CHAPTER 1:

Introduction and background

This report describes results from the second cycle of the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS 2016) for the five countries in the Latin American region that participated in the study. It focuses on aspects of particular relevance for this geographic region and should be read within the broader context of other publications related to ICCS 2016 (Losito, Agrusti, Damiani, & Schulz, 2018; Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Losito, & Agrusti, 2016; Schulz et al., 2018).

ICCS was designed to investigate how lower-secondary students in their eighth year of schooling across a wide range of countries are prepared for their roles as adult citizens. As part of this study, data were collected on students' civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement. The study measured not only factors related to students' home and peer contexts and school and classroom environments but also factors related to wider community contexts and the education system. Information regarding these contextual factors aids interpretations of variations in civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement and enables analyses of factors associated with those variations.

Most of the results presented in this report are based on data collected using a student questionnaire specific to the Latin American region, supplemented by data from the ICCS 2016 international instruments (a student test, student and school questionnaires, and a national contexts survey). The report considers contexts for civic and citizenship education in the region, students' perceptions of public institutions and government, students' views of peaceful coexistence, and students' perceptions of social cohesion and diversity.

Background

ICCS 2016 is the second cycle of the ICCS program of studies (the first took place in 2009). ICCS built on previous IEA studies of civic and citizenship education, in particular the IEA Civic Education Study (CIVED) in 1999 (Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001), and it responds to continuing and new challenges to this area of learning in changing contexts of democracy and civic participation (Schulz et al., 2016; Schulz, Fraillon, Ainley, Losito, & Kerr, 2008). The first ICCS cycle in 2009 had explicit links to CIVED 1999 but also provided a broadened scope by emphasizing aspects related to recent changes in the provision of education for citizenship.

In Latin America, Chile and Colombia participated in the CIVED study in 1999 and the results of that study had a considerable influence on the content and nature of national standards and curricula in those two countries (Reimers, 2007). ICCS 2009 was implemented in six countries of this region (Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, and Paraguay). The data collection included administration of a regional instrument consisting of a smaller set of test items designed to capture region-specific aspects of civic knowledge. This instrument also contained questionnaire items measuring students' attitudes toward government practices as well as violence and diversity, and students' perceptions of school contexts (Schulz, Ainley, Friedman, & Lietz, 2011).

After a period in which military regimes ruled most Latin American countries, much of the region returned, from the early 1980s on, to more democratic forms of government (Hagopian & Mainwaring, 2005), a process that Huntington (1991) called the "third wave" of democratization. The past two decades, however, have seen the resurgence of more authoritarian forms of government, a situation which suggests that instead of the region experiencing further stabilization of democratic processes, wider recognition of human rights, and a strengthening of the rule of law, it is now (as is the wider global context) facing a "democratic recession" (Diamond, 2015).

Recent opinion surveys have also highlighted a widespread lack of commitment to democratic processes across Latin American countries (Latinobarómetro, 2017; Pew Research Center, 2017).

While most adult respondents generally supported democratic government in principle, the results have also shown very low levels of trust in government in the region, widespread dissatisfaction with the functioning of the respective political systems, relatively high levels of willingness to consider non-democratic alternatives, and low levels of commitment to democracy. Surveys have also shown that commitment to democracy is associated with level of educational attainment, with better educated adults tending to be more supportive of democracy and less inclined to endorse authoritarian government practices (Pew Research Center, 2017; Valenzuela, Schwartzman, Biehl, & Valenzuela, 2008).

Issues additional to the reappearance of authoritarian forms of government are also having strong implications for democratic citizenship in the region. These include persistent poverty and inequality, increases in crime and violence, and ongoing corruption and clientelism (Cox, Bascopé, Castillo, Miranda, & Bonhomme, 2014; García-Cabrero, Sandoval-Hernández, Treviño-Villareal, Diazgranados Ferráns, & Pérez Martínez, 2017; Reimers, 2007). Despite growing recognition that education provides a way of overcoming poverty and strengthening democracy in Latin America (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 1992), and despite the considerable increases in students' attainment of primary and secondary education across countries in the region, inequality in general remains a significant issue throughout this part of the world (Cox, 2010).

The need to provide young people with civic and citizenship education has received particular attention across many Latin American countries (Ainley, Schulz, & Friedman, 2013; Cox, Jaramillo, & Reimers, 2005; Reimers & Villegas-Reimers, 2005). The funds that the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) provided for the regional initiative SREDECC enabled production of publications about curricular context and educational practice in this learning area (Cox, 2010; Magendzo Kolstrein & Arias Albañil, 2015) and contributed to the participation of six Latin American countries in ICCS 2009. Findings from that study revealed strong associations between the participating countries' historical and cultural contexts and civic and citizenship education learning outcomes. Also, even though ICCS 2009 highlighted differences in the countries' curricular contexts, the study showed that these countries were emphasizing the importance of student participation at school (Ainley et al., 2013; Colombian National Ministry of Education, 2006; Cueto, 2009; Guadalupe, 2015; Peruvian Ministry of Education, 2013; Schulz et al., 2011).

