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**YOUTH ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP:
PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS, PROCESSES AND PRACTICES.**

Presentata da: Antonella Guarino

Coordinatore Dottorato

Monica Rubini

Supervisore

Bruna Zani

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Abstract

The concept of youth active citizenship is a complex and challenging issue to deal with. Youth participative behaviors are rapidly decreasing in the contemporary scenario, but more attention must be given to the psychological aspects of citizenship and various forms of youth participatory practices. The aims of this research were to describe the citizenship participation behaviors of youth; to explore how the factors at individual, micro and sociodemographic level are related to the different behavioral components of youth active citizenship; to evaluate a participatory school-based intervention co-led by youth and adults; to examine the practices of youth active citizenship in youth organizations. Mixed-methods are used to account for the different and complementary aspects of youth citizenship. Methods used for the overall research design were: a longitudinal questionnaire for the analysis of the process of construction of active citizenship (chapter 2); a mixed-method evaluation of a school-based intervention consisted in a questionnaire, focus group and interviews (chapter 3), and qualitative case studies for the analysis of organizational practices (chapter 4). Results from the longitudinal study show that the levels of participative behaviors are decreasing in time, while political interest, family context and membership in students, religious and dealing with social issues organizations seem to be important factors that enhance active citizenship. Results from the evaluation of the school-based participatory research show that open school climate and an improvement of quality of participation at school favor forms of political participation. Moreover, the process and the outcome of critical awareness are perceived as fundamental in the process of constructing active citizenship. Results from the analysis of two youth organization practices reveal the importance to create opportunities to develop youth agency and power. A final discussion is focused on the implications for future research and interventions.

Keywords: youth active citizenship, civic and political participation, youth-adult partnerships, youth-participatory action research.

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INTRODUCTION

Active Citizenship can be considered as a complex and uncertain process which is built up by citizens in a specific context. In order to understand the process of citizenship meaning construction through time, it is important to review the different definitions of citizenship, while outlining some constitutive parts according to the focus given to it in different historical times and by scientific approaches (Condor, 2011).

Two broad conceptualizations of citizenship were developed in the first decades of the 20th century. The first one, attributed to John Dewey (1927), concerned engaging citizens in meaningful participation in the local practices and decisions that shaped their lives. From this perspective, citizenship was aligned with participation at a community level in order to protect and foster citizens' interests within the broader society. The second conceptualization was based on Floyd Allport's claims (1933) and considered active citizenship as a reflective, critical process that draws on individual agency within the broader social system.

In 1950, the first definition of Marshall (1950) considered citizenship in terms of rights and obligations highlighting its civic, political, and social dimensions. This tripartite sub-classification assumed that all people are equal before the law (civil citizenship). They also have the right to participate in the governance (political citizenship), to access economic welfare and security, and to live like "a civilized being according to standards prevailing in society" (social citizenship) (p. 74). Based on this description, Delanty (1997) defined citizenship as a concept that "implies membership of a polity and is defined by the rights bestowed by the polity on the individual. In the most general terms, citizenship involves a constitutionally based relationship between the individual and the state" (p. 285). This conceptualization of citizenship is linked to institutional and formal characteristics. Shooter (1993) has suggested that citizen identities shall be discussed while taking into consideration not just institutional relations, but also "cultural politics of everyday social life" (p. 187). To Shotter (1993), citizenship means rhetorically achieving a sense of identity and belonging in relation to others around us, and (re) constituting norms which regulate public life and impinge upon the individual in terms of rights and duties. Shotter (1993) characterized an 'imagined community', in which the entitlement to speak and to be heard depends on the acceptance of others as 'one of us'. Whereas some will automatically be accepted as insiders and have the right to speak, others will need to assert and prove their membership. While of course there are contrasting understandings and perspectives within any such community, the boundaries are drawn so that some individuals are marginalized or silenced by being outsiders. At that point, citizenship is embedded in the everyday life experiences of people,

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both at individual and collective level. While adopting Shotter's (1993) model, Carens (2000) emphasized the importance of the "psychological" aspects of citizenship. There was a natural link between the legal and psychological dimensions: people generally felt strongly connected to and identified with the political community of which they possessed legal citizenship; thus, they experienced emotional attachment and loyalty towards this community. In addition to these dimensions, citizenship entailed the potential of citizen participation. "Citizenship does not only have a bearing on how the community relates to the citizen, but also on how the citizen relates to the community of which he or she is a member" (Carens, 2000, p. 166). Carens (2000) claimed that the study of citizenship should include the construction of narratives of citizenship (at the individual and cultural level) as well as the development of personal and collective efficacy through active participation. The debate on citizenship based on rights presupposed a formal understanding of citizenship and has led to considering action and involvement in social and political domain as a more suitable and complete definition (Lister, 1997; Mouffe, 1992). It is important to focus on the interactions between members of a community and among different communities.

The feminist approach (Lister, 1997; Lister, Smith, Middleton & Cox, 2003) claimed that citizenship should be conceptualized as a practice, involving both rights/obligations and political participation meaningfully constituted in interaction. Thus, citizenship could be described as the individuals' relationship with the wider society. In research by Lister and colleagues (2003), many of the youngsters participating in the study perceived citizenship as a universal status, in the sense that they thought of everybody as being citizen. The definition of this concept was more inclusive and focused on the political agency of people from an actor-oriented perspective, including women, children, and disabled people. According to this view, Turner (1993) has attempted to shift the definition of citizenship to one which emphasized practices: "The word "practice" should help us to understand the dynamic social construction of citizenship which changes historically as a consequence of political struggles" (p. 2). This relocation of citizenship from the cognitive to the discursive realm corresponded to the discursive reformulation of several psychological processes traditionally dealt with in cognitive terms only (Isin & Turner, 2002).

Recently, Hoskins and Mascherini (2009) added the term 'active' to citizenship and defined it as: "participation in civil society, community and/or political life, characterized by mutual respect and non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy" (p. 10). Even if the previous definitions dealt with the active parts of citizenship as the involvement in civil society, in this definition there was a clear reference to it. The focus of

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active citizenship shifted from rights to participatory activities, participatory democracy, civil society, and community support. It also included reference to representative democracy, considering actions such as voting and membership of political parties that form the backbone of the democratic system. The definition also included participation in the everyday life of the communities that enables greater social inclusion. Studies on citizenship within psychology (Condor, 2011; Stevenson, Dixon, Hopkins & Luyt, 2015) focused primarily on citizenship as individual economic, social, and political engagement considered as sources of personal and societal improvement. In this definition, a ‘communitarian’ focus was also evident, by focusing on participation as part of a broader collective and as a key ingredient of citizenship behavior.

Considering these definitions as the starting discourse on which the construction of active citizenship is based, this research project is focused on psychological active citizenship in youth, considering practices and processes in the school context and community. The main research question of this study starts from a statement which is quite diffused in scientific literature, that is youth do not participate or their engagement is constantly decreasing. From adults and politics perspective, youth is often considered as disinterested in politics or political participation. Is this the right perspective to consider youth participation? An analysis of some approaches and methods that consider the voices of young people should give different answers to the same questions. Youth participation may take various forms depending on multilevel components coming from the individuals, the contexts, and the wider society. Youth can take part in different activities which may be considered as civic and political but do not refer to the traditional and conventional forms of civic and political participation. Many scholars tried to outline different forms and profiles of participating and non-participating youth (Amnå, 2012). If we consider the complexity of citizenship concept and its active dimension, we should consider different ways youth may express their representation and concrete dimension of active citizenship. The use of mixed methods methodology takes into account these different perspectives by considering the interaction of using quantitative and qualitative methods, providing a deeper understanding than using them independently (Allen, Walden, Dworkin & Javdani, 2016).

This doctoral research has been developed in the context of a larger research project (“CATCH-EyoU – Constructing AcTive CitizensHip with European Youth: Policies, Practices, Challenges and Solutions” - EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020), funded by the European Union and coordinated by the University of Bologna. The data used in the quantitative and qualitative studies presented in this

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dissertation are part of the data collection conducted by the Italian team in CATCH-EyoU, of which the Author is a member.

In *Chapter 1* I will review the literature on the concept of youth active citizenship according to the perspectives of social and community psychology. This latter will be enriched by contributions on the topic in developmental psychology, political sciences, and sociology.

Models of youth active citizenship development are discussed to depict a general framework of the state of the art from a systemic and ecological perspective. A focus on favorable conditions for youth to construct active citizenship will be given. Then, factors enhancing active citizenship and the forms that this latter may take in everyday life will be detailed.

In *Chapter 2*, a quantitative longitudinal study will show how the individual, micro, and macro level factors relate to active citizenship behaviors, according to a systemic approach longitudinal data from an Italian sample of youth, composed of younger and older subsamples, will be analyzed through logistic regressions to examine how the variables at different levels can explain the participative behaviors. Political interest, political efficacy, and institutional trust will be considered as individual level factors; family, peers, school, and community will be considered as micro level contexts for younger sample, while the membership in different organizations will be the comparison variable at a micro level between younger and older sample. Eventually, age, socioeconomic status, and gender will be considered as sociodemographic or macro level variables.

In *Chapter 3*, a participatory school-based intervention will show how such factors (explored in chapter 2) can be developed through a meaningful partnership between students and teachers in school to favor active citizenship promotion. The evaluation of the intervention through a mixed-method methodology will show different aspects of the process of citizenship construction in school both from the students and teachers' perspective.

In *Chapter 4*, organizational practices will be examined to account for the processes of youth active citizenship construction which are embedded in youth practices. A qualitative analysis of two youth organizations will investigate how youth perceive their active citizenship, which activities and tools they use, and what their strengths let them behave as active citizens while interacting with their everyday life contexts.

Finally, *Chapter 5* will present an integrated discussion and reflection on the results emerging from the different studies while pointing out implication for interventions and further research.

CHAPTER 1

An ecological and psychosocial perspective on Youth Active Citizenship

Community psychologists typically use the term ‘citizenship’ to denote the formal and informal rights, entitlements and obligations held by all community members while ‘citizenship participation’ can be formally defined as “a process in which individuals take part in the institutions, programs and environments which affect them” (Heller, Price, Reinharz, & Wandersman, 1984, p. 339).

“Constructing citizenship and strengthening civil society are, then, at the political core of community psychology, expressed in its empowering orientation activated through participation, and in action and reflection, about what is carried out by participants in community projects” (Montero, 2009, p. 152).

Critical community psychologists additionally emphasize the critical and transformative nature of citizen participation and collective community action (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Orford, 2008; Pancer, 2015). Their research has typically aimed at understanding which citizens participate, which factors facilitate or impede participation, and which effects does participation produce on the individuals and communities involved. According to this research, citizens gain their identity and rights from their community membership and the meaning of their actions is derived from their alignment with community goals. Moreover, citizenship participation is considered as an inherently inclusive concept that emphasizes the opportunity and the obligation of all community members to participate. This research also highlights the consequences of social and psychological barriers preventing participation and the consequences of social exclusion within marginalized communities (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010).

In this chapter, different aspects that contribute to define and explain the construction of Youth Active Citizenship (YAC) will be dealt with. First of all, we will provide a definition of the term *youth* in psychology, according to a general framework of ecological model and strength-based perspective; we will also analyze the relations between youth and adults in different contexts to create and construct opportunities and spaces for youth active citizenship. Furthermore, we will examine the explanation of the term *engagement* as a constituent element of the active part of youth citizenship. Finally, we will discuss psychosocial factors enhancing youth active citizenship.

The ecological framework for Youth Active Citizenship

In psychology, *youth* is becoming an elastic term: usually, it refers to young people aged from 15 to 25 (Sherrod, 2006), thus including the definitions of adolescents, emerging adults and young adults. The European Commission (2007) gives a definition of youth based on the complex, fragmented transitions that are extended from childhood to early adulthood and, in some contexts, until the age of 30 or even 35. Therefore, it seems that the term youth embeds these transition processes considering their variable nature.

Starting from this assumption, in this dissertation the term youth will be used as an inclusive concept of adolescents and young adults. Considering these multifaceted characters of youth in modern societies, the question of young people's status as citizens becomes crucial. In fact, it affects the way youngsters are considered and treated, the way youth policies and services are developed, and how young people feel about themselves and their value in society (Smith, Lister, Middleton & Cox, 2005). According to Nakamura (2002), a youth can be *vitally engaged* in almost any sphere of activity, including music, politics, arts, and community work. Any activity envisaging the three following features may be considered as a vital engagement: first of all, it shall include long-lasting, enjoyable, and fulfilling activities; secondly, it shall create a connection between the individual and the surrounding world; finally, it shall be considered as meaningful and significant by the individual carrying it out. The term *vitally* outlines the importance and the quality of a certain kind of engagement for youth. Thus, youth can become vitally engaged if they perceive it as meaningful for their life. In this sense, youth engagement as a component of Youth Active Citizenship can be linked to Nakamura definition of vital engagement. This latter encompasses not only "sustained engagement carried out in specific spheres of activity and concerning things that the individual is interested in, but also engagement with another person (such as a friend) and/or groups (such as teammates, a community) dealing with any aspect of the world" (Nakamura, 2002, p. 7).

Engagement usually involves some kind of participatory behavior (Barrett & Brunton-Smith, 2014) which may be directed towards political institutions and processes, public authorities (in the case of political engagement), or even the members of a community (in the case of civic engagement). However, not all the engagement is exhibited through participatory behavior. Youth may have interest in political or civic matters without undertaking any action, while having knowledge, opinions or feelings about these topics (Amnå, 2013). This means that individuals can be cognitively or affectively engaged without being behaviorally engaged. For this reason, some youths are indeed *psychologically but not behaviorally*

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engaged (Barrett & Zani, 2015). In other words, a lack of manifest political or civic action cannot necessarily be interpreted as a sign of political and civic disengagement (Amnå, 2012). Previous research (Barber, 2009; Livingstone, Bober & Helsper, 2005; Ozer, 2016; Pancer, 2015; Sherrod, Flanagan & Youniss, 2002; Zeldin, Christens & Powers, 2013) showed that youth need opportunities to be engaged. Particularly, Barber (2009) considers that *engagement zone* is the term for the dynamic context where adults engage and interact with young people. The term is drawn upon Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is a social constructivist proposition suggesting that the development of young people is dependent on social interaction and collaborative problem solving (Barber, 2009). According to this approach, giving room for more capable peers and adult guidance, is key to close the gap between actual and potential development. This zone is the place for dialogue, compromise, insight, and a focus on possibilities. In this area there will be expression of anger, cynicism, tokenism, humor, creativity, and positive change. Some adults and young people will leave the zone when they feel that their needs are not met; some will remain and continue to struggle optimistically in the hope that change can be achieved. This model is an interaction between top-down (adult guidance) and bottom-up (peers' competence) processes. Not all top-down pressures are negative. In fact, some structural forces can be productive and lead to positive outcomes if they are settled in the right context. Similarly, demands from bottom-up cannot be assumed to be positive and altruistic. Sometimes, the pressures from young people may be unrealistic, unattainable, and naïve in some ways. What remains in the engagement zone is the commitment to listen and dialogue between adults and young people.

Engagement is seen to be inserted in proximal, social, and political contexts and is one of the core components of decision making, autonomy, and partnership (Smith et al., 2005). Literature on civic and political development is focused on the different living contexts that can provide opportunities for youth to increase their capacities and abilities to be active citizens. Particularly, the ecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007) underlined that the improvement of youth civic and political attitudes is influenced on the one hand by multiple environments or systems such as family and peers, with whom most social interactions take place, and on the other hand, by schools and neighborhoods, where youth spend most of their daily lives.

This model focuses on the processes and interactions between the individual and social environments and the multiple interactions between different contexts in a specific system in order to improve an adaptive development of youth.

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The ecological environment is composed by different systems in which each person is situated and has a direct or indirect interaction that goes from the most proximal to the most distant: *microsystem*, *mesosystem*, *ecosystem* and *macrosystem*. As Bronfenbrenner (1994) says:

A microsystem is a pattern of activities, social roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical, social, and symbolic features that invite, permit, or inhibit, engagement in sustained, progressively more complex interaction with, and activity in, the immediate environment. (p. 1645).

Thus, the *microsystem* represents the contexts of which the individual has direct experience, such as family, school, and peers.

The *mesosystem* is comprised of two or more settings; in short, it is a system of two or more microsystems and is represented by their interactions in activities, roles and relations (for example, the relationship between family and school, family and peers, school and family).

The *ecosystem* represents the environments, that influence individuals through microsystem. Finally, the *macrosystem* is composed of social ideologies and values of cultures and subcultures.

Since micro systems represent the social contexts where youngsters can experiment their agency through direct relationships, these proximal contexts constitute a particularly important focus of research for the psychological understanding of civic and political development.

In recent years, researchers have started shifting from seeing youth as problems or at-risk population (Sherrod, 2006) to viewing them as resources for participatory action and research (Wong, Zimmerman & Parker, 2010). Young people were rarely asked to voice their opinions or participate in the development of research and programs designed for them. Studies that use participatory asset-based approaches, such as youth empowerment, are emerging in the empirical literature (Cargo, Grams, Ottoson, Ward & Green, 2004; Foster-Fishman, Deacon, Nievar & McCann, 2005; Jennings, Parra-Medina, Messias & McLoughlin, 2006; Ozer, 2016; Wallerstein, Sanchez-Merki & Dow, 2002). The appeal of these approaches is that they both lay upon young people's intrinsic strengths and actively involve them in addressing issues that they themselves identify. In addition, the issues young people identify may also be community concerns; thus, the potential to positively influence both youngsters and community development can be encouraged by actively involve youth. These approaches are based on the recognition that the goal of youth policies and programs should

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be to promote positive development (Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas & Lerner, 2005) —not just to prevent problems (Sherrod, 2006). Promoting positive development deals with the development of citizenship (Lerner, Johnson, Wang, Ferris & Hershberg, 2015; Sherrod, 2006) by giving them some responsibility, in constructing youth led initiatives.

Opportunities for Youth Active Citizenship

A systemic approach is present in the theory of Positive Youth Development (PYD, Lerner et al., 2015, Lerner, 2005): it specifies that if young people have mutual beneficial relations with the people and institutions of their social world, they will be on the way to a hopeful future, marked by positive contributions to self, the family, the community, and the civil society. The bidirectional relations between individual contributions to society, positive civic engagement, and the functioning of social institutions that support individual thriving, have become focal areas of theoretical and empirical work within developmental science (Sherrod, Torney-Purta, & Flanagan, 2010). The PYD perspective has arisen as well through the development and, in some cases, the evaluation of interventions designed and delivered within community-based, youth serving programs (Lerner, 2005). The PYD approach is derived from relational developmental systems theory (Hershberg, DeSouza, Warren, Lerner, & Lerner, 2014; Lerner & Overton 2008; Overton, 2014) that considers that all youth have strengths, and all contexts have assets. Youth development occurs as a product of the mutually influential interrelations between diverse individuals and changing contexts, represented as individual $\leftarrow \rightarrow$ context relations (Overton, 2014). When these mutually influential individual $\leftarrow \rightarrow$ context relations are also mutually beneficial, they are called adaptive developmental regulations (Brandtstädter, 1998). The *Five Cs* model of PYD (Lerner, 2005) posits that when individual strengths are aligned with contextual assets there is an adaptive development of individual $\leftarrow \rightarrow$ context relations. Thus, the positive developmental outcomes can be developed in five dimensions of Competence, Confidence, Caring, Connection, and Character (Lerner et al. 2015). *Competence* is a positive view of one's action in domain-specific areas including the social and academic domains. *Confidence* is an internal sense of overall positive self-worth, identity, and feelings about one's physical appearance. *Character* involves respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong, and integrity. *Connection* involves a positive bond with people and institutions that are reflected in healthy, bidirectional exchanges between the individual and peers, family, school, and community in which both parties contribute to the relationship. *Caring* reflects the degree of sympathy and empathy

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participants feel toward others. In turn, when these *Five Cs* develop, a sixth ‘C’, *Contribution* to self, family, and community, will emerge (Lerner & Overton, 2008; Lerner, Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, Phelps, Gestsdottir, Smith, 2005; Lerner, von Eye, Lerner, Lewin-Bizan & Bowers, 2010;). If young people do not regard contribution as a central component of their sense of self, or as an important outcome of participating in youth development programs, then theories and practice linking PYD and youth contributions may not be effective in encouraging youth engagement in youth development programs (Alberts, Christiansen, Chase, Naudeau, Phelps & Lerner, 2006; Harter, 2006). Moreover, if youth reports an ideological commitment to contribution, but do not report engaging in acts of contribution and valuing these acts, then it may be that youth programs, schools, and/or parents are not providing ecologically and developmentally appropriate opportunities for action (Balsano, 2005; Zeldin et al. 2013). Considering the status of engaged youth, not just in terms of rights and obligations, it is possible to debate that participation is perceived to be an adult activity with all the rituals and behaviors that go with it. Relatively few young people under the age of 18 years are given the opportunity to participate in political, economic, or social decision making. Engagement pertains not only to the political domain of citizenship (Geboers, Geijsel, Admiraal & ten Dam, 2013) but also increasingly to the social domain, and can include attitudes to pro-social behaviors such as volunteerism, self-confidence in ‘making the difference in the social environment’, and a contribution to construct social justice (Haste & Hogan, 2006; Torney-Purta, Barber & Richardson, 2004). Forms of youth engagement may be creating ‘the illusion of voice’ when in many situations they are more like a managerial process which ticks the correct boxes, achieves organizational priorities but remains tokenistic’ (Cockburn, 2005, p. 110). When they are consulted or encouraged to participate, the context is usually dominated by adults. Amnå (2013, p. 20) stated “Adults have to stop looking upon youths as they were the citizens of tomorrow. They are actually citizens of today”. Indeed, citizenship cannot be seen as a status that is suddenly achieved in an immutable form at a certain age. Young people’s sense of citizenship will be affected dynamically by their practices and experiences of transitions. In terms of social policy (Amnå, 2013), for example, greater prominence of the constructive social participation model of citizenship would require shifting emphasis from implementing interventions to promote youth citizenship and participation, to greater recognition of and support for what young people already do as citizens.

Youth -Adult partnership (Y-AP) approach emphasizes mutuality and respect among youth and adults, with a goal-oriented focus on shared leading and learning (Camino, 2000;

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Camino & Zeldin, 2002). In such perspective, youth and adults are challenged to bring their own perspectives, experiences, and networks into the partnership. By doing so, they can potentially promote community change by stimulating critical discourse, skill development, participatory inquiry, and collective action.

A critical perspective (Watts, & Flanagan, 2007; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999; Watts & Guessous, 2006; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003) on the process of constructing citizenship is focused on the importance to claim for the Socio-Political Development (SPD) of youth that can be reached by considering four components. The first component is considered the worldview and social analysis, of which critical consciousness is a central part, the second is the sense of agency, which is composed by empowerment and efficacy (self, collective, political), the third is presented as the opportunity structure, which takes into account the resources available to shape and permit action based on one's analysis, and the fourth is the Societal Involvement Behavior (SIB), that is the engagement in society articulated in community service, civic engagement, or socio-political activism. Youth socio-political development model derives from the integration of critical community psychology and developmental psychology, in which the aim of the development is not just an evolving and maturation process but also a process that considers youth voice and needs as part of the whole community. It claims a critical understanding of the political, economic, cultural, and other systemic forces that shape society and one's status in it (Watts et al., 2003). SPD is a "journey from a place of relative uninformed inaction on the social forces that affect our lives to one of sustained, informed, and strategic action" (Watts et al., 2003, p. 188). The focus of this model is the raising of critical consciousness. As Watts and colleagues (2003) sustained, by citing Hopper (1999), critical awareness

[it is] learning to think critically about accepted ways of thinking and feeling, discerning the hidden interests in underlying assumptions and framing notions (whether these be class-, gender-, race/ethnicity-based). It means learning to see, in the mundane particulars of ordinary lives, how history works, how received ways of thinking and feeling serve to perpetuate existing structures of inequality (p. 210).

