

SOCIALISM OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY AND ITS  
IMPLICATIONS ON PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

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Title of Study: SOCIALISM OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

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Abstract: Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century accords life to participatory democracy that differs from representative democracy by encouraging citizens not just to vote, but also to be a part of the political decision-making process during elections. Limited research has been evidenced to focus on participatory democracy and most of it pertains to only exploring the meaning of it as a theory (Funch and Zittel 2002, Pellizoni 2003, Paterman 2012). In fact, existing research fails to account for the impact of this model on the practice of participatory democracy in South America or its comparison with the neoliberal policies. The purpose of this research is to study the hallmark of 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism: Participatory democracy. In particular, the paper examines delegative democracy, which entails citizens functioning actively in the political process and elected representatives, necessarily following the will of the people. This study aims to measure the levels of participatory democracy in Bolivia and Venezuela. In order to achieve this objective, the study conducts a comparative assessment of Bolivia and Venezuela (two countries with progressive economic policies) with Colombia and Peru (two countries with neoliberal economic policies), for the period 2004 – 2014. The specified time period covers much of Hugo Chávez's time in office in Venezuela, as well as the first years of Bolivia's left-wing president, Evo Morales. Bolivia, Venezuela, Colombia, and Peru, in fact, share many similarities (e.g., population, demography, and political system) but differ in one key respect: Political system. Comparing these countries, as such, allows optimally to examine whether socialism for the 21<sup>st</sup> century results in higher levels of political participation for Bolivia and Venezuela.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

How does socialism of the 21st century arise? Subsequent to a series of structural adjustment loans and debt restructuring, which was led by the International Monetary Fund in the late twentieth century, Latin America experienced a significant increase in inequality. In fact, between 1990 and 1999, the Gini coefficient witnessed an escalation in almost every Latin American country and the associated volatile prices and inflation led to mass dissatisfaction. Particularly, in 2000, only 37% of Latin Americans were satisfied with their democracies. This event led to the emergence of a left-leaning socio-political movements' wave on behalf of indigenous rights, cocaleros (the coca leaf growers of Bolivia), labor rights, women's rights, land rights, and educational reform, which eventually provided momentum to the election of socialist leaders.

According to Dieterich (2007), "The program of the Socialism of the 21st century is necessarily a revolutionary one," wherein, the existing social order was replaced by a "qualitatively different system". However, according to Dieterich (2007), this revolution should be a gradual process that does not employ violence but instead utilizes participative

democracy in order to secure power, education, scientific knowledge in the context of the society and international cooperation.

Correspondingly, the mechanisms underpinning the structural construct or replacement of democratic institutions to ensure a fair and efficient allocation of public funds constitutes a central issue in the political economy of development. As such, with reference to the new governance agenda, several scholars including Cadbury (2000) and Hix (2011) have emphasized citizen empowerment as a tool for impacting improvement in the workings of democratic institutions. The idea that encouraging citizen participation can improve the workings of a democracy is also echoed in the political science literature, as evidenced in the work of several scholars (Albert & Hahnel, 2010; Gurcan, 2013; Racker, 2011; Harnecker, 2010; Bachrach & Botwinick, 1992; Paterman, 2012). Similarly, the literature evidences a substantial emphasis on the participation role of improving the flow of information into the political process beyond that available by the electing representatives.

The current study has implications for the effectiveness of the participatory democracy in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela, in context of encouraging political participation among the poor, less educated, and improving the quality of governance in Bolivia and Venezuela. Previous literature review highlights that to the best of primary author's knowledge, no previous study has focused on the effect of 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism on participatory democracy within the populations of low income and low educated people in comparison to neoliberal countries.

Attributed to the political system (socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century) in Bolivia and Venezuela, it is expected that these countries with progressive economic model demonstrate higher participation levels compared to the neoliberal economic model (Colombia – Peru).

Correspondingly, in order to test this statement, the current study analyzes the survey data through America's Barometer (using descriptive statistics, percentages, and t-tests tables.). Alternatively put, the study aims to assess: If there is a major mass participation in political decision-making to complement or replace the traditional institutions of elections and lobbying associated with neoliberalism and the governmental system that supports it (i.e., the representative democracy in Bolivia and Venezuela).

In order to answer the research question, the study initially conducts an in-depth review of the previous studies on socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century focusing on participatory democracy. Wherein, the study presents arguments aligned with the works of previous scholars, like Kennemore (2011) and Morris (1945) that have overlooked the process of participatory democracy. Second, for the theoretical framework of the theory, the study assumes a high percentage point for the participatory democracy in the Bolivian and Venezuelan case, under the Presidents Evo Morales and Hugo Chávez, from less active segments of society, such as the poor and the less educated. The high percentage could be attributed to the fact in both the countries the presidents are recognized as socialist leaders. Since socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century aims to create the conditions in workplaces and communities for the most vulnerable society and gives to people the tools to develop their capacities and include them in the decision-making process and political involvement, the study assumes more participation in those sectors of the society in Bolivia and Venezuela.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand traditional socialism, (herein, it specifically refers to socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe), it is imperative to understand, first of all, that it is a term with a broad definition. According to Marx (1867), the term refers to a range of economic and social systems characterized by social ownership and workers' self-management of the means of production as well as the political theories and movements associated with them. Correspondingly, social ownership may refer to forms of public, collective or cooperative ownership, or to citizen ownership of equity.

Following that concept, some scholars (Simonson, 1900; Ely, 1899; Johns, 1913; Schaffrath, 1955; Breckinridge, 1960; Warren, 1970; Brooklyn, 1933; Flint, 1843; McCabe, 1922; Low, 1913; Kennemore, 2011; Morris, 1945) define the fundamental base of socialism as the instruments of production, which constitute the property of the collective community. And further add that each member of the community, in socialism, will be entitled to an equal opportunity for their use, and that each producer will be

employed by the collective community, and will receive his remuneration from the community.

It is essential to start the exploration of the concept, through first gaining an understanding of the proposal of traditional socialism. This concept is well-defined by Simonson (1900), who believes that the proposal entails the following clauses:

- (i) A saving in rent and interest (currently being paid to the private owners of land and capital would now be paid to the community);
- (ii) A saving in the profits not going to the pockets of the various personnel of productive enterprises; each individual would have an opportunity to use the instruments of production, and to produce something socially necessary to the community. Each person would be sure of employment producing something needed by society, the large number of middlemen would be either abolished or diminished, and only actual contributors' toward production would share in the commodities.
- (iii) All the consumers would be producers and all producers consumers, there would be no private ownership in the instruments of production, and as each producer would have an equal opportunity for their use, there would be no exploitation of the workers by the owners of these instruments of production and the laborer would be rewarded by receiving his or her just wages out of the produced commodities.

Alternatively, Ely (1899) explains that this type of socialism pertains to the common ownership, common management in production, and the distribution of the income by the common authority (the people).

As apparent all the definitions mentioned above commonly highlight that traditional socialism focuses on the production of the goods for the well-being of the society, common

ownership and the industry property by the people. However, it is now obvious that socialism has turned into something similar, though exactly not the same through giving more importance and highlighting participatory democracy. The author terms this socialism as the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism, and participatory democracy, in fact, marks the hallmark of this 'new socialism' or the major distinction from traditional socialism and socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

There has been an ongoing debate criticizing capitalism, the associated inequality, the increment of the poor and the deterioration of society. Klein (2007) believes that neoliberalism belongs among the closed, fundamentalist doctrines that cannot coexist with other belief-systems. Furthermore, she adds that far from freeing the market from the state; the political and corporate elites have simply merged, trading favors to secure the right to appropriate precious resources previously held in the public domain. Also, Schuller (2008) agrees with this view and explicates that a more accurate term for a system that erases the boundaries between 'Big Government and Big Business' and clarifies neoliberalism is not liberal, conservative but capitalist/corporatist. It is primarily characterized by huge transfers of public wealth to private hands, often accompanied by exploding debt, an ever-widening chasm between the rich and the poor and an aggressive nationalism that justifies bottomless spending on security.

In corroboration, Gell (2007) discusses the individuals segregated inside the bubble of extreme wealth created by corporatist/capitalism arrangements. She explains that there can be no more profitable way to organize a society. But because of the obvious drawbacks for the vast majority of the population left outside the bubble, other features of the corporatist state tend to include aggressive surveillance (once again, with government and large



corporations trading favors and contracts), mass incarceration, shrinking civil liberties and often, though not always, torture.

Also, Klein (2007) explains that fortunes resulting from capitalism cannot be ignored and may actually have succeeded in achieving its true objectives (private ownership of the means of production and their operation for profit). Moreover, the privatization of formerly public property, elimination of social programs, busting up of worker groups, and the suspension of minimum wage laws have resulted in the destruction of an entire society, but the corporations that operate in the ruins are doing rather well.

Alternatively, some scholars including Liu (2011), Pena (2011), Yin (2010) and Taylor (2000) agree that the constant economic and financial crisis that paralyzed global capitalism has reawakened a broad interest in theories and practices aiming to establish an alternative society for capitalism. Studies evidence that socialism has survived, evolved, and progressed whereas global capitalism has entered an era, which has been described as “catastrophic economic decline, futile military adventurism, political paralysis, environmental irresponsibility, and social decay” (Pena 2011, pp.291). Long-term excessive accumulation and internalization of private financial assets had started to alter the quantitative proportions between financial and the productive sectors of the economics of developed countries, and as a “consequence the relationship between driving actors of the capitalist development became more finance-driven and then destroyed the economic and social stability and led to the current crisis. The direct way to resolve the crisis is to reduce the excessive accumulation of financial capital” (Yin 2010, pp.541). In addition, Li (2008) agrees with the view of Klein (2007) and claims that such a crisis highlighted the grave defects of governance in private corporations, in terms of increasing income

inequality, the inefficiency of capital state regulations and the impossibility of curing the financial system. In fact, the capitalist world system has entered into a structural crisis which can no longer be resolved within the historical framework of capitalism (Wallerstein, 1998; Li, 2008). Because of the climate change crisis, relentless capitalist accumulation on a global scale is now in fundamental conflict with the survival of human civilization, Taylor (2000). And as such, Li (2008) suggests that 21st century socialism may prove to be the new, only viable solution to the fundamental crisis confronting humanity in this century.

Considering the constant crisis of capitalism, some scholars, including Luft (2011), Pena (2011), II (2010), Foster (2010) and Gurcan (2013) highlight that the fundamental way out of the crisis is to replace all kinds of capitalism and socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to Pena (2011), the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism must necessarily entail four components of sustainability. He explains that in order to survive and succeed for the rest of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a socialist survival strategy should essentially be prioritized on achieving a comprehensive sustainability and adopt the relevant measures. Herein, the scholar has pointed out four components or (measurements): (i) The political system, where sustainable society must feature peoples' democracy, i.e., a democracy that works to implement people's agenda. The concept of people's agenda encompasses all of the progressive interests of humanity including peace and justice, security and prosperity and the maintenance of healthy, hospitable environment in perpetuity. (ii) The economic system of a sustainable society must serve as the productive engine that fulfills the material requirements necessary for making every aspect of the peoples' political agenda a reality. (iii) The cultivation of the proper national cultural characteristics for a progressive national

culture is to achieve independence and freedom, and finally, the environment should be developed sustainably.

