

The effect of exposure to political institutions on demand for democracy in Africa, Latin America and Asia

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Abstract

Understanding why people demand democracy is important to an evaluation of the prospects for democratic stability. Most researchers examining this question have added national-level variables to multi-level regression models of survey data. This paper contributes to the investigation of why people demand democracy by adding new individual-level variables related to individual exposure to political institutions. Its main question is: Does exposure to democracy increase the legitimacy of democracy? Regression analysis results show evidence that exposure to democratic institutions—measured as the number of years lived under democracy—has a statistically significant, though substantively small, effect on demand for democracy. Overall, the results allow some optimism that as people live under democracy, they internalize its core values and improve its chances of consolidation.

This is a working paper

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1 Introduction

Elites, because not numerous, can much more easily overcome collective action problems than the mass of lower class people. Usually, changes in the political regime are pushed by the elites, but they can not succeed if the mass offers strong opposition. Hence, the strength of common citizens desire to live under a democratic regime is important for both democratization and democracy maintenance.

In a democratic political regime, politicians and ordinary citizens must accept elections as the legitimate means of choosing who will govern. Losers must patiently wait until the next election to have an opportunity to elect a leader according to their preferences, and winners must restrain themselves from changing the rules to increase their power. Political systems are considered consolidated democracies when elections are free and fair, alternations of power happen according to the results of elections and are accepted by all main contenders, and the general public sees the system as the best way of organizing the political life. The establishment and survival of democracy depend on both politicians and ordinary citizens being committed to it.

Understanding why people have (or do not have) a favorable view of democracy, that is, why they demand democracy, is important to an evaluation of the prospects for democratic stability. Usually, national-level variables have been added to multi-level regression models of survey data. In this paper, I contribute to the investigation of why people demand democracy by adding to the usual explanations new individual-level variables related to individual exposure to political institutions. My main question is: Does exposure to democracy increase the legitimacy of democracy?

I argue that people live in a constant process of socialization, learning from their individual experiences and from their social environments. People exposed for a longer time to democratic institutions learn how the system works, accept its procedures, and, as a result, demand democracy more than less exposed people.

In this article, I investigate the long term effects of political regimes on individuals' manifest demand for democracy in 22 countries in Africa, 19 in Latin America, and 7 in Asia. I computed individual level variables using survey data from Afrobarometer, AmericasBarometer and Asian Barometer. In most countries, the survey was realized more than once, giving a total of 50 combinations of country-year for Africa, 57 for Latin America, and 19 for Asia.

2 Demand for democracy and exposure to political institutions

According to Lindberg (2004), Miller (2015), and Edgell et al. (2015) recurrent elections increase the prospects of democratization even when their competitiveness is more apparent than real. When opposition parties opt for boycotting the election in protest to widespread fraud and vote coercion practiced by the government, the result is the opposite of the expected. The boycott might highlight the illegitimacy of fraudulent elections, but it also closes a window of opportunity to improve the electoral process. Elections, even if they are a government tool for control as much as a competitive procedure, favor the reorganization of political forces around democratic rules and make it easier for dissidents of the regime to rebel or, at least, press for more authentic elections. Lindberg's theory is more about the dynamics of elites competing for power than about the attitudes of common people while this paper has the aim of evaluating the effect of exposition to democratic institutions on peoples' demand for democracy.

2.1 Definition of Demand for democracy

As in other studies that used the concept, demand here is rather a passive attitude than an active struggle to either conquer or maintain democracy. The concept of demand for democracy often comes in pair with supply of democracy. It is expected that a society with high demand for democracy and low perceived supply of democracy is under pressure to become more democratic while a society with low demand compared with its current perceived supply of democracy is under risk of suffering a setback in its process of democratization (Bratton, 2004; Claassen, 2004; Shin and Tusalem, 2007).

In this article, I opted for using the expression *Demand for democracy* to refer to how much people are willing to live under a democratic regime. According to Chu et al. (2008, p. 77), the survey question most widely used to measure demand for democracy is:

Which of the following statements do you agree with the most:

1. For people like me it doesn't matter whether a government is democratic or non-democratic, or
2. Democracy is preferable to any other form of government, or
3. Under some circumstances an authoritarian government may be preferable to a democratic one.

We may wonder what respondents think when they listen to the word "democracy" in a survey question. People may manifest support for democracy because they want the high

income of developed countries, which happen to be considered democratic (Dalton et al., 2007, p. 142). Another factor that might confuse people about the meaning of “democracy” is that many authoritarian leaders seeking international approval of their procedures say their governments are democratic (Dalton et al., 2007, p. 142).

Canache (2012) examined respondents’ answers to an open question about the meaning of democracy from the 2006–2007 AmericasBarometer and found that for a few respondents the word democracy may have a negative meaning, for some it is related to societal outcomes like economic prosperity and social equality, but for most of them it is associated to political concepts, such as freedom, rule of law, political equality and participation. Moreover, Chu and Huang (2010) created a typology of democratic orientation by the combination of measurements of support for democracy and liberal-democratic values, and found that their “typology has a strong causal affinity with a widely used measurement that asks respondents whether they approve or disapprove of three nondemocratic alternatives—one-party rule, military government, and presidential dictatorship” (Chu and Huang, 2010, p. 121). Hence, we may consider that the question is a reasonably good measure of abstract support for democracy.

However, generalized notions of system support sometimes blend regime preferences and regime evaluations, and demand for democracy is higher when measured by abstract questions such as the above one. Specific contexts give rise to weaker manifest preference for democracy (Chang et al., 2007; Mattes and Bratton, 2007, p. 72). Moreover, some people living under authoritarian regimes see their countries as democratic (Shin, p. 27; Chu and Huang, p. 121). Thus, while building an index of demand for democracy we have to add concrete questions.

According to Dalton et al. (2007, p. 149), people from countries with longer history of democracy associate democracy with freedom, while people from less democratic countries associate democracy with elections. This is evidence that exposition to democratic institutions changes attitudes toward democracy, but how, specifically would political institutions affect attitude formation? In the next section, I argue that socialization theory can contribute to our understanding of this issue.