The process of raising awareness follows different stages, going from the lack of awareness of social inequality, becoming increasingly sophisticated, it passes to be informed by action, and finally the synergy of action and reflection enhances the skills needed for effective liberation behavior which means that a social action component (community activism, solidarity activities, political actions) is advanced (Watts et al., 1999). It is through these learning processes that youth can both become empowered and obtain developmental benefits (Wong

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et al., 2010). Within these processes, the role of adults is essential in promoting and co-constructing opportunities and favorable conditions to learn, by being collaborators, instead of being the experts, facilitating critical dialogue, awareness, and building skills towards critical consciousness in partnership with young people (Zimmerman, 2000). The quality of this involvement can affect youth development.

Youth empowerment is defined as “participation in meaningful activities, such as community service, that provide opportunities for skill development and positive reinforcement and recognition from adults throughout the process” (Jennings et al., 2006, p. 34). The development of this process (Chinman & Linney, 1998; Wong et al., 2010), however, requires adults to be actively involved in fostering conditions and opportunities for youth to develop critical consciousness. Adults possess the authority to create safe environments and youth-centered conditions where young people feel welcomed and, therefore, are willing to share their views. In addition, adults have an increased access to institutions within the social environment that influence opportunities for youth to participate in decisions that affect their lives. The empowerment process, however, does not involve just youth or adults, but implies a shared co-learning relationship where both respective groups raise the level of collective and community critical consciousness. The level of empowerment that youth reaches, according to Wong and colleagues (2010), allows to distinguish three basic approaches: adult-driven, shared control, and youth-driven participation. The degree of control of youth can differ within these types. The ‘pyramid model’ conceives the edge as the most suitable scenario in which the control of decision-making and power is shared between youth and adults. Intervention and youth programs find their implementation in different nuances between these three types. Youth participants can be encouraged to be active collaborators and the sharing of their views contributes to critical dialogue, furthering awareness about how politics, socioeconomic position, culture and history can be fundamental in shaping individual life experience and health outcomes (Rappaport, 1995; Wallerstein, 1992; Zimmerman, 2000). By being active collaborators, youth can also increase developmental assets such as competence, self-efficacy and sense of control by developing an awareness of and engaging with their contexts (Zimmerman, 1995). Community organizations, youth groups and schools are all contexts, in which young people can collaborate with others, discuss relevant social and political issues, engage in participatory experiences and reflect critically on social issues. These are conceived as practice grounds for public life, that can provide youth with the possibility to exercise rights and responsibilities as members of a community and foster interest and critical awareness on a broader civic and

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political level. Community organizations are a vehicle for people seeking to participate. Organizing brings people together and enables them to generate power to accomplish their purpose. It is a process that builds their own sense of power, their perceived or actual power with others, and their ability to affect power relationships in the community (Checkoway, 2011).

Psychosocial factors of Youth Active Citizenship

Community psychology approach (Albanesi, Cicognani & Zani, 2007; Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012; Marta, Pozzi, & Marzana, 2010; Martinez, Coker, McMahan, Cohen & Thapa, 2016; McNamara, Stevenson & Muldoon, 2013) locates the practices and consequences of citizenship within the contexts of everyday life. Dealing with active citizenship within the community psychology perspective means to consider how different individual behaviors are constructed through the interaction with social and political contexts by taking into account the ecological and systemic perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The process of becoming involved in citizenship activities within specific contexts considers different factors that can initiate or sustain the engagement (Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Pancer, Pratt, Hunsberger & Alisat, 2007).

According to Pancer and colleagues' model (2007), youth initially becomes involved in an activity through some 'initiating factors'. At the individual level, these factors may be the influence of others, such as parents, friends or teachers. At the systems level, an example of an initiating factor is the presence of youth-oriented organizations and activities in the community.

Youth engagement can be sustained, however, if, in addition to factors that initiate involvement, there are "sustaining factors". At the individual level, engagement will be sustained if youth have positive experiences, within a supportive social context. At the systems level, engagement will be sustained if young people are in a context that values, structures, and supports youth involvement, and one that encourages, rewards, and supports the activities of adults who believe in youth engagement. Youth engagement can also be seen as occurring at two levels. At the individual level, engagement involves the individual engaging in an activity, on his or her own, such as providing community service or participating in a youth organization. At the systems level, the youth works in concert with others to affect an entire organization or system. If initiating and sustaining factors are present, then sustained, vital engagement will occur (Pancer, Rose-Krasnor & Loisel, 2002). These factors, both initiating and sustaining refer to psychological components of active

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citizenship that are strictly linked to the behavioral ones. At the individual level, political interest and political efficacy have been studied as the most relevant factors that enhance active citizenship.

Political interest refers to the interest that an individual has in politics and political issues (Barrett & Brunton-Smith, 2014). It has been consistently found that young people show lower levels of interest in conventional politics than adults, with many considering traditional politics to be “boring”, “irrelevant” to their lives, ineffective, and incomprehensible (Kiesa, Orłowski, Levine, Both, Kirby, Lopez & Marcelo, 2007; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins & Carpini, 2006). Emler (2011) suggests that interest stimulates political attentiveness, which in turn leads to political knowledge, which lead to having an opinion and to political participation.

Political efficacy can be considered in distinct forms: internal and collective efficacy (cfr. Bandura, 2006). *Self political efficacy* is the belief that one understands political issues and can participate effectively in political situations; while *collective political efficacy* is the belief that a collective group to which one belongs is able to influence political situations. A research (Jugert, Greenaway, Barth, Büchner, Eisentraut & Fritsche, 2016) shows that collective efficacy is related to pro- social behaviors reinforcing the perception that the collective group is capable of reaching its collective goals that leads to an increasing sense of internal efficacy, which in turn motivates individuals to act on behalf of the group.

At the system or contextual level, proximal contexts of socialization in which individuals reside and lead their everyday lives – family, peers, school, neighborhood, community groups and organizations – and their perceptions are considered to have critical influence on civic development and opportunities for participation (Albanesi et al., 2007; Cicognani & Zani, 2015; Cicognani, Zani, Fournier, Gavray, & Born, 2012; Diemer & Li, 2011; Foster-Fishman, Collins & Pierce, 2013; Guillaume, Jagers & Rivas-Drake, 2015; Harré, 2007; Lenzi, Vieno, Altoe, Scacchi, Perkins, Zukauskiene & Santinello, 2015; Lenzi, Vieno, Pastore & Santinello, 2013; Mannarini & Fedi, 2012; Marta et al., 2010; Martinez, Peñaloza & Valenzuela, 2012; Marzana, Marta & Pozzi, 2012; McLeod, 2000; Ohmer, 2010; Watts et al., 2003).

Dealing with contexts, it seems important to recall the concept of opportunities to participate in communities to develop civic attitudes and become youth active citizens (Atkins & Hart, 2003), reinforced by the institutional and relational support that adolescents are able to find in their contexts and that acts to push them to become involved in some form of social action (Hart & Atkins, 2002). Socialization processes occur within multiple contexts in which youth

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learn how to behave as active citizens (Rose & Krasnor, 2009; Rossi, Lenzi, Sharkey, Vieno & Santinello, 2016).

Research demonstrated that parental norms are predictive for civic and political participation, that is, if youths' parents approved of their offspring engaging in political action, and parents themselves engaged in political action, they will more likely join community groups and associations, and wear or display political symbols (Barrett & Brunton-Smith, 2014; Barrett & Zani, 2015). Peer contexts, having positive peer group relationships, having friends who are politically engaged, and having friends who provide social support all tend to be associated with higher levels of civic and political engagement, such as helping others in need (Persson, Kerr, & Stattin, 2007; Wentzel & McNamara, 1999). In fact, for Italian youth, the experience of membership in youth groups or institutions, such as sports clubs, youth clubs, church groups or religious groups (such as the Scouts) increase the probability of engaging in the community (Marta & Scabini, 2003; Marzana et al., 2012). Moreover, American youth whose peers offer social support for discussing personal issues and problems are more likely to engage in civic activism and to volunteer for community service in late adolescence (Zaff, Malanchuk & Eccles, 2008).

In the school, having an open classroom climate is a major predictor of young people's levels of political knowledge, political interest, and intentions to vote in the future (Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald & Schulz, 2001). The presence of an open classroom climate predicts levels of political interest, internal and external efficacy, and trust in politicians and government officials (Azevedo & Menezes, 2007) creating the relationship between a strong open classroom climate and opportunities to participate in school decision-making and these students' political attentiveness, collective efficacy and political trust. Teachers are also involved in promoting active citizenship. Teachers practice and work in the domain of pedagogical climate (Geboers et al., 2013), creating a classroom atmosphere in which discussion, dialogue, and a concern for others are highly valued. Effects of pedagogical climate were most frequently examined in students' attitudes concerning the political sphere of acting democratically (Geissel, 2008). It is shown to be the most frequently investigated type of citizenship education with small to large effect sizes.

Other research (Albanesi et al., 2007; Quane & Rankin, 2006; Wandersam & Florin, 2000) showed that neighborhood-based factors are related to youth participation in the civic life, to the development of important prosocial competencies and a better quality of life.

Conventional and unconventional forms of Youth Active Citizenship

Citizenship participation is a field of practice and subject of study which includes initiatives involving young people according to their race, ethnicity, class, gender, or other social identity; in education, environment, housing, or other issues; and in rural areas, small towns, suburbs, or neighborhoods of cities in nations worldwide. As any approach to social practice has shown, youth participation differs from group to group (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2009; Levine, 2008; Wray-Lake, Syvertsen & Flanagan, 2008) and to different forms in everyday life. Research conceptualized citizenship participation as a multi-component and multi-level, integrated construct encompassing both cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components (Zaff, Kawashima-Ginsberg, Lin, Lamb, Balsano & Lerner, 2011) and implemented at different levels according to an ecological and systemic perspective (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Lerner & Overton, 2008). As stated by Barrett & Zani (2015), the active dimension of citizenship comprises: civic participation (school-based community service, membership of a community organization, voluntary activities, etc.); political participation, with conventional forms such as being a member of a political party; unconventional forms such as attending protests or signing petitions, and psychological engagement, such as paying attention to political or civic events. Non-participation - or disengagement - should be included among the forms of civic engagement, as it is not the simple reverse of engagement. It rather can be viewed as an expression and a position when dealing with political and civic questions (Amnå, 2013; Ekman & Amnå, 2012). Identifying and studying various forms of civic engagement in youth, including disengagement, is important because they are less and less committed to formal types of engagement (like being active within a party or a trade union), whereas they may be highly involved in other types of civic participation (like non-political youth organizations or volunteer activities). People can feel good about doing something to help their community even if they disengage from the political system itself. Because younger people are often pressed into volunteering and service, they are the ones who are learning that politics is bad, and this influences their participation rates in the future. In a way, “volunteers in general consider their volunteer work to be non-political” (Keeter, Zukin, Andolina & Jenkins, 2002, p. 19). On the other way, their involvement, even if defined as a latent form of political participation (Ekman & Amnå, 2012), has similar characteristics of the political one when their actions reach community and society level. In this sense, civic engagement can be considered as a continuum of activities (Marzana et al., 2012) that goes from less structured activities (such as neighborhood networks) to institutionalized activities (such as associations promoting social and political

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campaigns), through a whole range of organizational forms of civil society that share the goals of solidarity and philanthropy (Yates & Youniss, 1998).

Younger people, however, often find civic participation, both online and offline (Jugert, Eckstein, Noack, Kuhn & Benbow, 2013), more appealing than political participation.

Campbell and Murray (2004) note that making political participation mandatory decreases people's internal motivation to participate in other ways. Youth who are forced to be involved in civic activities might well lose their intrinsic motivation to be involved in the future and may find themselves even less likely to participate in civic or political activities. The role of less conventionally political activity in citizenship is demonstrated in how young people define the characteristics of 'the good citizen'. Obeying the law is rated most important in most studies, but being involved in the community, helping people, and being concerned about the environment tend to be rated as equally, or more, important than voting, and considerably more important than belonging to a political party (Torney-Purta et al., 2001; Lister et al., 2003; Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo & Sheblanova, 1999).

Cross-cultural studies (Cicognani, Pirini, Keyes, Joshanloo, Rostami, & Nosratabadi, 2008; Esser & de Vreese 2007; Crocetti, Jahromi, & Meeus, 2012) have shown that overall rates of youth civic engagement differ across societies and some common patterns can be identified. Specifically, youth are rarely engaged in political organizations while they are more likely to participate in youth non-political organizations and in volunteer activities (Crocetti, Erentaitė & Žukauskienė, 2014). Research (Hahn, 1998; Putnam, 2000) shows a declining tendency of participation, mostly when it comes to traditional political organizations such as parties and unions, but also in relation to other civil associations, both in youngsters and adults. This phenomenon has been related to the growing personalization of political life (Cruz, 1995), to increasing individualism in our societies (Koliba, 2000), to the privatization of social life and leisure (Putnam, 2000). Active Citizenship then has to involve multiple components if we are to understand its development in diverse populations. As some authors (Yates & Youniss, 1998; Sherrod, 2006; Menezes, 2003) argue, civic engagement has not declined but simply changed in nature. For instance, whereas people are less likely to read newspapers, they may get news from other sources such as TV and the Internet (Peiser, 2000) and if youth voting is low, volunteerism is at an all-time high (McLeod, 2000).

Citizens' participation is a prerequisite for a successful democratic society and youth active citizenship lies at the heart of the construction of democracy (Rossi et al., 2016; Flanagan, et al., 1999). It seems necessary to focus on the social and political development of youth citizens as a process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, analytical skills, and

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emotional faculties necessary for participation in democratic processes and social change efforts.

Overall research aims

The theoretical background presented outlined the state of the art on the concept of Youth Active Citizenship. Starting from a strength-based approach and considering that youth active citizenship is still an important issue to deal with from psychological and political perspective, and despite the decreasing level of youth participative actions we want to examine its factors, processes and practices.

In this research, the issue that will be strengthened in order to promote, develop and maintain active citizenship in youth is the concept of opportunity, considered as favorable condition created by the interaction of different actors in meaningful contexts of youth lives to express their needs and desires to be active citizens. Using different methods of analysis, the argumentation on the concept of active citizenship will have different lenses that will be interrelated to highlight integrative aspects that won't be focused otherwise. Particularly, the results from qualitative analysis will give an in-depth view on processes and practices that construct youth active citizenship that from a quantitative perspective, lack of deep explanation.

The research aims of this dissertation are:

- 1) To describe the psychosocial factors and active citizenship behaviors in Italian youth sample (*chapter 2*);
- 2) To explore how the individual, micro and socio demographic level psychosocial factors are related to the different behavioral components of active citizenship (*chapter 2*);
- 3) To examine the differences of the relations between psychosocial factors and behavior components in younger and older sample of youth population (*chapter 2*);
- 4) To evaluate how a participatory school- based intervention will contribute to improve the relation between individual level psychosocial factors and active citizenship behaviors (*chapter 3*);
- 5) To examine how the partnership between youth and adults will have an impact on the perception of school context and on the improvement of the quality of participation (*chapter 3*);
- 6) To explore the practices of active citizenship embedded in two youth organizations outlining commonalties and differences among them (*chapter 4*);
- 7) To examine the role of youth in being active agents of the process of construction of active citizenship inside and outside their organization (*chapter 4*).

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The studies presented contribute to show the multifaceted nature of the concept of active citizenship from a youth perspective, trying to outline the importance to consider bottom-up processes that start from youth strengths to improve the existing framework for youth active citizenship policies and practices. The purpose of using a mixed method involves a search for contradiction and complementarity between methods (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989). Indeed, research questions using one method can be studied from a different perspective using a second method (Green, Gerber & Nickerson, 2003). There has been a growing emphasis on mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches in community research (Greene, 2007; Greene et al., 1989; Mertens, 2010). Greene et al. (1989) have argued that mixing methods is valuable for several reasons, one among them is the complementarity between methods, trying to cover some aspects of a phenomenon that is not well captured by a single method.

Chapter 2 seeks to address research aim 1, 2 and 3. The purpose of this study is to consider the construction of active citizenship through a longitudinal perspective, analyzing the role of different psychosocial factors that enhance YAC at individual, micro and macro levels according to an ecological approach.

Chapter 3 seeks to address research aims 4 and 5. This study integrates mixed-methods to evaluate an upper secondary school-based intervention that was implemented through a participatory youth co-led action research with the partnership of adults, teachers and university researchers. The quantitative evaluation, pre and post intervention, will concern the improvement of individual psychosocial factors after the intervention, such as political interest, political efficacy, institutional trust, the impact on school climate and the perception of quality of participation at school, as well as citizenship participative behaviors. The qualitative evaluation will explore how the meanings of the citizenship behaviors are expressed by students and how the increasing raising of critical awareness about social and political issues at local and national level is constructed.

Chapter 4 seeks to address research aims 6 and 7. This study proposes to examine how youth construct active citizenship while they are members of youth organizations. Two different Italian youth organizations will be considered as case studies in which empowering processes, initiating and maintaining factors of involvement and partnership between peers and adults within and outside the organizations will be explored. The role of youth in leading activities inside the organizations will be considered as an important aspect of youth agency that has an impact on different domains of youth lives.

CHAPTER 2

Key psychosocial factors of Youth Active Citizenship

As discussed in chapter 1, the construction of active citizenship is a process that develops through the interaction of individuals and the contexts in which they are inserted (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The adaptive interaction between individuals and contexts and among different contexts is possible through mutually beneficial relations with the people and institutions of their social world, as family, school, community and the whole society (Lerner & Overton, 2008). The aim of the research presented in this chapter is to identify and explore individual, micro and sociodemographic level factors related to citizen participation, with a focus on the role of microsystems on citizen participation. The psychosocial factors of youth active citizenship at each level will be detailed in the following sections.

Individual level factors

Political Interest

Political interest is a key predictive factor for political and civic action (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). It refers to the interest that an individual has on politics and political issues. Political interest tends to be conceptualized as a psychological predisposition, which alongside political knowledge and political attentiveness, leads to civic and political participation. Previous research found that, in both youth and adult populations, the more interest a person shows in political issues, the more likely he/she is to participate in civic and political activities (Verba, Schlozman, K. L., Brady, H., & Nie, 1993; Brunton-Smith, 2011; Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr & Losito, 2010). Thus, Emler (2011), for example, proposes that political interest functions as the initial factor that leads to political participation. He suggests that interest stimulates political attentiveness, which in turn leads to political knowledge, with knowledge leading to forming opinions on political issues and to act in political activities. Previous researches mainly focused on the direction from interest to participation while few analyzed the opposite direction. Russo and Stattin (2017) found out that once young people become interested in societal and political issues, they are likely to be willing to engage in discussion and get feedback from their family. The authors conducted a longitudinal study on changes in levels of political interest among Swedish youth aged between 13 and 28 years old. They found that instability in levels of political interest was most pronounced between 13 to 15 years of age, but that interest became more stable with increasing age, especially from the early twenties onwards. Moreover, Strömbäck and Shehata

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(2010) adopted a longitudinal design to investigate the relationship between new media use and interest in politics among adults. They found that the relationship between attention to political news and political interest was reciprocal, and that the effect of political interest on new-media use was stronger than the effect of new media use on political interest. Finally, Šerek, Machackova and Macek (2017), who conducted a longitudinal analysis of the relationship between young people's interest in politics and their political participation on Czech youth aged 14 to 17 years old, found an opposite effect from participating in protests on political interest but no effects of volunteering or of engaging with elections or elected representatives on interest. There were also no significant effects in the opposite direction, from political interest to participation.

Institutional trust

Political trust has been studied by various authors as a necessary condition for “good” democratic citizenship. Institutional trust impacts differently on participation in interaction with the type of activity (conventional or unconventional) and with levels of political efficacy (individual or collective). In a traditional interpretation, political trust has been regarded as a necessary quality of active citizens and has been examined as an important precursor to political participation. More recently, it has been pointed out that dissatisfaction and distrust with institutions and government are, on the contrary, an indicator of healthy democracy and have the potential to lead to improvement of processes and structure (Cicognani et al., 2012; Talò, Mannarini & Rochira, 2014). In parallel, Geissel (2008) has found that participation increased with higher levels of attentiveness to political issues, but regardless of the level of political trust and satisfaction.

Classical research on the topic has considered political support and trust as crucial to the legitimacy of democratic systems (Almond & Verba, 1963). In contrast, other authors point out that trust can play a different role in the relationship of citizens with politics. In this sense, distrust in politicians and institutions may be accompanied by a need of critical supervision of decision-making and, possibly, by the subsequent urge to take action to improve it (Dalton & Welzel, 2014; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 2002; Norris, 1999; Rosanvallon, 2008; Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005, Tzankova, 2018).

Political efficacy

The sense of political efficacy is related to the perceived influence and control on the political process through political activity (Bandura, 2006, Guillaume et al., 2015; Kirshner &

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Ginwright, 2012; Martínez et al., 2012; Ohmer, 2010; Wong, et al., 2010, Watts & Flanagan, 2007). Youth's beliefs about their efficacy to influence governmental practices may also be partially internalized from their experiences in trying to influence the adults in educational and other institutional settings with which they must deal.

Youth observe the animated political debates by adults around them and in the mass media and they learn about the ability to influence the political system and the character and trustworthiness of elected officials (Foster & Matheson, 1998). "Institutional practices that imbue young people with a sense of efficacy that they can play a part in influencing their situations are more likely to instill a belief that political systems are also responsive and influenceable" (Bandura, 2006, p. 30).

The joint influence of political efficacy and trust in the socio-political system predicts the form and level of engagement in political activity (Wolfsfeld, 1986). People who believe they can achieve desired changes through their collective voice and view their governmental systems as trustworthy participate actively in conventional forms of political activities. Those who believe they can accomplish social changes by persevering collective action but view the governing system and officeholders as untrustworthy favor more confronting and coercive tactics.

Micro and sociodemographic level factors

A great attention is given to the importance of the relations between the contextual factors and socio demographic levels according to an ecological and systemic perspective (Foster-Fischman et al., 2013; Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012; Ohmer, 2010; Watts et al., 2003). Flanagan (2004) highlights the political socialization processes suggesting that significant adults transmit civic ideologies, understandings and practices based on their current social relations. Research has found that family, peers, school, and community contexts play an important role in influencing the likelihood of youth involvement in the civic and political domain (Silva, Sanson, Smart & Toumbourou, 2004).

Family and peer norms

Several studies have suggested that parental modelling of either acts of community service or altruistic behavior more generally is related to volunteerism or activism in adults and youth (Harrè, 2007; Watts et al., 2003, Zaff, Boyd, Li, Lerner & Lerner, 2010). Janoski & Wilson (1995) argued that this relationship could be the result of an internalizing process of

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parental norms. Zaff and colleagues (2010) showed that parents who act as role models, who reinforce volunteering behavior in their offspring, and who participate in general activities with them, have offspring who are more likely to be involved in volunteering activities (Zaff et al., 2010; Flanagan et al., 1999).

Positive relationships with peers also predict civic behaviors (Wentzel & McNamara, 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998; Green et al., 2003) even if the long-term effects of these relationships are unknown. There is evidence that youth will join activities if their friends do likewise (Persson et al., 2007).

Open school climate

Schools have been referred to as developmental niche (Torney-Purta & Amadeo, 2011) and “mini-polities where the younger generation can explore what it means to be a member of a political community and can practice the rights and obligations associated with membership in that community” (Flanagan & Christens, 2011, p. 102). This process can be accomplished in classrooms or through school-wide curricular content and relational processes (Guillaume et al., 2015).

Empirical studies have shown positive associations between students’ reports of open classroom climates in which teachers encourage them to express their views, open-mindedness (Torney-Purta, 2002), sense of social responsibility (Flanagan et al., 1999; Torney-Purta, 2009), and commitment to the democratic ideals of tolerance, and helping people in need (Flanagan, Cumsille, Gill & Gallay, 2007; Torney-Purta et al., 2004). The larger effects were mostly found in cross-sectional studies and the few small effects in longitudinal studies.