Luft (2011) correspondingly believes that the post-capitalist society has to meet five major criteria by these criteria from the Marxist socialism to the 21st century socialism; wherein, the following measures must be followed. First, society should propound a new answer to the old question of property. Second, society should develop a sustainable and responsible mode of utilizing natural resources. Third, society's main criterion should be concerned with a new definition of the economy. Fourth, the democracy should be generalized around all the social relationships. The final parameter is, that the society should propagate a new philosophy of life with qualitative elements of human progress being introduced into the GDP. In congruence, Li (2010) believes that the liberation of workers (wages) and the development of the human spirit, the transition from industrial civilization to ecological civilization, the materialization of economic ecology, political ecology, cultural ecology and the balance of human beings and nature, constitute the fundamental basis of the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism.

It can be thus be argued that the existing 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism has surpassed the achievements of the weak models of the Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union socialism, and, in fact, it has overtaken several capitalist countries in some respects (Switzerland), and notably, despite all the predictions of its demise. Nevertheless, socialism has in some countries (Bolivia, Switzerland) has weathered the global economic crisis better than capitalism, and evidences undergoing a revival in some parts of the world, particularly in Latin America (Pena, 2011).

Harnecker (2010) gives an idea of how the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism started in South America. She explains that 21<sup>st</sup> socialism evidenced a rise with the increase of poverty, aggravated social inequalities, destruction of the environment, and the weakening of the working class by deepening income inequality and popular movements, in general. She continues to state that concurrent to all these conditions, individuals began to understand that new political organizations had to be committed to the society in order to be immersed in the popular sectors. As also corresponded in the previous literature, “It had to overcome the tendency to homogenize the social base where it operates, by engaging in unity in diversity and respect for ethnic, cultural, gender and other differences” (Harnecker, 2010, pp.4). The left understood that democracy is one of most beloved banners of people and that the struggle for democracy cannot be separated from the struggle for socialism because it is only under socialism that democracy can, in fact, develop fully, as claimed by Rickard (2011).

It was Chávez, who popularized the term ‘Twenty-First Century Socialism’ (Pena, 2011; Harnecker, 2010). Based on this conceptualization, Venezuela and some of the policies created by the late president Hugo Chávez are considered as an example of the future socialism or the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism. Cole (2011) explains that Chávez, in fact, focused the popular attention to the term “21st century socialism”, and thus, he sought to differentiate this new socialism from the errors and deviations of the socialist model implemented in the twentieth century in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries.

Previous scholars, as cited above agree that the process of 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism is a process of culture and education, which is necessary to the construct of socialism. As such, the developmental process of socialism pertains to the framework wherein, the

individualistic culture of every person for himself or herself is gradually overcome, as is the paternalistic culture, which creates the habit of wanting the state to solve our problems instead of organizing to solve them ourselves. Also, consumer culture must be overcome, by replacing the idea that if we have more we are better, for we have what is needed, which implies the basic necessities of life, i.e., reducing income inequality and giving power to the people, including them in the decision-making process of the politics and others, as claimed by Foster (2010).

In addition, scholars including, Foster (2010), Harnecker (2010), Li (2010), Racker (2011) and Gurcan (2013) agree that the transition from the capitalist system to the new socialist system must essentially follow a differential path in each country. In concurrence, Sarker (2006) explains that every society presents its own unique characteristics, which differentiate it from other societies, and, although there may be a shared goal, the measures taken in the transition process must be adapted to the specific conditions of each country.

In fact, adapted to Latin America, 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism demonstrates few features mentioned before in the study. It has been observed that the scholars exhibit an agreement in restating some of the Marx's original ideas. As such, Harnecker (2010) explicates that the goal of the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism is full human development: "It cannot, therefore, come into being because of a government or an enlightened vanguard says so: it cannot be decreed from above, it is a process that is built with the people, in which, as they transform their circumstances, they transform themselves. It is not a handout, it is something to be conquered" (Harnecker 2010, pp.36).

The discourse correspondingly, raises the question: What are the features of the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism? Several previous scholars (Racker, 2011; Albert & Hahnel, 2010; De La Torre, 2013; Paterman, 2012) have highlighted the most important features for 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism. Wherein, participative democracy or protagonist participation has been mentioned as an imperative, and concurrently, Racker (2011) explains that the concept refers to the real capacity of the majority of citizens to decide on major issues in the public affairs of the nation. In fact, it is not state paternalism, because that is incompatible with popular protagonism, thus implying the power of people to be entitled or included in politics and therefore govern themselves together with the state. Protagonist participation aims for the citizens to make decisions about who implements public policies and how those policies are implemented (Gurcan, 2013).

The second feature is creating spaces for participation or what the scholars define as “community councils, consumer councils, student councils, peasant councils”, i.e., constructs which allow for free and full participatory processes. According to this idea, people will be fully connected with the state and will be aware of the necessities of their community, and they can relate easily and share similar problems—both socio-economic and those connected to urban development. Each of these communities has to choose a community government, thus defining a process, which will help people understand the project they are engaged in building (Albert & Hahnel, 2010).

The third feature entails transitioning from representative democracy to delegative democracy, which is a form of democratic control, whereby an electorate entrusts voting power in delegates rather than in representatives. It has been commonly argued that delegative democracy, lies between the participatory and representative democracy. It does

not depend on representatives but rather on a weighted and transitory delegation of votes. Voters can either vote directly or delegate their vote to other participants, i.e., the voters may select a delegate for different issues. Thus, alternatively put, in a representative democracy, the representative is free to vote in a way that contradicts his or her constituents, thus implying the function of acting as a trustee. In a delegative democracy, the voter must choose a policy that a majority of constituents would support. The goal here, Harnecker (2010) explains, is to build a different kind of system of democratic representation that is “the true expression of the interests of the working class and society in general” (Harnecker 2010, pp.40). This premise would apply to decision-making by society in all spheres of life and would be comparable to the economic system of corporatism, in which representatives or delegates or spokespersons are elected from communities and workplace assemblies, and must be accountable to them (De la Torre, 2013).

According to Bachrach and Botwinick (1992), the objective of participatory democracy is thus not simply to democratize the workplace for its own sake, but to have the workplace emerge as a point of leverage from which a more egalitarian distribution of power can be achieved, thereby, leading to a greater democratization of the entire political process. Furthermore, Paterman (2012) points out that the participatory democracy, which he calls ‘deliberative democracy’, has been held to include, for example, school boards, community policing, deliberative polling, community consultations, citizens’ juries, citizens’ assemblies, legislatures, judicial bodies, and participatory budgeting.

The second resultant question from the discourse is: What is the aim of deliberation? The aims include, for example, arriving at a consensus, making a decision, or revealing how the individual preferences might undergo alteration after they have deliberated.

Paterman (2012) continues by highlighting the elements imperative in participatory democratic theory: Intersect of capacities, skills, and characteristics of individuals with forms of authority structures. Individuals learn to participate by actively participating (the educative or developmental side of participatory democracy, the aspect most often mentioned). Thus, in accordance with the theory, individuals need to interact within the confines of democratic authority structures that induce participation possibility.

Second, the participatory democratic theory is an argument pertaining to democratization. That is, the argument refers to changes that will make the individual's social and political life more democratic. This, in turn, will provide opportunities for individuals to participate in decision-making in their everyday lives as well as in the wider political system. Thus, it can be safely inferred that the process encapsulates democratizing democracy.

And third, the changes required are structural, they necessitate reform of undemocratic authority structures (Paterman, 2012).

Several things had been mentioned about socialism and correspondingly, in the section above, the paper discusses scholars' works and their arguments and agreements regarding the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism. This discussion is aligned with: (i) A universal view; and (ii) Supported and implemented in Latin American countries. As apparent, the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism differs in several ways from the socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. In summation, the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism aims for: The



transformation of society and human development, create awareness of the actual crisis and find ways for the survival of civilization. Additionally, the process aims, with the help of a political instrument, to design a project for the country where a political organization is necessary to make sure that the society does not get lost for putting the construction of socialism on the right course and understanding what has to be done and encouraging and facilitating protagonist participation of the population. It also aims to give people autonomous power to contribute to their development, abandoning the attempt at manipulation.

This discourse raises several questions: Which components of 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism are actually commonly incorporated, and do they work to make socialism feasible? This type of socialism is apparent in Latin America, and in similar countries such as Bolivia and Venezuela. Both countries have been observed to implement the same type of socialism (21<sup>st</sup> century socialism), and are similar in a number of respects such as poverty levels, life expectancy, unemployment rates, defense expenditures, education expenditures, etc.

### **Pink Tide**

In addition, some of the scholars link these socialist politics to the rise of the pink tide (Gradin, 2011; Patrice, 2011; Usborne, 2014). As such, the media describes the pink tide as the perception of a turn towards left-wing governments in Latin American democracies straying away from the neoliberal economic model.

The countries that are a part of this trend include Ecuador, under the Rafael Correa presidency, Bolivia, under the Evo Morales presidency, Argentina, under Nestor and

Cristina Kirchner, Brazil, under Luiz Ignacio Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff, Paraguay, under Nicanor Duarte, and Venezuela, under Hugo Chávez Frias. In fact, the ‘pink tide’ concretized the World Social Forum (WSF) slogan: ‘Another world is possible’. At the 2005 WSF in Brazil, then Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez proclaimed the aim to build, “socialism for the twenty-first century” (Raul, 2008).

During the Cold War, a series of left-leaning governments attained power via the electoral polls in Latin America. These governments faced what was described as the ‘economic warfare’ and coups sponsored by the United States government as part of its geostrategic interest in the region (Patrice, 2011). These included the 1954 Guatemalan coup d'état, 1964 Brazilian coup d'état, 1973 Chilean coup d'état and 1976 Argentine coup d'état, among others. All of these coups (Gradin, 2011) were followed by US-backed and sponsored right-wing military dictatorships as part of the US government's Operation Condor (Gradin, 2011; Patrice, 2011).

These authoritarian regimes committed several human rights violations including illegal detentions of political opponents, suspects and/or their families, tortures, disappearances and child trafficking (Patrice, 2011). As these regimes started to decline due to the international pressure, the internal outcry in the US from the population due to the US involvement in the atrocities forced Washington to relinquish its support for them (Rober, 2014). And subsequently, new democratic processes began during the late 1970s and up to the early 1990s as a result of the economic adversities due to many broken economic decisions taken by these regimes (Robert, 2014).

