the selection of the number of classes was addressed in an exploratory half of the sample, analysing the empirical results from models that considered between one and five latent classes. The interpretation of statistical indices guided this decision. Furthermore, this resolution was informed by previous studies in the literature that analysed profiles of attitudes toward gender equality (Inostroza Fernandez, 2021).

To select a model with a specific number of latent classes, it was followed the tradition and recommendations of researchers of Latent Class Analysis (Geiser, 2012.; Masyn, 2013), using the interpretation of statistical indices including Bayesian information criterion (BIC), Consistent Akaike information criterion (AIC), and Entropy value. The smaller the value of BIC and AIC, the better the model adjustment. Entropy indicates the classification quality, where values close to 1 show a higher classification accuracy (Geiser, 2012).

After selecting the number of classes, we analyse the stability of the solution (Torres & Carrasco, 2021) on the validation half of the sample, contrasting the response patterns.

The fit indices obtained were contrasted with a partially homogeneous solution to confirm the selection of a structurally homogeneous model.

All the analyses were carried out using R (version 4.1.2) and Mplus (www.StatModel.com), incorporating survey weights.

Results

Model selection

First, we analysed Simultaneous Latent-Class Analysis Across Groups, considering solutions from one to five latent classes. We examined the fit statistics of these estimates (table 3) to choose the model with better adjustment. Following the information of the BIC and AIC indices, the solution with lower values corresponded to the model with five classes. Regarding classification accuracy, the best solution (the one with the highest entropy) is the one with three classes. While the solution with three classes was not the best when considering the AIC and BIC fit statistics, its results are close to those with five and four classes.

Second, considering the patterns of response probabilities explored visually (using graphs like the one in figure 1), the third and four-class solutions presented classes with similar configurations. Nevertheless, once we inspected the prevalence of the solution with three classes across countries, we found that some profiles were non-existent in Chile and Colombia.

Table 3.
Summary of fit results

N° Classes	LL	N° parameters	BIC	CAIC	AWE	Entropy
1	-49458.325	10	99010.907	99020.9061	99135.1623	
2	-46042.183	21	92282.303	92303.3039	92543.2417	0.723
3	-44527.688	32	89356.995	89388.9956	89754.6152	0.83
4	-43940.018	43	88285.338	88328.3374	88819.6387	0.812
5	-43722.444	54	87953.872	88007.8711	88624.8542	0.794

Source: Own elaboration based on results obtained with ICCS 2016

Notes: BIC = Bayesian information criteria; CAIC=Consistent Akaike's information criterion; AWE= Approximate Weight of Evidence Criterion; N° Param. = Number of parameters; Fit indexes were obtained with the exploratory sample.

Finally, considering previous research, the expected responses were consistent with the work of Inostroza Fernandez (2021), whose proposition was around three and four classes, depending on the European country.

Based on these antecedents and the statistical criteria, it was selected the four-class solution.

Regarding the stability of the four classes, we can see that the results of the exploratory and confirmatory samples are very similar (table 4).

Table 4.
Summary of the prevalence of the four classes across the different samples

Class	Proportion in exploratory sample	Proportion in confirmatory sample
1	0.226	0.231
2	0.074	0.080
3	0.159	0.120
4	0.541	0.569

Source: Own elaboration based on results obtained with ICCS 2016

To confirm the use of a structurally homogeneous model, in contrast to a partially homogeneous one, the parameters are compared in table 5. The country-specific model implies using a less parsimonious model (139 versus 43 parameters) without improving the fit indices. As well, the interpretation across contexts is not possible.

Table 5.
Summary of results for homogeneous versus country-specific models

	Classes	LL	N° parameters	BIC	CAIC	AWE	Entropy
Country-specific	4	-43578.715	139	88467.646	88606.65	90194.86	0.765
Homogeneous	4	-43940.018	43	88285.338	88328.34	88819.64	0.812

Source: Own elaboration based on results obtained with ICCS 2016

Response patterns

To summarise and represent the latent class solution in figure 1, we used the expected probability response of each item conditioned by each latent class. Based on the content of each item and the response rate of these indicators, we selected a name for each profile. For this, it was critical to contrast the current results with previous literature, particularly the work of Inostroza Fernandez (2021), who analysed the same outcome in the European context. A description of each class is described below.