Sense of community

Sense of community (SoC) has been theorized as a construct composed of four dimensions (McMillan & Chavis, 1986): *membership* (sense of belonging to the community), *opportunities for influence* (perceived opportunities to contribute to the communal life through participation), *integration and fulfilment of needs* (benefits and satisfaction of needs deriving from community membership) and *shared emotional connection* (sharing of common history and emotional ties). SoC has been studied as an influencing process for both civic engagement and political participation (Albanesi et al., 2007; Cicognani, Mazzoni, Albanesi & Zani, 2015; Cicognani & Zani, 2015; Cicognani et al., 2012; Christens & Speer, 2015; Foster-Fishman et al., 2013; Marzana et al., 2012; Ohmer, 2010; Talò et al., 2014).

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Despite evidence attesting the association between SoC and community participation, the direction of such a relationship is not obvious. The majority of the empirical studies have considered participation as a dependent variable, but theoretical approaches have assumed the existence of a circular relationship between these two variables: SoC enhances active citizen participation, which in turn reinforces SoC (Talò et al., 2014). A sense of community has been found to shape the perception of the environment, affect relationships with others and lead to a stronger sense of the capacity of the community to achieve its goals, all of which lead to increased participation. In addition, across most studies, the degree of investment in the community, strength of sense of community or ‘community identity’ has been consistently found to predict citizens’ participation (Wandersman & Florin, 2000). For adolescents, in particular, the quality and multiplicity of experiences of involvement and opportunities for influence have been considered crucial for positive developmental outcomes (Chiessi, Cicognani, & Sonn, 2010; Evans, 2007).

Youth organizations membership

A constitutive element of citizenship participation is the experience of group membership together with the experience of socialization (Sherrod et al., 2002). Retrospective experiences of membership are an effective predictor of citizenship behaviors because the enriching element of this experience lies in participating in groups in local communities where young people felt respected and had a voice in decision making processes (Marzana et al., 2012). Indeed, participation in youth organizations has been related to youth’s perception to have greater knowledge of their community, more opportunities to give and receive feedback, and greater capacity for community problem solving, compared with more traditional youth development programs (Gambone, Yu, Lewis-Charp, Sipe, & Lacoé, 2006).

In organizations, youth are exposed to peers within the relatively ‘safe’ environment of activities, with the help of supportive adult leaders, thus being particularly important for youth who lack other opportunities for positive interaction, have trouble with school peers, and/or are socially anxious. Bohnert, Aikins, and Edidin (2007) found that activity involvement in organizations across the transition to university was linked to better social adjustment (higher friendship quality, less loneliness and social dissatisfaction) for students who reported poor social adaptation in high school but was unrelated to changes in adjustment for their more socially skilled peers (Rose- Krasnor, 2009). The involvement in organizational activities has been often predictive of healthy development, including academic success, a sense of wellbeing, positive peer relationships, and lower risk taking (Feldman & Matjasko,

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2005; Mahoney, Larson, Eccles, & Lord, 2005). Some of these effects are activity-specific, considered either alone or in combinations (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005). For example, sports participation has been associated with social connectedness, while prosocial activities have been linked to higher self-esteem (Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001).

Socio demographic variables

A range of socio demographic factors and individual characteristics such as age, gender, socio economic status, all predict participation, though these factors vary systematically according to the specifics of the local context (Arnstein, 1969; Kagan, Castile, & Stewart, 2005).

Previous studies indicated that young Italian men are more interested in political issues and are more politically active than young Italian women (Cicognani et al., 2012). Girls are more likely to participate in informal political activities, and their participation is more likely to take the form of individualized rather than group activities and volunteer work. In the US context, boys are more likely to engage in formal political actions (Wilson, 2000). So, gender differences may also result in different types of participation (civic vs. political). About internet political participation (Harris, 2008) there is a general consensus that young women and young men use new technologies differently (less access, lower usage, less enjoyment and confidence in using them for women). Livingstone et al. (2005) found that older girls were more likely to visit civic websites, while boys were more likely to use the internet for non-civic purposes. Without clear findings regarding this factor, it remains to be seen how gender can affect civic engagement in both its offline and online forms. Offline civic engagement is likely to increase with age, because young adults have, and see, more opportunities to get engaged and they also possess more individual skills in terms of cognitive abilities and identity development than adolescents (Watts et al., 1999).

Youths of low socioeconomic status feel politically inefficacious and disaffected from the political system. People who have higher levels of education and income typically also have higher levels of political and civic engagement (Verba et al., 1995; Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980). Online civic engagement is less constrained by financial resources and external pressures (e.g., from parents) than offline engagement.

Participation as active component of citizenship

The concept of active citizenship is based on participation. The active components of citizenship can be distinguished in: volunteerism activities, conventional and unconventional

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political participation and online participation. Forms of participation are determined by issues and needs arising within a (local) community, and include its culture, norms, values and institutions (Cicognani & Zani, 2009).

Civic engagement or volunteerism indicate activities carried out for the benefit of the community or society (Marzana et al., 2012) and it is rooted in a fundamental orientation towards reciprocity (Amnå, 2012). These activities include actions of people dealing with values, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, knowledge, skills and behaviors concerned with conditions outside the immediate environment of family and friends. Indeed, it means “making a commitment to an ongoing helping relationship that may extend over a considerable period of time and that may entail considerable personal costs of time, energy, and opportunity” (Clary, Snyder, Ridge, Copeland, Stukas, Haugen & Miene, 1998, p. 1517). It can consist of individual and collective forms if acted singularly or collectively. It is also considered as “a set of values, actions and competencies aimed to change or improve the local community or the wider society” (Lenzi et al., 2015, p. 445).

Political participation, largely defined, comprises “all voluntary activities by individual citizens intended to directly or indirectly influence political choices at various levels of the political system” (Kaase & Marsh, 1979, p. 42). It is defined as a behavioral expression of an engagement consisting of political interest, attention, knowledge, opinions and feelings, which focus on political institutions, processes and decision making (Ekman & Amnå, 2012). Conventional political activities including voting, party membership and participation in a political assembly are actions that intend to influence the political process through the electoral arena (Verba, 1978). Unconventional political participation aims to influence politics through non-institutionalized means. For example, holding a demonstration, participating in a boycott, in confrontations with political opponents or the police and signing a petition are forms of unconventional political activities or forms of activism (Amnå, 2012, Van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009).

Little is known about what drives online participation (Amnå, 2012). It has, however, received increased attention as a potential tool to promote civic engagement among young people (Chadwick, 2006; Dahlgren, 2007) in response to findings documenting a decline in civic and political participation among them (Prout, 2000; Torney-Purta et al. 2001; Zukin et al. 2006). Presumably, online activities are more accessible and require fewer resources than offline activities. It also has been proposed that youth may benefit most from opportunities to participate online because they are considered ‘digital experts’ and their accessibility to participate online may be not constrained by teachers, parents, and financial resources

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(Hirzalla & van Zoonen, 2011). Some authors have found that those who use the internet for civic activities are also civically active offline and vice versa (Chadwick, 2006; Livingstone et al. 2005) and that online engagement serves as a facilitator of offline engagement (Raynes-Goldie & Walker, 2008) but others (Jugert et al., 2016) found that online civic engagement is unlikely to replace offline civic engagement.

According to the literature, political interest, political efficacy and institutional trust are considered related factors at individual level on participation. Indeed, these factors are considered the most proximal influential on the participative behaviors. Family, peer, school and community context for younger and community organizations for younger and older, are considered as influential microsystems, having direct effects on participation. Finally, age, gender and socio-economic status as socio-demographic factors are considered as impacting aspects on participation.

Method

Research questions and hypotheses

The main aims of this study were to describe the dimensions of Youth Active Citizenship, to explore whether and how they change in one year- period, and to analyze the differences between two age groups. The research questions were:

1. What are the forms of youth active participation?
2. What are the relationships between individual level factors and Active Citizenship?
3. What are the relationships between micro level factors and Active Citizenship?
4. What are the relationships between socio-demographic level factors and Active Citizenship?

For research question 3, family, peer, open school climate, and community were considered for the younger sample.

Respectively, for each research question, the hypotheses were the following:

- H1.1 Civic engagement, conventional and unconventional forms of participation and online participation can be identified as distinct forms in the overall sample of youth;
- H1.2 Civic engagement, conventional and unconventional forms of participation and online participation are more likely to decrease with time in the general sample;
- H2.1. Political interest should have a strong relationship with participation change in the older sample rather than in the younger (Russo & Stattin, 2017);

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- H2.2 Trust towards institutions is positively related to change in political conventional participation and negative related to unconventional participation (Almond & Verba, 1963; Cicognani et al., 2012);
- H2.3 Political efficacy is positively related to participation change in the overall sample;
- H3.5 Organizational membership is positively related to participation change in the overall sample;
- H4.1 Youth males are more likely to participate in conventional political forms of citizenship participation while youth females are more likely to participate in civic forms of citizenship participation;
- H4.2 Younger people are more likely to participate in unconventional forms and civic forms of citizenship participation than older youth (Chadwick, 2006; Marzana et al., 2012).

The hypotheses for the younger sample at micro-level were the following:

- H3.1 Family norms are positively related to participation change;
- H3.2 Peer norms have high positive influence on youth participation change;
- H3.3 School climate is positively related with change of participation;
- H3.4 Sense of community predicts an increase in participation (Chiessi et al., 2010);

To reach the objectives and test the hypotheses, we conducted and assessed a longitudinal study design.

The research model presented here (Fig 2.1) hypothesized that individual, micro and socio-demographic levels variables tested at Time 1 are predictors of citizen participation tested at Time 2, in general sample (N= 1294, M age= 19.21, SD age = 3.34; females = 61.1%, males = 38.9%) and in two subsamples of younger (15-17 years old) and older (20-30 years old).

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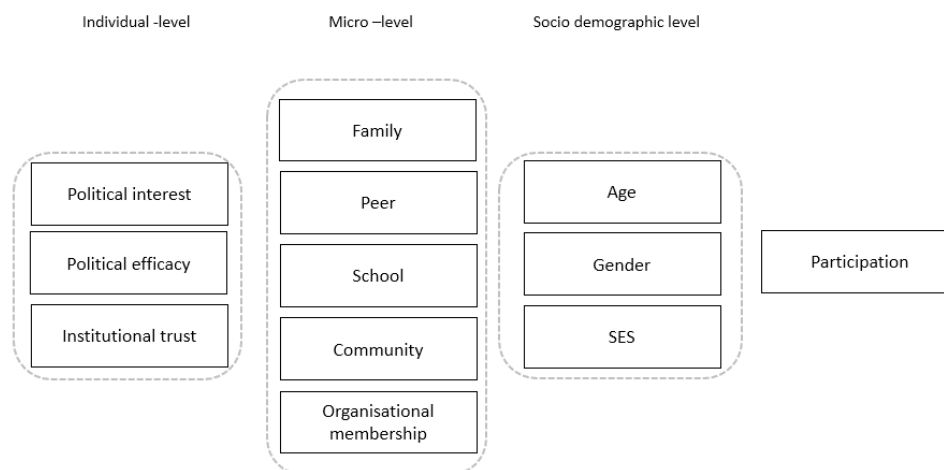


Figure 2.1 Overall Research model.

Two different models were tested. The first model (fig. 2.1a) considered political interest, political efficacy, institutional trust at individual level and organizational membership as micro level context, age, gender and socioeconomic status as socio-demographic variables in general sample, in older, and younger subsamples. The second model (fig. 2.1b) included political interest, political efficacy and institutional trust as predicting factors at individual level, family norms, friends' norms, open school climate and sense of community at micro level, age, gender and socio-economic status as socio demographic variables for younger subsample.

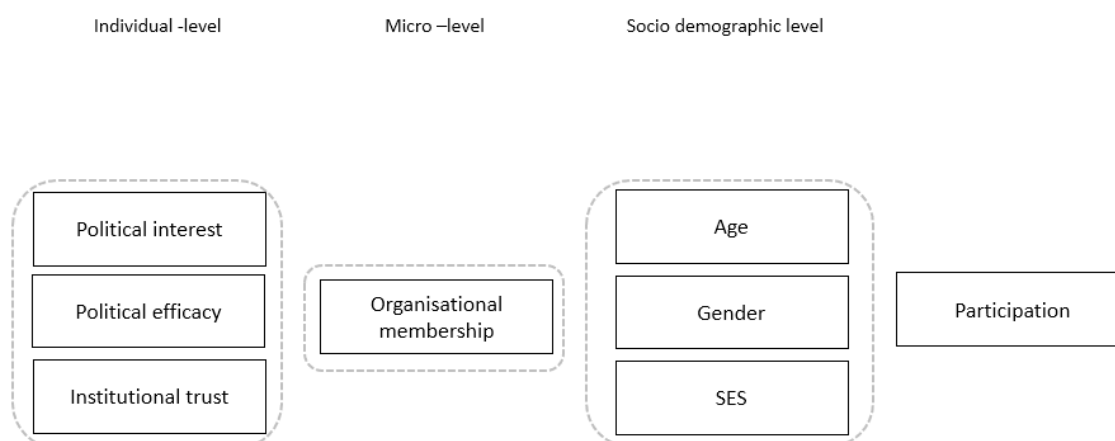


Fig. 2.1a. Model with youth organizations membership as micro-level variable.

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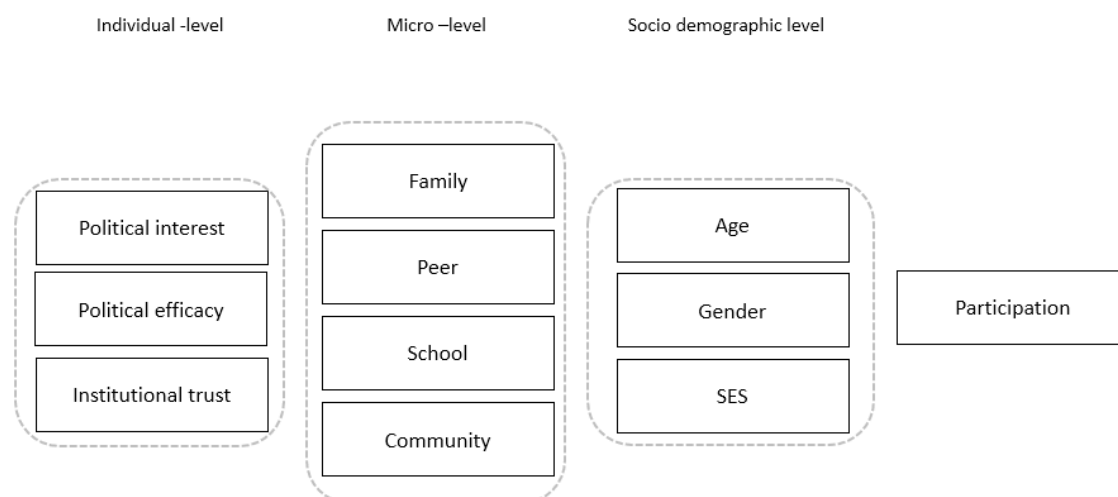


Fig. 2.1b Model with family, peer, school, and community as micro-level variables.

Sample

The sample of the current study consisted of youth population of Emilia- Romagna region (North of Italy), collected in schools, university and youth community organizations. A total of 1,294 youth (table 2.1) participated in a longitudinal assessment with 1-year interval. It was composed by two subsamples of younger people (N= 685) and older people (N= 609). Attrition rate is reported to account for the percentage of participants recruited for the two waves.

	Longitudinal (W1 + W2)	Only W1	Only W2	Attrition rate
Younger	685	129	60	16%
Older	609	309	0	34%
Total	1294	438	60	25%

Table 2.1 Attrition rate for the overall sample.

The sample size for this study was balanced by gender for the younger group (50.8% girls, 49.1% boys, one youngster decided to not indicate his or her gender) while there was a prevalence of girls in the older group (72.9% girls, 27.1% boys). The age of participants from younger group ranged from 15 to 17 at T1 (M age = 16.41, SD age = 0.77 at T1) and from 16 to 18 at T2 (M age = 17.43, SD age = 0.76 at T2). The age of participants from the older group ranged from 20 to 30 at both waves (M age = 22.37, SD age = 1.98 at T1; M age = 23.35, SD age = 1.98 at T2).

The younger sample was composed by youth attending higher and lower track schools (86.4% of high schools (lyceum) and technical schools, 13.6% of vocational schools), mostly living

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with their parents (99%). A majority of them reported a good socio-economic status of their families (62% of them reported that their family income fully covers family needs). The older sample was composed by a majority of youth living with their parents (54.8%) and with a good socio-economic status of their families (49.1% of them reported that their family income fully covers family needs). At T1 participants were students (77% reported full-time student status) and potential working youth (20.7% were not working nor looking for a job, 11.7% were occasionally working). At T2 the number of students diminished (58.5% full time students) while the number of potential working youth changed in status (36.9% were not working nor looking for a job, 21% were occasionally working).

Distribution by gender was not significantly different between the two waves, $\chi^2(1) = 24, p = .623$. Income was different between the two waves, $\chi^2(3) = 18.1, p < .001$, as less participants who reported none or partial coverage of needs by their family income participated in the longitudinal sample.

Missing item values were estimated in SPSS using the EM-procedure. Little's (1988) Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) test yielded a $\chi^2(40) = 30,063, p = .873$ for the younger sample and a $\chi^2(7) = 3,443, p = .841$ for the older sample. According to guidelines by Bollen (1989), this indicates a good fit between sample scores with and without imputations.

Procedure

The study was approved by the Bioethics Board of the University of Bologna. Schools from different cities of the region were selected to account for the variability of the school type and according to the accessibility of the schools to participate in the longitudinal study: 1 vocational school, 3 technical schools and 2 lyceums, all located in the Emilia-Romagna region (North of Italy) were selected. Referent teachers were contacted before the beginning of the school year in order to organize the administration of the questionnaires to students in the same classrooms. All schools and classrooms that we contacted participated in the study.

Questionnaires were administered after an introductory meeting where the students were informed about the purpose of the study and that participation was voluntary. The parents were informed about the study through a written letter and asked to contact the school or the investigators if they did not want their children to participate. Time 1 data collection occurred in October 2015- January 2016 and Time 2 occurred one year later. Before each wave, school administration and prospective participants were informed about the date and time of the assessment. The questionnaires were administered by the research group, of which the author was member, at the schools and were completed in classes during regular class

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hours. Participation to the study was on voluntary basis and no personal incentives were provided. None of the students who accepted to take part in the study interrupted the fulfillment of the questionnaire during the compilation.

The participants from the older age group (20-30 yrs. old) were contacted through the University of Bologna office and young workers through youth organizations. A message was sent by email, containing a short explanation of the project and the link to complete the questionnaire. Participants of older group were offered a gadget of the value of max €5. For the whole study paper and pencil questionnaire (40.9%) and online format (59.1%) were distributed. The online version of the questionnaire was published on the platform Qualtrics.

Measures

We used measures of psychosocial factors of Youth Active Citizenship at T1 and measures of citizenship participation at both surveys.

- Measures used for both samples:

Political interest was measured using a scale adapted from Amnå, Ekström, Kerr, and Stattin (2010). The three items (e.g., “*How interested are you in politics?*”) had a Cronbach’s Alpha of .82 for younger and .86 for older. The response format ranged from (1) *not interested at all* to (5) *extremely interested*.

Institutional trust was measured using two items adopted from Barrett & Zani (2015) (E.g.: *I trust the national government*) Pearson correlation was $r=.50$ for younger subsample and $r=.44$ for older subsample on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Political efficacy was measured using a scale adopted from Krampen (1991). Seven items (e.g., “*I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of important societal issues*”) had a Cronbach’s Alpha of .79 for younger and .78 for older. The response range was on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Youth organizations membership was measured using six items (E.g.: “*Have you ever been a member of or worked for any of the following organizations? Trade unions, religious groups, etc.*”) adapted from Barret & Zani (2015). Response range was on 4- point Likert scale (1= *no* to 4= *I am currently involved on a regular basis*). We decided to recode the response scores as dichotomous items with values that vary from 0 to 1, indicating not belonging/ belonging to each organization.

Age was measured with one item (E.g.: “*How old are you?*”) asking to insert the number of participants corresponding age.

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Gender was measured by a dichotomous item coded 0 for females and 1 for males for which participants had to indicate their gender.

Socio-economic status was measured by one item (E.g.: “Does the money your household has cover everything your family needs?”) that assessed the income level of participants families. The response range was on a 4-point Likert scale (1= not at all to 4= fully).

Participation. Eleven items adopted from Barrett & Zani (2015) measured participation in the last 12 months (E.g. ... *Volunteered or worked for a social cause (children/ the elderly/refugees/ other people in need/youth organization)*). Response range was on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = no to 5 = very often). We decided to recode the response scores as dichotomous items with values that vary from 0 to 1, indicating not done/done.

- Measures used only for Younger subsample:

Family norms was measured with three items (E.g., *My family would approve it if I became politically active*) adopted from Barrett & Zani (2015) indicating the degree to which participants’ families supported participation. Cronbach’s Alpha was $\alpha = .61$. The response range was on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Peer norms was also measured with three items (E.g., *My friends would approve it if I became politically active*) adopted from Barrett & Zani (2015). Cronbach’s Alpha was $\alpha = .63$. The response range was on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Scales with low reliability were kept according to the importance in literature of proximal contexts on young people socio- political development (Flanagan et al., 1999).

Open school climate was measured with three items adapted from the IEA ICCS study (Schulz et al., 2010), which asked the degree to which students felt that they were encouraged to discuss issues openly and that their opinions were respected by teachers (E.g. “*Teachers respect our opinions and encourage us to express our opinions during the classes*”). Cronbach’s Alpha was $\alpha=.74$. The response range was on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Sense of community was measured with four items (E.g., *In our neighborhood, there are enough activities for young people; I think that people who live in our neighborhood could change things in the community*) that assessed participants’ perceptions of opportunities present in their local territorial community. These corresponded to two of the dimensions of the scale Sense of Community for Adolescents (Chiessi et al., 2010) – namely, *satisfaction of needs and opportunities for involvement* and *opportunities for influence*. Cronbach’s Alpha

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was $\alpha = .80$. The items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Analysis

In order to describe the forms of youth participation, we explored the factorial structure of participation through an Exploratory Factorial Analysis (EFA). Then, to test whether political interest, institutional trust, political efficacy predicted participation longitudinally (i.e. changes in participation), we tested a longitudinal model (see Figure 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.2c) in which the predictor variables at T1 were specified to predict participation at T2, controlling for the initial level of participation (T1) both for younger and older sample. Following an ecological and multilevel perspective, these factors are organized from the most proximal to the most distal ones. By adding the Time 1 measurement of citizenship participation as additional predictor, the analyses technically examined changes in participation depending on individual -level variables, contextual level variables and socio demographic-level variables.

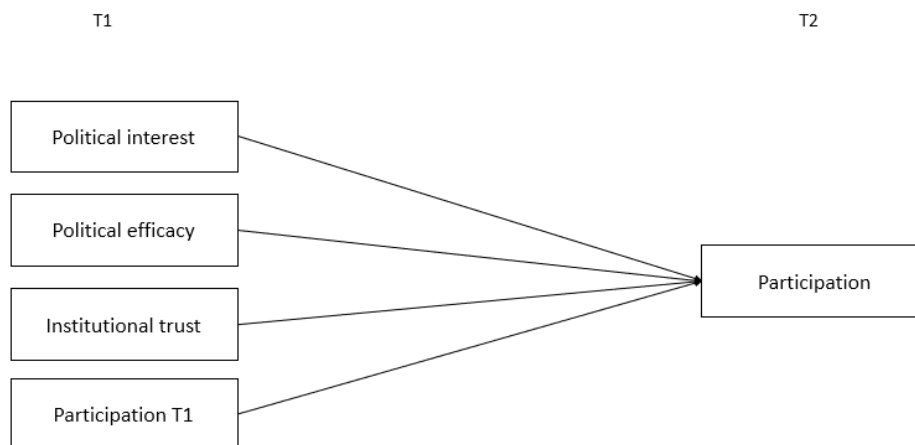


Fig 2.2a Individual level variables for both subsamples in a longitudinal model.