With the exception of Costa Rica, essentially all Latin American countries had at least one experience with a US-supported dictator [Usborne, 2014] including Fulgencio Batista in Cuba, Rafael Trujillo in Dominican Republic, the Somoza family in Nicaragua, Carlos Castillo Armas in Guatemala, Juan María Bordaberry in Uruguay, Jorge Rafael Videla in Argentina, Augusto Pinochet in Chile, Alfredo Stroessner in Paraguay, Emílio Garrastazu Médici in Brazil, Marcos Pérez Jiménez in Venezuela, which, in fact, caused a strong anti-American sentiment in wide sectors of the population (Naomi, 2007).

In the 1990s, following the end of the Cold War, Latin American countries turned towards neo-liberal economic policies and underwent a process of privatization of public companies, as well as cuts in the public spending, foreign investment, and the adoption of free-market policies. These neoliberal economic policies were promoted by the IMF and the World Bank and termed the 'Washington consensus', (Pimienta, 2016). According to the BBC, a "Common element of the 'pink tide' is a clean break with what was known at the outset of the 1990s as the 'Washington consensus', the mixture of open markets and privatization pushed by the United States". However, the neo-liberal experiment collapsed in several countries by the end of the decade, thereby, leaving the different economies with features such as high levels of unemployment, corruption, inflation and increasing inequality (Andrea, 2015). These initial unsuccessful attempts with neo-liberalism combined with the end of the Cold War allowed the left in Latin America to reevaluate their movements and participate further in the electoral processes.

The pink tide was led by Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, who was elected into the presidency in 1998. According to Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, a pink tide president herself, Hugo Chávez of Venezuela (inaugurated 1999), Lula da Silva of Brazil

(inaugurated 2003) and Evo Morales of Bolivia (inaugurated 2006) were ‘the three musketeers’ of the left in South America (Usborne, 2014).

## CHAPTER III

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As evident in the literature review, the study assumes that one of the aspects that distinguish traditional socialism and socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the protagonist participation of the people, the power of the people to govern themselves and be included in the political decision-making process. This political participation aims for the citizens to gain control and manage the things themselves and for power not to be centralized, particularly in the executive and legislative branches.

Since both the countries (i.e., Bolivia and Venezuela) have been characterized by their leaders (i.e., Evo Morales and Hugo Chávez, respectively) as well as by the people as socialist countries; the socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century highlights the importance of popular participation. Therefore, the study hypothesizes the probability of higher participation levels in the Venezuelan and Bolivian cases, i.e., from traditionally less active segments of society, such as the poor and the less educated people, than in Colombia and Peru. Given this hypothesis, the higher levels of participation are more likely to be higher in Venezuela

and Bolivia due to the political system and the progressive economic model rather than the neoliberal model of Colombia and Peru.

The discourse, however, leaves this question unanswered: What is participatory democracy? Participatory democracy refers to the use of mass participation in political decision-making to complement or (in the most radical versions) replace the traditional institutions of elections and lobbying associated with representative democracy (Hawkins, 2010). In other words, a participatory democracy is a model of democracy, wherein, the citizens have the power to make policy decisions emphasizing the broad participation of people in politics.

The description leads to the next question: What is the agenda of this participatory democracy? This means participatory democracy attempts to create opportunities for all members of a population in order to make meaningful contributions to decision-making and seeks to broaden the range of people with access to such opportunities. It basically includes reforms, such as the integration of new civil society organizations into traditional forms of corporatist policymaking and the implementation of direct primaries and more radical forms of consensual decision-making in the political parties. Several of these reforms originated with the left are, in fact, now being endorsed by parties of the center and right, as well as multilateral aid agencies, such as the World Bank, which perceive of these reforms in more pragmatic terms as a means for providing better governance (Shah, 2007).

The current study, as such, raises the following questions: But are those reforms successful? And are they actually incorporating the traditionally marginalized sectors, such as the poor? The quantity and quality of participation are important for practical reasons, in that the incorporation of traditionally disenfranchised sectors, such as the poor, is presumably the key to making government policy more representative and just, and especially to eliminate the legacies of clientelism that typically characterize politics in the developing world. Yet participation is also important for its own sake, as a means of empowering citizens and giving them control over their own lives.

In the case of Venezuela, it is apparent that the constitution (i.e., new constitution of 1999) in its articles 62, which declares that: “All citizens have the right to participate freely in public matters” and that “The participation of the people in the creation, execution, and control of public affairs is the required means to achieve the protagonism that guarantees their complete development, both as individuals and as a collective.” Article 70 provides a long list of government activities considered potentially participatory, including traditional ones, such as: “Elections to public office; the referendum; the consultation of public opinion; the recall of public officials; the legislative, constitutional, and constituent initiatives; the town hall meeting; and the citizen assembly,” but also less traditional areas, such as “Government offices open to the public; self-management; all forms of cooperatives, including those of financial nature; credit unions; and community businesses.” Article 6 of the Constitution expresses with respect to the Venezuelan government that, “It is and will always be democratic, participatory” and alludes to a vocation for permanence, and points out attributes of government in which participation is conceived as one of them. In the chapter referring to Civil Rights, the possibility of the

participation of citizens in their defense is established; in fact, Article 55 confers on every person the right to protection by the State, through the security organs citizens regulated by law, facing situations that constitute a threat, vulnerability or risk to the physical integrity of people, their property, the enjoyment of their rights and the fulfillment of their duties. Within this context, it opens the possibility for citizens to participate in programs aimed at prevention, citizen security, and emergency management, referring them to the special law. Article 102, which is also oriented on the constituent in the protagonist conception of participation, considers education as a public service, based on respect for all currents of thought, in order to develop the creative potential of each human being and the full exercise of his personality in a democratic society, based on the ethical valuation of work and active, conscious and supportive participation in the processes of social transformation related with the values of national identity, and with a Latin American and universal vision. Therefore, the democratic regime enshrined in the preamble of the Constitution supposes the supreme objective of establishing a democratic, participative and protagonist society, in a State of justice, of a federal and decentralized nature, that consolidates the values of freedom, independence, peace, solidarity, the common good, territorial integrity and coexistence under the rule of law.

Thus, one may question as to: How has Venezuela put the theory of participatory democracy into practice? The review reveals that along the years under President Hugo Chávez, the creation of committees aims to help and empower the people. These committees are divided into the division of Health Clinics, named as Misión Barrio Adentro, seeking to provide comprehensive publicly funded health care, dental care, and sports training to poor and marginalized communities in Venezuela. The paper also



considers Misión Ribas that provides remedial high school level classes to the five million Venezuelan high school dropouts; named after independence hero José Félix Ribas. There are several types of 'Misiones Bolivariana' in Venezuela, with several such divisions are such as education (Misión Ribas, Misión Sucre), electoral (Misión Florentino), environmental (Misión Revolución Energetica), food and nutrition (Misión Mercal). Specifically, this initiative is very emblematic since it seeks to provide access to high-quality produce, grains, dairy, and meat at discounted prices. It also seeks to provide Venezuela's poor increased access to nutritious, safe, and organic food (local and national). As previously mentioned, similar to healthcare missions more housing (Misión Habitat and Vivienda) missions are also evident. Specifically, the goal of the housing mission is the construction of new housing units for the poor. The program also seeks to develop agreeable and integrated housing zones that make available a full range of social services, from education to healthcare, which likens its vision to that of new urbanism. Correspondingly, an indigenous rights (Misión Guaicaipuro) mission seeks to restore communal land titles and human rights to Venezuela's numerous indigenous communities, in addition to defending their rights against resource and financial speculation. Moreover, the land and reform (Misión Zamora) mission is an integrated land reform and land redistribution program in Venezuela. Several large landed estates and factories have been, or are in the process of being expropriated to stimulate the agricultural sector, create more economic activity and to redistribute wealth to the poor. Other committees address rural development (Misión Arbol and Misión Vuelta al Campo), science (Misión Ciencia), socioeconomic transformation (Misión Vuelvan Caras), civilian militia (Misión Miranda) and finally cultural mission (Misión Corazón Adentro and Misión Música). Another type

of organization created by the government is the producer cooperatives, which support the endogenous development and encourages economic diversification and national self-sufficiency. In 2005, the government began creating a vast network of Communal Councils (Consejos Comunales). These are a new type of neighborhood association, which are tasked with combining and administering several of the above entities. Each council has been voluntarily constituted by up to four hundred families in a given community, which meet in a Citizens Assembly (Asamblea de Ciudadanos); the council proper is an executive committee selected by the assembly. The councils are not purely territorial and as such project the existence of overlapping councils in the same community. They represent the culmination of the government's participatory democratic ambitions and constitute what it calls the "sixth branch of government," that of the "people or community," (Hawkins, 2010).

The Movement for Socialism-Political Instrument for the Sovereignty of the Peoples Spanish: Movimiento al Socialismo–Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos, abbreviated MAS-IPSP, or simply MAS started in 1998 with Evo Morales has a president. In 1999, MAS-IPSP went to municipal elections against the Communist Party of Bolivia. The results favored MAS-IPSP getting 65,425 votes (3.3% of the nationwide votes) and winning 81 local council seats (4.8% of the seats in the country) in 1999. According to Albó and Quispe (2000), the vast majority of the MAS-IPSP councilors elected in the 1999 municipal election were indigenous. These elections, in fact, marked the beginning of the era of socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in Bolivia before Evo Morales won the elections in 2005.

Since taking office, the MAS-IPSP government has emphasized on the modernization of the country, through several initiatives, including: Promoting industrialization, increased state intervention in the economy, social and cultural inclusion, and redistribution of revenue from natural resources through various social service programs.

Through the years, the Bolivian case worked the same way as Venezuela in order to impact deep changes in the country through legitimizing the changes in the constitution (2009), which defines Bolivia as a representative, participatory and communitarian democracy. It incorporates enhanced mechanisms and institutions for participatory democracy. The mechanisms of the participatory democracy under the new Bolivian constitution are the referendum, the legislative initiative of citizens, the recall referendum for public servants, the assembly, the city council, and the previous consultation. Moreover, the new constitution establishes that members of the judicial branch, after pre-selection by the legislative branch, will be elected by the Bolivian populace (Art. 182, 188, 194, 198). Furthermore, Articles 240 and 241 stipulate that the Bolivian population, represented by the 'organized civil society', is supposed to participate in the design of public politics and to execute social control at every state level. A law of social control shall be passed, and new spaces for participation and social control shall be created by state entities. The participatory rights and the codetermination of 'organized civil society' are also mentioned with regard to the health system, the educational system, environmental protection, and other issues (Art. 40, 78-93, 309, 343), (Schilling-Vacaflor, 2011).

The recognition of 'communitarian democracy' is an innovation of the new constitution and is supposed to be exercised in self-governed indigenous-campesino

(indigenous farmers) entities such as municipalities and indigenous-campesino territories (TIOC). The election or designation of indigenous- representatives in those entities should be conducted in accordance with the communities' own norms and procedures. Indigenous peoples' and communities' right to self-determination has been incorporated into the new constitution and, like the provisions in international instruments (particularly the ILO Convention 169 and the UN Declaration about the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), comprises two dimensions: The right to self-government executed within the framework of indigenous autonomy, including the exercise of indigenous political, juridical, and economic systems, and the right to fully participate in state institutions and in the dominant society (Art. 30).