Fully egalitarians. This class matches the fully egalitarians class described in the model of Inostroza Fernandez (2021). Since this class represents those students who highly support the five items considered in the analysis, we kept the name provided in her work. This profile exhibits probabilities above 0.75 in all the items, fully supporting the adherence to gender equality in rights (figure 1). Its prevalence in the population projection is 54.1% (table 6). This class also presents very similar characteristics to the students recognised in the work of Sandoval-Hernández and Carrasco (2020), those that highly endorse (over 50%) all the items related to egalitarian attitudes.

Hesitant egalitarians. This class is characterised by its average endorsement of the different items. Even though this profile presents probabilities of endorsement above 0.50 in all items, it does not show a high level of involvement in support of rights for women (figure 1). This profile tends to show lower probabilities of endorsement in items related to equal pay (gen3) and the availability of jobs for women if these are scarce (gen5). This class present a prevalence in the population of 7.4 % (table 6).

Normative egalitarians. This class is interesting, given its support for those items that express a desire for equality in a normative way. In other words, students in this class tend to endorse those statements that conform to or are derived from socially desirable equitable norms (presenting a probability of endorsement above 0.75 in them). However, when they are asked about scenarios that depict the dominance of men over women in public spaces (i.e., job and politics) in a direct way, they tend to lower their support for egalitarian attitudes, with probabilities of endorsement under 0.25 (figure 1). Its prevalence in the population is about 22.6%.

Political sexists. This class presents a very clear indisposition to support women in politics (gen4), with probabilities under 0.25 for that item. In contrast, for the rest of the items, this profile presents probabilities of support above 0.75 (figure 1). The prevalence of this profile in the population is about 15.9% (table 6).

Table 6.
Proportions for each latent class profile based on the exploratory model

N°	Class Name	Frequency	Percentage
1	Fully egalitarians	6713.02	0.541
2	Hesitant egalitarians	917.80	0.074
3	Normative egalitarian	2800.15	0.226
4	Political sexists	1971.02	0.159