2.2 Socialization theory

Berger and Luckmann (1966) presented a sophisticated theory on how people develop patterns of behavior while daily interacting with other people, and how they become unconscious of the origins of their social habits. In Berger and Luckmann’s theory, the patterns of behavior acquired during the first years of life—from the interactions with parents and other persons highly important for infants—have an enduring imprinting on individuals’ personality. They refer to this first stage of becoming a member of society as *primary*

socialization.

Although children and adolescents are not emancipated citizens yet, periodic elections make their parents' political preferences more salient and may contribute to a vision of electoral democracy as something normal (Sears and Valentino, 1997). The national political regime might be used as a model on how to make decisions and, thus, contribute to the institution of democratic procedures within other institutions, such as schools (Torney-Purta, 2002). An environment of freedom of speech may also favor open classroom discussions, which help in the development of sophisticated reasoning on social issues by the use of logic to check the internal coherence of arguments and of empirical evidences to support arguments. Moreover, open discussions help people to understand and tolerate the positions of others (Rossi, 2006, p. 113). In summary, if the institutions successfully indoctrinate children and teenagers with the values most favorable to the maintenance of political system at this early phase of life, we will find a correlation between demand for democracy and how authoritarian or democratic the regime was when individuals were very young.

However important the primary socialization may be for the formation of the personality of an individual, politics usually is not a subject very frequently discussed in most homes, and the world of children and teenagers is mostly restricted to family, close friends, school colleagues, and people from their own communities. Children and adolescents do not have enough autonomy to take important decisions about their own destiny; these are taken by their parents. By the time individuals reach adulthood, they have already developed their own ways of dealing with people and solving problems of personal relationships. However, impersonal relations and strategic behavior are much more present in the political world than in everyday life, and knowledge of how to deal with family and friends is rarely enough to navigate the political landscape. An understanding of how political institutions work is necessary to properly appreciate how useful these institutions are to solve collective problems or what a hindrance they are to the prosperity of the community. Citizens must raise their reasoning above the practical knowledge of how to deal with people in daily situations. An understanding of political institutions requires a great deal of abstract thought, or, what Bratton et al. (2005b) calls *cognitive awareness*.

It is only when individuals enter the adult world that national and international events become important for their decisions. Information on job opportunities in nearby provinces or countries and knowledge of political regimes and political conflicts, for instance, might be useful to decide where to live and whom to vote for in national elections. Politics matters more when individuals are already mature enough to understand abstract concepts such as government, political party, and democracy, and when their interactions with strangers become more frequent. Thus, individuals' personalities and basic orientations toward the social world are consolidated mostly during infancy and adolescence, but political attitudes are formed mainly in adulthood; over the basic values developed at their parents' home,

individuals' political ideas may evolve mainly after primary socialization is no longer the main process shaping the individual values and attitudes. This process of continuous adaptation to the larger society, which goes on for the individuals' entire life, Berger and Luckmann called *secondary socialization*.

Individuals do not make rational decisions all the time; nor do they act randomly. Quite the contrary: Most of the time, actions are guided by existing orientations that were learned from experience. Attitudes are practical expressions of these orientations. The meaning of new situations is commonly interpreted within the framework provided by existing orientations, and rarely do individuals feel the need to change their attitudes. Sometimes, however, novel situations might be too different from previous experiences to be encompassed by existing attitudes or might bring new elements that make it evident that previous attitudes are unsatisfactory. If the dissonance between the perception of the current world and existing attitudes is too strong and too persistent, individuals will change their attitudes or even their basic orientations (Bourdieu, 1972; Giddens, 1984; Eckstein, 1988). If the influence of political regimes are exerted mainly through processes of secondary socialization, political events will most directly affect the attitudes of adults, and we will find significant correlation between demand for democracy and the contact individuals have had during their adult lives with democratic and autocratic regimes.

The process of socialization (primary and secondary) is far from being an atomistic process in which individuals develop opinions and attitudes based solely on their own experiences. They talk with each other, share their experiences and form their opinions together. According to Jost et al. (2008, p. 173),

“people are motivated to achieve mutual understanding or ‘shared reality’ with specific others in order to (i) establish, maintain, and regulate interpersonal relationships [...] and (ii) perceive themselves and their environments as stable, predictable, and potentially controllable”.

If this phenomenon happens in a national scale and is strong enough to overcome more individualistic and dyadic processes of socialization, we could find correlation between demand for democracy and exposure to democracy at the national level. Casalecchi (2016) calls this effect of exposure to democracy over the whole population *democratic legacy*, and he has found a positive correlation between support for democracy and democratic legacy in Latin America.

Chu et al. (2008) observe that in different regions of the world economic and political factors have different weights in the explanation of people's evaluation of democratic regimes: national economic conditions, for example, matter more for Latin Americans than for Africans and Asians. Hence, before proceeding to the analysis of data on the relationship between exposure to democratic institutions and demand for democracy in Africa,

Latin America and Asia, I will briefly comment on the different contexts that might impact the relationship.

2.3 Regional contexts

Many North African countries became independent during the first decades of the 20th century, but most sub-Saharan African countries achieved their independence between 1960 and 1980. Most of these independent countries emerged as authoritarian regimes. During the years following the end of the Cold War, the number of democratic countries increased, with some setbacks. However, the democratization process in the countries surveyed by Afrobarometer has leveled off in recent years.

In Africa, many people still live in small villages with strong ethnic identity, and local leaders inherit their political positions in a patriarchal system instead of being elected. However, local participative assemblies are also common which is a feature favorable to the development of democratic institutions. Most African countries have national boundaries that do not follow the ethnic distribution of their people, and national political institutions that were imported from Western countries instead of being built upon their traditional politics (Lindberg, 2004; Mattes and Shin, 2005). On the contrary, traditional practices, in a context different from its origins, inadvertently corrupts the imported institutions. Typical African values of respect for traditional leaders who should care for the interests of the whole community have favored the development of national institutions plagued with clientelism and patrimonialism and not the rule of law. Usually people try to reach consensus on political matters, which might be good for local politics, but might result in intolerance and xenophobia at the national level where the conciliation should be the result of negotiation rather than consensus (Mattes and Shin, 2005, p. 10).