The new Bolivian constitution foresees the creation of indigenous-campesino autonomies (Art. 289-296, 304). The rights of indigenous peoples anchored in the constitution have been extended to campesino communities as well as to the Afro Bolivians (Art. 32). With regard to the representation of indigenous-campesino peoples and communities in the legislative branch, Art. 147 stipulates that “The proportional participation of indigenous peoples and communities will be guaranteed” and that quotas stipulating a certain number of indigenous representatives will be implemented. Furthermore, article 210 establishes that the organization and functioning of indigenous-campesinos organizations, as well as of citizen associations and political parties, must be democratic and that the electoral organ will supervise the election of indigenous-campesino authorities and representatives (Art. 211). In this context, the consequent crucial question is, as to which criteria will be applied to define whether the 'communitarian democracy' is democratic enough. Concepts such as 'communitarian democracy' have also been

developed by indigenous-campesino organizations and their allies to countervail Western concepts of democracy and of a 'good life'. Thus, these are perceived by these actors as part of an ongoing decolonization and emancipation process.

In comparison to the former constitution, Bolivia's new constitution supports enhanced human rights, particularly economic, social, and cultural rights and the rights of underprivileged groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities, and elderly persons. For example, women's right to equal political participation (Art. 8, 11, 26, 147 and 210)<sup>15</sup> and other women's human rights, which are now included. New mechanisms have additionally been introduced to complement the already existing legal procedures for guaranteeing the implementation of human rights.

In sum, the new Political Constitution defines an unpublished state model - Plurinational State - characterized by legal, economic, linguistic, cultural and political pluralism based on the recognition of collective rights to indigenous peoples. In its political aspect, it is expressed in the recognition of community democracy - forms of election and selection of authorities and representatives through indigenous customs and practices - that is articulated with representative democracy and participatory democracy. The variable combination of rules and institutions of these three forms of democracy constitute the intercultural democracy. This model of State condenses the political project of the Movement to Socialism (MAS), a party that has dominated the political scene for a decade with the leadership of Evo Morales, winner of three consecutive elections: 2005, 2009 and 2014.

So far, evidently both constitutions and the reforms of those constitutions clearly express the plural and protagonist participation of the citizens giving them the power not only to express freely and choose their leaders but also be included in the political decision-making that promotes their self-governance and the recognition of their rights through a participatory democracy. The representative form of democracy of both countries, Bolivia and Venezuela, is exercised through the universal, direct, and secret election.

### **Why are Bolivia and Venezuela the best cases for this study?**

The paper focuses on Bolivia and Venezuela because these nations are the most radical left-wing countries in South America that have carried the most far-reaching changes in order to achieve the goals of the socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **How did the left-wing countries start?**

During the 1990s, conservative policies held power in much of the region, as even the traditionally populist parties came to embrace the market-oriented paradigm. The new wave of left governments, however, saw the region move in a different direction, driven in part by disappointment with the traditional parties and their record of governance Lopes (2016). By early 2008, left-of-center parties or movements had come to power in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela, and, nearly, Mexico and Peru as well.

And with this arrived a new era for the Latin American countries where part of them opened the door to policies with a more socialistic view.

**Why Venezuela and Bolivia are different from the other left-wing countries in South America and what makes them a better case of study in order for the project to test the hypothesis?**

Primarily, the main differences between the countries focus on the wide range of policy areas from economic and social policy to the reform of political institutions.

Undoubtedly, the left could be distinguished from the right in part based on beliefs about whether society should be fundamentally shaped by citizens or consumers. And this idea is based primarily on the concept where citizens are equal in rights and duties, while consumers are unequal because their rights are influenced and ‘depend on the size of their pockets’.

Although there may be widespread agreement on the left about the need for greater social justice and citizen participation, there has been a great deal of variation in how leftist governments have chosen to achieve these goals. Venezuela has carried out the most far-reaching changes to date. The administrations of Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro have dramatically renovated the country’s existing political institutions, expanded state intervention in the economy, and boosted social spending significantly. Similarly, Evo Morales has renovated and carried out policies that lean more in the direction of Chávez. Morales’ administration has sought to dramatically reform the constitution and has expanded the role of the state in the economy, but so far it has employed rather cautious fiscal and wage policies. Left-of-center governments in Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, and Uruguay, by contrast, have largely worked within the existing policy institutions and have embraced the existing market-oriented economic policy model (free trade and free market

where most of the companies are not owned by the state) (Johnson, 2005). Correspondingly, the ideas of market oriented economic policy model include economic liberalization policies such as privatization, austerity, deregulation, free trade and reductions in government spending in order to increase the role of the private sector in the economy and society (Palley, 2005; Andrew, 2009; Goldstewin, 2013).

**Other aspects of the reforms of Bolivia and Venezuela in order to achieve the goals of the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism.**

Regarding the economic policies, social policies and reform in political institutions, Bolivia and Venezuela differ from the rest of the countries in South America that are and were a part of the pink tide. According to Casas and Pimienta (2014), Lopes and Faria (2016), and Jared (2017), the pink tide phrase is used in contemporary 21st century political analysis in the media and elsewhere to describe the perception of a turn towards left-wing governments in Latin American democracies straying away from the neoliberal economic model or market model. Where the countries move toward more progressive economic policies (based on the idea that free markets are naturally unfair, favoring large corporations and the wealthy people). These economic policies are believed that a fair market should result in a normal distribution of wealth, and in order to make this happen the progressive model countries will be controlling the markets through public protections that they believe will favor upward mobility and diminish income inequality to prevent the heavily disproportionate incomes as explicated by (Roemer, 1999; Moreno-Ternerero, 2017) and coincides with a parallel trend of democratization of Latin America following decades of inequality.



Chávez and Maduro moved to overhaul existing political institutions and consolidate control of the Venezuelan government. Shortly after taking office, Chávez convened a constituent assembly dominated by his supporters, which dissolved the existing legislature and the Supreme Court, extended the President's term, and allowed for immediate presidential re-election. Chávez also stacked his supporters in institutions that were traditionally nonpartisan, such as the Attorney General's Office, the Comptroller's Office, and the National Electoral Council, in order to weaken the horizontal accountability structure. Chávez and Maduro also have used political mobilizations to put pressure on the opposition, and frequently employed incendiary rhetoric in denouncing political opponents. Partly as a result, this has resulted in the considerable weakening of the political polarization during their administrations.

Chávez's economic policies also represent a departure from past policies, but here the break is only sharp if compared to the market-oriented policies implemented by Carlos Andrés Pérez's administration in the early 1990s. As Javier Corrales notes in his paper, Chávez substantially increased the level of state intervention in the economy, returning Venezuela to the populist and statist policies of the 1970s and 1980s. The government announced the nationalization of the electricity and telephone companies and sought to boost state control of the oil industry via various measures. The Chávez administration also embarked upon a spending spree and sought to diversify its sources of foreign trade and investment. These policies however, generated mixed macro-economic results and Venezuela experienced a serious economic crisis in 2002–2003. Though, the economic growth in recent years has been very strong attributed largely to high oil prices. The level of inflation in Venezuela has been among the highest in the region in recent years, however.

As Ellner details, the Chávez administration has used its growing oil wealth to boost social spending considerably. Chávez, for example, advanced the social security pensions by tying them to the minimum wage, which went up significantly during his administration. The government also doubled the payment pensioners receive at Christmas. In the area of education, the government created ‘Missions’ that provide basic literacy training as well as high school, college, and graduate school programs for underserved constituencies. In addition, the government sponsored cooperatives and created community councils that are eligible for state aid to carry out local projects.

To a large degree, the Morales administration in Bolivia, which took office in early 2006, has followed Chávez’s model. Similar to Chávez, Morales used intemperate rhetoric at times, and sought to create a new constitution in order to consolidate his control of the country. The new constitution allows the presidents to serve two consecutive five year terms, allowing Morales to stay on for another ten years. In fact, as such, it seeks to weaken the opposition’s control of the senate, the prefects, and the judiciary by expanding the size of the senate, creating direct elections to fill the Supreme Court, and allowing elected officials to be subject to recall elections. Finally, the new constitution would increase the government’s control of other institutions such as the Human Rights Ombudsman, the Comptroller General’s Office, and the National Electoral Court, by lowering the amount of congressional support necessary to confirm governmental appointees to these posts. Naturally, the new constitution has been vigorously opposed by the opposition, thereby, leading to growing political polarization in Bolivia.

In the economic policy domain also the Morales administration followed the Chávez model to some degree by moving Bolivia in a more statist direction. The Morales

government refused to negotiate a free trade agreement with the United States, and exerted more state control over the economy, particularly in the natural resource sector.

This is the reason why among all the countries that are or were part of the pink tide, Venezuela and Bolivia were specifically chosen in this case of study. As mentioned before, left-wing governments have introduced change to Latin America, but the extent of these changes has varied considerably across the countries and policy areas. In Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay left-of-center or moderate left-wing governments have been more aggressive than their predecessors in using social policies to address poverty and inequality, but they have largely embraced the political institutions and economic policies inherited from previous regimes. It is also true that there have been no efforts by leftist governments in other pink tide countries to have new constitutions or at least constitutions that changes dramatically or to an extreme extent the amendments that are stated. For example, as mentioned before, Venezuela changed the constitutions in order to make possible the indefinite reelection of the presidents. In Bolivia and Venezuela, populist leaders and more radical governments have engaged in fierce rhetoric and sought to radically renovate their countries' political institutions.

In this case of study, particularly the primary author focuses on drawing comparison between Bolivia and Venezuela with Colombia and Peru to impress upon the reader, a succinct idea about what is enough participation. In case, the study would have only concentrated on the comparison of Bolivia and Venezuela's levels of participatory democracy, it would have led to the question: What is enough participation? As such, the compare of Bolivia and Venezuela with Colombia and Peru allows to show and evaluate the extent and weight of enough participation in comparison with other countries.

## **Why does the study select Colombia and Peru to contrast with Bolivia and Venezuela?**

In the 1960s, a series of dictatorial regimes favored by local aristocracies with the support of the United States began - through the doctrine of national security- with the objective of neutralizing socialist governments in various countries of South America: Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, and Bolivia.

Since 1999, several countries in South America have elected center-left governments such as Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Peru, or left-wing governments such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela; although notably, most of these governments embrace the free market.

South America marks a notorious diversity not only in the social, cultural and demographic aspects but also in terms of existing economic policies, and it is also a historically unstable region, due to the continuous change of focus in what it refers to monetary policies in the countries of the region, which has generated constant internal and external conflicts with different outcomes in South America (Charles, 2006).