Source: Own elaboration based on results obtained with ICCS 2016

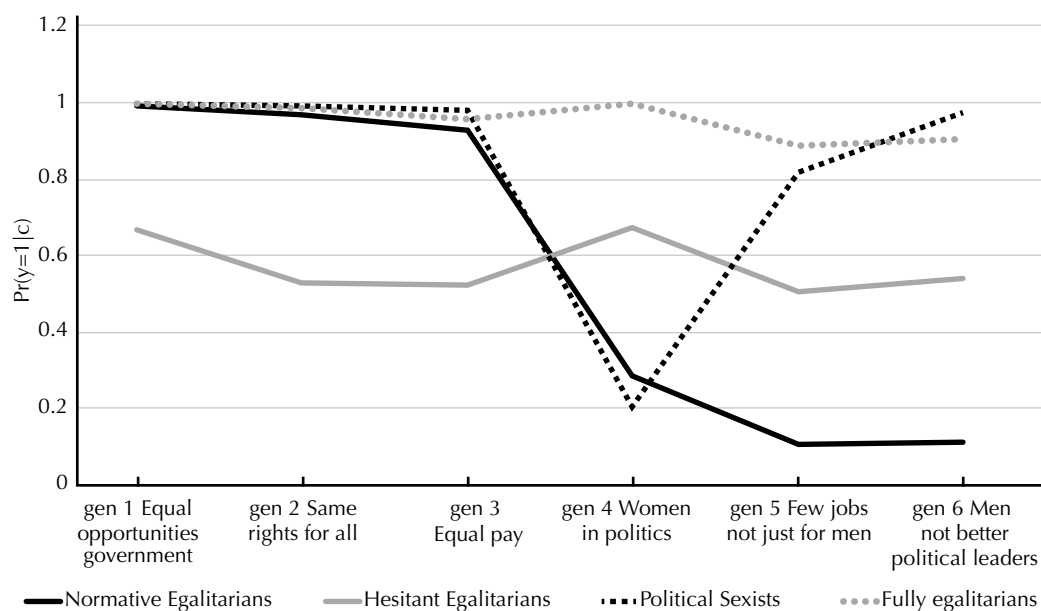


Figure 1. Response pattern of 4-class solution

Source: Own elaboration based on results obtained with ICCS 2016.

Prevalence of classes by country

In this section, we present the distribution of classes by country. As seen in table 7, Chile and Colombia show a high proportion of fully egalitarian adolescents (76% and 80%, respectively). In Chile and Colombia, the following more important classes are the normative egalitarians, with 17.1% and 11.5% of prevalence, respectively.

Peru presents a proportion of 67% of the fully egalitarian class among its young people, followed by 18% of normative egalitarian adolescents.

It seems critical as well to observe how in Mexico, the prevalence of the fully egalitarian class is just about 3%, with a high presence of political sexists (63.6%) and 27.8% of normative egalitarian adolescents.

In the Dominican Republic, 44.4% of adolescents adhere to a fully egalitarian class, and 41.7% belong to the normative egalitarian profile.

Table 7.

Proportion prevalence of classes by country

	Fully egalitarians	Hesitant egalitarians	Normative egalitarian	Political sexists
Chile	0.756	0.054	0.171	0.019
Colombia	0.798	0.070	0.115	0.016
Dominican Republic	0.444	0.120	0.417	0.019
Mexico	0.030	0.055	0.278	0.636
Peru	0.672	0.084	0.201	0.043

Source: Own elaboration based on results obtained with ICCS 2016.

Discussion

According to the UNESCO Report on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) subcomponent 4.7.4 (Sandoval-Hernández & Carrasco, 2020), the level of adherence among Latin American adolescents to gender equality is lower than the international average. As mentioned, this report set a benchmark to obtain the number of students supporting equality of rights for women and men. In Latin American countries, only 16% of Dominican Republic students reached this threshold, 17% of Mexican students, 36% of Peruvian students, 41% in Colombia, and 52% in Chile. These results contrast with percentages such as the one in Denmark, where 71% of the students reach the threshold (Sandoval-Hernández et al., 2020).

The results of this article are coherent with this previous evidence and suggest that Latin American students' adherence to equitable gender attitudes is also considerably heterogeneous.

Regarding the first profile of fully egalitarians, the prevalence in the countries analysed is 54%. These students tend to report high support for equality in all the items asked in the ICCS survey. In some contexts, such as Chile and Colombia, the high prevalence of students who fully adhere to equal rights for women and men is encouraging. In Chile, for example, although the feminist movement is long-standing (Reyes-Housholder & Roque, 2019), it is possible that the peak of demonstrations in recent years (e.g., the rise of them since 2016, the feminist demonstrations in 2018 [*Mayo Feminista*], and 2019 with the upspringing of the feminist group *Las Tesis* and their song and choreography that was popularised worldwide) have had an impact on the proportion of adolescents endorsing the fully egalitarian profile. The presence of the twice-elected women president, Michelle Bachelet (the last period between 2014 and 2018) also implied the advancement of a political agenda oriented to more institutional and structural equality for women. A couple of examples are the creation of a Ministry for Women, the creation of a system of proportional representation that incorporates the requirement of gender parity in the formation of the lists of candidacies, and the law that decriminalises the voluntary interruption of pregnancy in three causes (Ministerio de la Mujer y la Equidad de Género, 2018). These movements and advancements have implied progress at institutional and cultural levels, frameworks that could be interiorised by young people (Dotti Sani & Quaranta, 2017). In Colombia, this encouraging pattern could be a spill-over effect of policy actions associated with the nationwide implementation of programmes like *Aulas en Paz* (Chaux et al., 2008). This programme involved civic and citizenship education, fostering knowledge and skills among students of primary level (2nd and 5th levels) and their families. It considered promoting moral values for correct citizenship behaviour, searching to minimise the probability of aggressive or violent behaviours (Jiménez et al., 2010).