People do not choose and cannot change their ethnicity. If voters choose their representatives based on ethnicity, they will not change their votes based on the policies proposed in electoral campaigns, and the low competitiveness of elections will decrease the appeal of elections (Lindberg, 2004, p 43)

The increasing insertion of African states in the global economy as exporters of commodities—which makes governments less dependent on taxation of citizens and more dependent on foreign capital—is one of the obstacles to further democratization of the continent. Moreover, in recent years, combating terrorism has become a top priority for developed countries, which has resulted in weaker international pressure for democratization and consequently a dwindling manifest commitment to democracy by some African leaders (Gyimah-Boadi, 2015; Diamond, 2015).

Democratization does not always deliver the improvements in economic conditions that people expect. Indeed, African citizens have not benefited as they should from recent eco-

conomic growth, and vote buying and distribution of resources to secure the support of allies remain widespread (Gyimah-Boadi, 2015, p. 106). On the one hand, this might make people disillusioned with democracy. On the other hand, people may learn that democracy is more about freedom than about material gains. When there is alternation in power, citizens' satisfaction with democracy is restored (Bratton, 2004; Moehler and Lindberg, 2009), and the occurrence of free and fair elections is the factor with the strongest effect on people's satisfaction with democracy (Bratton, 2007).

Mattes and Bratton (2007, p. 202) have found that the most important factor for a high demand for democracy in Africa "is the extent to which respondents see a set of political procedures (a scale consisting of majority rule, free speech, regular elections, and multi-party competition) as 'essential' elements of democracy." People demand more democracy when they associate the regime with more political rights; performance of the national economy and personal finances are less relevant (Mattes and Bratton, 2007, p. 202).

Although elections in an environment dominated by patronage and clientelism might be more an expression of the power of leaders to control the votes of populations than an expression of individual free will, Bratton et al. (2005b) have found that in Africa cognitive awareness increases with education, exposure to mass media, and personal experience. Even people with little education can observe political events such as elections and their results and make their own judgments about the value of democracy. Consequently, it is expected that demand for democracy will be higher among those who have lived their adult lives under democratic regimes. According to Mattes and Bratton (2007, p. 198) "people constantly acquire new information, developing a running tally of lessons about political regimes accumulated over an entire lifetime".

Scholars consider that, compared with people from Western countries, Asians inherited from Confucius a philosophical world view that makes them value collectivity more than the individuality. People from Asian would expect that their leaders are part of an elite who cares for the collectivity welfare and not for their own interests. Common people would not be prepared to question what leaders do, and should respect the social hierarchies. On daily interactions, this deference to leaders would be extend as respect for older people. The obligation of working hard for the prosperity of the community would also be typical of Asian values. In this context, a government would be legitimate not if elected in free and fair elections, but if implementing policies that improve the life of common people. The strong ethics of work might be favorable to economic development, but the lack of individual liberties and freedom, ultimately, in addition to obviously hindering the development of democracy, harms the economic development (Shi and Lu, 2010; Kim, 2010; Mattes and Shin, 2005).

However, there are signs that these values are changing. Older people have more typically Asian values than young people, and when different regions of Asia are compared,

what is supposed to be typical Confucian values are actually stronger in regions less influenced by Confucianism (Kim, 2010, p. 337), (Croissant, 2004, p. 170), (Shin, 2013, p. 12).

China's vertiginous economic growth combined with its authoritarian regime affects the whole world, but obviously its influence is stronger on other Asian countries. The fact that the most populous country in the world so far is growing without democratization, and strengthening its economic relations with democratic and authoritarian countries alike, contributes to an environment favorable to the survival of authoritarian regimes (Chang et al., 2006).

The economies of Latin America colonies were organized to produce and transfer raw materials to their metropolitan states, and the enslavement of both native and African people was ubiquitous. The cultural inheritance of the colonial era is a highly hierarchical society and also a distinction between poor and rich people so strong that poor non-white people are seen as somewhat less than humans and are treated with notably less dignity than the rich decedents of white Europeans. This context exerts a strong pressure over democracy. As Lagos argues, Latin America is a region with

[...] extremely limited social mobility: 86 percent of those born in the last generation to parents with only primary education themselves attain only primary education. [...] An individual's future is determined by birth, and people expect democracy to change this (Lagos, 2008, p. 124).

As a result of such a context, some authors argue that Latin America citizens are particularly worried about the economic performance of their democracies (Lagos, 2008; Fernandez and Kuenzi, 2010), and Benton (2005) has confirmed that Latin American voters punish incumbents by voting in non-incumbents when they are blamed for economic adversities. Given this context, from the three regions studied in this research, Latin America is expected to have the lower effect of exposition to democratic institutions on demand for democracy.

3 Data and results

I use data from Afrobarometer¹ (rounds 3, 4 and 5), Asian Barometer² (waves 1, 2 and 3) and AmericasBarometer³ (years 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2012), keeping only countries that have in their recent history both democratic and non-democratic regimes, as measured by the *Electoral Index* of the Varieties of Democracy (*V-Dem*) project (Coppedge et al., 2016). I also deleted both the cases with missing responses for questions used to build the dependent variable and the cases with missing age or education of respondents. Finally, to avoid losing more data, I replaced missing values of other control variables with random values.⁴ Table 1 shows the remaining number of cases by continent.