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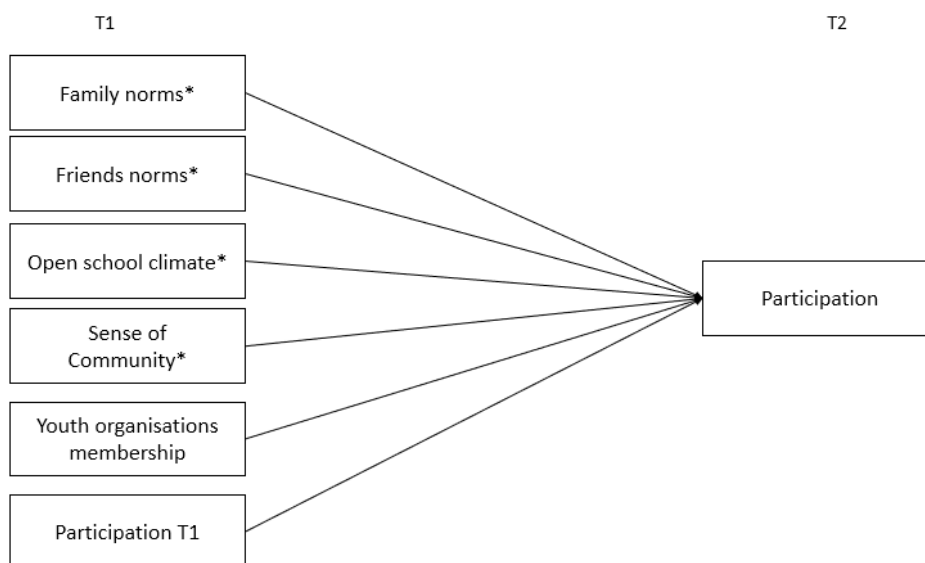


Fig 2.2b Micro level variables in a longitudinal model; *variables measured in younger sample.

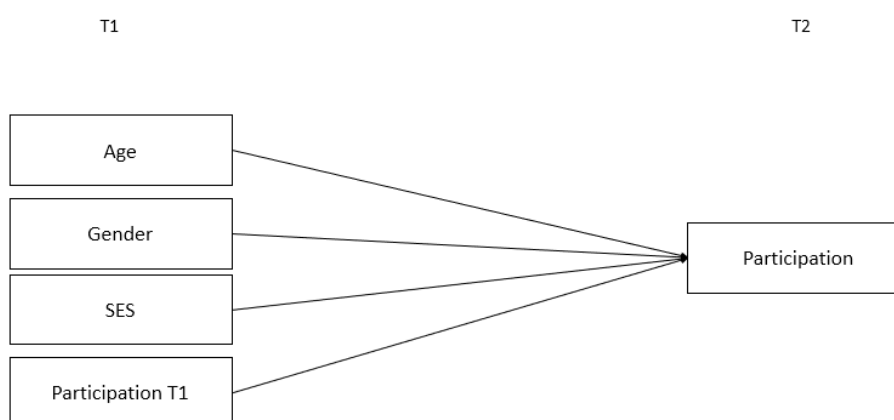


Fig. 2.2c Socio demographic level variables in a longitudinal model

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Means and standard deviations of indicators of participation at individual, micro and socio demographic level and percentage of frequencies for participation items are presented in Table 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4. We decided to consider participation as dichotomous factors: responses to the activity items were re-coded into a dichotomous index. The recoded index has a straightforward interpretation as it includes several different civic and political activities done by a person in the past year.

From the descriptive analysis of the items from the two waves, the results show that levels of participation are low, in a decreasing or almost stable trend, in line with the literature on the trend of youth citizenship participation (Crocetti et al., 2014; Zaff et al., 2010).

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	Overall sample	Younger	Older
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Political Interest	3,16 (.93)	2,82 (.85)	3,55 (.87)
Institutional Trust	2,66 (.83)	2,47 (.78)	2,87 (.82)
Political Efficacy	3,51 (.69)	3,23 (.64)	3,82 (.60)
Family norms*		2,95 (.79)	
Friends norms*		2,48 (.93)	
Open school climate*		3,12 (.89)	
Sense of community*		2,59 (.88)	

Table 2.2 Descriptive statistics of continuous independent variables of YAC; *Scales used only for younger sample.

	Overall sample	Younger	Older
	Yes%	Yes%	Yes%
Trade unions	3,6	2,8	4,5
Political parties or their youth organizations	8,6	4,6	13,1
Student or youth organizations	41,7	39,6	44,2
Religious organizations or groups	35,1	36,0	34,1
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	31,4	18,5	45,9
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	69,2	69,3	69,0

Table 2.3. Percentage of dichotomous independent variables (organizational membership) of YAC

Variables	T1		T2	
	Younger	Older	Younger	Older
	Yes(%)	Yes(%)	Yes(%)	Yes(%)
1. Volunteered or worked for a social cause (children/ the elderly/refugees/ other people in need/youth organization)	52,3	68,0	45,0	57,1
2. Participated in a concert or a charity event for a social or political cause	37,5	70,4	30,7	49,6
3. Donated money to a social cause	43,9	78,5	38,0	52,7
4. Shared news or music or videos with social or political content with people in my social networks (e.g., in Facebook, Twitter etc.)	50,4	83,4	47,6	69,6
5. Discussed social or political issues on the internet	31,5	68,1	25,1	49,8
6. Joined a social or political group on Facebook (or other social networks)	18,1	65,4	17,4	47,0
7. Taken part in an occupation of a building or a public space	6,3	16,9	6,4	6,6
8. Taken part in a political event where there was a physical confrontation with political opponents or with the police	5,7	16,4	5,1	7,6
9. Worked for a political party or a political candidate	3,6	12,0	4,1	12,0
10. Contacted a politician or public official (for example via e-mail)	7,9	23,6	7,4	23,6
11. Donated money to support the work of a political group or organization	9,5	16,7	6,6	10,0

Table 2.4 Percentage scores of dichotomous dependent variables (actions of participation) of YAC.

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Exploratory factor analysis on participation

To explore the number of factors and their factor loadings, we performed exploratory factor analyses (EFA) on the eleven items of participation at T1 and T2 separately. For these analyses, we used Mplus 8.0 (Muthen & Muthen, 2015). We used principal axis factor analyses with geomin rotation (table 2.5). The analysis performed a four-factors model with good model fit indexes both at T1 and T2. For the fit indexes of the other models, see Appendix A.

	Model	Chi square (df)	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
T1	4-factors model	41,084 (17)	,029	,99	,99	,015
T2	4-factors model	32,943 (17)	,026	,99	,98	,022

Table 2.5. Model fit of EFA

The factorial structure presents good factor loadings of items (from .52 to .97 for T1 and from .46 to 1.09 at T2). The reliabilities were acceptable (more than .71) except two factors but we decided to use these factors according to theoretical discussion of Youth Active Citizenship and to keep the models with the best fit indices (table 2.6).

	Factor 1 Civic engagement		Factor 2 Online participation		Factor 3 Conventional Political participation		Factor 4 Unconventional political Participation	
	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2
Item1	,651*	,626*						
Item2	,739*	,698*						
Item3	,529*	,447*						
Item4			,875*	,783*				
Item5			,878*	,885*				
Item6			,706*	,589*				
Item7							,968*	,555*
Item8							,595*	1,095*
Item9					,960*	1,016*		
Item10					,844*	,762*		
Item11					,676*	,613*		
Reliability	$\alpha = ,62$	$\alpha = ,71$	$\alpha = ,73$	$\alpha = ,77$	$\alpha = ,74$	$\alpha = ,94$	$\alpha = ,69$ ($r = ,49$)	$\alpha = ,94$ ($r = ,43$)

Table 2.6 Factorial structure and loadings for the first and second wave, * $p < .05$

Notes: empty cells mean that items have factor loadings less than .30 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007)

Factor 1 named *Civic engagement* includes item 1,2 and 3, labelled respectively “Volunteered for social cause”, “Participated in a concert or a charity event”, “Donate money to social cause”. Factor 2 labelled *Online participation* includes 4, 5 and 6 named respectively “Shared news or music or videos with social or political content with people in my social networks (e.g., in Facebook, Twitter etc.)”, “Discussed social or political issues on the internet”, “Joined a social or political group on Facebook (or other social networks)”. Factor 3 termed *Conventional Political participation* consists of items 9,10 and 11 respectively named as

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“Worked for a political party or a political candidate”, “Contacted a politician or public official (for example via e-mail)”, “Donated money to support the work of a political group or organization”. Factor 4 labelled *Unconventional political participation* contains items 7 and 8 respectively named as “Taken part in an occupation of a building or a public space” and “Taken part in a political event where there was a physical confrontation with political opponents or with the police”.

Descriptive statistics and correlations of each factor are presented in table 2.7, 2.8, 2.9 and 2.10. The number of youth who were involved in a participative activity generally decreased in one year and t test for paired samples showed that means differences in political participation ($t = -4,247$, $df = 460$, $p = ,000$) and unconventional political participation ($t = -5,914$, $df = 460$, $p = ,000$) were significant while they were not significant for civic engagement ($t = 1,103$, $df = 460$, $p = ,271$) and online participation ($t = ,079$, $df = 460$, $p = ,937$).

Then we tested the same exploratory factor analyses for the two subsamples separately (table 2.9) and the structure was replicated with factors reliability from low to acceptable (table 2.10). The factors with low reliabilities were kept for the analysis to have comparable results for each subsample. In the table 2.10 the frequencies for each factor in the two subsamples are reported.

Factor	T1	T2
	Yes (%)	Yes (%)
Civic engagement	83,5	72,5
Online participation	73,2	67,3
Political conventional	24,1	16,7
Political unconventional	16,9	9,5

Table 2.7 Frequencies in percentage scores for each factor in overall sample

	Civic engagement		Online Participation		Political conventional		Political unconventional	
	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2
Civic engagement	---	---	,26**	,20**	,19**	,18**	,14**	,11**
Online participation			---	---	,16**	,21**	,17**	,13**
Political conventional					---	---	,30**	,25**
Political unconventional							---	---

Table 2.8 Correlations between factors at T1 and T2, ** $p < ,05$

	T1		T2	
	Younger Yes %	Older Yes %	Younger Yes %	Older Yes %
Civic engagement	75,2	92,9	64,2	81,8
Online participation	59,7	88,3	55,5	80,6
Political conventional	16,1	33,2	12,3	21,7
Political unconventional	9,8	25	8,5	10,7

Table 2.9 Frequencies in percentage for Civic engagement, Online participation, Political conventional and Political unconventional.

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Factor	T1		T2	
	Younger	Older	Younger	Older
Civic engagement	,60	,66	,59	,54
Online participation	,67	,82	,60	,78
Political conventional	,63	,71	,77	,75
Political unconventional	,47**	,45**	,36**	,47**

Table 2.10. Reliability for younger and older subsamples (**Pearson r is reported for 2 items- scale).

Individual and micro level factors of Youth Active Citizenship

Logistic regressions were conducted in order to find the set of factors, among the different levels of variables, which best influence the different forms of participation. For the full indices of model fit for each factor, see tables in Appendix A. Each table reports fit indices of *Omnibus χ^2* , *Cox and Snell R^2* and *Nagerlkerke R^2* and *Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness of fit (HL) χ^2* . The model fit indices indicate that our models have an acceptable fit given that Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness of fit (HL) χ^2 test was not significant except for a model for Political participation in general sample and a model for Unconventional political participation in younger subsample (see Appendix A). Below we report Bs coefficients (B) according to Wald χ^2 test significance, with standard deviations (SD) and the odds ratio (OR) of variables related to change of participation. An odds ratio greater than 1 indicates that the event is more likely to occur, an OR less than 1 that is less likely (Mayers, 2013).

Model with comparison variables at micro level

We report results for the relation between individual level variables, organizational membership and socio demographic level variables for each factor of the participation for the overall sample and differentiated for the younger and the older.

General sample. The model showed that political interest (B=,396, SE=,097, OR= 1,486) at individual level, students organizations (B=,365, SE=,165, OR= 1,440), religious groups (B=,833, SE=,172, OR= 2,300) and organizations or groups for social issues (B=,778, SE=,204, OR= 2,177) significantly predict an increasing level of civic engagement. Regarding online participation, political interest (B=,562, SE=,096, OR=1,753), organizations for social issues (B=,397, SE=,181, OR= 1,488) and age (B=,058, SE=,025, OR=1,060) resulted as significant predictors of change. Predictors of increasing level of conventional political participation are political interest (B=,27, SE=,117, OR=1,311), membership in political parties (B=,631, SE=,269, OR=1,879) and student organizations (B= ,498, SE=,191, OR=1,646) and gender (B= -,570, SE=,180, OR= ,565). Boys were more likely to participate in political issues than girls. For unconventional political participation, only membership in youth organizations (B=,769, SE=,239, OR=2,158) significantly predicted the increase in one year.

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Older sample. There are no differences from the results of the whole sample. Thus, political interest ($B=,382$, $SE=,167$, $OR= 1,465$), student organizations ($B= ,600$, $SE=,282$, $OR=1,823$), religious groups ($B=1,092$, $SE=,313$, $OR= 2,979$) and groups for social issues ($B=,922$, $SE=,289$, $OR= 2,515$) predicted civic engagement increment from T1 to T2. For online participation, political interest ($B= ,797$, $SE=,178$, $OR= 2,220$) and institutional trust ($B=,356$, $SE=,169$, $OR= 1,427$) resulted as significant predictors of change. Results show that political interest ($B= ,649$, $SE=,184$, $OR=1,914$) and student organizations ($B=,793$, $SE=,275$, $OR=2,211$) are significant predictors of an increasing conventional political participation. Finally, regarding unconventional political participation, political efficacy ($B=,660$, $SE= ,322$, $OR=1,935$) and gender ($B= -,746$, $SE=,327$, $OR=,474$) resulted significant predictors of change. Indeed, young males are more likely to be involved in unconventional forms of participation than young females.

Younger sample. The indicators that resulted significant predictor of positive change for civic engagement in the younger sample were: political interest ($B=,371$, $SE=,125$, $OR=1,449$), religious groups ($B=,775$, $SE=,212$, $OR= 2,170$) and gender ($B= ,398$, $SE=,189$, $OR=1,489$). Girls tend to be involved more in civic and social activities. Political interest ($B= ,443$, $SE=,119$, $OR= 1,558$) and age ($B=,270$, $SE=,115$, $OR=1,310$) are significant predictors of online participation change in T2.

For conventional political participation, gender ($B=-,820$, $SE=,270$, $OR=,440$) is the only predictor of change. This means that girls participate less than boys in political activities. Finally, membership in student or youth organizations ($B=,983$, $SE=,332$, $OR=2,672$) results significantly positively related to unconventional political participation change.

Model with micro-level variables for younger subsample

At Time 1 and only for the younger sample, political interest, institutional trust, political efficacy, family norms, friends' norms, school climate, sense of community, age, gender and income were used as predictive factors for each form of participation at T2 for the younger sample (Fig.2.3c).

The results showed that political interest ($B = .340$, $SE = ,118$, $OR = 1,404$) and trust ($B= -,268$, $SE=,127$, $OR=,765$) significantly predicted changes in adolescents' civic engagement at Time 2. This last effect was negative, that indicates that trust in institutions is related to a decreasing level of civic engagement. In the contextual variables, family norms significantly predicted positively civic engagement change ($B= ,263$, $SE=,132$, $OR= 1,300$), while the other contexts were not significant. Political interest ($B=,454$, $SE=,115$, $OR= 1,575$) and age ($B=,252$, $SE=,112$, $OR= 1,286$) significantly predicted increasing levels of online

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participation. Gender results as significant predictor of political participation ($B = -.915$, $SE = .265$, $OR = .400$) in younger sample, thus young females are less likely to be involved in political activities than young males. Regarding unconventional political participation, there are no significant predictors of change.

Summing up, we can describe our sample noticing that youth from 20 to 30 years old who are politically interested and belong to student organizations, religious groups and groups for social issues are more likely to be involved in civic activities. While youth who are part of students' organizations and politically interested are more likely to participate politically. For online participation and unconventional political participation, there were no significant effects of organizational membership. Regarding youth from 15 to 17 years old, we can notice that girls who are interested in political issues, belong to religious groups and tend to participate more in civic activities. Finally, the belonging to student or youth organization has a significant effect on increasing unconventional political participation.

The model that considers family, peer, school and community contexts as micro level variables for younger sample shows that political interest, negative institutional trust and family norms are significant predictors of civic engagement, political interest and age are predictors of change in online participation; gender is the only variable related to political participation change while unconventional political participation has no significant predictors.

Figures 2.3a, 2.3b and 2.3c show the different models with significant predictors for each form of citizenship participation for older and younger sample. Arrows indicate significant relations between predictors and factors of citizens participation.

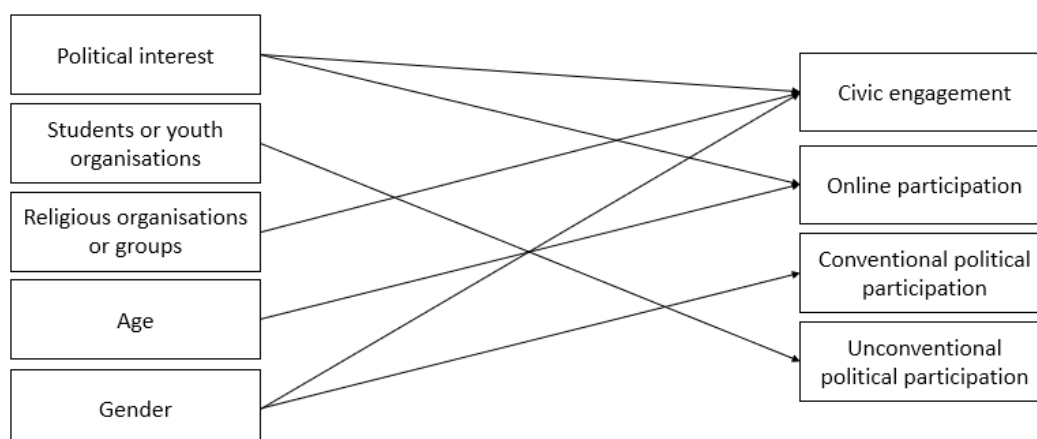


Fig. 2.3a Comparable model in younger sample.

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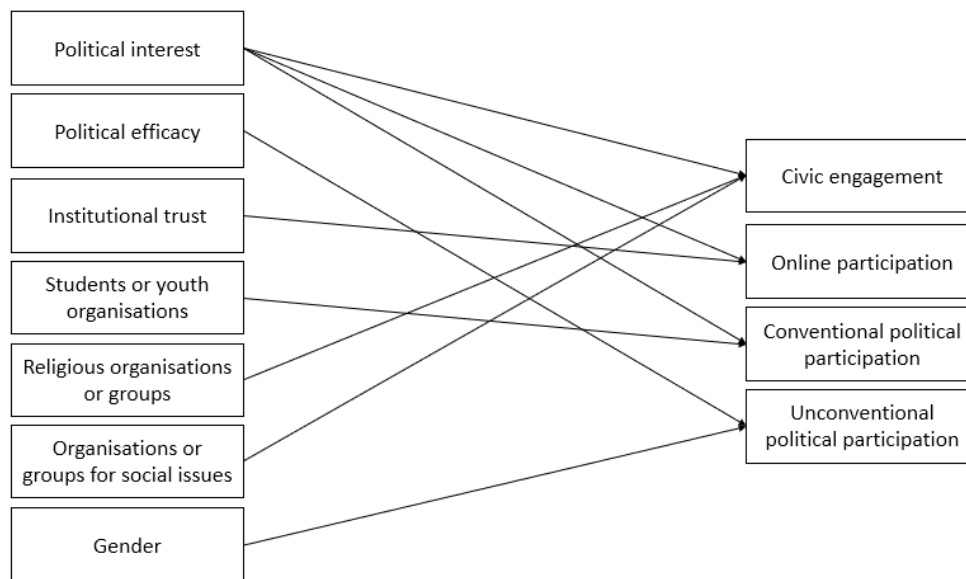


Fig.2.3b Comparable model for older sample.

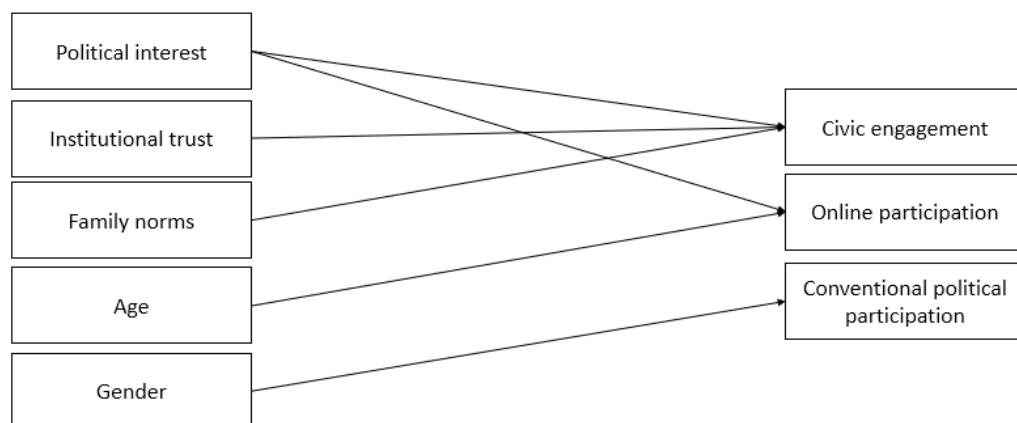


Fig. 2.3c Micro-level proximal variable for younger sample.

Discussion

In this chapter, we wanted to explore first if the active component of citizenship, that is citizen participation activities assume different forms for younger and older youth. Second, we wanted to test which indicators are related to citizenship activities considering levels of influence: individual, micro or proximal contexts and macro or sociodemographic level. A comparable model for both subsamples was composed by political interest, institutional trust and political efficacy at individual level, six different types of membership belonging for

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contextual level and age, gender and income for sociodemographic level. We also tested a model only for younger sample which consisted of different micro level measures corresponding to proximal contexts of influence such as family, peers, school and community.

Types of citizenship participation

Our results show that four types of participation can be identified corresponding to civic engagement, online participation, political conventional and unconventional participation, confirming and deepening our hypothesis 1.1. These four factors show that the representation of active behaviors regarding citizenship for youth still remains multifaceted including a continuum from traditional forms of civic engagement such as volunteerism and unconventional forms such as protest (Marzana et al., 2012), forms of confrontation with political opponents and occupation of buildings (Amna, 2012). In fact, the civic and political forms of participation, conventional and unconventional are confirmed. The emerging forms of active citizenship for youth are online participation and political participation, given that the latter assumes different meaning from voting. Civic engagement is high in both subsamples, even if the trend after one year is decreasing. For online participation, we can notice that digital devices are not just means and tools but also spaces that stimulate participation. We can argue that youth perceptions of having an influence through online means and spaces are increasing rapidly. Online participation is strengthened by youth, giving major emphasis to the role that internet and new technologies have on the development and maintenance of citizenship participation for youth. Another important element is the type of content of online participation that, in this case, can be ranged from civic and social to political issues, even if this result does not ensure that these are the only issues on which youth discuss online. Regarding political participation, we can notice that youth consider political contents of their activities even if they are not related to the traditional political behaviors such as voting. This type of political participation can be applied both for younger (who don't have the formal access to vote) and for older. The trend of these forms of participation decreases in one year in both the two subsamples, confirming our initial hypothesis in line with the literature. As the difference between T1 and T2 was significant for political conventional and unconventional participation, it emerges that the most impressive decrease happens in unconventional participation for older youth (from 25% to 10.7%).