At present, three types of economic systems are apparent in South America, that although share similar and general aspects, depict differential economies which follow a predetermined line; in this the study acknowledges the purely capitalist, open economies, which are based on the model of the free market, countries like Colombia and Peru that have adopted the economic models of the United States, although with a lower degree of mixed economy, without being clearly distinguishable.

On the other hand, there are those countries that support semi-closed economies or more radical progressive economic model with a more radicalized spectrum than the

previous ones, or with very little or non-free market relation, maintaining economic relations with exclusive countries of its blocs, i.e., countries like Bolivia and Venezuela.

Despite the apparent economic differences, these countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela) are related to each other because they share a long list of similarities that make them alike with the exception of their economic model. Such similarities are commonly evident in major industries as regards, for example, the general characteristics of the industrial and productive composition of the exporting economies of South America. These industries mainly entail projects corresponding to the extraction of natural resources, mainly the mining and petroleum industries, manufacturing and agriculture. Herein, the oil industry is the main one in Venezuela, Colombia, and Bolivia on its export of gas and oil and Peru where the mining industry is the principal economic source being the second world producer of silver.

According to OECD (Mejores Políticas para una Vida Mejor) Colombia is the third largest South American economy, after Brazil and Argentina, and is among the first 23 countries in the world and, in fact, is expected to continue growing while consolidating as a regional power.

According to the World Bank, Venezuela is the fifth most powerful South American economy in terms of GDP (PPP), and the 30th in the world. The country is a founding member of OPEC, has an economy based on extraction and oil refining, in addition to having the largest proven reserves of oil in the world, which are believed to exceed 300 billion barrels. Furthermore, Venezuela's iron reserves are some of the most

important in the world, with powerful companies such as SIDOR. Venezuela is part of Mercosur together with Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

According to the World Bank, Peru is the fourth economy in South America and the one with the highest growth in South America with 6.4% annual. Peru's economy has grown in recent years thanks to its economic opening, the FTAs signed with European, Asian and South American countries. It also is a party to the Strategic Trans-Pacific Economic Partnership Agreement. Additionally, Peru is part of the Andean Community of Nations and the Pacific Alliance.

Other aspects such as human development, demography, languages, religion, culture, political geography, geology, and ethnicity, among others; accord this set of countries quite marked similarities. The very aspect presents sharing a conglomerate of characteristics that make the region and in particular these four countries very distinctive from the world. This is the result of Spanish and Portuguese colonization in an area populated by numerous indigenous peoples, by the forced arrival of black slaves from Africa, by the massive immigration of Europeans and Asians since the 19th century, and by the mixture of these different groups, thereby, originating numerous variants. Particularly Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela share a very similar ethnicity in their population where Native American, Mulatto, Mestizo, and White Arab prevails.

The question that arises now is whether higher levels of participatory democracy are observed in Bolivia and Venezuela rather than Colombia and Peru and if the constitutional changes will be reflected in the relations between the state and the civil society considerably and whether or not the new democratic model connected with

socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is being established in Bolivia and Venezuela. More importantly, presumably, higher levels of participation should ideally be evident in Bolivia and Venezuela due to these constitutional changes, the economic restructuring and the changes in the new political system that has been in place since the leftist presidents came to power in these countries.

**Based on the literature review this study aims to investigate:**

Overall Research Objective: Do the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela present higher levels of participation in comparison to the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?

The following are the specific research questions:

Do people with low education and low income present higher support for the system in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela in comparison to the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?

Do people with low education and low income present higher percentage points for requesting help or cooperation from members of the legislature in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela in comparison to the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?

Do people with low education and low income present higher percentage points for requesting cooperation from public institutions in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela in comparison to the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?

Do people with low education and low income present higher percentage points for requesting help or cooperation from a local government in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela in comparison to the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?

Do people with low education and low income present higher percentage points for offering help to solve a problem in the community in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela in comparison to the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?

Do people with low education and low income present higher percentage points for attending meetings of political movements in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela in comparison to the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?

Do people with low education and low income present higher percentage points for attending municipal meetings in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela in comparison to the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?

Do people with low education and low income present higher percentage points for requesting help from a municipal office in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela in comparison to the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?

Do people with low education and low income present higher percentage points for the parameter: Believing that they should govern directly rather than through elected representatives in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela more than the neoliberal countries of Colombia and Peru?



**Hypothesis:** If participatory democracy is considered the hallmark of socialism of the 21st century, then the current study would be able to reflect high levels of participation where the political and economic system is socialism.

**Figure 1.** South America Map

Source: geology.com



**Figure 2.** South America location on the World Map

Source: OnTheWorldMap.com



## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The argument as presented in the previous section opened a window to utilize survey data from countries with diverse political systems that espouse different economic policies (i.e., neoliberal economic policies vs. more progressive policies) however, with similar characteristics that make the effects of different economic policy approaches ascertainable. These political systems, which are different between the two sets of groups are expected to impact the levels of participatory democracy in each of these countries: Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Colombia and Peru and by adopting a neoliberal or socialist political system it results in a change in the economic policy

The research contains two different groups, one is Bolivia and Venezuela *and* the other is Colombia and Peru. The primary author decided to use the case studies in two groups of two countries each, instead of treating each country as separate cases, with the purpose to allow reviewing the political system as a whole. Irrespective, the study aims to give the reader more generalizable results on how a political system can affect participatory democracy, and particularly, in this case, the socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Correspondingly, in the interest of simplicity, it was decided to group Bolivia and Venezuela in one group, *and* Colombia and Peru in the other.

As discussed in the paper, the primary differential aspect across the four countries is the emphasis on socialism for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in Bolivia and Venezuela. On considering each country separately, it would result in an increase in the number of comparisons in the project. For the t-tests, for example, the study would entail a comparison of Bolivia and Colombia, Bolivia and Peru, Venezuela and Colombia, *and* Venezuela and Peru. These extensive comparisons, can, in fact, be very confusing for the reader, since the number of tables can go up to 40.

In order to test this hypothesis, the current study, as such employs the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), which is a consortium of academic research institutions spread throughout the Americas. This data that works in conjunction with the AmericasBarometer Survey and USAID focuses on producing objective, non-partisan, and scientifically sound studies of public opinion. It has been observed that primarily the studies focusing on the measurement of political attitudes and behavior related to democracy and quality of life present the utilization of these instruments.

Furthermore, the study hypothesis is assessed and tested with dependent variables from domains within each mode of participatory democracy, and as such, the study methodology engages in the examination of the domains of participatory democracy, in particular, and not representative democracy. Each dimension captures a different mode of assessment, including the items on political involvement measuring a person's reaction to political institutions: people actually getting involved and participating in the decision-making process; and individuals being empowered to decide whether a policy is good enough or not for the community; and these are registered in context with the democratic institutions, municipal governments, and municipal officials. The effectiveness of this

relationship (community-government) determines whether the participation levels and the political involvement is successful due to their teamwork where the government and the community are placed on the same line and the line of power is horizontal and the power is decentralized.

The study hypothesis is assessed and measured with the measurements of participatory democracy and not representative democracy. Participatory democracy means that people get involved in the decision-making process, and in fact, this is the importance of participatory democracy. Specifically, the involvement in politics and people getting involved in the decision-making process. Whenever the community encounters a problem, the community cohort recommends a solution, which is subsequently taken to the local government for necessary action and implementation. The leader of the community meets with the local government to present to the government body the solutions previously discussed with the community. By that time, the community is politically involved but the successful decision-making process (when is fully complete) is when those solutions that are brought to the local government and subsequently taken into consideration and translated into action. This implies a response by the local government and by no means the subsequent action should exactly align with the community recommendation, however, typically there is a compromise between both parts.

The data looks specifically at the political culture of democracy in the Americas, towards the equality of political participation in the Americas (specifically in two groups Bolivia- Venezuela, and Colombia-Peru). The data focuses the attention on the assessment of how gender, race, and poverty affect political involvement and opportunities across the region. It also focuses on current levels of participation in electoral politics and civil society

as measured from 2004 to 2014 in the AmericasBarometer survey. It also attempts to measure the extent to which participatory inequalities exist in the Americas and take into consideration the public opinion related to disadvantaged groups' participation in politics and public officials.

Specifically, the study first examines the 2004 - 2014 AmericasBarometer, a cross-national survey fielded in Latin America, as part of the LAPOP at the Vanderbilt University. The survey included a total of 42,193 respondents/individuals in the four countries under study.

Second, the survey is implemented based on a national probability design. In some cases, oversamples are collected in order to allow precise analysis of opinion within sub-national regions. Also, survey participants at the time of the study were voting-age adults who were interviewed face to face in their households.

In the study data, the participatory democracy is measure by nine variables that best explain the involvement of the people with low income and low education levels in the political decision-making process.

In order to provide a specific result, the study analysis integrated into each one of the analyses two main variables: Low income and Low education. This was ensured in order to target the people of each one of the four countries with the purpose to demonstrate that socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century focuses on those with fewer possibilities of getting involved in politics (explained in the previous theory section).

The first variable combines two questions on overall system support into a single index, which has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.65. The first variable pertains to a question

provided by the survey. The question is: “To what extent do you respect the political institutions of (country)?” This question is labeled by the name Respect for Political Institutions (b2) and the second, “To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of (country)?” is labeled by the name People Should Support the Political System (b6).

The second variable entails another question provided by the survey. The question is: “In order to solve a problem have you ever requested help or cooperation from...?” The first option is a member of the Legislature (cp2). The other two options are a government ministry, minister, or state agency (cp4); and a local government official or local government office (cp4a).

The new variable (cp5\_new) was contrasted from two different types of survey question from the AmericasBarometer survey. For Bolivia and Colombia in 2004 and 2006, the original question was dichotomous. For all other data, the original question allowed people to answer on four levels of frequency: Never, once or twice a year, once or twice a month, and once a week. This means that the results were dichotomized to never vs. somehow, in order to help solve a problem in the community. On this variable, the question provided by the survey is: “In the last 12 months have you tried to help to solve a problem in your community or in your neighborhood?” This question is labeled by the name Help to Solve a problem in the community.

This collated data and information is presented in the tables, where the section group has the values 0 and 1. 0, which means that the respondents’ answers they did not help to solve a problem in the community.

The sixth variable has a question provided by the survey, which is: “I am going to read a list of groups and organizations. Please tell me if you attend their meetings.” This question is labeled by the name Attendance at Meetings of Political Movements or Political Parties (cp13\_new). This variable is coded so that “never” responses are scored 0 and all other responses are scored 1.

The seventh variable has a question provided by the survey, which is: “Have you attended a town meeting, city council meeting or other meeting in the past 12 months?” The question is labeled by the name Attendance at Municipal Meetings (np1). As per the responses, the study also recoded the variables to range from 0 to 1 with higher scores indicating participation in the municipal meetings.

The eighth variable also includes a question provided by the survey: “Have you sought assistance from or presented a request to any office, official or councilperson of the municipality within the past 12 months?” The variable is labeled by the name Requested Help from municipal Office (np2).

