

Intermedia Social Innovation

Report on “Protection of the family and the contribution of families in realizing the right to an adequate standard of living”

a) Families positive relationships improve civic and social participation family relationships are important predictors of social participation.

We have divided this lifestyle factor into two important dimensions: dialogue with parents and family supervision. The former, as expected, has a significant positive impact on both political and civic participation. This might be interpreted following Faggiano (2007), who has posited that more dialogue leads to more information, and consequently more participation. Contrarily, family supervision has a negative impact on political participation.

Risky behaviors are associated with higher rates of both political and civic participation. As noted in the introduction, other authors have found similar outcomes for this counter intuitive relationship. A possible explanation of these results is that those who are involved in risky behaviors need to restore the balance by engaging in community service. In this way, they can maintain a positive self-image by compensating their risky activities. The correlational nature of this study does not permit to rule out neither this possibility nor the contrary: that those who are engaged in politics and charity are under high pressure and, as a result, they need to release this tension by engaging in compensatory activities.

We found that taking part in cultural activities is associated with a higher rate of participation. As stated before, people who access more information are in a better position to participate (Faggiano, 2007). Following this logic, culturally active people gain more information than those who do not and as a result, participate more. It was found that civic values, as an independent measure, produced different participation outcomes. While it led to lower levels of political participation, it increased civic participation.

We analyzed only two ways of social participation and the political one is limited at an early age. The interviewees were teenagers from non-war zones, and previous research showed that exposure to war violence lead to greater political participation among young people (Blattman, 2009). Apart from these limitations, further research should consider analysing the impact of social participation on individual strengths, to clarify how specific contextual assets promote positive relationships and positive bonds with parents and friends that reflect healthy and bidirectional exchanges between the adolescents and their closed social context. In closing, this research confirms the importance of the European Commission’s

recommendations ('Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage') that highlights the relevance of children's opportunities to participate and use their rights to tackle social exclusion (European Commission, 2011). Although the importance of children's participation is stated in UNCRC's 'Article 12' (Child Rights Information Network, 2008), children and Young people are still left out of public decisions (Leal, 2014): more evidence is needed for improving social programs and enforcing UNCRC internationally (Woodhouse, 2014). Finally, this study offers some insights on areas and dimensions (like family dialogue) that should be promoted to encourage children's participation, especially children and adolescents, who are entering a very important identity forming life stage: decision makers will find that this study offers important guidance towards interpreting the low social participation of children and adolescents, especially those from southern European Union countries.¹

b) Families relationships are crucial for less psychological distress

On average when responses are pooled across the 25 EU states, living with two parents rather than one is associated with fewer psychological difficulties among 9- to 16-year-old internet-using children (the vast majority of children in this age range). Other adults do not confer a significant advantage, but a second parent does. However, analyses at the country level show that there is a significant advantage associated with living with two parents in only eight out of 25 countries: Italy, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria, Norway, Romania, and Austria. Differences do not reach statistical significance in other countries. The results suggest that in the EU as a whole, children's living arrangements are related to their psychological well-being. Therefore, public policies and programs supporting and educating families should take into account these family structure differences: specifically, one-parent homes, and homes touched by union instability, may need greater support in order to address higher levels of psychological distress and economic disadvantage experienced by children in these homes.²

¹ Rivera, Reynaldo & Santos, D. (2015). Civic and Political Participation of Children and Adolescents: A Lifestyle Analysis for Positive Youth Developmental Programs. Children & Society. <http://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12118>

² Rivera, Reynaldo (2014). Family Structure Across Europe and Children's Psychological Health. World Family Map Report 2014. Child Trends, Washington, US.

c) Families relationships are vital for developing altruism and entrepreneurial capabilities

The results of empirical research conducted for this study point in the direction of the hypothesis: altruism, as embodied in behaviors and attitudes of servant leadership, and relational styles that make up reflective modes of youth, are factors which they relate to entrepreneurial intentions in social innovation projects.

Young people interviewed have strengths and weaknesses. The latter can be highlighted the level of interest in starting an economic activity independently and, most important, the competence of teamwork and service attitudes. Among the strengths, however, we emphasize the high sense of social responsibility, courage, integrity and empowerment. From this point of view, our study confirms that those who claim that the new generations are tendentious narcissistic, consumerist and individualistic; They do considering only a part of youth. This has before it a way to go to assume social responsibilities and resources to it.

Being social leaders in the future requires both youth and the agents responsible for their socialization, a greater commitment to solidarity, critical thinking and decision making based on a vital project that takes into account the constraints and opportunities It provides the specific context. In its analysis of the future forecast trends, Archer argues that the metarreflexivo style is characteristic of postmodernism (Archer, 2012). However, this requires a precondition: a process of relational innovation in which, especially in social institutions like the family, the media, organizations of civil society, school, college, business, etc .; that is, the vital places of youth development, models of altruistic behavior, service, and also promote youth participation and status as a center of decisions is placed. Metarreflexivos Young people are those who do not passively accept the tradition, values, messages and mainstreaming. They are therefore able to develop a critical sense that allows them to empathize with whom he needs, generate alternative solutions and have the courage to try them out.

While this study has some limitations, mainly unable to work with a representative sample of youth, it makes a contribution to the theoretical and political discussion on the future of youth as social entrepreneurs who we hope will be useful from our point of view for designing action programs and public policies committed to character development and relational capabilities of new generations as the basis of social action.³

³ Rivera, R., & Vega, M. (Eds.). (2015). Juventud, futuro e innovación social. El futuro del emprendimiento y la participación juvenil. Observatorio de la Juventud, Instituto de la Juventud, Ministerio de Sanidad, Servicios Sociales e Igualdad.