Individual level factors

We can discuss our results comparing the effect of the variables within and between each level for each type of participation. Regarding the individual level variables, political interest emerged as the major predictor mainly for civic engagement and online participation in older

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sample confirming our hypothesis (H2.1) and adding the positive relation also in the younger sample. It seems an important result that for youth the interest in political affairs can promote an increasing engagement in civic activities. Institutional trust seems to be an ambiguous predictor. The role of trust in political institutions seems to be negative for youngsters: if youth trust in them, their involvement in volunteering activities decrease, disconfirming our hypothesis (H2.2). Thus, younger people who trust in institutions seem to be not motivated in getting involved in civic activities. We can explain this result by claiming that the perception of trustworthy institutions is related to delegate the involvement in civic issues to institutional affairs. In this case, an individual commitment seems to be not necessary. Indeed, the political role of institutions is given by a vote that delegates politicians and officials to act on behalf of people. It is surprising that this function is shifted also on the civic sphere of action, not only on the political one. Moreover, youth can consider that institutions are involved in all spheres of citizenship participation, including the civic. For older youth, institutional trust seems to be a promoter of online participation, disconfirming our hypothesis (H2.2). We can reason about this result considering that the online discussions are rapidly becoming as an “experimental space” to construct trust in institutional leaders and politicians who are constantly and increasingly discussing through social networks and online platforms. The main way to contact and connect with them seems to be online. Thus, a “paradox effect” of institutional trust seems to emerge, considered that there are negative relations in younger sample and positive relation in older sample, both not related to conventional or unconventional political participation. Political efficacy results to be a positive indicator of unconventional political participation only for older youth, thus representing the protest or different forms of activism as the unique ways through which they perceive to have an influence and exercise their power, confirming partly our hypothesis (H2.3). Indeed, political efficacy does not result to be an indicator of YAC for younger.

Micro level factors

Considering the younger sample and the results of the model including proximal contexts of family, peers, school and community, we notice that family norms have a significant effect on civic engagement increasing confirming our hypothesis (H3.1), while the other contexts -peer group, school and community- are not significant for any type of participation, disconfirming our hypotheses (H3.2; H3.3; H3.4). This result is partly confirmed by literature that emphasizes the parents modelling role (Zaff et al., 2011) in shaping level of engagement in their offspring and it can be described also by the characteristic of the Italian national contexts in influencing ideologies and behavior of youth.

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Instead, the non-existent effect of peers and school context was unexpected. We can argue that the effects of school and peers are not so strong to overtake the role of family in youth from 15 to 17 years old in the Italian context. It can be noticed that the influence of teachers and friends are not valued as much as the support and the influence of the parents. Moreover, we presume that the measures of school climate and peer norms are not enough inclusive of the possible explanation of potential significant effects. Contents of discussions with peers or the type and qualities of the school activities and the interactions between teachers and students could provide other explanations. Also, the community seems to be not an influencing context. This result can be explained by arguing that the interactions between youth and community as a larger context than family, is absent, and the privileged relations and connections are constructed within one's family.

Considering the micro-level variables of youth organizations memberships, students' or youth organizations seem to be related more to civic engagement and political participation for the older while this relation is significant for the unconventional political participation activities for the younger, confirming our hypothesis (H3.5). In this case, we can argue that the role of peers and collective agency that can be embedded in a youth organization strengthen the probability to be involved in unconventional activities such as demonstrations for youngsters. Students organizations and youth groups in general can be considered as promoting spaces of civic and political activities, thus accounting for the lack of the general community influence. Religious groups seem to be related with civic engagement in both samples, but this is emphasized in younger group, thus confirming the Italian tradition of religious groups such as scout (Marzana et al., 2012) in developing and promoting civic activities.

Socio demographic level factors

If we consider sociodemographic variables, we can notice that there is no significant effect of socio economic status, considering our sample coming mainly from moderate-high socio-economic level families. Gender for older sample continues to have a significant effect on participation: the gender differences emerge, as males continue to be more likely to participate in unconventional political activities than females, on the contrary, there is no significative difference for civic engagement. In younger group, females are more likely to be involved in civic activities while males are engaged in political activities, confirming partly our hypothesis (H.4.1). Finally, regarding the difference of involvement in the four types of participation between the two samples, we can say that there is no difference between younger and older in being involved in civic, conventional political and unconventional or online

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activities, disconfirming our hypothesis (H4.2). On the contrary the frequency of participation is higher in older sample in every form.

The next chapter will pursue to investigate the processes of constructing active citizenship in contexts. Based on the results from the quantitative analysis presented in this chapter, we will study psychosocial factors and the effects of youth- adult partnerships in promoting active citizenship in the school context by using a participatory method.

CHAPTER 3

Promoting Youth Active Citizenship: an evaluation study of a participatory school-based intervention

Background

The concept of *opportunity* is considered as the institutional and relational support that adolescents can find in their contexts and that pushes them to become involved in some form of social action (Hart & Atkins, 1999; Marzana et al., 2012). Education for active citizenship is defined as learning opportunities (formal, non-formal and informal) that occur at any stage of the life cycle that facilitate or encourage active citizenship (Hoskins, 2006).

An opportunity for Youth Active Citizenship is created when adults and youth meet and work together for the same goal. In a participative process and in a partnership with young people, adults can serve as collaborators and facilitators of critical dialogue, awareness, and building skills towards critical consciousness (Wong et al., 2010). In these processes, youth participants can be encouraged to be active collaborators, sharing their views contributes to critical dialogue, furthering awareness about how politics, socioeconomic status, culture and history can be fundamental in shaping individual life experience and health outcomes (Rappaport, 1995; Wallerstein, 1992; Zimmerman, 2000). In these co-learning processes, youth can become empowered, increase developmental assets such as competence, self-efficacy and sense of control by developing an awareness of and engaging with their environment (Zimmerman, 1995). A growing body of research on youth civic development in the U.S. (Christens & Peterson, 2012; Faison & Flanagan, 2001; Sullivan & Larson, 2010) indicates that, when adolescents take on leadership roles within organizations and communities (e.g. through initiatives that involve them in governance, organizing, activism, media, and research), their levels of social and political interest and participation are enhanced. Such evidence offers useful suggestions on the approaches and methods to implement citizenship education interventions, in order to enhance young people engagement and participation in their communities and in the political sphere. In fact, citizenship education, both at school and in extracurricular contexts, is crucial to processes of civic regeneration (Davies, 2014) which offer means for connecting young people to the political system, helping them to make sense of a complex political world, and thereby strengthening democracy (Kisby & Sloam, 2014).

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Youth-adult Partnership (Y-AP; Krauss, Collura, Zeldin, Ortega, Abdullah & Sulaiman, 2014; Zeldin, 2004; Zeldin, Camino & Mook, 2005; Zeldin et al., 2013) is the general framework that considers the promotion of youth co-led practices. It is defined as a practice of:

- (a) multiple youth and multiple adults deliberating and acting together, (b) in a collective [democratic] fashion (c) over a sustained period of time, (d) through shared work, (e) intended to promote social justice, strengthen an organization and/or affirmatively address a community issue (Zeldin et al., 2013, p. 388).

Y-AP emphasizes mutuality and respect among youth and adults, with a goal-oriented focus on shared leading and learning (Camino, 2000). Youth and adults are challenged to bring their own perspectives, experiences, and networks into the partnership. By doing so, they can potentially promote community change by stimulating critical discourse, skill development, participatory inquiry, and collective action. Supportive youth-adult relationships in youth-adult partnerships are related to greater community connectedness broadly within the community. Shared work—including collective deliberation, planning, action, and reflection—is fundamental to Y-AP. Through these processes diverse groups can construct the shared meaning and intention that underlie democratic efforts and civil society (Kirshner, 2009).

In this study we aimed to evaluate the processes and the effectiveness of a school-based intervention. We will present first the structure intervention and the methodological approach of the intervention, then the methodology and results of the evaluation study.

The Youth- Participatory Action Research

The intervention is rooted in the principles and methodologies of Youth–Adult Partnership (Y-AP) and Participatory Action-Research (PAR, Kagan, Burton, Duckett, Lawthom & Siddiquee, 2011), which are assumed to strengthen young people interest and awareness of social and political issues, their sense of efficacy in addressing such issues and active engagement. More specifically, Y-AP describes the nature of the educational relationship that the intervention aimed to establish between students and adults (e.g. teachers, other adults), whereas the PAR approach inspired the activities in which participants have been engaged.

Youth-led Participatory Action Research (YPAR, Ozer, Ritterman & Wanis, 2010; Ozer, 2010) is a form of community based participatory research in which participants are trained to identify and analyze problems relevant to their lives. In YPAR, youth also conduct research (e.g., surveys, focus groups, photovoice—photo documentation and interpretation of the phenomena under study) and advocate for changes based on evidence. YPAR is intended to

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promote new, systemic, ecological views of a problem and skills in research inquiry, considering evidence, communication, teamwork, and advocacy. YPAR programs promote youth contribution by assuring that the young person has a sustained relationship with at least one committed adult, who provides skill-building opportunities and acts to enhance the young person's healthy and active engagement with the community. YPAR typically starts with young people identifying a problem or question they want to address and then cycling through research and action processes with the guidance of adult facilitators. Reflection is considered the main component of a participatory action research through which participants can discuss and share ideas coming from the actions, thus learning from experience (Kagan, 2012). To set the stage for YPAR, it is important to develop trust and communication among youth researchers and with adult facilitators, and to share power between adults and youth. After selecting a topic and with a training on the methodologies, young researchers choose their research design and methods to consider the relative strengths and limits of different methods (e.g., surveys or interviews), and to learn how data (e.g., numbers, images, maps, or text) help to answer different facets of the research questions and which data sources and measurement tools are useful. YPAR does not precept the research method: surveys, focus groups, interviews, mapping, observations, and photovoice can be all used. Once young people generate, analyze, and interpret data, they engage and report to relevant stakeholders to advocate for solutions to the problem. This might involve presentations to school boards or other elected officials, assemblies for the whole school, social media campaigns, videos, or publications.

Aims and methods of the intervention

The main aims of the intervention were to promote youth active citizenship and enhance young people's interest and engagement in social and political affairs in and outside school. The intervention was initiated by the tutors/researchers from the Community Psychology Laboratory of the University of Bologna, whose the present author was a member and two teachers of the school. Students were supported and supervised by an integrated team composed by the researchers and the teachers who worked with them during the overall implementation of the intervention.

The research team, as tutors, supported the process of intervention teaching to students methodologies and techniques like brainstorming, community profiling techniques, questionnaires, and interviews aimed at assessing a broader range of variables and processes during the overall intervention. The brainstorming technique served to explore and choose some significant social problems for their community. The community profiling technique

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(Francescato & Zani, 2013; Francescato, Tomai, Ghirelli, 2002) was performed by small group of students to describe and present their community (i.e. city) by using seven different dimensions: territorial, demographic, services, economic activities, institutional, psychological, anthropological.

Questionnaires and interviews were prepared and used for the data collection regarding each social issue, thus students were constantly supported during the preparation, implementation and analysis of data, both quantitative and qualitative.

The school Principal proposed to incorporate the intervention in the curricular program of “alternanza scuola-lavoro” (school-work training system), a specific mandatory time (in Lycée 100 hrs. per year) in which students must learn job-related skills. This choice allowed to devote to the intervention a considerable number of hours, a greater flexibility in adjusting this time (both in terms of distribution of time over the year, over the week and the possibility to use this time for activities in class during regular school hours or out of school) as well as the collaboration of researchers as external tutors. Indeed, the school-work training requires a formal partnership between the school and an external organization offering students training, under the supervision of an internal and an external tutor. In our case, the external organization was the Department of Psychology of the University of Bologna and the researchers acted as tutors for methodological aspects, as well as being in charge of monitoring the process and evaluating. This co-leadership between teachers and researchers appeared to be an optimal condition for conducting all the activities as well as ensuring the management of the group dynamics generated by the large group of participants.

Context and procedure of the intervention in school

The intervention was implemented in a scientific high school (lyceum) located in Parma, a city in the North of Italy. The school was approached by firstly contacting the Principal, who identified two teachers who expressed their willingness to collaborate in the intervention (1 teacher of English and 1 of Italian literature; both women). The principal and the teachers reported the general interest of the school toward innovative didactic approaches. The selection of the classes of students was made by the teachers and the Principal, in collaboration with the researchers. Two classes of the third year took part in the intervention (Intervention Group (IG); N= 45; M age =15.76 years, females= 53.3%). Two other equivalent classes from the same school participated as control group (Control Group (CG);

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N=44, M age 15.73 years, females = 56.8%)¹. Informed consent was preliminarily collected from both students and their parents. The first year of the intervention started in October 2016 and lasted till April 2017, while the second year lasted from November 2017 to May 2018 (fig. 3.1) and were structured into different phases based on the action-reflection process of YPAR (Cicognani, Albanesi, Mazzoni, Amnå, 2018). In the first year, students were involved in YPAR in the phases of identifying social issues located in their community, mapping and understanding the social issues, sharing findings with international students; whereas in the second year, students participated in the phases of reflection, mapping and understanding the social issues at EU level, developing proposals for Eu institutions and sharing proposals with representatives of institutions, international students and teachers.

Students and researchers collaborated during the overall intervention and the degree of their involvement changed according to each phase. During the first year, the protagonism of students increased following the complexity of the intervention:

1. Identifying and exploring phase aimed at presenting the overall project to students and discussing with them about social issues at local level. In the first two months of activities, after a general introduction, brainstorming and focus groups were used by researchers to help students in the process of detection of some significant social issues in their local community.
2. Mapping and understanding the social issue. Students were thus grouped into four thematic groups, corresponding to four social issues (migration, environment, drug abuse, poverty) that they identified based on their personal interest and the concrete opportunities to conduct an interesting and original research on them. Thematic groups explored each issue by using the technique of community profiling, then students collected both qualitative and quantitative data about each social issue. In every group, in order to collect data, students decided autonomously to use face-to-face interviews or questionnaires and on-site visits that were developed with the support of the research team. Students contacted representatives of local organizations and managed place and dates for the interviews and for on- site visits. Students learned to use interview transcripts, images, and video recordings for qualitative data and simple statistical procedures and graphs for quantitative data. The creation of videos was

¹ Initially, based on the school registry, the IG was made by 48 students (24 + 24), while the CG was made by 46 students. There were school dropouts (3 students for IG and 4 students for CG) due to absentees or students' participation to mobility school programs.

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chosen by students and teachers who attended a curricular course with a video-maker expert. The final months of this activity year were devoted to the analysis of data.

3. Sharing findings phase aimed at organizing a public event in which students presented their works and conclusions to the local stakeholders in their city and to a broader public composed by students, researchers and politicians in an international conference². For the national public event, students prepared a PowerPoint presentation to describe the process they followed for the research, the context analysis and the data collection and invited their families to participate. For the international event, students were considered as participants of a scientific conference in which they had ad hoc sessions for the presentations of their work. Each group asked comments to and answered questions of the public during the events.

The second year of the intervention started from the reflections on and redefinitions of social issues as these were discussed and researched during the first year. The aim of the second year was to extend the debate and the research on EU level³. This broader level of implementing the intervention aimed at improving the reflections and discussions of students on social issues from local to an upper level, thus strengthening the awareness that dealing with local issues can stimulate a more global interest and awareness.

In the second year, students were included in:

1. Mapping and understanding the social issue at EU level. This phase aimed at collecting data by contacting representatives of European institutions regarding the specific issue in order to shift the focus to European level. In this phase, students asked particularly for a support of the research team, to approach and contact representatives of European institutions. The research team provided lectures from European professors about the structure and the functioning of European institutions and a meeting with a local representative of European Parliament. An online platform was prepared to share research material between students and discuss the different perspectives on social issues with students coming from other countries (members of the Catch-EyoU project) and, finally, find common solutions. Students made personal contacts with European students to discuss future solutions.
2. Developing proposals for the EU institutions. Students prepared possible solutions for each social issue, starting from data collected at European level. The intervention team supported student to focus on the proposals.

² The first Catch-EyoU conference held in Athens in March 2017.

³The European level was the focus of Catch-EyoU project.

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3. Sharing proposals. Students from all countries involved in the overall project were protagonists of the European conference in Bruxelles to discuss and share their proposals with representative of the EU institutions. Students had the opportunity to interact with politicians with comments and explanations on their proposals.

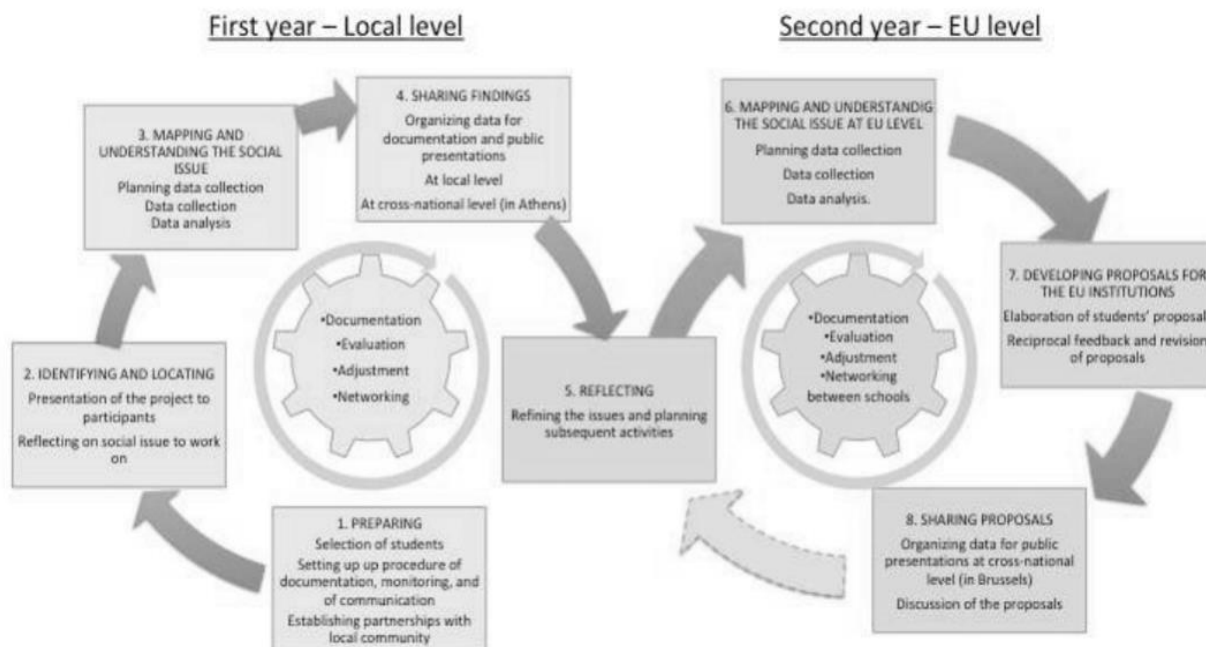


Fig. 3.1 Y-PAR model taken from Cicognani et al, 2018.

Methods of evaluation design

The aims of the present study were to evaluate the effectiveness of this school-based intervention, by testing the extent to which the intervention impacted on psychosocial factors and processes, that characterize active citizenship. In particular, we wanted to understand whether the intervention was able to increase students' awareness of their role as citizens: changes in political interest, political efficacy, institutional trust, peer norms, school climate, quality of participation at school and participation activities were assessed. Furthermore, we wanted to understand the perspective of the teachers involved in the project about the overall capacity of the intervention to support their students' awareness and engagement on social and political issues. The evaluation design was completely led by the research team.

To reach these goals, we used an evaluation model (fig 3.2) that consisted in individual and micro level variables (see chapter 2) assessed at time 1 and time 2, in IG and CG; for the purposes of this study a theory-led evaluation model was used.

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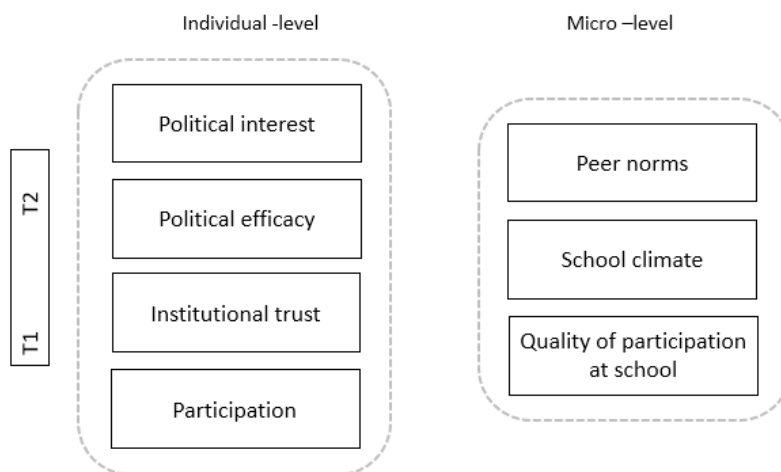


Fig 3.2 Model for YPAR evaluation.

The individual level variables of political interest, political efficacy and institutional trust were considered to evaluate the sense of ownership and efficacy in engaging with social and political issues. The micro level variables of open school climate, quality of participation and peer norms were used to evaluate the impact of the intervention on school context. Moreover, to evaluate participants' active social and political engagement, we considered a range of participation activities.

In order to monitor and evaluate the processes of raising awareness about social and political issues and the changes of young people's views on what active citizenship is and what it means for them, we assessed a focus group with students, before and after the intervention. We collected the evaluations from teachers to monitor the process and frame the changes related to the intervention in curriculum school activities. The process evaluation took place through a mixed method approach: we used questionnaire, focus groups and interviews as instruments. The triangulation of the information collected from these sources was aimed at gaining a better assessment of the nature of the changes occurred.

Instruments

Questionnaire

Before the beginning of the intervention activities (September 2016) and after their implementation, at end of the intervention (May 2018), students completed the following measures.

A pre-post questionnaire was submitted to both the intervention group (IG) and an equivalent control group (CG). The questionnaire aimed to assess changes in the individual dimensions of active citizenship that were assumed to be stimulated by the intervention approach, and specifically:

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- *Political interest*. It was measured by four items (e.g., ‘How interested are you in politics?’) adapted from Amnå et al., 2010.
- *Political efficacy*. It was measured using seven items (e.g., ‘I consider myself capable to become engaged in societal issues.’) adapted from Krampen (1991).
- *Institutional trust*. It was measured using three items (E.g.: ‘I trust the national government’) adapted from Barrett & Zani (2015);

The questionnaire included also some contextual indicators that we expected to be positively influenced by the intervention, and specifically:

- *Open classroom climate* was measured with three items (e.g.: “Students are encouraged by the school to make up their own minds”) adapted from Gniewosz & Noack (2008);
- *Quality of participation at school*. This was assessed by four items (during last year, I “... felt that there were a variety of points of view being discussed”) adapted from Fernandes-Jesus, Malafaia, Ferreira, Cicognani, & Menezes, 2012);
- *Peer norms* was measured with three items (E.g., My friends would approve it if I became politically active) adapted from Barret & Zani, 2015.

All the items used in the questionnaire were measured on a 5-point Likert scales (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Moreover, some participative behaviors were included to assess changes due to the intervention.

- *Participation* was assessed by 11 dichotomous items from Barrett & Zani (2015) asking whether participants had done any of the following activities during the preceding 12 months (In the last year, ...: “Volunteered or worked for a social cause (children/ the elderly/refugees/ other people in need/youth organization)”, “Shared news or music or videos with social or political content with people in my social networks (e.g., in Facebook, Twitter etc.)”, “Contacted a politician or public official (for example via e-mail)”. Response scores as dichotomous items were measured with values that vary from 0 to 1, indicating not done/done.