Finally, the last variable is Direct Representation labeled by the name Direct Representation (pop107). The question provided by the survey is: “The people should govern directly rather than through elected representatives. How much do you agree or disagree?”

#### **Guide for variables:**

The literature review section has provided a detailed discourse on socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and its significance. According to Harnecker (2010), 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism started to rise with the increase of poverty, aggravated social inequalities, destruction of



the environment, and the weakening of the working class, all of which were strengthened through income inequality and popular movements, in general. Therefore, the 21<sup>st</sup> century highlighted the importance of popular participation and participatory democracy targeting the most marginalized people: The less educated and low-income people.

**Based on this statement, the results as presented in the tables are computed based on the following parameters:**

- Low-income population (people that struggle to live with their monthly salary)
- Low Education (8 years or less education)

The variable low income is named in the tables as ed01

The variable low education is named in the tables as q10d01

Based on the above-mentioned parameters, the study measures the participatory democracy using the following variables: **Table 1: Variable Name and Labels on the Tables**

<b>Variable name</b>	<b>Label on the tables</b>
System Support	System_support
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Member of the Legislature	cp2
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office	cp4
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Local Public Official or Local Government	cp4a
Help to Solve a Problem in the Community	cp5_new
Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties	cp13_new
Attendance at Municipal Meetings	np1
Requested Help from Municipal Office	np2
Direct Representation	pop107

### Descriptive Statistic Tables

The tables used in the study are descriptive statistic tables. The study draws a comparison of Bolivia and Venezuela with Colombia and Peru, targeting people with low education (8 years or less) and low income (people that struggle to live with their monthly salary). In order to know higher or lower levels of participation, the study takes into consideration the mean for each variable provided. **Note:** In order to measure system support the variables b2 and b6 are combined into system\_support, in order to have a better and general view on system support in each country.

The variables combined are:

B2	Respect for Political Institutions
B6	Should Support Political System

**Table 2. Low Education tables for Colombia and Peru. Bolivia and Venezuela**

<b>Variable name</b>	<b>Colombia and Peru</b>		
<b>Low Education</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>n</b>
System Support	4.63	1.56	4801
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Member of the Legislature	.049	.216	4429
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office	.059	.236	3775
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Local Public Official or Local Government	.178	.383	5225
Help to Solve a Problem in the Community	.315	.464	1716
Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties	.177	.382	5206
Attendance at Municipal Meetings	.114	.318	5168
Requested Help from Municipal Office	.139	.346	5215
Direct Representation	3.52	1.93	2495

Variable name	Bolivia and Venezuela		
	M	SD	n
System Support	4.37	1.46	7270
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Member of the Legislature	.060	.238	5882
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office	.071	.257	3816
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Local Public Official or Local Government	.154	.361	7312
Help to Solve a Problem in the Community	.399	.489	6649
Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties	.156	.363	8137
Attendance at Municipal Meetings	.136	.343	8164
Requested Help from Municipal Office	.121	.326	8199
Direct Representation	3.42	1.84	3872

**Results for low education tables (variable ed01):** As apparent the means for the variables cp2, cp4, cp5\_new, and np1 are higher for Bolivia and Venezuela. In the rest of the variables (system\_support, cp4a, cp13\_new, np2, and pop107) are higher for Colombia and Peru.

**Table 3. Results for low income tables**

Variable name	Colombia and Peru		
	M	SD	n
System Support	4.41	1.53	6657
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Member of the Legislature	.039	.195	5586
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office	.083	.277	5586
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Local Public Official or Local Government	.165	.371	7012
Help to Solve a Problem in the Community	.424	.494	816
Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties	.159	.365	6987
Attendance at Municipal Meetings	.120	.325	6933
Requested Help from Municipal Office	.161	.368	7012
Direct Representation	3.47	1.91	4500

Variable name	Bolivia and Venezuela		
	M	SD	n
System Support	4.22	1.53	7738
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Member of the Legislature	.049	.216	4990
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office	.085	.279	4984
Requested/Cooperation Help from a Local Public Official or Local Government	.131	.338	7113
Help to Solve a Problem in the Community	.415	.492	6372
Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties	.130	.337	8253
Attendance at Municipal Meetings	.131	.337	8295
Requested Help from Municipal Office	.122	.328	8290
Direct Representation	3.28	1.88	5113

**Results for low income tables (variable q10d01):** As we can see the means for the variables cp2, cp4, and np1 re higher for Bolivia and Venezuela. In the rest of the variables (system\_support, cp4a, cp5\_new, cp13\_new, np2, and pop107) are higher for Colombia and Peru.

## Percentage Tables

### Variable System support

**Results for low education - table 4:** This table contained the values from 1 to 7, where 1 meant no support for the system and 7 implied support for the system. The analysis combined and summarized the positive values (i.e., values after 4 are considered positive, as the value of 4 lies in the middle of the questions answered or alternatively, signifies neutral). Based on the comparison, it is evident that the results are favorable for Colombia and Peru with 61.21% of approval.

<b>Table 4</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low education level	Variable: System Support	Colombia and Peru	61.21%	39.79%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	53.97%	46.03%

**Results for the low-income – table 5:** The tables had values from 1 to 7 where value 1 meant no support for the system and value 7 support for the system. The study combined and summarized the positive values (i.e., values after 4 are considered positive, as the value of 4 lies in the middle of the questions answered or alternatively, signifies neutral). Based on the comparison, it is evident that the results are favorable for Colombia and Peru with 55.26% of approval.

<b>Table 5</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low Income level	Variable: System Support	Colombia and Peru	55.26%	44.74%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	51.1%	48.9%

**Variable: CP2 – Requested Help/Cooperation from a Member of the Legislature**

**Results for low education – table 6:** For this variable Bolivia and Venezuela scored a higher percentage with 6.05%. Colombia and Peru scored 4.90%.

<b>Table 6</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low education level	Variable: Requested Help/Cooperation from a Member of the Legislature	Colombia and Peru	4.90%	95.10%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	6.05%	93.95%

**Results for the low-income – table 7:** For this variable Bolivia and Venezuela scored a higher percentage with 4.93%. Colombia and Peru scored 3.97%.

<b>Table 7</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low Income level	Variable: Requested Help/Cooperation from a Member of the Legislature	Colombia and Peru	3.97%	96.03%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	4.93%	95.07%

**Variable: CP4 – Requested Help/Cooperation from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office**

**Results for low education – table 8:** For this variable Bolivia and Venezuela scored a higher percentage with 7.15%. Colombia and Peru scored 5.96%.

<b>Table 8</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low education level	Variable: Requested Help/Cooperation from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office	Colombia and Peru	5.96%	94.04%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	7.15%	92.85%

**Results for low-income - table 9:** For this variable Bolivia and Venezuela scored a higher percentage with 8.55%. Colombia and Peru scored 8.38%.



<b>Table 9</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low Income level	Variable: Requested Help/Cooperation from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office	Colombia and Peru	8.38%	91.62%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	8.55%	91.45%

**Variable: CP4a – Requested Help/Cooperation from a Local Public Official or Local Government**

**Results for low education - table 10:** For this variable Colombia and Peru scored a higher percentage with 17.88%. Bolivia and Venezuela scored 15.50%.

<b>Table 10</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low education level	Variable: Requested help from local official	Colombia and Peru	17.88%	82.12%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	15.50%	84.50%

**Results for low-income – table 11:** For this variable Colombia and Peru scored a higher percentage with 16.54%. Bolivia and Venezuela scored 13.19%.

<b>Table 11</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low Income level	Variable: Requested help from local official	Colombia and Peru	16.54%	83.46%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	13.19%	86.81%

**Variable: CP5\_new – Help to Solve a Problem in the Community**

**Results for low education – table 12:** For this variable Bolivia and Venezuela scored a higher percentage with 39.95%. Colombia and Peru scored 31.53%.

<b>Table 12</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low education level	Variable: Help to Solve a Problem in the Community	Colombia and Peru	31.53%	68.47%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	39.95%	60.05%

**Results for low-income – table 13:** For this variable Colombia and Peru scored a higher percentage with 42.40%. Bolivia and Venezuela scored 41.56%.

<b>Table 13</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low Income level	Variable: Help to Solve a Problem in the Community	Colombia and Peru	42.40%	57.60%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	41.56%	58.44%

**Variable: CP13\_new – Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties**

**Results for low education - table 14:** For this variable Colombia and Peru scored a higher percentage with 17.75%. Bolivia and Venezuela scored 15.67%.

<b>Table 14</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low education level	Variable: Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties	Colombia and Peru	17.75%	82.25%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	15.67%	84.33%

**Results for low-income – table 15:** For this variable Colombia and Peru scored a higher percentage with 15.92%. Bolivia and Venezuela scored 13.07%.

<b>Table 15</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low Income level	Variable: Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties	Colombia and Peru	15.92%	84.08%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	13.07%	86.93%

**Variable: NP1 – Attendance at Municipal Meetings**

**Results for low education – table 16:** For this variable Bolivia and Venezuela scored a higher percentage with 13.69%. Colombia and Peru scored 11.46%.

<b>Table 16</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low education level	Variable: Attendance at Municipal Meetings	Colombia and Peru	11.46%	88.54%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	13.69%	86.31%

**Results for low income – table 17:** For this variable Bolivia and Venezuela scored higher percentage with 13.13%. Colombia and Peru scored 12.02%.

<b>Table 17</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low Income level	Variable: Attendance at Municipal Meetings	Colombia and Peru	12.02%	87.98%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	13.13%	86.87%

**Variable: NP2 – Requested Help from Municipal Office**

**Results for low education – table 18:**For this variable Colombia and Peru scored higher percentage with 13.90%. Bolivia and Venezuela scored 12.14%.

<b>Table 18</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low education level	Variable: Requested Help from Municipal Office	Colombia and Peru	13.90%	86.10%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	12.14%	87.86%

**Results for low income table – 19:** For this variable Colombia and Peru scored higher percentage with 16.16%. Bolivia and Venezuela scored 12.28%.

<b>Table 19</b>		Group	Yes	No
Low Income level	Variable: Requested Help from Municipal Office	Colombia and Peru	16.16%	83.84%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	12.28%	87.72%

**Variable: POP107 – Direct Representation**

**Note:** On the table the section “group” we can see that it goes from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

**Note 2:** The survey from the AmericasBarometer had a statement that said: How agree or disagree are you with the statement that people should govern directly rather than with elective representatives.

**Results for low education - table 20:** For this variable Colombia and Peru scored higher percentage (if we summarize the values after 4 since I consider values after 4 being positives, where 4 is neutral) with 31.59%. Bolivia and Venezuela scored 29.01%.

<b>Table 20</b>		Group	Yes	No	Neutral
Low education level	Variable: Direct Representation	Colombia and Peru	31.59%	51.78%	16.63%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	29.01%	51.45%	19.55%

**Results for low income - table 21:** For this variable Colombia and Peru scored higher percentage with 30.71%. Bolivia and Venezuela scored 27.09%.