Regarding the normative egalitarian profile, given the cultural frame of egalitarian essentialism (Cotter et al., 2011) present in the region, normative support for gender equality makes sense. As Cotter and colleagues (2011) and Sánchez and colleagues (2021) explain, this cultural frame would allow women access to specific public spaces but would also continue to demand their presence and the fulfilment of traditional roles in the private sphere. In this regard, there would be a socially desirable reaffirmation of adherence to equal gender roles. However, in the end, there is still a belief that men should have more advantages regarding public positions (jobs and politics). This profile has a presence of 23% in the analysed countries, with a higher predominance in the Dominican Republic (41.7%).

The profile associated with political sexism shows interesting results that warrant further research to identify the mechanisms underlying this pattern. The case of Mexico is paradoxical, since a high proportion of young people in this profile (64%) coincides with the introduction of a quota of seat legislation in Congress for female representatives (Comisión Nacional para Prevenir y Erradicar la Violencia Contra las Mujeres, 2018). This lack of support for women representatives is accompanied by the low presence of the fully egalitarian profile (3%), which could be explained by the high level of gender violence against women in that country (Castañeda Salgado et al., 2013).

Finally, the hesitant egalitarians are young people who support all the five items considered in the analysis but to a lower extent when compared with the fully egalitarians. Their presence is 7.4%, with more predominance in the Dominican Republic (12%). Even if they are a smaller profile, education interventions targeted at this group (such as school practices like open classroom discussion, to improve tolerance) could be an effective strategy to move their hesitant support to a complete one in attitudes toward gender equality.

Conclusions

In this paper, we have used Simultaneous Latent Class analysis across five Latin American countries to identify four profiles of adherence to attitudes toward gender equity among adolescents. These profiles provide the basis for a richer discussion about the social and psychological mechanisms underlying the configuration of support towards equal rights for men and women. Moreover, since the sample is based on 8th grade students, our results can also be a starting point to explore the socialisation factors associated with gender equality both in and outside the schools.

This work contributes to the previous evidence regarding attitudes towards gender equity. In the case of the work by Sandoval-Hernández and Carrasco (2020), our results deepen the analyses of the recognition of those who fully adhere to egalitarian attitudes. It also makes it possible to understand what types of profiles emerge among those who do not fully adhere to equal rights in Latin America. Doing so allows for a complementary discussion centred on the individuals, not the statistical variables; the Latent Class Analysis provided a person-centred framework to comprehend how young people adhere to gender equality.

Our results bring the discussion of equity attitude profiles to the Latin American context, previously addressed for European countries by Inostroza Fernandez (2021). This is a scenario in which, although progress has been made in equality and rights for women, there are still high levels of structural inequality, lack of opportunities, and exposure to violence (Sánchez et al., 2021).

A positive finding is the predominance of a profile that fully adheres to more equal roles. Nevertheless, the results are contextually based: Chile and Colombia have a percentage of this profile above 70%, but the rest of the countries still face a heterogeneous mix of adherence among adolescents, with worrying low levels of this profile in the case of Mexico.

We find ourselves in an international scenario where democratic values are threatened, making women's rights even more fragile. Therefore, keeping in mind evidence on how young people are adhering to gender equitable values in Latin America is essential to generate more attention on how citizenship education is taught.

In a broader sense, this work expands the literature on civic attitudes. While this field has gained considerable importance in the last years (probably due to its inclusion as targets between SDG 4), the attitudes towards gender equality are hardly present in the field of citizenship.

Regarding the possible limitations, with the data available, we could cover just five countries in Latin America. As well, further research should address the possible factors and predictors associated with these profiles in the Latin American context.

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