Focus groups

A qualitative evaluation, through focus group was conducted with the IG (N= 24) in two times: at the beginning and at the end of the intervention to assess changes in how participants describe their process of being active citizens, and in their representations of citizenship activities.

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The focus groups were performed with students of the two classes re-grouped on purpose, creating two groups composed by components of the two classes. Interviews were conducted separately for the two teachers

The first focus group questions aimed at exploring the different forms of participation known by students. This discussion was accompanied by showing some images representing a variety of forms of active participation. The second focus group was conducted with the aim to investigate whether their experience could be considered as active citizenship, to explore if participative behaviors of young people changed and the factors that promoted these changes.

Interviews

Semi- structured interviews were conducted with teachers. The first interviews with teachers took place at the end of the first year of activities. The aim was to collect teachers' personal views about students' activities in the first year, their participation to the first European conference and any relevant note about the ongoing process.

The second interviews with teachers took place at the end of the entire intervention, and focused on the second year of students' activities, and a general evaluation of the entire process. At the end of the project we thus had two interviews for each teacher that we audio recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Analysis

The longitudinal analyses were performed on the participants who took part in the two evaluations (T1, T2), while uncompleted cases were excluded. For this reason, the quantitative evaluation was performed on 24 valid cases for the IG (M age =15,79, SD age= .50, females = 62,5%) and 32 valid cases for the CG (M age= 15,69, SD age= .53, females =50%). For the variables which were measured on a scale, the differences in the results between the intervention and the control group were assessed through the GLM repeated measures, comparing T1 and T2. Two levels for the factor "time" were defined: T1 (beginning of the intervention) and T2 (end of the intervention). A significant interaction effect of group (between factor) and time (within factor) was interpreted as different change in the scores of the two groups. For the dichotomous variables, the McNemar's test was used.

Qualitative data, both from focus groups and interviews were analyzed following the grounded approach of the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016).

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The thematic analysis consisted of exploring and analyzing the basic topics that arise in the qualitative data set, and particular patterns in the data by generating descriptive coding and thematic analyses (Saldaña, 2012). It is important to note that the descriptive coding we employed in this study was both deductive and inductive. The process of analysis followed the specific analytic steps of:

- 1) Immersing in the data by reading and rereading all responses provided by youth;
- 2) Generating initial codes independently and then discussing and refining codes to be sure that a range of youth responses were captured in codes or open coding step;

The open coding emerges from the initial reading of the interviews, a number of codes is produced according to the portions of the text with a relevant meaning for that code; this operation must be carried out for each interview, and a taxonomy of codes entered into categories is obtained, then codes are grouped in macro-areas. Furthermore, we proceeded with the cleaning of the codes such as the elimination of repeating codes. In this stage, two independent researchers compared the codes that have been created for the same interview or textual data. The Author has been supported in this step by a researcher, colleague of the research team.

- 3) Constructing themes through sorting codes into different higher order groupings or axial coding;

In this phase the categories are improved and connections between them are created following a hierarchic process. Categories can be linked at the same level. In this step new categories can also be created.

- 4) Reviewing and narrowing themes or categories, as well as considering them in relationship to each other. The aim of this phase is to identify the core category that can summarize and be inclusive of all the categories. The process of coding and categorization for this study is detailed in table 3.8 and 3.9.

Results

Quantitative data

Below we present the descriptive statistics of items of the questionnaire for the two waves. Mean, standard deviations and reliability are reported for 5 points Likert scales, while the percentage for the “yes” scores are reported for dichotomous items.

Political interest (table 3.1; $F=,616$ $p=,43$) and political efficacy scales (table 3.2; $F=,35$ $p=,55$) did not show significant differences in times and between group.

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	T1		T2	
	M	SD	M	SD
CG	2,58	,64	2,84	,71
IG	2,86	,47	3,26	,68
α	,67		,85	

Table 3.1 Descriptive statistics of Political Interest scale.

	T1		T2	
	M	SD	M	SD
CG	3,27	,48	3,33	,51
IG	3,55	,58	3,71	,94
α	,74		,76	

Table 3.2 Descriptive statistics of Political efficacy scale.

The scale of institutional trust was not used for the analysis due to a low reliability in both two waves.

Results from school climate scale (table 3.3) showed that the interaction effect between group and time was significant ($F= 10,431$ $p=,002$ $\eta^2=,17$) suggesting that students in the IG experienced a more open climate during the intervention.

	T1		T2	
	M	SD	M	SD
CG	3,46	,53	3,24	,80
IG	3,00	,87	3,49	,51
α	,75		,79	

Table 3.3 Descriptive statistics on school climate scale.

Regarding the quality of participation, the interaction effect between group and time was significant ($F=4,846$ $p=,032$ $\eta^2=,08$) suggesting that in the IG there was an increase regarding the experience of participation in the YPAR (table 3.4)

	T1		T2	
	M	SD	M	SD
CG	3,53	,54	3,40	1,00
IG	3,42	,64	3,82	,48
α	,74		,85	

Table 3.4 Descriptive statistics of quality of participation scale.

Results from peer norms items showed that the interaction effect between group and time was significant ($F= 8,878$ $p=,04$ $\eta^2=,15$) suggesting an increase in perception that students of the IG have of their friends' engagement and support provided by peers (table 3.5).

	T1		T2	
	M	SD	M	SD
CG	2,77	,64	2,80	,73
IG	2,80	,66	3,46	,68
α	,49		,75	

Table 3.5 Descriptive statistics of peer norms items, * $p < .05$.

Participation items (table 3.6) show good enough percentage of civic (i.e. "Volunteered or worked for a social cause (children/ the elderly/refugees/ other people in need/youth

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organization)”), online (i.e. “Shared news or music or videos with social or political content with people in my social networks (e.g., in Facebook, Twitter etc.)”) and political activities (i.e. “Contacted a politician or public official (for example via e-mail)”) performed by the students belonging both to control and intervention group, while protest activities were not performed at all by students. However, the trend from T1 to T2 is not homogeneous for each group on the different items. The McNemar’s test resulted significant for item 3 ($p < .05$) in the CG and item 10 ($p < .001$) in the IG. This result shows that the intervention supported the increase of a form of political participation experienced by youth during the 1-year interval. (“Contacted a politician or public official (for example via e-mail)”).

		T1	T2
		Frequencies (YES %)	Frequencies (YES %)
1. Volunteered or worked for a social cause (children/ the elderly/refugees/ other people in need/youth organization)	CG	23 (71,9%)	21 (67,7%)
	IG	16 (66,7%)	19 (82,6%)
2. Participated in a concert or a charity event for a social or political cause	CG	14 (43,8%)	8 (25,8%)
	IG	10 (41,7%)	6 (26,1%)
3. Donated money to a social cause	CG	24 (75%)	14 (45,2%)*
	IG	15 (62,5%)	10 (43,5%)
4. Shared news or music or videos with social or political content with people in my social networks (e.g., in Facebook, Twitter etc.)	CG	12 (37,5%)	12 (38,7%)
	IG	11 (45,8%)	7 (30,4%)
5. Discussed social or political issues on the internet	CG	6 (18,8%)	4 (12,9%)
	IG	8 (33,3%)	4 (17,4%)
6. Joined a social or political group on Facebook (or other social networks)	CG	4 (12,9%)	2 (6,5%)
	IG	3 (12,5%)	4 (17,4%)
7. Taken part in an occupation of a building or a public space	CG	0	1 (3,2%)
	IG	2 (8,3%)	2 (8,7%)
8. Taken part in a political event where there was a physical confrontation with political opponents or with the police	CG	0	0
	IG	1 (4,2%)	2 (8,7%)
9. Worked for a political party or a political candidate	CG	0	0
	IG	0	1 (4,3%)
10. Contacted a politician or public official (for example via e-mail)	CG	0	0
	IG	0	11 (47,8%)*
11. Donated money to support the work of a political group or organization	CG	3 (9,4%)	0
	IG	2 (8,3%)	1 (4,3%)

Table 3.6 Descriptive statistics of participation items, * $p < .05$.

Qualitative data from the focus groups

We describe below the codes that emerged from the thematic analysis and the categories or themes associated. The following sections will give details for each theme, explained by the different codes. Quotations from focus groups are labelled with a category consisting in three elements: gender of the interviewee, classroom and number of focus group (e.g.: M, 3D,

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FG1). The category for the quotations from interviews consists in: role of interviewee and year of assessment (e.g.: teacher 1, year 1).

Codes	Description of codes	Themes
Civic engagement Political conventional or unconventional participation Online participation Artistic activities	All the behaviors indicated and recognized by participants as forms and activities of participation.	Forms of youth active citizenship
Political Interest Political Efficacy Critical thinking Self- awareness Learning transversal skills Team work	Factors and skills from the individual level, that students consider meaningful to be active citizens	Psychosocial factors and processes at individual level
Peer group Sense of belonging to community Youth- Adult relationships	Contextual relations that influence the construction of youth active citizenship inside and outside school.	Psychosocial factors and processes at micro level
Opportunities Challenges	Activities that improved and tested the possibility to create youth active citizenship	Youth voice

Table 3.7 Codes and themes emerging from the focus groups.

Forms of Youth Active Citizenship

The images presented at the beginning of the discussion in the first focus group, enhanced a reflection on active citizenship and different forms and typologies. Few differences on types of participation emerged from the first to the second focus group. Thus, the distinction in civic and political forms of participation emerged (Barrett & Zani, 2015; Ekman & Amnå, 2012).

Searching information to get knowledge about and being interested in national and global events seem to be an active part of what students think about being and becoming an *ideal active citizen*, as shown in the following statement:

According to me, it is enough to be interested in what is happening in your city and, even if you don't make something concrete, if you experiment yourself and you are interested in and involve people, it is enough. (F,3D,1FG)

I meant it is OK to be informed, however a fundamental thing from my point of view to be active citizen is to also analyze the data with critical thinking, even if they are about the social context in which we live. Try to be objective. (M,4D, FG2)

Increasing the information about civic and social issues gives the possibility to choose and to have a critical thinking that can be considered a basic skill of an active citizen. The focus from the first to the second discussion shifted from the informative level of citizenship to a

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more reflective level, emphasizing the role of critical thinking as a crucial skill to get information and interest and, eventually, to be involved in citizenship participative activities. These elements are considered precursors to another formal and traditional citizenship behavior: voting. This latter is reported, by emphasizing the opportunity to choose to vote. Students report that:

To vote is a characteristic of the ideal citizen. Not necessarily one person doesn't want to vote but knows what is happening. (M, 3B, FG1)

The real participation should be to be informed. You can vote or not, but it is a free choice of the person. The most important thing is the possibility to choose to vote or not. (M, 4D, FG2)

A bridge between individual and collective forms of participation is volunteering and other pro-social behaviors:

To be active citizens, it begins from small things, such as to take care of the environment around us. If we neglect it, also our country becomes unsuitable and we don't love more our country. (M, 3D, FG1)

A volunteering experience emerges from a specific event: in fact, the disastrous flood occurred in 2014 was important for youth because they felt involved in their community and they felt they could help and be active. From volunteering activities, students report the need to be more active to be an ideal youth active citizen, trying to create relationships with adults and to be recognized as resources for their community.

Yesterday I went with other classmates to a nursing home to spend some time with elders who live there and a comment of one of them struck me: "Are you really going away?" this made me feel well because this people, older than me, they can feel better thanks to my action. According to me, youth can do also these experiences and so, be more active. (F, 3D, FG1)

Participants' engagement can be detailed in the benefits that these activities generate. It emerges that volunteering is satisfying if volunteers receive direct feedback from organizations, even if these activities have to be improved.

Surely, I felt useful. It struck me to see and think that that house could be yours. In my case, when I helped people, they thanked you and so you felt very satisfied. (M, 3B, FG1)

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The benefit is sure. We know that we are doing something positive. If there is something negative is that we don't receive feedback from "Emporio"⁴. We donate food or school material, but we don't receive thanks or feedback on what we do. (M, 3D, FG1)

Another form of youth citizenship can be considered online participation, with its disadvantages, as a student recognizes:

Youth spend a lot of time on the internet. There are a lot of people that die because of the insults received on the internet. (F, 3B, FG1)

Moreover, art activities are identified as a form to express their ideas and to be tied to the community.

We participate through the school, to art days, for example, in which students can bring an activity or a project and show it to the other schools. So, we give a service to citizenship. (M,3D, FG1)

Students refer also to collective and unconventional behaviors, such as taking part in demonstrations. These are considered a way to have a voice in political and civic issues and are linked to conventional activities.

I think that it is important to demonstrate, to express your own discontent towards some choices of the political class and that can be expressed also through vote. (M, 3D, FG1)

Finally, it emerged a definition of active citizen, different from the passive one, that included the development of critical awareness not only at the individual but also at the community level as below:

When we started to be involved, we began to delve and "go out of games". This is for me an active thing because just realizing that these things happen is passive but to be involved and to let the others know is an active part. (F, 4D, FG2)

Factors and processes of YAC at individual level.

Sense of political efficacy is expressed by the ability to deal with and resolve simple tasks and social problems at different levels. At local level, these students express their sense of efficacy in a cost- benefit circle in engaging in social activities. In fact, adolescents need that adults or civic organizations recognize their abilities in order to feel efficient and useful for the community. As the statement below shows:

If I had to go to someone's home, I wouldn't feel well because I don't know if such person would appreciate my presence there. I go also to Caritas to deliver food packages to families and this is

⁴ Emporio is a volunteering organization based on the creation of supportive market that attempts to meet the need of disadvantaged people. It is located in the living city of the students.

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very gratifying because I am doing something very useful and people smile at you. I think that going to people's homes is more difficult. (F, 3D, FG1)

Another indicator of youth citizenship concerns the need to have a voice and to express ideas, as described below:

Students who have an idea and try to spread it. (F, 3B, FG1)

Because it seems where we exchange our ideas, a discussion, and then it remembered me the experience at school. (F, 3B, FG2)

Youth in school reported the importance of some skills to acquire and improve in engaging with social issues, these are: critical thinking and self-awareness.

Critical thinking is the skill that helps to analyze information, situations and experiences from an objective perspective, distinguishing reality from one's own subjective perceptions. It means to recognize the factors that influence personal and other people's thoughts and behaviors and it helps to choose. This skill is considered a fundamental step for youth active citizenship, all long the process of intervention. The following statements explains it:

Because he will be the adult of tomorrow and he will have to vote, to take decisions for his community, a young active citizen has to get informed and develop a critical thinking on the information he receives from the society and the community. (M, 3D, FG1)

I believe that for becoming an active citizen, you must develop a critical thinking. And for developing a critical thinking you must get informed, being interested, doing research. I believe that everything we wrote can be summarized with the critical thinking. That is not a believe you already have, but something you learn to build. I think this means being active. (M, 4D, FG2)

Self-awareness is the ability to recognize oneself as an individual separate from the context and other individuals. Self-awareness is necessary to develop and to maintain relationships with peers and adults. This skill is well explained by many statements regarding being engaged in volunteer activities, for example:

In my view, when you speak about volunteering, it is important to involve people that never did it. But I think that it is better to try to do things alone because I've seen that if we are in group we tend to stay among us and not to stay with elders. (M, 3D, FG1)

To summarize, youth can have a role as citizens if they are aware of their skills and their active contribution. From the statement below, it emerges that the opportunity to choose and to discover one's own attitudes and interests are considered fundamental elements to create citizenship:

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To try to do something is right. I like to try to do something, even if it seems that I don't like at the beginning or I have some preconceptions. I think that to try is always a positive thing because you can discover that something you didn't like at the beginning, then you like most. Or you can discover that some things are not wonderful as you believed. Anyway, it is important to keep an integrity, trying to avoid being influenced by the others but to think on what you want and to stop and say: "I like this, and I don't like that" even if others say, "this is for you" but you don't feel so. (F, 3D, FG1)

The activities run during the first year allowed students to enhance their awareness about what they can learn from activities conducted outside the school. From the second focus in fact, it emerged that students recognized the importance of the team work and of managing and organizing the tasks when a group is composed by different people who don't know each other.

For me, I think that this job helped us to learn how to work in group. The group work does not mean that we are good at working in group, it means that we know also the obstacles we can meet in this and they are a lot. So, I think that this helped us also for our future job, because we will meet other people with whom we are not agree but, in the end, we must stay together and produce something. (F, 4D, FG2)

Factors and processes of YAC at micro level.

The representation of youth active citizen depends on the sense of belonging to a community. In particular, students refer that it is important to take care of their own community and country, to involve also other people and consider themselves citizens, especially at a local level, when they are engaged in their community. Citizenship is not an abstract concept but is tied to everyday actions and concrete experiences.

When our attention goes beyond our house door, when it is wide and involves others, then we are active citizens. There is a sense of belonging to something more. If you are born in Italy, you are Italian, and you have to try reconsider your country. For me, a thing that summarizes all, is the sense of belonging. (M, 4D, FG2)

Students refer also to the role of the group of peers in increasing or hindering participative behaviors. They are aware that the role of peers is fundamental to promote or obstacle different levels of engagement. Generally, as reported below, youth tend to share the same form of participation with their friends or classmates.

We tend to do things in group, we don't take the initiative to do things by ourselves. Me too, I went to the elders (nursing home) but we were many: in fact, I told myself that I see who is going and then I go too. Or two years ago I went to Emporio with my cousin but never alone. (F, 3B, FG1)

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Yes, but this can be also an obstacle because not everybody is interested in these things and then maybe there is a person who would like to do another thing but doesn't because the others don't. I think that this is youth problem. (F, 3D, FG1)

There are different points of view: in fact, students think that in order to experiment own attitudes and interests it could be useful to try to experiment oneself alone, without any external influence, even if it is not always possible.

It is an important thing but difficult to take the initiative by ourselves, to do something even if the others don't but to follow one's own idea. At our age it is very difficult, you need to be very determined in what you do, or the group and what others do, hinder you. (F, 3D, FG1)

Another important indicator seems to be the relations with adults and the way the children succeed to be independent from their parents. Thus, the suggestions and recommendations from adults are accepted if they meet interests and attitudes of adolescents. These statements show clearly the attempt to create a balance between adults' authority and adolescents' willingness, developing a favorable partnership.

I think that, at our age, we can allow adults to lead us. In fact, my mother told me: do you want to come with me to Caritas? and I agreed. I never thought to do that because I didn't know how to do it, so, I'd never go alone. I think that we youth, have to listen to adults. (F, 3D, FG1)

We need to use critical thinking and to analyze and filter what adults say, according to which we consider to be right. It is really true that a lot of engagement comes from adults, for example this project comes from adults. I think also that to take initiatives is important, both are important to grow, for the formation of the person. (M, 4D, FG2)

Youth voice: opportunities and challenges

An important topic discussed with the students was the liking of the activities they participate, that is the activities perceived as opportunities of learning and experimenting. From the discussion, the opportunities were those ones in which students experimented different and new techniques from those they already knew. A more detailed range of opportunities came up at the end of the intervention.

The most interesting part was to see in Athens, the social issues on which the other groups worked on. And, we never thought to do a similar work: to be organized in groups, to prepare presentations and to work as if we were a group. The less interesting activity was the translation of the interviews: it was a hard work. (F, 4B, FG2)

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I liked the research and I never thought it would be a good work. I liked also to create and administer the questionnaire, because we were engaged. The part that has created some misunderstanding was the relation with the students from the other classroom because at the beginning we worked separately and then we had difficulties to organize the work. But, at the end, we did a good work! (F, 4B, FG2)

The construction of research questionnaires, the visits outside the school to interact with community organizations and Athens' conference are the activities in which students had the possibility to enlarge their knowledge about their community, to compare their works with their peers and share their ideas.

The opportunities that students recognized during the activities that aimed at promoting YAC were:

The meeting we had at school with our group and B.⁵ on pollution. What he said helped me to know a new world, things that I didn't know (M, 4B, FG2)

We were involved as protagonists in the activities we did. For example, to deal with poverty we did not restrict the job to a power point presentation, but we went to Emporio, we met them. So, the different researches we did starting from the experience. I liked also to work in group, it was gratifying because each of us had his task. (M, 4B, FG2)

Mainly, the social issues we deal with, it is more interesting than the project that other schools do for their "alternanza", some do keyrings. It is better to deal with these themes, I prefer to deal with social issues that strike us directly such as migration, because we hear a lot of things about it, so it is better to examine in depth. (M, 4D, FG2)

It seemed important that students could reflect also on their involvement in the activities of the project and the differences between these activities and the typical activities of the school curriculum. In fact, they noticed that the project gave them the opportunity to experiment other methodologies that enhanced their autonomy in thinking and acting, in managing difficulties and trying to find solutions. Then, youth report that the participative activities in which they feel better, are those where they are protagonists, feel useful and have positive feedback from the others.

We feel useful. We know that we are doing something positive. It is an active participation to which most of the youth gladly engage. (M, 3D, FG1)

[in class] We don't work in groups. (F, 3B, FG1)

⁵ A representative of the organization that deal with environmental issues.

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In classroom, we do not deal with the search of original sources. Everything is already written, and we have just to study it. We don't conduct any research. (F, 4B, FG2)

Also, the relation with teachers was different. We worked with our heads! Then, ok, we asked for approval, but we worked alone. (F, 4B, FG2)

Yes. All this job was uncommon, because we never did a such demanding job, analyzing a social issue at local level. Then, it was a new way of working and it helped to grow up. (M, 4D, FG2)

They referred to this experience as uncommon and demanding, but also rewarding.

Other activities mentioned can be considered as *challenges* during the intervention. Students referred these as:

At the beginning, it was complicated because each class already did its work. So, it was not so easy to combine all the data. Then, it was surely nice because during the travel to Athens I met new friends, also from the other class. (M, 4B, FG2).

The relation with the other class seems to be the most difficult part of the work. It seems that the problem was given by the organization, communication and the amount of work to share between them, recognized by students who felt an asymmetrical relation during the interaction. This imbalance of distribution of power between them was solved with an equal distribution of the work.

When we collected the data, in my group we did a paper version of the questionnaire and then we had to enter the data on the pc. Other groups used a web survey. So, we should organize better. (M,4B, FG2)

According to me, it was difficult at the beginning when it was not clear what we had to do, when we were unsure on how to proceed, but, when we began, it was laborious but, at the end, it was rewarded at the Conference because it seemed to be that we went well, we did a good job. (M, 4D, FG2)

A final evaluation considers the importance to reflect on the different levels of dealing with a social issue and the possible concrete solutions that students propose.

To me the only thing that disappointed me of the second year is that during the first year we were very involved in the project. Dealing with our city, we felt ours these problems. I am aware that the problem of the pollution there is also at European level and the fact that even other students didn't feel it so has disappointed me, maybe it has not a big impact on them. (...) The second year has perhaps served to become aware of this problem. In the sense that also the proposal of a possible solution means that you have reflected on that and this has brought you to a maturation and to make sure you that cannot propose any absurd ideas. (F, 4D, FG2)

Qualitative data from the interviews with teachers

We present the codes and the themes resulted from the analysis of the interviews of teachers (table 3.8) in a unique section.

Codes	Description of codes	Themes
Motivation Participation Team work Learning transversal skills Efficacy Critical thinking	Factors and skills from the individual level, that students consider meaningful to be active citizens	Psychosocial factors and processes at individual level
Peer to peer relationships Youth- Adult relationships	Collaborative and supportive relations among peers and between youth and meaningful adults that promote the construction of youth active citizenship inside and outside school.	Psychosocial factors and processes at micro level
Opportunities Challenges	Activities that improved and tested the possibility to create youth active citizenship	Youth voice

Table 3.8 Codes and themes from interviews with teachers.

The two teachers described the effects of the intervention emphasizing various points.

Teachers recognized that students acquired new competences during the project and reported also some changes occurred after the intervention.