<b>Table 21</b>		Group	Yes	No	Neutral
Low education level	Variable: Direct Representation	Colombia and Peru	30.71%	52.22%	17.07%
		Bolivia and Venezuela	27.09%	55.04%	17.88%

**t-test Tables**

**Note:** For all the t-test tables two different groups have been tabulated. The group 0 means Colombia and Peru and group 1 means Bolivia and Venezuela. The aim is to ascertain if there is a statistically significant difference in the mean between the two groups.

## Variable: system\_support – System Support

### Results for low education table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare system support in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(12069)} = 9.38, p < .01$ ). Table 22 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher (M=4.63 vs. M=4.37).

**Table 22** The Likelihood of Low Educated Individual's Intention of System Support in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	4.63	1.57	4801
Bolivia and Venezuela	4.37	1.46	7270

$t_{(12069)} = 9.38, p < .01$

### Results for low income table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare system support in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(14393)} = 7.16, p < .01$ ). Table 23 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher (M=4.41 vs. M=4.22).

**Table 23** The Likelihood of Low Income Individual's Intention of System Support in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	4.41	1.53	6657
Bolivia and Venezuela	4.22	1.53	7738

$t_{(14393)} = 7.16, p < .01$

**Variable: CP2 – Requested Help/Cooperation from a Member of the Legislature**

**Results for low education table**

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help or Cooperation from a Member of the Legislature in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(10309)} = -2.53, p < .01$ ). Table 24 suggests that Bolivia and Venezuela are statistically significantly higher (M=.060 vs. M=.048).

**Table 24.** The Likelihood of Low Educated Individual’s Intention to Requested Help or Cooperation from a Member of the Legislature in Different Countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.049	.216	4429
Bolivia and Venezuela	.061	.238	5882

$t_{(10309)} = -2.53, p < .01$

**Results for low income table**

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help or Cooperation from a Member of the Legislature in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(10574)} = -2.386, p < .01$ ). Table 25 suggests that Bolivia and Venezuela are statistically significantly higher (M=.049 vs. M=.039). People with low income in Bolivia and Venezuela within the periods from 2004 to 2014, requested help or cooperation from a member of the legislature more than in Colombia and Peru, as per the collated responses.

**Table 25** The Likelihood of Low Income Individual’s Intention to Requested Help or Cooperation from a Member of the Legislature in Different Countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.039	.195	5586
Bolivia and Venezuela	.049	.216	4990

$t_{(10574)} = -2.386, p < .01$

**Variable: CP4 – Requested Cooperation/Help from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office**

**Results for low education table**

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help or Cooperation from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(7589)} = -2.10, p < .01$ ). Table 26 suggests that Bolivia and Venezuela are statistically significantly higher (M=.071 vs. M=.059). People with low education in Bolivia and Venezuela within the periods from 2004 to 2014, requested help or cooperation from a member of the legislature more than in Colombia and Peru, as per the collated responses.

**Table 26.** The Likelihood of Low Educated Individual’s Intention to Request Help/Cooperation from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.059	.236	3775
Bolivia and Venezuela	.071	.257	3816

$t_{(7589)} = -2.10, p < .01$

### Results for low income table

There is not a significant difference between the two groups.  $t=-0.312$   $df=10568$ . The mean for Colombia and Peru is .083 and the mean for Bolivia and Venezuela is .085.

### Variable: CP4a – Requested Cooperation/Help from a Local Public Official or Local Government

### Results for low education table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help or Cooperation from a Local Public Official or Local Government in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(12535)} = 3.54, p < .01$ ). Table 27 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher ( $M=.178$  vs.  $M=.154$ ). People with low education in Colombia and Peru within the periods from 2004 to 2014, requested help or cooperation from a Local Public official or Local Government more than Bolivia and Venezuela, as per the collated responses.

**Table 27.** The Likelihood of Low Educated Individual's Intention to Request Help/Cooperation from a Local Public Official or Local Government in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.178	.383	5225
Bolivia and Venezuela	.154	.361	7312

$t_{(12535)} = 3.54, p < .01$



**Results for low income table:**

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help or Cooperation from a Local Public Official or Local Government in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(14123)} = 5.61, p < .01$ ). Table 28 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher ( $M=.165$  vs.  $M=.131$ ). People with low income in Colombia and Peru within the periods from 2004 to 2014, requested help or cooperation from a Local Public official or Local Government more than Bolivia and Venezuela, as per the collated response.

**Table 28** The Likelihood of Low Income Individual’s Intention to Request Help/Cooperation from a Local Public Official or Local Government in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.165	.371	7012
Bolivia and Venezuela	.131	.338	7113

$t_{(14123)} = 5.61, p < .01$

**Variable: CP5\_new – Help to Solve a Problem in the Community**

**Results for low education table**

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help or Cooperation from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(8363)} = -6.41, p < .01$ ). Table 29 suggests that Bolivia and Venezuela are statistically significantly higher ( $M=.400$  vs.  $M=.315$ ). People with low education in Bolivia and

Venezuela within the periods from 2004 to 2014, helped to solve a problem in the community more than in Colombia and Peru, as per the collated response.

**Table 29.** The Likelihood of Low Income Individual’s Intention to Help to Solve a Problem in the Community in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.315	.464	1716
Bolivia and Venezuela	.400	.489	6649

$t_{(8363)} = -6.41, p < .01$

### Results for low income table

There are not significant difference between the two groups.  $t=0.4610$   $df=3186$ . The mean for Colombia and Peru is .424 and the mean for Bolivia and Venezuela is .415.

### Variable: CP13\_new – Attendance at Meetings of Political Movements or Political Parties

### Results for low education table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(13341)} = 3.15, p < .01$ ). Table 30 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher ( $M=.177$  vs.  $M=.156$ ). People with low education in Colombia and Peru within the periods from 2004 to 2014, attended at Meetings of Political Movements or Political Parties more than Bolivia and Venezuela.

**Table 30** The Likelihood of Low Income Individual's Intention to Attend to Local Meetings of Political Movements or Political Parties in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.177	.382	5206
Bolivia and Venezuela	.156	.363	8137

$t_{(13341)} = 3.15, p < .01$

### Results for low income table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Attendance at Meeting of Political Movements or Political Parties in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(15238)} = 4.99, p < .01$ ). Table 31 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher (M=.159 vs. M=.130). People with low income in Colombia and Peru within the periods from 2004 to 2014, attended at Meetings of Political Movements or Political Parties more than Bolivia and Venezuela, as per the collated response.

**Table 31** The Likelihood of Low Income Individual's Intention to Attend to Local Meetings of Political Movements or Political Parties in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.159	.365	6987
Bolivia and Venezuela	.130	.337	8253

$t_{(15238)} = 4.99, p < .01$

### Variable: NP1 – Attendance at Municipal Meetings

### Results for low education table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Attendance at Municipal Meetings in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru.

There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(13330)} = -3.76, p < .01$ ). Table 32 suggests that Bolivia and Venezuela are statistically significantly higher ( $M=.137$  vs.  $M=.114$ ). People with low education in Bolivia and Venezuela within the periods from 2004 to 2014, attended to Municipal Meetings more than in Colombia and Peru, as per the collated responses.

**Table 32.** The Likelihood of Low Educated Individual's Intention to Attend at Municipal Meetings in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.114	.318	5168
Bolivia and Venezuela	.137	.343	8164

$t_{(13330)} = -3.76, p < .01$

### Results for low income table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Attendance at Municipal Meetings in Group Bolivia *and* Venezuela and Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(15226)} = -2.06, p < .01$ ). Table 33 suggests that Bolivia and Venezuela are statistically significantly higher ( $M=.131$  vs.  $M=.120$ ). People with low income in Bolivia and Venezuela within the periods from 2004 to 2014, attended to Municipal Meetings more than in Colombia and Peru, as per the collated responses.

**Table 33** The Likelihood of Low Income Individual's Intention to Attend at Municipal Meetings in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.120	.325	6933
Bolivia and Venezuela	.131	.337	8295

$t_{(15226)} = -2.06, p < .01$

## Variable: NP2 – Requested Help from Municipal Office

### Results for low education table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help from Municipal Office in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(13412)} = 2.98, p < .01$ ). Table 34 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher (M=.139 vs. M=.121). People with low education in Colombia and Peru within the periods from 2004 to 2014, requested help from Municipal Office more than Bolivia and Venezuela, as per the collated responses.

**Table 34** The Likelihood of Low Educated Individual's Intention to request help from Municipal Office in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.139	.346	5215
Bolivia and Venezuela	.121	.326	8199

$t_{(13412)} = 2.98, p < .01$

### Results for low income table (variable q10d01):

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help from Municipal Office in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(15300)} = 6.88, p < .01$ ). Table 35 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher (M=.161 vs. M=.122). People with low income in Colombia and Peru within the periods from 2004 to 2014, requested help from Municipal Office more than Bolivia and Venezuela, as per the collated response.

**Table 35** The Likelihood of Low Income Individual's Intention to request help from Municipal Office in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	.161	.368	7012
Bolivia and Venezuela	.122	.328	8290

$t_{(15300)} = 6.88, p < .01$

### Variable: POP107 – Direct Representation

#### Results for low education table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help from Municipal Office in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(6365)} = 2.06, p < .01$ ). Table 36 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher (M=3.52 vs. M=3.42). People with low education in Colombia and Peru within the periods from 2004 to 2014 believe that they should govern directly rather than through elected representatives more than Bolivia and Venezuela, as per the collated response.

**Table 36** The Likelihood of Low Educated Individual's Intention to choose Direct Representation in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	3.52	1.93	2495
Bolivia and Venezuela	3.42	1.84	3872

$t_{(6365)} = 2.06, p < .01$

#### Results for low income table

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the variable Requested Help from Municipal Office in Group Bolivia and Venezuela *and* Group Colombia and

Peru. There was a significant difference in the scores for the group Colombia and Peru and for the group Bolivia and Venezuela ( $t_{(9611)} = 4.85, p < .01$ ). Table 37 suggests that Colombia and Peru are statistically significantly higher (M=3.41 vs. M=3.28). People with low income in Colombia and Peru within the periods from 2004 to 2014 believe that they should govern directly rather than through elected representatives more than Bolivia and Venezuela, as per the collated responses.

**Table 37** The Likelihood of Low Income Individual's Intention to choose Direct Representation in different countries (2004-2014)

Group	Mean	S.D.	N
Colombia and Peru	3.41	1.91	4500
Bolivia and Venezuela	3.28	1.88	5113

$t_{(9611)} = 4.85, p < .01$

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Table 38 suggests a summary of the results regarding my hypothesis.