Table 1: Number countries and number of respondents by continent

	Countries	Countries \times Years	Respondents
Africa	22	50	66,863
Asia	7	19	25,530
Latin America	19	57	77,955

3.1 Dependent variable

Like Bratton and others,⁵ I measure *Demand for democracy* based on survey questions where respondents have the opportunity to agree with the statement that “Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government” and to disapprove of single-party rule, military government, and presidential dictatorship. To calculate *Demand for democracy*, I coded the democratic answers as 1 and all other responses as 0. The index is the mean value of the variables. Figure 1 shows the distribution of *Demand for democracy*. Latin American is the only region where the most frequent value of *Demand for democracy* is not 1.

¹Afrobarometer describes itself as “a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across more than 30 countries in Africa. Five rounds of surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2013. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent’s choice with nationally representative samples that yield country-level results with margins of sampling error of +/-2% (for samples of 2,400) or +/- 3% (for samples of 1,200) at a 95% confidence level” (see www.afrobarometer.org).

²I am grateful to Asian Barometer project for allowing the free academic use of its data.

³I thank the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) and its major supporters (the United States Agency for International Development, the United Nations Development Program, the Inter-American Development Bank, and Vanderbilt University) for making the data available.

⁴The R scripts necessary to replicate the analyses presented here are available as an attachment to this PDF file.

⁵See Bratton (2004, p. 151), Bratton et al. (2005a, p. 90), Bratton et al. (2005b, p. 272), Bratton (2007, p. 102), Mattes and Bratton (2007, p. 193).

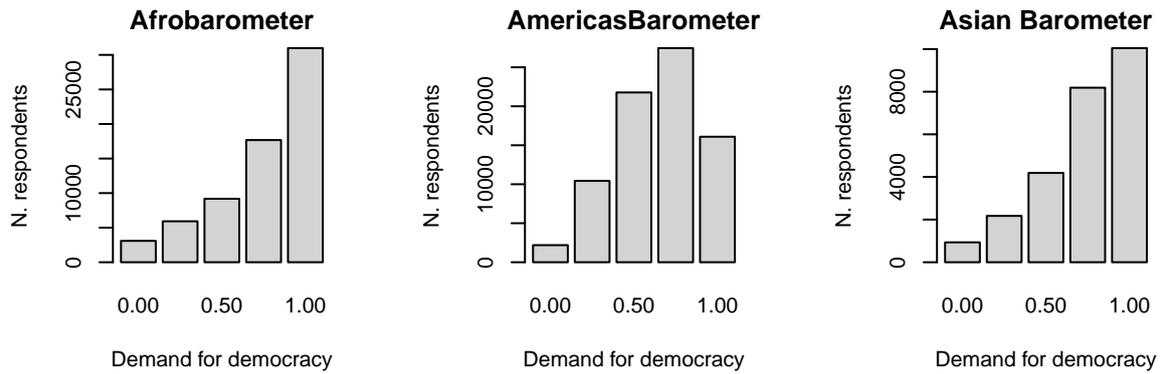


Figure 1: Demand for democracy distribution

3.2 Independent variables

To calculate individual exposure to democratic institutions, we need data on the national level of democracy throughout recent decades. I used *V-Dem* because it is most likely the better data available to date. Its indexes were calculated by using sophisticated methods to aggregate information provided by more than 2,600 experts from around the world (Teorell et al., 2016). The *V-Dem* project covers the period from 1900 to present, and given the way that I have calculated exposition to democratic institutions this is enough even for people that were born in 1894 (just 3 people were born earlier among a total of 170,348 respondents).

I used the *V-Dem Index of electoral democracy* dichotomized as non-democratic (when ≤ 0.5) and democratic (> 0.5) (Lindberg, 2015). Figure 2 shows the proportion of democratic to non-democratic regimes among the countries surveyed by Afrobarometer, Asian Barometer and AmericasBarometer. Note that the countries not surveyed by Afrobarometer include some of the least democratic on the continent, and, thus, the proportion of democratic regimes in Africa is lower than the what is shown in the figure.

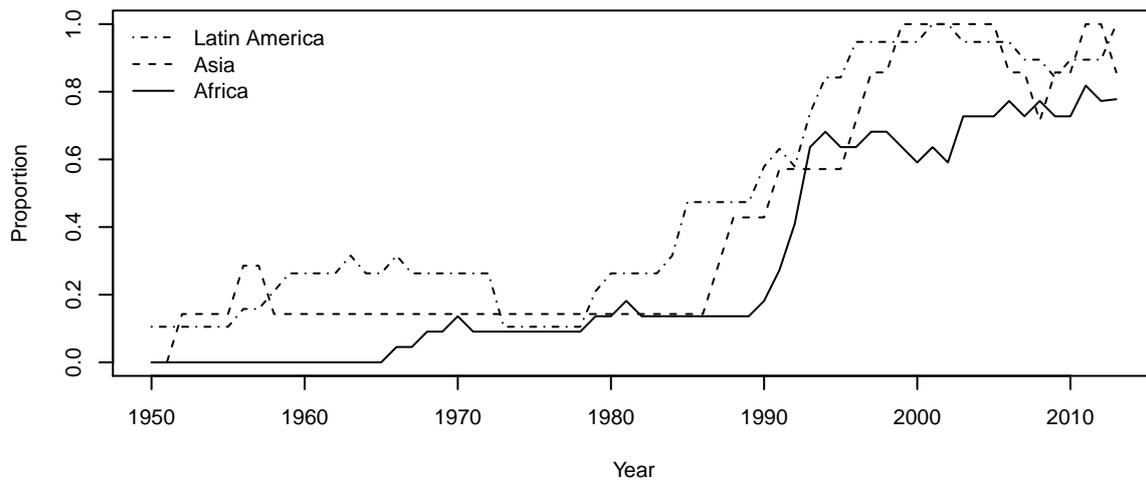


Figure 2: Proportion of democratic regimes among countries surveyed by Afrobarometer, AmericasBarometer and Asian Barometer — 1950–2013

Based on *V-Dem*, I calculated four indicators of respondents' exposure to both democratic and authoritarian institutions:

- *Years of democracy (Youth)* is the number of years lived under democracy before adulthood (between 6 and 17 years old). My goal with this variable is to test whether primary socialization was especially favorable to democracy under democratic regimes.
- *Years of democracy (Adult)* is the number of adult life years lived under democracy between the year of respondent's 18th birthday and the survey date. This variable will be used to test whether secondary socialization has an effect or not on demand for democracy.
- *Democratic legacy* is a national level variable corresponding to the number of democratic years in the last six decades. While the previous variables are based on a more atomistic hypotheses of individual attitudes formation, the purpose of this variable is to test whether the interaction between citizens within nations is a dynamic strong enough to have a significant effect on the attitudes of the citizenry as a whole.