It was a process, even students who were slower changed and I expect that next year all of them start from the same point. Really, I saw them changed. (teacher1, year 1)

These changes are not linked just to the involvement of students in school activities but also to factors that enhance participation and teamwork, such as motivation and good competitiveness.

Motivation and participation: they understand that another way of working is possible and that should be possible. I am a tutor of a class that started with more weaknesses thus, I think that it was very important for them. (teacher1, year 1)

Working together brings also some competitiveness and this willing to compete gave them the possibility to recognize that they also can do. (teacher1, year 1)

In both interviews, the two teachers emphasized the development of a number of skills, that can be grouped in transversal skills and curricular skills. More specifically, the first type refers to the development of skills which are not specific of any discipline but have been acquired by the students in the group work and self-organization. For example, one teacher reported the importance of the soft skills, while the other emphasized the importance of a scientific approach in conducting the research:

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They learned things that aren't taught at school normally: new ways of working and to analyze data with scientific methods. They learned how to use the language in a certain way as to speak in public, to express their thought with self-confidence. They learned to work in group and to respect deadlines, things that go beyond normal school activities (teacher 2, year 1)

Certainly, they have acquired skills which before they didn't have. They learned to manage data and have learned a scientific approach. They refined the quality of their work, undoubtedly. (teacher2, year 2)

I believe that students are now able to better orient their searches for documental sources. I mean that they understood that they have to look for official sources, and to distinguish them from the other ones (Teacher1, year 2).

Transversal skills are enhanced from the activities such as *teamwork*, *speaking in public* and working independently. Instead other competences linked to the specific methodology and instruments used to create the final projects emerged such as analyzing data, making videos.

Sometimes they are not aware of all the competencies they have learned. This morning someone told me that he learned to make videos, those who didn't use google surveys to create the questionnaire made a self- critic because they noticed that they did a lot of questionnaires, but they put data manually and, they said, it was boring. This kind of mechanism runs. (teacher 1, year 2)

It was nice because they had the opportunity to interview someone and this morning they were enthusiastic to have interviewed G that seems a charming person and they were fascinated from this interview. This means that they found their space to express and this is one of the objectives of "alternanza scuola lavoro": to let them autonomous. (teacher1, year 1)

Teachers recognized also the importance of the technological skills that were required during the project and were necessary for collecting data, preparing dissemination materials, and communicating with the groups of other countries.

In addition to the many skills that they developed, like the ability to work together in group and to organize themselves, there are also the technological skills. For example, how to make a video, how to edit it, how to make a Prezi. [...]. They acquired some skills that can be useful in a future job or at the university. (teacher2, year 2)

Finally, there are some skills that were more directly connected with the curricular disciplines and this is the case, for example, of the English language course.

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I believe that also in the use of spoken English, some of them reached impressive results. This is mostly due to a higher motivation. Because when you must use for something that can motivate you, you do it with more interest and with a higher commitment. (teacher2, year 2).

We asked teachers the activities they liked most and those they liked less, and we can define them as difficulties and opportunities created for student by the project. A first opportunity that emerged is:

I liked most that students met adults and institutions. Thus, we find the key to allow that two different worlds will meet. They learned how to send formal emails. They create this contact in a respectful way also because stakeholder and people who were interviewed said that it was a professional and quality work. (...) I found positive the relation with local stakeholders. They were friendly: they were interviewed by students, audio recorded. There were CIAC, EMPORIO, INFORMAGIOVANI, and SER.T., a council member⁶. They found good that youth approached these realities. (teacher2, year 1)

An important activity highlighted by the teacher was to open the school to the community and so, to allow students to meet representatives of community organizations and stakeholders. The experience to know other realities beyond their school and their community emerges also by the activity liked most from the other teacher. The project conference is considered also from the teacher a turning point of the project to give to the students the motivation to continue their projects.

Athens conference was a starting point because students could meet students from other European schools and this let them enthusiastic for the next year. They could see other realities; it was a very nice moment of sharing. I saw a great change in that moment, because they worked in single groups till that moment, then they didn't know the work that other groups were realizing but there they realized what was also their work and they were satisfied, proud of their project and this gives them a great motivation to go ahead. (teacher1, year 1)

Discussion

The results from the questionnaire showed that political interest and political efficacy did not change in students after the intervention, while school climate, quality of participation, institutional trust and friends' norms improved following the intervention. The triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data showed the possibility to understand the effects of the

⁶ CIAC (migrants centre), EMPORIO, INFORMAGIOVANI (youth service for social topics), and SER.T. (Service for drug addiction) are the organizations that students contacted to develop their research on social issues.

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individual and contextual variables on the process of constructing active citizenship. The construction of trust moves from proximal to distal context. This result is confirmed from qualitative data, from which it emerges that the relations between students of the two classes were improved after the intervention. Moreover, we can suggest that the partnership between students and community stakeholders enhanced a general trust. It is interesting to notice that school can be considered a context that promote active citizenship (Eder & Kinney, 1995; Martinez et al., 2016; Ruiz, McMahon & Jason, 2018) by constructing partnership with community organizations and other educational institutions, i.e. university. If we consider this study as case study to promote active citizenship, school as context regains its role and function, primarily educational, then political. As showed in the first study, an open school climate in curricular activities did not influence the construction of YAC, while a participatory intervention and partnership with the community organizations gave voices to students and remodeled the educational and democratic role of school in shaping democracy and active citizenship. Positive relationship with teachers and the opportunities that the students had to express their opinions were emphasized from students and improved the perception of open school climate. These results are consistent with the improvement in the school climate that was registered in the qualitative evaluation that showed an improvement in the relationship between students of the two classes and an increased autonomy from teachers in conducting the group work. Similarly, the questionnaires showed an increase in the quality of participation, given that the focus of the discussion on real and/or everyday problems became important after the intervention. This finding is completely consistent with the nature of the participatory action research, which has made students reflecting and discussing on issues that were identified as relevant in their local community. Peer engagement and support are significant contextual factors as well. The role of peers in being supportive for active citizenship was improved thanks to the participative nature of the intervention. From qualitative data we can argue that through group work, sharing different perspectives and debating, soft skills were enhanced in students.

In the questionnaire evaluation students reported that they had more opportunities to take part in some specific actions, like contacting politicians. This represents a strong evidence that the intervention was able to promote engagement also through practical experience in real contexts. At this regard, the qualitative evaluation integrates such results suggesting also a shift from a representation of active citizenship that was mostly linked to participation and volunteering practices (i.e., action), to a representation of active citizenship which included also a more defined discussion and elaboration of possible solution (i.e., reflection).

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In the two focus groups, the students' definitions and representations of YAC were strictly connected to their personal experiences. Students were aware of a concrete definition of active citizenship that can be described and practiced. In fact, they describe it step by step considering the different phases of a process, from the raising of awareness through searching for information to the concrete behavior. The representation of young active citizenship emerges clearly and directly from the experience that students made during the activities. Finally, some students mentioned the collaborations that the school has established with different voluntary associations. Through the data collection and meetings that were organized for the projects, students had the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of such collaborations. They learned how to work in groups and that it is a difficult task made by different activities that they needed to consider. They experienced how difficult it was to organize a challenging work requiring decision-making processes and management of relations.

In the entire intervention project, we can detect a process of construction of active citizenship, recognized by youth themselves. It starts from the raising of awareness, a process composed by different steps. The first step is to get information about the community in which they live and its social issues. The information provided by media or by the different contexts in which youth live are critically analyzed by students, trying to avoid fake news. The second step to be active citizens, as students say, is to create something that is an available solution for the whole community, regarding the issues analyzed. This step is important for youth because it gives the possibility to act on those social issues: the creation of an action or a product is considered the essence of the active part of citizenship. Finally, sharing information and solutions allows other people to be aware of the useful and important role of the raising of knowledge on social issues not just for the individual but also for all the community. In the final focus group, students reported many of the previous criteria to define an active citizen. However, we can say also that, compared to the first focus group, they reduced the importance attributed to concrete actions (like helping as volunteers) and gave more importance to reflection. In this sense, much importance is attributed, at the end of the intervention, to the development of a critical consciousness.

CHAPTER 4

Active citizens in youth organizations: qualitative case studies

Background

Community organizations are a vehicle for people seeking to participate. Organizing people together enables them to generate power to accomplish their purpose. It is a process that builds their own sense of power, their perceived or actual power with others, and their ability to affect power relationships in the community (Checkoway, 2011; Checkoway & Gutierrez, 2006; Checkoway, Richards-Schuster, Abdullah, Aragon, Facio, Figueroa, Reddy, Welsch & White, 2003).

Youth organizing is a form of civic engagement and a context in which young people identify common interests, mobilize their peers, and work collectively to address quality-of-life and human rights issues in their schools and communities (Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012). Youth organizing represents one type of civic engagement among a constellation of civic opportunities, such as community service or participation on youth councils (Pancer et al., 2007). An aim of groups inspired by social justice values is to develop power to change systems, institutions, or policies (Larson & Hansen, 2005; Warren, Mira & Nikundiwe, 2008), having a focus on youth's concerns and the mobilization of young people as agents of change (Delgado & Staples, 2007; Ginwright & James, 2002). Research on youth organizing offers fertile ground for extending and deepening ecological theories of development. Youth organizing, with its emphasis on conveying youth's awareness of inequality into social action, provides an especially valuable context for studying the relations between ecological context and human development.

Youth engagement is a collective, not just individual, concept. Researches on collective action movements and groups (van Zomeren, Saguy & Schellaas, 2013) suggested that in groups of collective movements, efficacy beliefs strongly predict the level of engagement of members. Personal feelings of efficacy and engagement, for example, are likely to increase when one participates in a broader social movement. The importance of participative efficacy beliefs captures the belief that one's own contribution makes a difference in a group. Thus, groups in organizing their campaigns or activities should stress on the importance and value of the contribution of each member to make the difference in purchasing a goal and be successful. In this way, youth could experience a higher sense of agency that implies a belief in the capacity of the group to pull together and realize shared aspirations or address shared problems (Bandura, 2001).

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Other studies (Gambone et al., 2006; Rogers, Mediratta & Shah, 2012) provided evidence for the effectiveness of youth organization in the socio-political development of youth and influence of academic engagement. In particular, the raising of political empowerment and the use of participatory action research as method, provided evidence that youth participants experience growth in three developmental domains: civic development, psychosocial wellness, and academic engagement (Delgado & Staples, 2007, Noguera, Cammarota, & Ginwright, 2006).

Ginwright's (2003) identification of key topics, and how they relate to creation of a critical consciousness, clearly has a place in youth-led community organizing. Critical thinking leads to further politicization, which in turn helps stimulating engagement and action. Youth go through a process that invariably entails multiple steps or stages. Each person goes through these stages at his or her own way, with some entering the field of youth organizing with a clear understanding of how societal forces shape behavior and outcomes while others bring a high degree of skepticism about individual versus society's responsibility for community conditions. Another area where youth often are advantaged, is the use of technology. The importance of technology in the current age is evident, and not just for adults. Katz (2004) notes that effectively the use of technology ties together youth and social activism and give access to young people to information that previously was available only to the privileged. Carpini (2004) advocates use of the Internet as a vehicle for increasing civic engagement among the young, helping them to find their place in public life. This also has served to connect young people to intra-, inter-, and transnational political movements, thereby giving them a broad view of political matters that transcends a focus on purely local issues.

On the other hand, concerns also have been expressed that electronic technology is not sufficient to remedy the structural inequality that contributes to the lack of participation by large numbers of disempowered citizens (Hacker & van Dijk 2000, p. 210).

Community youth organizations can contribute to community development, which refers to the process of strengthening social capital through organizing enriching what Putnam (1993) has defined as social capital as "features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (p.36). Putnam (2000) sees civic organizations, such as voluntary associations, as incubators for social capital, describing them as "places where social and civic skills are learned— 'schools of democracy'". Members learn how to run meetings, speak in public, write letters, organize projects, and debate public issues with civility" (p. 338).

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Youth organizing contributes to political networks and norms that serve as social resources for community improvement (Sampson, Morenoff, & Earls, 1999). This view of social capital acknowledges structural constraints in communities, and considers youth as active participants facilitating institutional change, challenging these limits through strong social networks. A strategy to improve the challenge of structural constraints is the support in youth- adult partnerships (Y-AP; Camino, 2000; Zeldin, 2004; Zeldin et al., 2013). The relationship with adults (both individuals and organizations) often is complex for youth-led organizations. Because adults usually have authority and can considerably influence the lives of youth, they tend to be the prime target for most youth-led organizing efforts. However, it is necessary for youth leaders to be able to work productively with adults and not turn every instance of adultism into a confrontation. There are always adults providing ongoing guidance, support, and expertise. Previous research (Zeldin et al., 2005) indicates that youth want and expect certain types of support. These include coaching, dialoguing, and connections to institutional resources and community leaders. Indeed, it is a complementary match between what youth and adults are likely to bring to civic life. Adults look to youth to provide legitimacy, “on the ground” knowledge and perspective, and cause-based passion, offer the opportunity to connect with peers from different groups and with adults, reducing the barriers of generational boundaries (Madyaningrum & Sonn, 2011), and becoming agents in building different communities.

A central dimension of Youth – Adult partnership is empowerment that is based on the premise that relatively powerless individuals and groups nevertheless possess capacities, skills, strengths, and assets that can be powerful resources during any helping process or initiative to bring about social change (Cowger, 1994; Tomlinson & Egan, 2002). Empowerment is operative at both the personal and collective levels (Fetterman, 2002; Staples, 1990), and it often focuses on oppressed group with an emphasis on changing the stigmatization and unequal structural relations of power that perpetuate personal and social problems (Boehm & Staples 2004; Itzhaky & York 2002; Moreau, 1990; Solomon, 1976). Freire (1970; 1973) maintained that critical consciousness is an essential element in the development of empowerment. He urged service providers to function as “teacher-learners” and to raise questions (“problematization”), rather than simply providing answers for clients and community members. In fact, while empowerment cannot be created for another person, it can be facilitated through a number of practice principles and techniques that tend to be nondirective and that underscore the need for consumers to make decisions and take initiative (Gutierrez, 1990; Staples, Hullah & Higgins, 1999). “A combination of self- acceptance and

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self-confidence, social and political understanding, and the ability to play an assertive role in controlling resources and decisions in one's community" (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988, p.726) determines a process of empowerment at personal and collective level. In socio-political development (SPD) approach (Watts et al., 2003), youth acquire knowledge, analytical skills, emotional faculties, and the capacity for action. This action, however, must entail struggle against all forms of oppression in a political and social system. Political education provides youth with the necessary language to engage in problem solving and critical thinking—essential components in achieving social change (Roach, Yu, & Lewis-Charp, 2001; Sonn & Fischer, 1998; 1996; Stepick & Stepick, 2002). Social change (Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000; Campbell & Murray, 2004; Kagan et al., 2011) can be defined as a process that aims at challenging social inequalities and acquire more power through a collective commitment. In this sense, active citizen participation has a strong role to play in struggles for social change. Promoting social change and addressing social and political issues need a component of fun that is helpful for both the young participants and the allies of organizations. This chapter offers a focus on practice of active citizenship, as it is meant by youth involved in community organizations.

Method

Main aims and research questions

The aims of this study are to analyze the organizational contexts of youth participation and explain the processes underlying the construction of active citizenship. The research questions are:

1. What are the psychosocial factors that construct active citizenship in youth organizations?
2. What are the contextual factors that form active citizenship?
3. How processes of construction active citizenship are embedded in organizational practices?

Procedure

The procedure selection of the youth organizations followed different phases (fig. 4.1). The first phase was a mapping of youth organizations in the Italian context with the aim to collect the variety of bottom-up civic and top-down political initiatives led or co-led by young people. The criteria of this first selection were very flexible due to the complexity of the Italian civic and political forms of youth organizations and to the accessibility of the

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information about the organizations. The research team, of which the author was member, considered youth organizations or initiatives known through direct knowledge, word of mouth; or through public events or fliers; research through keywords combinations using online platforms; the age of the youth involved in the organizations. The first database contained a list of 104 organizations (Banaji, 2017). These initiatives were issue based, at local, national or regional level, engaging with democratic and social processes, face-to-face and online. From the first sample, a number of 38 youth initiatives and organizations were selected, considered representative of the variety of Youth Active Citizenship initiatives in the Italian context and inclusive of age differences (Banaji, 2017). In particular, the target was differentiated between younger people, including youth from 10 to 17 years old and older young people, including youth from 18 to 35 years old. The selected sample was composed of:

- Political conventional organizations (4);
- Collective and movements for social change (10);
- Social and cultural promotion associations (9);
- Social inclusion and human rights initiatives (3);
- Local based initiatives (6);
- Voluntary and educational organizations (6).

Younger people usually belonged to school organizations or educational groups, while older young people were members of organizations with a political or humanitarian goal.

The identification and selection of the case studies followed the criteria of innovation, representativeness of Italian context and accessibility. The criterion of innovation was based on general characteristics that described the organizations taken from their websites. Thus, organization that had a creative structure or used creative tools in their activities were selected. At that point, local and regional initiatives located in Emilia- Romagna were privileged. According to the selected Italian scenario and to the availability of the organizations to be part of the study, one social and cultural promotion association and one voluntary organization became our case studies. A preliminary email was sent to the organizations to ask their willingness to be part of the study. Then, we scheduled a meeting and interview with a responsible or a board responsible for each organization to explain the research project aim and method and have their consent to follow organization activities. Each board consulted members and after their approval, a calendar of the activities was planned together. Contacts with the organizations during the study were kept in an informal way.

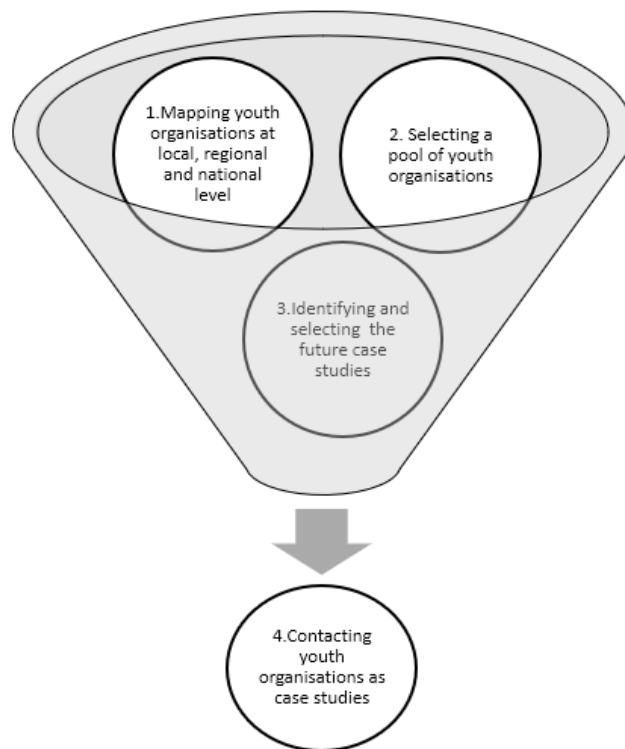


Fig. 4.1 Phases of individuation of case studies.

Participants

The first organization called Radioimmaginario (RI, “Imaginary Radio”) is a youth co-led organization, a European network located in a small city in the province of Bologna, Emilia-Romagna region. It was founded in 2012, as a media hub and it can be considered a unique case of adolescents’ radio network in Italy and in Europe. It is based on social and cultural promotion of youth issues through the use of a web radio organization. Initially it was difficult to establish trust relationships but the progressive involvement in the organization and the interaction with members allowed the researcher (the Author) to reach the expected research objectives and to create informal relationship with members. The main aims of the organization, as described in the Statute⁷, are the following:

- to promote a protected protagonism and the engagement of adolescents and children;
- to support the development of their potential in the transition phase from childhood to adolescence to emerging adulthood through a creative method;
- to use the new media, including social networks critically, to produce attractive and smart content;

⁷ The researcher had access to the organizational documents, retrieved online or from the organization archive.

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- to improve soft skills and transversal competencies, such as relational, social and technical ones.

Defining the protected protagonism as the most important aim of the organization, means promoting an active role of youth in a supportive context that guarantees the characteristics of its members. In fact, members are youth from 11 to 17 years old who are ‘partners’ of the radio with the previous consent of their parents. A group of 20 young people from 18 to 21 years old and 3 adults over 40 years old are also involved. Members come from almost 33 different places in Italy and 7 in the rest of Europe. The study lasted 7 months, from March to October 2017 with irregular visits to projects and activities of the organization. These observational data were used to frame the general context of the organization. Data were composed by 7 interviews, 3 of them collected via online calls (table 4.1).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Field observations</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Interviews</i>
07-Mar	1.Meeting with board at main office	06-Jul	RI_1
20-Mar	2.Meeting between university group and board group	07-Aug	RI_2 (via skype)
23-May	3.Live recording Radioimmaginaria (Bologna)	09-Aug	RI_3 (via skype)
06-June	4. Live recording Radioimmaginaria (Bologna)	25-Sept	RI_4
07- June	5. School party- Forli	27-Sept	RI_5
13- June	6.Live recording Radioimmaginaria (Bologna)	10-Oct	RI_6
23- June	7.Community event	17-Oct	RI_7 (via skype)
04-July	8. Live recording Radioimmaginaria (Bologna)		

Table 4.1. Agenda of research study of Radioimmaginaria.

Activities and radio broadcasts of RI are tagged and labelled by a hashtag (#), that stands for the strong link between online language and the use of social networks. It is possible to distinguish radio broadcasts, radio projects and events. Radio broadcasts are labelled with the name of #Okkinsu (Eyes up) that stands for the eyes up facial expression that adolescents usually make when adults ask them for their future life. Another activity is #141e5, a daily program, in live or registered edition, that is transmitted at h. 14:15 because it comes from the daily radio programs that spread news during that time of the day. For Radioimmaginaria members, their peers need to have a daily program that was not so “boring” like the traditional daily news program in radio or TV. Every group of radio staff have their own broadcasts that can be live-edited or registered. Such broadcasts may deal with different content, ranging from daily news to cinema, from politics to fashion, from friendship issues to football, etc. Contents depend on the interests of the members of each staff. Broadcasts are produced in different languages such as: #You2 that is the English edition, #EdheTi that is the Albanian edition, #TA that is the French edition, #TeTe that is the Spanish edition.

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The second organization called PrendiParte (PP, “Take Part”) is a youth-led organization located in Bologna. It is a voluntary and educational organization created by a group of high school students who shared similar experiences of school engagement. The involvement of the organization was discussed initially with the board that reported the positive decision to participate to the research to all members. They were available for all the phases of the study. The objective of the organization is *to promote and support a collective, creative and responsible participation of youth considering the action in groups, the discussion and the mutual exchange as critical and constructive elements for a personal and collective improvement (Organization statute).*

Members of PrendiParte are all young adults (ranging from 20 to 24 years old) and include local youth and students who came from different part of Italy. PrendiParte can be considered a non- formal political organization. The study was developed for 7 months, from March to October 2017 with irregular visits to projects and activities of the organization. The timetable was linked to the school time. Fieldnotes from these activities served as a contextual frame in which consider interviews. Data were composed by 8 interviews (table 4.2).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Field Observations</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Interviews</i>
24-Mar	1. Board meeting	29-May	PP_1
05-Apr	2. Meeting with Scu.Ter project members.	13-Jun	PP_2
03-May	3. Meeting to plan the school breaks (Scu.Ter. project) with the group that works at Aldini-Valeriani high school.	29-Jun	PP_3
05-May	4. <i>Oltrescuola project</i>	03-Jul	PP_4
26-May	5. <i>Scu.Ter. project- Manfredi school</i>		PP_5
27-May	6. <i>Scu.Ter. project – Copernico school</i>	05-Oct	PP_6
03- Jul	7. <i>Prendiparty</i>	28-Oct	PP_7
21- Sept	8. General assembly	30-Oct	PP_8

Table 4.2. Agenda of research study of PrendiParte.

The activities of PrendiParte are conducted both in schools and outside the school context.