Conceptual framework and research questions

The ICCS 2016 assessment framework (Schulz et al., 2016) contained the following five general research questions:

1. How is civic and citizenship education implemented in participating countries?
2. What is the extent of and variation in students' civic knowledge within and across participating countries?
3. What is the extent of students' engagement in different spheres of society, and which factors within or across countries are related to it?
4. What beliefs do students in participating countries hold regarding important civic issues in modern society and what are the factors influencing variation in those beliefs?
5. How are schools in the participating countries organized with regard to civic and citizenship education, and to what extent is organization of this learning area associated with students' learning outcomes?

This report focuses mainly on Research Questions 1 (implementation of civic and citizenship education) and 4 (students' beliefs regarding important civic issues) and draws on data from the regional Latin American student questionnaire supplemented by information collected through the international student test of civic knowledge and the international student and school questionnaires.

With regard to learning outcomes, the ICCS 2016 assessment framework (Schulz et al., 2016) specified three different dimensions of civics and citizenship:

- The *content dimension* describes the subject matter to be assessed as learning outcomes (with regard to both affective-behavioral and cognitive aspects). It encompasses the following framework domains:
    - *civic society and systems* (concerning citizens, state institutions, and civic institutions);
    - *civic principles* (concerning equity, freedom, sense of community, and rule of law);
    - *civic participation* (concerning decision-making, influencing, and community participation); and
    - *civic identities* (concerning civic self-image and civic connectedness).

- The *cognitive dimension*, as measured by the student test of civic knowledge, describes the thinking processes to be assessed. These are:
    - *knowing* (the learned information used during engagement with more complex tasks); and
    - *reasoning and applying* (use of information to reach conclusions that extend beyond the understanding of single concepts).

- The *affective-behavioral dimension* outlines the following types of student perceptions and activities, as measured by the student questionnaire:
    - *attitudes* (judgments or evaluations regarding ideas, persons, objects, events, situations, and/or relationships); and
    - *engagement* (students' civic engagement, students' expectations of future civic-related action, and students' dispositions to actively engage in society).

The ICCS 2016 contextual framework viewed cognitive and affective-behavioral learning outcomes as influenced by antecedent (relating to the historical background) variables and process-related (contemporaneous) variables. These variables can be located at different levels of context, ranging from individuals, home and peer environments, and schools and classrooms through to the wider community, encompassing local neighborhoods, national and supra-national levels, and global levels. The framework regards antecedent variables as exogenous explanatory variables and recognizes that process-related variables may have a reciprocal relationship with learning outcomes.[1]

The region-specific aspects measured in the Latin American regional student questionnaire were originally developed for ICCS 2009 in accordance with a regional framework that was linked to the ICCS 2009 assessment framework (Schulz et al., 2008). The ICCS 2016 framework (Schulz et al., 2016), however, described the constructs to be measured with the regional instrument.

Data collection and instruments

The ICCS 2016 main survey data collection took place between October 2015 and June 2016. In countries with a Southern Hemisphere school calendar (in the Latin American region, Chile, Peru, and parts of Colombia), the survey took place between October and December 2015. In those countries with a Northern Hemisphere school calendar (the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and parts of Colombia), the survey took place between February and June 2016.

The ICCS 2016 survey used the following instruments:

- *The international student cognitive test:* This instrument consisted of 88 items measuring civic and citizenship knowledge, analysis, and reasoning. These items were assigned to eight booklets (each of which contained three of a total eight 11-item clusters) according to a balanced rotated design. Each student completed one of the 45-minute booklets.

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1 For example, students with higher levels of civic knowledge may be more likely to participate in activities promoting learning about civics and citizenship.

- *The international student questionnaire:* This instrument took between 30 and 40 minutes to complete and was used to obtain students' perceptions about civics and citizenship as well as information about each student's background.
- *The teacher questionnaire:* This instrument, which took about 30 minutes to complete, asked respondents about their perceptions of civic and citizenship education in their schools. It also collected information about the organization and culture of their respective schools as well as their own teaching assignments and backgrounds.
- *The school questionnaire:* This instrument, which also took about 30 minutes to complete, asked school principals to provide information about school characteristics, school culture and climate, and the provision of civic and citizenship education in the school.
- *National contexts survey:* This online survey, conducted in each of the participating countries, collected information from national experts (individuals with expertise in civic and citizenship education) about the structure of the education system, civic and citizenship education in the national curricula, and recent developments in civic and citizenship education. ICCS 2016 national research coordinators (NRCs) were responsible for compiling and synthesizing this information.