I expect that the democratic patterns of behavior observed at the national politics will be emulated by the adults while they supervise children and adolescents, helping them to trust other people and to be tolerant to diversity, ultimately demanding more democracy when reaching adulthood. Consequently, *Years of democracy (Youth)* should have a positive effect on *Demand for democracy*.

The rationale behind the expected positive correlation between *Years of democracy (Adult)* and *Demand for democracy* is that people living under democracy will see its institutions as valuable. Elections will be seen as the normal way of choosing leaders, turnover

of government officials will be regarded as the natural consequence of elections, and tolerance toward minorities will be seen as necessary and fair. These and other democratic events and attitudes will be seen as the normal way of achieving peace and prosperity. The longer an individual lives under democracy, the more he or she will demand democracy.

Years of democracy (Adult) will be the same as the number of adult life years for respondents living in countries whose *V-Dem* scores have always been above 0.5 in recent decades. In these countries, *Years of democracy (Youth)* will have the same values for all adults. Similarly, countries with no history of democracy cannot provide useful data on these variables. Hence, when using these variables, it only makes sense to analyze data from countries that have had both democratic and non-democratic years in their recent past.

Table 2 shows the correlations between *Demand for democracy* and the independent variables. The value of *Demand for democracy* was averaged by country–year before calculating the correlation with *Democratic legacy*.

Table 2: Correlation between *Demand for democracy* and independent variables

Variable	Continent		
	Africa	Asia	LA
Years of democracy (Youth)	0.05	0.06	0.01
Years of democracy (Adult)	0.05	0.09	0.14
Democratic legacy	0.31	0.41	0.65

3.3 Control variables

In addition to the independent variables on exposure to democracy, the multilevel regression models presented in this paper contain several control variables that are known to influence demand for democracy.

On the one hand, as citizens become older, they accumulate experience with their country’s political system and can better understand it. This effect is similar to gaining years in school, although never as powerful as what can be achieved with formal education. On the other hand, given the current demographic profile of most countries in the world, older people are less educated than younger people. Figure 3 shows the mean value of *Demand for democracy* by *Age*, and we can see that the relationship between them is not linear in Africa and Asia. For this reason, I recoded *Age* in three groups: *Youth* (up to 29 years old), *Mature* (from 30 to 59 years old), and *Old* (more than 60 years old).



Figure 3: Average value of *Demand for democracy* by *Age*

The variables *Years of democracy (Youth)* and *Years of democracy (Adult)* are the number of years lived by individuals during certain phases of their lives while *Age* is the number of year lived since they were born. Hence, it is expected that the variables are correlated, which could cause multicollinearity issues in regression models. Table 3 shows that the correlations are high, but the variance-inflation factors of linear regression models are all smaller than 4 and, thus, not problematic (Table 4).

Table 3: Correlations between age groups and individual level variables measuring exposition to democracy

Age group	Years of democracy (Youth)			Years of democracy (Adult)		
	Africa	Asia	LA	Africa	Asia	LA
Young	0.62	0.46	0.64	-0.55	-0.38	-0.72
Mature	-0.44	-0.29	-0.45	0.36	-0.06	0.41
Old	-0.27	-0.11	-0.24	0.26	0.45	0.44

Table 4: Variance-inflation factors for linear regression models with *Demand for democracy* as dependent variable

	Africa	Asia	LA
Years of democracy (Youth)	1.74	1.58	1.75
Years of democracy (Adult)	1.52	1.73	2.48
Age group (Mature)	2.47	2.59	3.35
Age group (Old)	2.05	3.11	3.08

Formal education increases individuals' capacity for abstract thinking and consequently allows them to have a better understanding of how democracy works (or should work) and to feel more confident in their ability to participate in public debates (Donovan and Karp, 2006; Mattes and Bratton, 2007). Figure 4 shows the mean value of *Demand for*

democracy according to *Age group* and *Education*. In Africa and Asia, *Education* clearly has a stronger effect on *Demand for democracy* than *Age*: even young people with higher education demand democracy more than old people with only primary education. In Latin America both variables seem to be equally important to explain *Demand for democracy*. In the three continents, *Education* amplifies the effect of *Age* on *Demand for democracy*: older people demand more democracy and even more so if they have higher education.