<b>Table 38: Summary of t-test results</b>	<b>Low Education</b>	<b>Low Income</b>
System Support	Not consistent with hypothesis	Not consistent with hypothesis
CP2 - Requested Help/Cooperation From a Member of the Legislature	Consistent with hypothesis	Consistent with hypothesis
CP4 - Requested Cooperation/Help from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office	Consistent with hypothesis	Insignificant
CP4a – Requested Cooperation/Help from a Local Public Official or Local Government	Not consistent with hypothesis	Not consistent with hypothesis
CP5_new - Help to Solve a Problem in the Community	Consistent with hypothesis	Insignificant
CP13_new – Attendance at Meetings of Political Movements or Political Parties	Not consistent with hypothesis	Not consistent with hypothesis
NP1 – Attendance at Municipal Meetings	Consistent with hypothesis	Consistent with hypothesis
Variable: NP2 – Requested Help from Municipal Office	Not consistent with hypothesis	Not consistent with hypothesis
POP107 – Direct Representation	Not consistent with hypothesis	Not consistent with hypothesis



### **Variable – System Support:**

**Low education:** For system support, the results indicated that people with low education in Colombia and Peru within the study periods of 2004 to 2014, support the system compared to people in Bolivia and Venezuela. Although, the finding here is ambiguous and as such, more studies are needed on this particular correlation between participatory democracy and system support in countries with neoliberal and progressive economic models. Also, since the ambiguous findings are inconsistent with the literature review.

**Low income:** For system support, the results indicated that people with low income in Colombia and Peru within the study period of 2004 to 2014, support the system more in comparison to people in Bolivia and Venezuela. However, the finding here is ambiguous and as such, more studies are needed to explore this particular correlation between participatory democracy and system support in countries with neoliberal and progressive economic models. Also, the ambiguous findings in the current study are inconsistent with the literature review.

### **Variable - Requested Help/Cooperation From a Member of the Legislature**

**Low education:** People with low education in Bolivia and Venezuela within the study period from 2004 to 2014, requested help or cooperation from a member of the legislature more in comparison to people in Colombia and Peru.

**Low income:** People with low income in Bolivia and Venezuela within the study period of 2004 to 2014, requested help or cooperation from a member of the legislature more in comparison to people in Colombia and Peru.

**Variable - Requested Cooperation/Help from a Ministry, Public Institution or Government Office**

**Low education:** People with low education in Bolivia and Venezuela within the study period of 2004 to 2014, requested help or cooperation from a member of the legislature more in comparison to people in Colombia and Peru.

**Low income:** The study results, did not present any significant difference between the two groups.

**Variable - Requested Cooperation/Help from a Local Public Official or Local Government**

**Low education:** People with low education in Colombia and Peru within the study period of 2004 to 2014, requested help or cooperation from a Local Public official or Local Government more in comparison to people in Bolivia and Venezuela.

**Low income:** People with low income in Colombia and Peru within the periods from 2004 to 2014, requested help or cooperation from a Local Public official or Local Government more in comparison to people in Bolivia and Venezuela.

**Variable - Help to Solve a Problem in the Community**

**Low education:** People with low education in Bolivia and Venezuela within the study period from 2004 to 2014, helped to solve a problem in the community more in comparison to people in Colombia and Peru.

**Low income:** The study results do not infer any significant difference between the two groups. This means that the results, for this variable and the survey taken by the

AmericasBarometer, are very similar and the percentage of the answers of people participating in the survey responded in a similar manner.

### **Variable - Attendance at Meetings of Political Movements or Political Parties**

**Low education:** People with low education in Colombia and Peru within the study period of 2004 to 2014, attended at meetings of political movements or political parties more in comparison to people in Bolivia and Venezuela.

**Low income:** People with low income in Colombia and Peru within the study period of 2004 to 2014, attended at meetings of political movements or political parties more in comparison to people in Bolivia and Venezuela.

### **Variable - Attendance at Municipal Meetings**

**Low education:** People with low education in Bolivia and Venezuela within the study period of 2004 to 2014, attended municipal meetings more in comparison to people in Colombia and Peru.

**Low income:** People with low income in Bolivia and Venezuela within the study period of 2004 to 2014, attended to municipal meetings more in comparison to people in Colombia and Peru.

### **Variable Requested Help from Municipal Office**

**Low education:** People with low education in Colombia and Peru within the study period of 2004 to 2014, requested help from municipal office more in comparison to people in Bolivia and Venezuela.

**Low income:** People with low income in Colombia and Peru within the study period of 2004 to 2014, requested help from municipal office more in comparison to people in Bolivia and Venezuela.

### **Variable Direct Representation**

**Low education:** People with low education in Colombia and Peru within the study period of 2004 to 2014, believe that they should govern directly rather than through elected representatives more than in Bolivia and Venezuela.

**Low income:** People with low income in Colombia and Peru within the study period of 2004 to 2014 believe that they should govern directly rather than through elected representatives more than in Bolivia and Venezuela.

### **Limitations**

**Lack of available and/or reliable data.** The data provided by the AmericasBarometer was not complete, as some variables were not added in all the surveys for the study period of 2004-2014. This lacuna limited the scope of study analysis and the size of the sample. Thus, it can be safely assumed that in some variables there is just not enough data available, which in fact, can function as a significant obstacle in the study findings. The primary author, as such, presupposes that this particular limitation produced some constraint in the accurate interpretation of the findings. And correspondingly, if the data had been complete perhaps the results might have been different and consistent with the study hypothesis.

**Missing Data:**

- **Variable CP5:** For the countries Peru and Venezuela in 2004 the data are missing because, during that year, no survey was conducted. This statement about the 2004 survey also applies to these countries in the case of other variables.
- **Variable CP2:** For Bolivia 2010 the variable CP2 was not included in the survey and the same is true for Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela for 2014.
- **Variable CP4:** This variable was included in the surveys listed against each country for that year respectively: Bolivia and Colombia 2004, Bolivia 2006, Bolivia 2010, Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela 2014.
- **Variable CP4a:** For Bolivia 2010 the variable was not captured in the survey.
- **Variable POP107:** For Bolivia and Colombia 2004 this variable was not captured in the survey. Also, it was not found in Bolivia and Colombia 2006 and also absent in Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela 2014 survey.

**Lack of prior research studies on the topic.** Minimal literature is available on participatory democracies. The literature speaks about participatory democracy as a theory applicable to countries in South America (e.g., Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela). The literature does not compare countries with neoliberal policies and progressive economic policies. Scholars focus on single country cases, although there are studies that compare larger samples of countries with the same political system there lacks a clear base for studies that include a sample of states with different political and economic systems. The lack of empirical studies comparing neoliberal countries and socialist countries in terms of participatory democracy makes the study more uncertain in terms of the results. Therefore,

in absence of an empirical foundation, the results are more likely to be inconsistent with the current study hypothesis. Even with the lack of empirical foundation, this research also gives an opportunity to contribute to research on participatory democracy and socialism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**The lack of leadership in Bolivia and Venezuela:** State capacity of the federal government to control the regional and local governing bodies is insufficient in many countries in South America. Knowing that the leadership in these countries can be corrupted. Corruption can affect the investment of the national government leading to a development of the socialism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To build state capacity Waterhouse (2009) believes that charismatic leadership, leveraging large fiscal reserves and/or natural resources, increase public goods and social welfare programs is a way to start taking control over the state. Leadership affect how government officials use their power or network contacts for illegitimate private gain affecting the capacity to implement a participatory democracy.

**Neoliberalism has some other ways to target participation:** Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century targets participation by transitioning from representative democracy to delegative democracy, creating spaces for participation such as community councils with the goal to give real capacity of the majority of citizens to decide on major issues in the public affairs of the nation. In addition, neoliberalism also has its own ways to target participation. This study does not focus on the analysis of the neoliberalism as a whole and its implications on mass participation but one alternative explanation of why this results are mixed can be that the ways neoliberalism targets participation can also be successful in terms of including people in the political agenda and decision making process.

**Socialism has not fully develop in South America.** Time and national investment are needed to build a new political system from the bottom to the top. Educating people, changing the democratic institutions, opening a window for new opportunities takes time. One explanation of why this research has mix results could be because socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> has not fully developed in Bolivia and Venezuela. It is uncertain what is the level of accomplishment that both countries have reached in the past 10 years but certainly there has been some major changes in the system as a whole.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

There are not enough studies, which focus on measurement of participatory democracy in countries in South America and even fewer studies comparing countries with a different political system, in this case, socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and neoliberal political system and its impact on participatory democracy. This study focused on participatory democracy in the socialist countries of Bolivia and Venezuela. The lack of the literature in this particular research, therefore, contributes the study an uncertainty in terms of the expected findings but also makes this study the first study comparing two different political models and the influence of these political models on participatory democracy.

The results obtained from the study are mixed results; socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has not been 100% effective in terms of incrementing the participation of the people in the political decision-making. Notably, since the surveys were not conducted in Peru and Venezuela in 2004 and since few of the variables chosen for this study were available in all available AmericasBarometer surveys, this can be a potential influence in the results since those numbers can potentially change the mixed results.



Regarding the theory presented in the study, both the countries and their leaders (i.e., Evo Morales and Hugo Chávez) have made many changes in order to achieve the socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century goals but that does not mean that the levels of participation are way higher than the other two countries chosen to contrast the participation (Colombia and Peru).

Also, notably, the variables: Attendance to Municipal Meetings and Help to Solve a Problem in the Community are found to be higher in Bolivia and Venezuela. The primary author considers these variables as the most imperative from all variables chosen to measure participatory democracy for the following reason: Those two variables are the most straight forward in order to measure the participation of the people and the involvement in the decision making process.

That being said, the variables chosen are in part of the relation/help/request/cooperation of the people and the government legislature (local/national), in fact, this relationship between both parts is essential in order to have a successful participatory democracy. Otherwise, it wouldn't be possible since people by themselves cannot create policies and make it a law and government by itself cannot stay in power without the support of the people. The other part of the variables is how people are included in this decision-making process and the interest they have to actually do something for their community. The variables mentioned before are in favor of Bolivia and Venezuela, which makes it easy to infer that the people display an effective and successful desire to actually be a part of this political decision-making process and do something about their community. This means that people are mobilized to actually engage in politics in a very effective way, or at least the results show that.

Regarding the other variables, it is seen that Bolivia and Venezuela demonstrate very similar/close results to Colombia and Peru, thus, implying that socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century still needs some more years of development in order to make participatory democracy fully effective.

In any case for future studies, it is strongly recommended to find more data if possible in order to have more accurate results. Since this study is the first study that has been made in comparison of two groups with a different political system and the impact that it has on participatory democracy, it is suggested that future research reviews and sources data from another container and compare other countries in South America with similar characteristics in order to obtain more generalizable results. It is also suggested that future research analyze and measure state capacity in the countries where socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is implemented since this particular factor can have a significant impact on the development of the participatory democracy. In addition, it will also be important to depend the study on the ways of how neoliberal targets participation to have a better comparison between both political systems and distinguish under what mechanisms neoliberalism integrates mass population into politics.

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