The ICCS 2016 Latin American student questionnaire included questions measuring aspects very similar to those included in the regional instrument developed for ICCS 2009. The ICCS 2016 research team left a number of questions unchanged in order to measure changes over time, and modified others so as to improve the measurement of the underlying constructs or to include additional aspects. This regional questionnaire had a stipulated completion time of 15 minutes and addressed the following region-specific aspects:

- Students' perceptions of public institutions and government (attitudes toward authoritarian government, dictatorships, and corrupt practices);
- Students' perceptions regarding peaceful coexistence (attitudes toward violence, acceptance of disobedience to the law, and feelings of empathy); and
- Students' perceptions of discrimination in their country, acceptance of social minorities, and attitudes toward homosexuality.

Participating countries, population, sample design, and data collection

Overall, 24 countries or sub-regions participated in ICCS 2016, 16 from the European region, three from Asia, and five from the Latin American region. Figure 1.1 shows the geographical position of each of the five participating Latin American countries.

All five Latin American countries administered the Latin American student questionnaire and are represented in this report. ICCS 2016 was the first time that Peru participated in an international study of civic and citizenship education. The other four countries (Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, and Mexico) all participated in ICCS 2009 and therefore provided data that could be compared with data from the previous cycle. The inclusion of a large number of questionnaire items that were not modified meant that comparisons could be conducted for a relatively large number of items and scales across the two cycles.[2]

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2   Details of the equating procedures enabling comparison of the 2009 and 2016 results are provided in the ICCS 2016 technical report (Schulz et al., 2018).

Figure 1.1: Latin American countries participating in ICCS 2016

ICCS 2016 defined the population for the ICCS teacher survey as all educators teaching regular school subjects to students enrolled in the country's target grade at each sampled school. The teacher population included only those teachers who were teaching the target grade during the testing period and who had been employed at their school since the beginning of the school year.

The process used to select samples of respondents from this population employed a stratified two-stage design. During the first stage of sampling, PPS procedures (probability proportional to size as measured by the number of students enrolled in a school) were used to sample schools within the participating countries. The numbers required in the samples to achieve the necessary precision were estimated on the basis of national characteristics. However, as a guide, the sampling team asked each country to plan for a minimum sample size of 150 schools.

Each sampled school was asked to provide a list of the target-grade classes.[3] An intact class was then randomly selected from that list and all students in that class were surveyed. Across the five Latin American countries, the numbers of assessed students ranged from 3937 to 5609, and the numbers of assessed schools from 141 to 206 (see Appendix A).

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3 A classroom was defined as an exhaustive and mutually exclusive partition of all the students in the tested grade.

The participation rates required for students in each country were 85 percent of the selected schools and 85 percent of the selected students within the participating schools, or a weighted overall participation rate of 75 percent. The same criteria were applied to the teacher sample. The student and the teacher samples were adjudicated independently, however. All ICCS 2016 Latin American countries met IEA sample participation requirements, making it possible to report findings without having to provide annotations.

Overview of the ICCS 2016 Latin American report

This publication reporting findings from ICCS 2016 for the Latin American region is complemented by the international report (Schulz et al., 2018), a regional report for the European region (Losito et al., 2018), a technical report (Schulz, Carstens, Losito, & Fraillon, 2018), and an ICCS international database and user guide. The report contains six chapters, the first of which is this introductory chapter. Chapters 2 to 5 are content-related chapters that focus on different region-specific aspects of students' civics-related perceptions and attitudes. The concluding chapter (Chapter 6) provides a more general discussion of the findings reported in the content-related chapters.

Chapter 2 summarizes the national contexts for civic and citizenship education in each of the participating countries. It provides basic information on each country's demographic, economic, and political characteristics, as well as information about the implementation of civic and citizenship education in the country's national curriculum and schools.

Chapter 3 describes students' views of public institutions and government, particularly their endorsement of non-democratic government practices, their attitudes toward corruption, and their trust in civic institutions. The chapter also compares ICCS 2016 outcomes with outcomes from the 2009 cycle and looks at associations between students' attitudes and selected variables (such as civic knowledge and parental education).

Chapter 4 contains data on students' views of peaceful coexistence. It focuses on their views regarding the use of violence, their attitudes toward disobedience to the law, and their sense of empathy, as well as on changes in students' perceptions of the use of violence and their attitudes toward breaking the law since 2009. It also provides information on associations between these variables and selected variables, such as gender and civic knowledge.

Chapter 5 is concerned with students' views of social cohesion and discrimination. It describes the extent of students' acceptance of neighborhood diversity, their attitudes toward homosexuality, and the extent to which they thought different social groups in their country were experiencing discrimination.

Chapter 6 summarizes the main findings that emerged from ICCS 2016 with regard to region-specific issues. It also discusses possible implications of these findings for further research, policy, and practice.

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