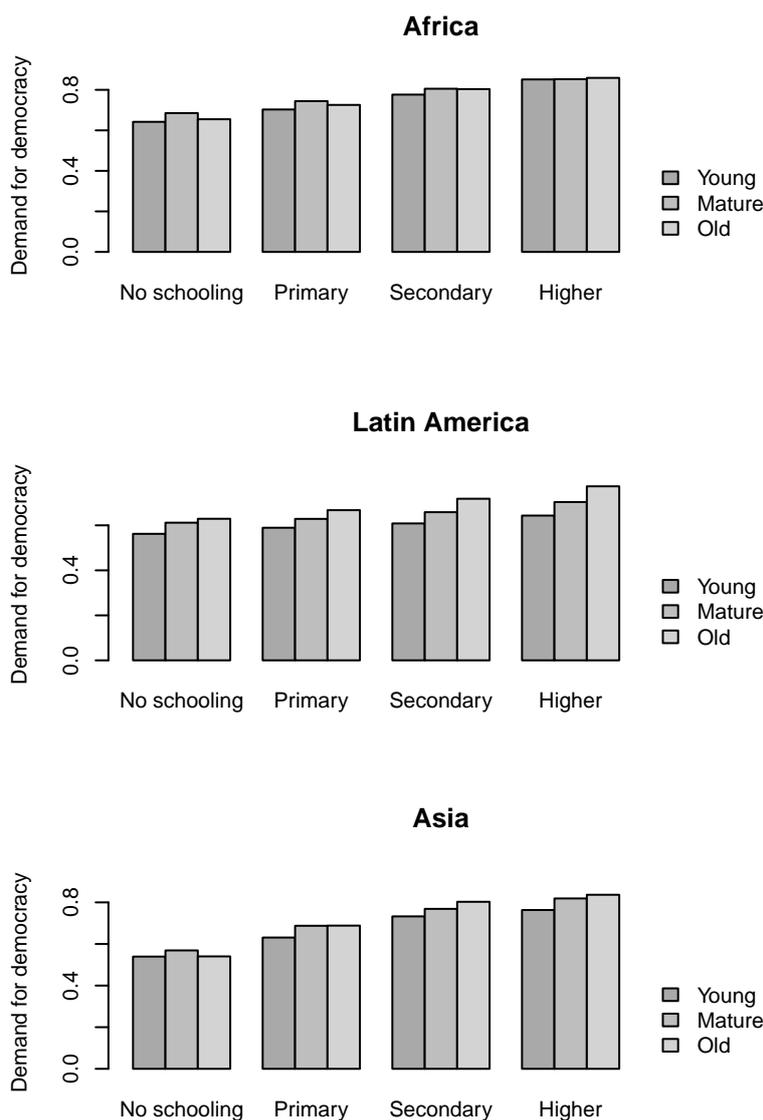


Figure 4: Mean value of Demand for democracy according to age and education

People worried with survival are more prone to support any political regime that seems promising in raising their standard of living than people who do not see any important threat to the satisfaction of their basic material needs. The later have higher propensity to value freedom of expression, tolerate cultural diversity and trust other people. Therefore, they form a better base of support for democracy. In summary, economic development

nurtures self-expression values and these, then, form a better environment for democracy to thrive (Inglehart, 2003). This theory has found support in other investigations. For example, using World Values Survey data from 1997, Ribeiro (2008) has found a positive association between demand for democracy and post-materialist values among Brazilians. Also, according to Andersen (2012, p. 28), people of higher income support democracy more than people of lower income, especially in countries with low economic inequality.

If people support democracy because they believe that it will foster economic development and decrease economic inequality, the support will be withdrawn if such expectations are not fulfilled in a few years after democratization. In this case, it is expected an increase in the approval of populist leaders that defend that the institutions of liberal democracy—such as partisan competition and subordination of president to Congress—are more an obstacle than a way of realizing the peoples' desires (Bratton and Mattes, 2001; Seligson, 2007).

On the contrary, if people support democracy because they believe in its intrinsic value, the chances that the regime will survive to economic crises are higher (Mattes and Bratton, 2007). Chang et al. (2007, p. 75) and Chu et al. (2008, p. 85) argue that it is harder for a citizen of a democratic country to be happy with its democracy if the country was governed in the recent past by an economically successful authoritarian regime, and according to Chang et al. (2007, p. 77), people in East Asian developing countries became disillusioned with democracy because economic and social conditions did not improve as expected after democratization.

Many studies using survey data add *Income* as a control variable in their models. Asian Barometer asks respondents to indicate what is their household monthly income among five groups of income, and I used this variable as an indicator of *Affluence*. For both Afrobarometer and AmericasBarometer, I used a battery of questions on the ownership of goods (radio, television and motor vehicle for Afrobarometer; television and motor vehicle in Latin America) to build an *Affluence* index.

Logan and Bratton (2006) have shown that in Africa women mostly have the same attitudes as men regarding *Demand for democracy* but replied “Don’t know” more frequently than men to the questions used to build the index of *Demand for democracy*. Women are also slightly more likely than men to accept one-party rule due to fear of violence during elections (Logan and Bratton, 2006). Hence, I add the variable *Gender* to the regression models to complete the set of basic demographic controls.

The perception that the state adequately supplies democracy increases the legitimacy of the system and, consequently, regime stability (Zuern, 2009). Using Afrobarometer data, several authors⁶ have measured this perception with an index of *Supply of democracy*, built

⁶See Bratton and Chang (2006); Mattes and Bratton (2007); and Bratton and Gyimah-Boadi (2015).

by combining the answers to two questions: “In your opinion, how much of a democracy is your country today?” and “Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in your country?” These two questions are also present in both AmericasBarometer and Asian Barometer, and I used them to compute an index of *Supply of democracy*. I coded the first question responses as 1 if they were “A full democracy” or “A democracy with minor problems” and as 0 otherwise. As for the second question, the value 1 was attributed to the answers “Fairly satisfied” and “Very satisfied.” In both cases, “Don’t know” was coded as 0. The index is the mean value of the two indicators. There is a positive correlation between the average value of *Demand for democracy* by country and the average value of *Supply of democracy* by country. However, the correlations are significant only for Afrobarometer ($r = 0.43, p = 0.00$) and for AmericasBarometer ($r = 0.73, p = 0.00$), not for Asian Barometer ($r = 0.37, p = 0.12$). Of course, conclusions drawn from correlations between country averages might lead to ecological fallacy since the correlations might not exist at the individual level within countries.

As control variables at the national level, I added the *Logarithm of GDP per capita* (World Bank, 2015) and the *Current democratic level* (the electoral democracy index of *V-Dem*). The correlation between the averages of *Demand for democracy* and *Log of GDP per capita* is not significant for Afrobarometer ($r = 0.13, p = 0.37$), but it is for AmericasBarometer ($r = 0.37, p = 0.00$) and Asian Barometer ($r = 0.81, p = 0.00$). The correlation between the averages of *Demand for democracy* and *Current democratic level* is significant for Afrobarometer ($r = 0.29, p = 0.04$) and for AmericasBarometer ($r = 0.36, p = 0.01$), but not for Asian Barometer ($r = 0.44, p = 0.06$), possibly due the smaller number of country–years combinations.

Many other individual level variables (such as perception of corruption, trust in institutions, interpersonal trust, evaluation of government performance, respondent’s ideological position, and feelings of insecurity due to high criminality rate) have been pointed by the literature as having explanatory power on attitudes toward democracy (Bratton and Mattes, 2001; Bohn, 2012; Doyle, 2011; Chang et al., 2007; Fernandez and Kuenzi, 2010; Gunther and Monteiro, 2003; Mattes and Bratton, 2007; Seligson, 2007). However, I believe that the basic set of demographic variables and the few others added as control in the following regression models are already the most theoretically relevant for testing the robustness of the relationship between demand for democracy and exposure to political institutions.

3.4 Multilevel regressions

So far we have mostly looked at the effect of single variables on *Demand for democracy*. However, we have to test whether correlations remain significant when the variables are controlled by each other. Because we have variables from both individual and national

levels, I have run the multilevel regression model whose results are shown in Figure 5. All variables included in the model were scaled to have mean 0 and standard deviation 1 to make it easier to compare the estimates of the coefficients. Each plot shows the results of three models, one for each continent. The horizontal lines represent the confidence intervals calculated as the interval of the estimate ± 1.96 its standard error. I consider significant the coefficients whose confidence interval do not include 0 as estimate.

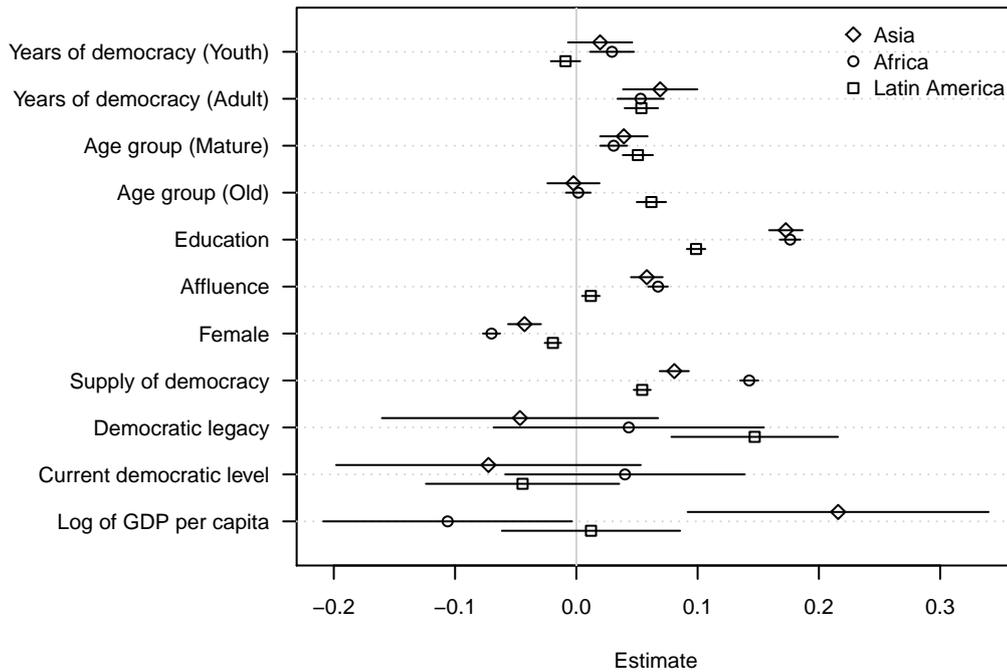


Figure 5: Exposition to democracy as explanation for *Demand for democracy*

The confidence interval of the national level variables are much wider than the that of individual level ones due to the relatively small number of combinations of country–years. *Democratic legacy* effect is positive, as expected, for Africa and Latin America, but it is significant only for Latin America. Thus, we confirm the results found by Casalecchi (2016), but we did not found evidence that they are generalizable for other continents. The main alternative explanation at the national level, *Current democratic level*—as measured by *V-Dem*’s Electoral democracy index—was not significant in any continent. That is, although not generalizable for other continents, *Democratic legacy* still is a better explanation than the variable most widely used to test the importance of political institutions to attitudes formation. Still, we do not have strong evidence in favor of the hypothesis that the interaction among citizens significantly shapes the attitudes of all persons, including the ones that have not lived the experience by themselves.

The other control variable, *Log of GDP per capita*, has a high impact on *Demand for democracy*, but only in Asia, a negative effect in Latin America (the opposite from what expected from the literature), and no effect in Africa.

Turning to the individual level variables, the effect of *Years of democracy (Youth)* is as ambiguous as the effect of *Democratic legacy*. It is significant only for Africa—and positive, as expected—but it has a positive but not significant effect in Asia, and an unexpected negative effect in Latin America. In summary, our approach to measure exposure to political institutions did not produce clear evidence that primary socialization is more pro-democratic when it happens in a national democratic context. In other words, I did not find strong support for the hypothesis that exposition to democratic institutions during the period of primary socialization is conducive to more democratic attitudes.

Turning now turn to the test of secondary socialization, we can see that, as expected, *Years of democracy (Adult)* has positive and significant effect on *Demand for democracy* in all three continents. Although the estimates are small, they still are higher than the effect of *Age* in each continent. That is, if mature people demand more democracy, this is at least in part because they have lived under democratic regimes. Thus, we have evidence that exposition to democratic institutions during adulthood increases demand for democracy. This result is consonant with Lindberg's theory of democratization through elections: elections increase the prospects of democracy because elites abide by the democratic rules on how to distribute power, but also because common people's appreciation of democracy increases.

Supply of democracy, *Affluence*, and *Education* have the expected positive effect. Women demand democracy less than men. However, as Logan and Bratton (2006) found, women are twice as likely as men to reply that they “don't know”, and, given the way *Demand for democracy* was calculated, this implies lower index values.

4 Conclusion

The main argument of this paper is that people living under democracy learn about how democracy works and become more committed to it. They not only say that democracy is the best political regime available, but they also reject military government, single-party rule and presidential dictatorship. I argued that a variety of mechanisms would be responsible for making common people to demand democracy: primary socialization, secondary socialization, and a national dynamics of attitudes formation. In order to test these hypotheses, I computed one national level and two individual level variables reflecting exposure to democracy. I have found only limited support for the importance of primary socialization and national dynamics hypotheses, and a more robust effect of secondary socialization on demand for democracy. Exposure to democratic institutions—measured as the number of years lived under democracy during adulthood—has a statistically significant, though substantively small, effect on demand for democracy. The effect is statistically significant even in the different historical and cultural contexts of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Overall, the results allow cautious optimism regarding the future of democracy: we have found evidence that as people live under democracy they internalize its core values, improving its chances of consolidation.

Of course the approach of measuring exposition to national political institutions as the number of years lived under these institutions does not fully capture the influence of institutions on the formation of individuals' attitudes, but it proved to be efficient for the task of showing that this influence exists. *Years of democracy (Adult)* is highly correlated with *Age* since it is just part of the sum of years lived by individuals, and at same time it has a significant effect on *Demand for democracy*. That is, *Years of democracy (Adult)* explains part of the effect of *Age* on *Demand for democracy*. The variable *Age*, usually added as control to regression models, is just a proxy for an array of unknown events lived by individuals. Thus, ideally, we should be able to add new meaningful variables to the models up to the point where age would completely lose its statistical significance. *Years of democracy (Adult)* was not enough for this, but its significance in three continents indicates that the approach proposed in this paper is worth taking.

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Appendix

Table 5: Availability of variables in different Afrobarometer Rounds

Question	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
Support for dem.	supdem	Q38	Q37	Q30	Q32
Reject one party	rejone	Q35A	Q36A	Q29A	Q31B
Reject military	rejmil	Q35C	Q36B	Q29B	Q31A
Reject dictator	rejdic	Q35D	Q36C	Q29C	Q31C
How democratic	dmpext	Q37	Q46	Q42A	Q42
Satisf. with dem.	dmpsat	Q40	Q47	Q43	Q43
Age	age	Q80	Q1	Q1	Q1
Gender	gender	Q96	Q101	Q101	Q101
Education	educ	Q84	Q90	Q89	Q97
Affluence			Q93A-F	Q92A-C	Q90A-C
Hshld income		Q90			

Table 6: Availability of variables in different AmericasBarometer Years

Question	04	06	08	10	12
Support for dem.	DEM2	DEM2	DEM2	DEM2	DEM2
Reject one party		DEM23	DEM23	DEM23	DEM23
Reject military	JC1,10,13	JC1,10,13	JC1,10,13	JC1,10,13	JC1,10,13
Reject dictator		JC15	JC15	JC15A	JC15A
How democratic		PN4	PN4	PN4	PN4
Satisf. with dem.		PN5	PN5	PN5	PN5
Age	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q2
Gender	Q1	Q1	Q1	SEXI	Q1
Education	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED
Affluence	R1-15	R1-15	R1-15	R1-18	R1-15
Hshld income					

Table 7: Availability of variables in different Asian Barometer Waves

Question	W1	W2	W3
Support for dem.	Q117	Q121	Q124
Reject one party	Q122	Q125	Q130
Reject military	Q123	Q126	Q131
Reject dictator	Q121	Q124	Q129
How democratic	Q100		
Satisf. with dem.	Q098		
Age	SE3	SE3	SE3
Gender	SE2	SE2	SE2
Education	SE5	SE5	SE5
Affluence			SE14
Hshld income	SE9	SE9	SE13

Table 8: Variation in the number of cases and countries while preparing the datasets for analysis

Stage	N. of country–years			N. of rows		
	Africa	Asia	LA	Africa	Asia	LA
Original dataset	72	30	82	104,697	36,829	132,844
Missing <i>Demand for democracy</i>	71	30	62	103,378	36,829	85,915
Missing <i>Age</i>	71	30	62	102,320	36,829	85,183
Missing <i>V-Dem</i> data	71	25	59	102,320	32,304	81,126
Missing <i>Education</i>	71	25	58	102,267	32,206	79,652
No variation in exposure to democracy	50	19	57	66,863	25,530	77,955

Table 9: Number of missing values replace by random ones

	Africa	Asia	LA
<i>Affluence</i>	51	2,112	19
<i>Supply of democracy</i>	52	410	11,554
<i>Gender</i>	0	9	0

Table 10: Exposition to democracy as explanation for *Demand for democracy*

	Africa	Asia	LA
Years of democracy (Youth)	0.029 (0.009)	0.020 (0.013)	-0.009 (0.006)
Years of democracy (Adult)	0.053 (0.010)	0.069 (0.016)	0.054 (0.007)
Age group (Mature)	0.031 (0.006)	0.039 (0.010)	0.051 (0.006)
Age group (Old)	0.002 (0.005)	-0.002 (0.011)	0.062 (0.006)
Education	0.176 (0.004)	0.173 (0.007)	0.099 (0.004)
Affluence	0.067 (0.004)	0.058 (0.007)	0.012 (0.004)
Female	-0.070 (0.004)	-0.043 (0.007)	-0.019 (0.003)
Supply of democracy	0.143 (0.004)	0.081 (0.006)	0.054 (0.004)
Democratic legacy	0.043 (0.057)	-0.046 (0.058)	0.147 (0.035)
Current democratic level	0.040 (0.050)	-0.072 (0.064)	-0.044 (0.041)
Log of GDP per capita	-0.106 (0.052)	0.216 (0.063)	0.012 (0.037)
Constant	0.003 (0.043)	-0.007 (0.047)	0.008 (0.028)
Observations	66,863	25,530	77,955
N. groups	50	19	57