- Scu.Ter. Project. The name stands for “School and Territory”. It is an ongoing project implemented in 4 high schools in Bologna. It includes activities proposed to students during the school breaks once a week. Such activities consist of organized discussions on contemporary social and political issues.
- Oltrescuola (After school activities) in primary and secondary schools. This project is based on providing support to children and adolescents in doing their homework.
- Meridiano d’Europa (Meridian of Europe). This project is promoted by the *WeCare* network and is implemented by the members’ organizations in different contexts (e.g. schools, during extracurricular times, etc.). PrendiParte decided to implement this project in a high school in Bologna. The meridian refers to the line from Utoya to

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Lampedusa, two small islands located in opposite parts of Europe (one in the deep North of Europe and the other one in the extreme south) which have an important symbolic value respectively for youth and migrants' history.

- P.A. Z. -migrants project. The acronym stands for Progetto Accoglienza Zaccarelli. The project is based on offering leisure and cultural activities within a reception center for migrants and refugees. Twice a week, members of PrendiParte meet the hosts of the center and engage them in activities aimed to promote their understanding of the community where they live, of local and national laws and institutions relevant for migrants and to spend their free time in a constructive way.

Instruments

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interview structure was designed to raise detailed answers to the three study questions, with specific attention to exploring how participants constructed the meaning of youth active citizenship, their organizational activities and practices, the structural issues, contexts and types of issues which most motivate specific young people to participate, the role of the organization in the whole community. This protocol also allowed for respondents to raise new perspectives and allowed the research team to remain open to discovering concepts and relationships embedded within the organizational practice that had not been considered prior to data collection. The interviews were conducted with representative members of each organization, according to their role to account for the different voices and trying to balance interviewees for age and gender (table 4.3 and 4.4). The participants were chosen by the research team according to their availability and disposition to be interviewed.

N interview	Age	Gender	Role in the association
RI_1	17	F	Speaker, chief editor Bologna
RI_2	19	M	J, radio director
RI_3	21	M	J, radio director
RI_4	17	F	Speaker
RI_5	21	F	Speaker, Representative of radio contents
RI_6	20	M	Responsible for radio direction
RI_7	21	F	Speaker, J, Representative of human resources

Table 4.3. Descriptive data of interviews with Radioimmaginaria members.

N interview	Age	Gender	Role in the association
PP_1	21	M	Scu.Ter. project
PP_2	24	M	Vice president (ex)
PP_3	21	F	Scu.Ter. project, new president
PP_4	21	F	Scu.Ter. project, Meridiano d'Europa project
PP_5	24	M	President (ex)

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PP_6	21	M	Representative of Afterschool activity
PP_7	21	F	Scu.Ter. project, Meridiano d'Europa project
PP_8	22	F	Scu.Ter. project, Migrants project

Table 4.4. Descriptive data of interviews with PrendiParte members.

The study is conducted using an in- depth view on the youth organizations with a case study method. Qualitative Case study (Jason & Glenwick, 2016; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2003) was developed to study the experience of real cases operating in real situations. Qualitative understanding of cases requires experiencing the activity of the case as it occurs in its contexts and in its particular situation. The situation is expected to shape the activity, as well as the experiencing and the interpretation of the activity. The researcher tries to capture the experience of that activity and may be unable to draw a line marking where the case ends and where its environment begins (Stake, 2005). The aim of the case studies is to facilitate an in depth, extended, recursive analysis of youth active citizenship histories, motivations and work over time within youth organizations and to provide a depth of understanding about the opportunities and challenges involved in different organizations. Case study utilizes qualitative instruments such as interviews and observational methods. Case studies that use within and cross-case analysis have been found to be more effective at generating theoretical frameworks and formal propositions than studies only employing within case or only cross-case analysis (Barratt et al., 2011). Analyzing case study data in parallel with data collection activities allows the researchers to make quick adjustments to study design as required. However, failing to explore rival explanations, inconsistently applying analytic techniques, only using a subset of data, and inadequately relating findings across cases can lead to unjustified conclusions. “Case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a ‘sample’, and the investigator’s goal is to expand and generalize theories [analytical generalization] and not to enumerate frequencies [statistical generalization]” (Yin, 2003, p. 10).

Reliability is concerned with demonstrating that same results can be obtained by repeating the data collection procedure. In other words, other investigators should in principle be able to follow the same procedures and arrive at the same results. Two strategies for ensuring reliability of case studies include creation of the case study protocol, and development of a case study database (Yin, 2003).

Analysis

Data collected from interviews were analyzed using the technique of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016). The thematic analysis consisted of exploring and analyzing the basic topics that arise in the qualitative data set, and particular patterns in the data by generating descriptive codes and themes (Braun & Clarke 2006; 2013; Saldaña, 2012).

The thematic analysis consisted of exploring and analyzing the basic topics that arise in the qualitative data set, and particular patterns in the data by generating descriptive coding and thematic analyses (Saldaña, 2012). It is important to note that the descriptive coding we employed in this study was both deductive and inductive. The process of analysis followed the specific analytic steps of:

- 1) Immersing in the data by reading and rereading all responses provided by youth;
- 2) Generating initial codes independently and then discussing and refining codes to be sure that a range of youth responses were captured in codes or open coding step;

The open coding emerges from the initial reading of the interviews, a number of codes is produced according to the portions of the text with a relevant meaning for that code; this operation must be carried out for each interview, and a taxonomy of codes entered into categories is obtained, then codes are grouped in macro-areas. Furthermore, we proceeded with the cleaning of the codes such as the elimination of repeating codes. In this stage, two independent researchers compared the codes that have been created for the same interview or textual data. The Author has been supported in this step by a researcher, colleague of the research team.

- 3) Constructing themes through sorting codes into different higher order groupings or axial coding;

In this phase the categories are improved and connections between them are created following a hierarchic process. Categories can be linked at the same level. In this step new categories can also be created.

- 4) Reviewing and narrowing themes or categories, as well as considering them in relationship to each other. The aim of this phase is to identify the core category that can summarize and be inclusive of all the categories.

To ensure an internal validity, we used a double-check revision for the processes of coding and themes' construction. Two researchers were involved in these processes independently and, then, they compared and revised the emerged themes to reach a common view. The phase of double-checking for cross case comparison (Rihoux, & Lobe, 2009) followed the

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steps of identifying commonalities and differences between each case by each independent researcher and then, reducing themes across the cases to ensure the maximal parsimony of concepts (see table 4.6).

External validity was considered in order to deal with the problem of knowing whether the findings are generalizable to other cases. However, it has been argued that the use of one case is similar to the use of one experiment, in the sense that neither one is sufficient to reject or disprove propositions, and that several are necessary to demonstrate accuracy of a theory (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2003).

Results

The emerging codes and themes from the thematic analysis are presented in Table 4.5. Quotations from interviews are labelled with a category consisting of four elements, respectively: the name of the organization (RI or PP), the number of the interview, the gender of the interviewee, his or her age.

Codes	Definition of codes	Themes
Motivations Attentiveness Critical awareness Emotions	Prerequisites and outcome of belonging to the organizations.	Psychosocial individual factors underlying youth active citizenship
Youth- adults' relationships Partnerships and Power relations	Structural and functional issues of the organizations, internal and external partnerships.	Contextual or micro level factors that enhance youth active citizenship
Learning in informal contexts Constructing democracy Political positioning Creating opportunities for youth	Practices from the organizations' implementation of activities.	Processes of construction of youth active citizenship.

Table 4.5 Codes and themes of thematic analysis.

The codes and the relative themes are organized according to the research questions of the study. The model that we adopted three sections, corresponding to the research questions, each of them includes themes and codes from the analysis (fig. 4.2). Codes will be reported, emphasizing commonalities and differences of the two youth organizations.

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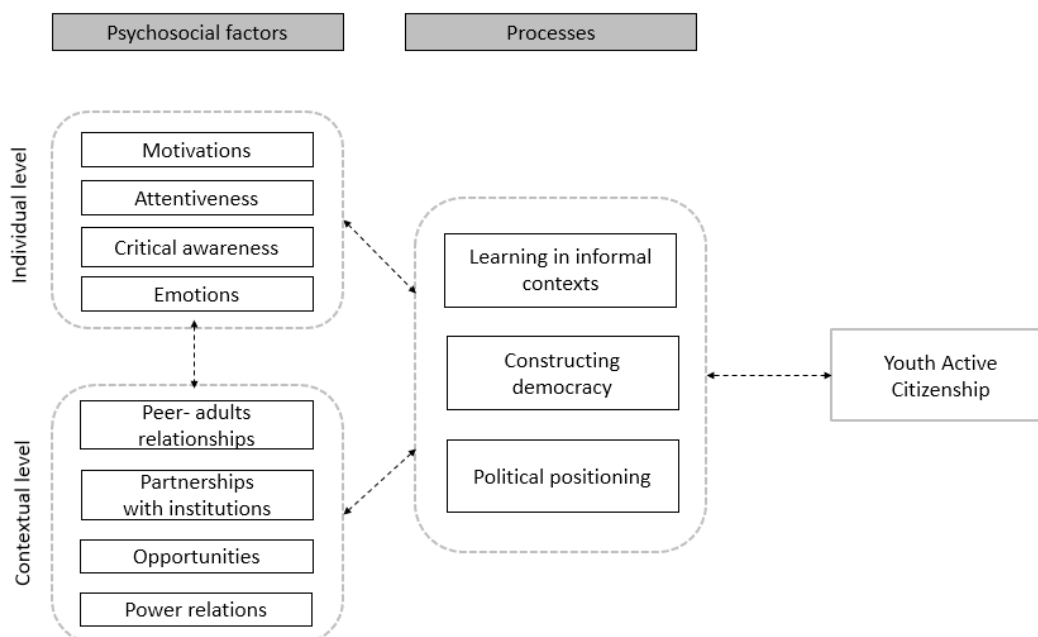


Fig. 4.2 Model of Youth Active Citizenship in organizations.

1. What are the psychosocial factors at individual level that construct active citizenship in youth organizations?

Motivations

Factors that promote the involvement in the organizations can be divided into two categories:

1. initiating factors: reasons that led youth to choose to be members of the organization;
2. sustaining factors: reasons that promote the permanence of the members within the organizations.

The first category can include different motivations connected to previous experiences of members, critical phases of life and interests on the issues of the organizations. As one member of RI explains, his previous belonging to a cultural organization led him to know Radioimmaginaria and to decide to leave the previous organization to devote his time to radio activities:

It was 2015, when I met them at “Sea of Books”, a cultural festival held every summer in June in Rimini, my city. It lasted three days and I was a volunteer, dealing with logistics, a task very close to the one that I have now; one year we collaborated with Radioimmaginaria and G., C. G. [members of RI] came to Rimini. They followed the festival, doing some broadcasts about festival and, then they asked to interview some volunteers. The artistic director of the festival proposed me and my sister. We did this first experience as guests and we liked it a lot (...) the following year guys from Radioimmaginaria came back to us but we said, “why don’t we go to greet them in Riccione?”. So, we went and the idea to create a local staff in Rimini was born. (RI_3, M, 21)

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Interests can be considered a strong motivation that led different members to approach the organization. Youth show their interests in music or radio activities before meeting

Radioimmaginaria. As one of the radio directors says:

I always had this interest for 'deejay art'. When I was younger I played with those programs on my pc. I had this great passion for music and I listened from my cousin that in Radioimmaginaria they run just music without speaking. But I didn't understand...After two months I went to meet M. who is the director, the artistic director of Radioimmaginaria and I asked him if I could be a deejay, but he looked at me and told me: In what sense? Because here, we don't have deejay". I said: what could I do?" "If you are interested in music, you could support G." who was one of our most important directors (...) I collaborated with him for long time and I learned a lot of things (...) my interest was being a deejay, but I discovered that I liked also being a director. (RI_6, M, 20)

It is important to notice that interests generally come from early life experiences and passions and can find a place to be developed in an organized context.

The previous membership to a similar organization that deals with cultural, civic or political issues, is a motivation that encourages also members of PrendiParte to decide to join the organization. As the new president says, her motivations can be summarized as the need to create an experience of participation that is adapted to youth interests and values, the opportunity to be part of a concrete project and the possibility to meet new people:

I was a volunteer for Libera⁸ since high school and, then, before joining the organization I had a training of three years with a group of students in Libera. This group was composed by students coming from different schools and, then, the different groups of Libera that were present within every school met and together we did awareness-raising activities, funding activities and typical things of associations. It was a very useful and important experience, for me it has surely influenced many choices I made in my life and, then PrendiParte was born. (PP_3, F, 23)

In other cases, it was a previous lack of interest in or of opportunities to develop cultural activities for adolescents in the place where they live, that led members of RI to join the organization as explained by one editor of a local broadcast:

I joined Radioimmaginaria 5 years ago because here, in my town there are not a lot of activities for us teens and, Radioimmaginaria arrived also here. A friend of mine joined it firstly and told me: why don't you try, you could like it, finally there is something for us here". At the beginning I was skeptical but, then, I stayed because I liked it a lot. (RI_4, F, 17)

Interest is a motivational factor because it is linked to the decision to be involved in the organization. It comes from the match between personal attitudes of youth and focuses of the

⁸ Libera. *Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie* (Free. Associations, names and numbers against mafias) is an Italian association that promotes outreach activities and various types of protest action against the Mafia phenomenon, Italian organized crime, and organized crime in general.

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activities of the organizations. As it is highlighted from results it is not a general interest in civic or political issues, but it has a specific focus. Searching for new interests while staying in the organization becomes an aim for members that want to avoid the monotony of everyday life activities.

Members from PrendiParte explain the combination of an extrinsic motivation coming from their friends and the interest in social and political issues that encouraged youth to join the organization:

My interest in education was always there, so this was an opportunity for my personal benefit of doing something useful within the local context and to go to school to help students in need, then, this could be a very important experience also for my future work as teacher (PP_6, M, 21)

I knew it was a trustworthy organization, as I listened my friends talking about it, and the interest for the organizations raised since high school. I joined some school activities like being a representative of students when I lived in my hometown. When I moved to Bologna, I wanted to pursue my interest in politics and social life. And, then, through the experience of my friends, I joined PrendiParte. Their work seemed to me very trustworthy, it is an organization based on projects so there is no risk to talk a lot and doing nothing. So, I gave it a try without difficulties. (PP_8, F, 22)

Trust in the organization, as it is presented by the members, seems to be a key element that enhances members' motivation. The focus on concrete activities, projects that increase competencies and the context are considered very important for new members, particularly for students coming from other Italian cities. The organization is considered as "serious and competent" by members, hence they consider their membership as an opportunity to acquire new competencies for their future. Trust is constructed on others meaningful people perceptions and experience. Moreover, it increases during the involvement in the organization.

The second category of motivation is represented by the reasons for continuing the experience within the organization. Radioimmaginaria members seem to be attracted by innovative activities suggested by the organization that provide them different learning and cultural opportunities and created positive relationships within the group, thus enhancing members sense of belonging:

I stayed because I felt highly integrated in the group since the beginning, I liked to work in this group... I stayed because I felt that it was a very lively environment. When they asked me: "let's go to Expo" I said: "Wow! We go to Expo, they are really enterprising. So, I always engaged a lot, and, in the end, I realized that it was something that I would want to continue, so I decided to remain and give priority to this project. (RI_3, M, 21)

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Sense of belonging to a group and to the organization raises through the involvement in the activities. Thus, the active participation enhances sense of belonging. In particular, Radioimmaginaria is seen as a formative context in which adolescents grow up and develop their ideas with other adolescents in a structured and protected organization. A member recognizes to be part of an organization that developed during the years through the activities of its members:

I am still here because I've seen a lot of Radioimmaginaria, I've seen the organization while it was developing. From here in Castel Guelfo⁹, I've seen our development, and we did a lot of improvement, the fact that we have a main office here in Castel Guelfo that was a challenge to get it. This was a ruin and with the support of the municipality, we rebuilt it. And now we are here, and we do radio in Italy and in Europe. (RI_6, M, 20)

Some difficulties to continue to be engaged with the organization depend on members' school assignments and tasks. As this member of RI explains, sometimes the commitment within the organization must be combined with school life. Moreover, the feeling to be bored by the everyday routine of the organization and life, can motivate members to explore new interests for new activities.

Sometimes it is not so easy because we have school, tests and then, sometimes, we get bored if we are here since long time...and you can't find your space. Then, every time we need to find some new topics and understand the attitudes of every single member, find their interests in order to transform their interests into a radio content to motivate members, to motivate them to be on air, then activate their passion and this is not so easy. (RI_4, F, 17)

Attentiveness

The emergence of the factor of attentiveness comes from the specific structure of the organizations. In particular, for adolescents of RI, this consists in the attention to contents, sources and themes that are the subjects of debates between youth within their organization and in the contexts where they propose their activities. The level of attention for current events, both social and political ones, increases thanks to membership and engagement in the activities of the organization. As one member of RI says, her interest increased - and civic issues became more attractive for her - because she must review them to create radio news and contents, thus increasing the quality of the information collected and provided through the radio broadcasts.

⁹ Castel Guelfo di Bologna is a municipality in the Metropolitan City of Bologna (Emilia-Romagna) where them an office of Radioimmaginaria is located.

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Thanks to the radio and, in general, to the fact that maybe the news would be useful for a broadcast, I mean, I want to talk about this thing, so I have to be well informed and, I mean, it's very different, the level of information I now have about things (RI_1, F, 17)

In fact, creating robust information means that they have to search for the sources of information to create content enhancing their political and social attentiveness. By quoting the sources, radio listeners (both youth and adults) can also refer to these contents and form their own opinion by reading the news from the main sources. This practice became a habit that is used not just to edit news for radio contents but also to find information useful in other domains of their lives (i.e. at school or with friends). A member explains this practice:

In general, also at an informative level, I feel much better informed about the world, I mean, I understand the things that interest me and that it is important to know, those things that maybe, no, I mean manage to do a... Let's say a filter for the news. So, to say: I feel capable of grasping when news is fake, when news is true (...) because I know that there are certain sites, certain things that maybe aren't reliable, also because, maybe, I find something on a reliable site and it always has to be checked, in general, not only for the broadcasts but precisely in life. So yes, in my view this thing has helped a lot also in understanding if, I mean, to have a thousand times secure source rather than draw on news just like that, for the subject of the program I mean, and then it comes from the fact that I do it normally, that's it. (RI_1, F, 17)

For this factor, it seems that Radioimmaginario is devoted to work on the construction and promotion of attentiveness for its members and to sustain its activities.

Attentiveness is also supported by the tools that each organization uses for the activities and provides for its members to have a role within the organization. Social networks, such as Facebook or WhatsApp, are used to implement the activities and to recruit new members (Banaji, 2008). Social networks are useful to keep contacts between members online and to spread information on the events, but also to organize and remind important events of the organization such as meetings or assemblies to its members. Considering Radioimmaginario, social media allow to organize and to manage almost all their activities. They use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social networks to share their activities and to collect opinions from other adolescents. The online platform Spreaker allows people to share and to store all the broadcasts of the radio. Social networks offer adolescents the opportunity to challenge the commonplace view about the use of digital devices by young people. According to the funder of the radio, these tools can be effective in helping adolescents to be aware on the use of the same to construct and spread information:

app [lications], websites, then every kind of content that can reach the eyes and the ears of these 11 years old [youth], even younger (...) can transform all these possibilities and the extraordinary

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freshness and flexibility and potential of a brain of that age that never came back in life, in an aware planning of activities with cultural and communicative basis. (Founder of the organization)

Tools can be considered also techniques and instruments that the organizations use. For PrendiParte members, it is important to use creative methods to increase the attentiveness of students. Such tools are role-playing games, theatrical techniques, visual methods:

we go to schools (...) and we try to involve them: we dress up or we give flyers, in short, we try to attract their attention as we can to get to a higher purpose (...) try to give input to create a minimum of civic awareness and critical thinking (PP_1, M, 21)

Critical awareness

Another factor that is mentioned by members of these organizations as a transversal skill that can be improved by their engagement is raising awareness and critical thinking. Members of RI use a critical approach to look for information and to improve their knowledge of youth lifestyles thanks to the interaction with adolescents coming from different parts of Italy and Europe. As this definition of Active citizenship of one member, reminds:

active citizenship is that of a citizen who does not passively suffers what happens in the society in which he/she lives, but asks you questions, thinks that his/her contribution may be important in every domain, including professional life, family, human relationships. This is more or less my idea. (RI_7, F, 21)

Active citizenship can be fostered by the opportunity to question and problematize the society in which she lives. By promoting critical thinking, adolescents can develop a different perspective towards the world that makes them active in their lives.

In PrendiParte, interests, content and debates within the organization encourage members to get involved in projects with different types of youth populations and this can be considered a significant practice of critical awareness. As a member explains:

PrendiParte enhances active participation, that means also looking at what happens around you with a critical perspective, and not only ... that is if you agree you participate and if you do not agree, instead of complaining and writing a post on Facebook you go down in the street and express your anger by doing something... (...) For example, I experienced a change, I used to be a culturally informed citizen, but I did not participate, absolutely, nothing concrete. (PP_1, M, 21)

Moreover, the promotion of critical thinking can help young people members and target of the organization, to overcome their condition of indifference by engaging them in political and social issues, such as, for example, migration.

I enter in school, in Bologna, with young people with whom I would not have any type of contact and, in some ways by stimulating their critical thinking I attempt to grow aware citizens. This is

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active citizenship, I am working for Bologna. When I go to the center Zaccarelli, even there I am doing active citizenship because I work for Bologna, I am attempting to prevent social exclusion and negative situations in free zones (PP_8, F, 22)

The difference between the two organizations in the process of critical awareness stands on the method they use to foster it. RI uses the direct involvement of youth in activities and through these, enhancing a critical thinking on the whole context. PP uses critical thinking as a tool to construct and organize the activities. Thus, critical awareness stands as an outcome of participation for Radioimmaginaria and as a prerequisite to develop the organization activities and outcome for PrendiParte members.

Emotions

Initial and sustained motivations are connected to emotions that members felt during the participation to the organization's activities. Positive emotions are linked to particular moments of the organization life, as explained by this member of Radioimmaginaria:

And I remember a very beautiful moment in which all of us, we stood, and we said: okay, these are Js¹⁰ of Radioimmaginaria; now, all those Js are not here, some went out, some left the organization, but the sense was: ok, this is the team that lead Radioimmaginaria, it's you. And for me that was a very strong emotion (RI_3, M, 21)

Even simple moments, such as becoming a speaker for an adolescent can be considered an emotionally positive experience:

Being a presenter is really cool, I mean it's really a great thing, I mean very different, it gives the sensation you get when you sing, for example, it's a whole other thing, but in any case the fact of being with a radio, in fact, I remember that it was reassuring because it was a situation where it was only us, we didn't actually know who was listening, there was no need to have a special face. Then, when you heard the playback of your voice ... A heart attack, you wanted to hear nothing for the rest of your life, just to avoid hearing that voice again, because it's hard anyhow, in the sense that I'd never heard my own voice before. (RI_5, F, 21)

Even if members didn't reflect about their emotions regarding their involvement in the organization, there are good sensations linked also to the relationships that can be created within the organization:

The great thing is that the oldest helps you based on the mistakes they made or based on their experience and they give us suggestions, and this is a good thing because they motivate you, they try to understand you... and this is a good sensation because you feel to be in a unified place.

¹⁰ Js is the name given to the youth who choose to remain in the organization, after the majority age.

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When I join my staff, I feel to be in a family because I stayed with them since years and we shared good and bad things, we faced many challenges (RI_4, F, 17)

Individual passion and enthusiasm allow the organization to recruit and to attract new members:

It is true that I am very enthusiastic about things, above all when I believe a lot in the organization, as this is the case; and my enthusiasm and my energy help to attract and affiliate – this is what others say- and I believe it because many of my friends joined the organization and this means that I gave them a positive picture. (PP_3, F, 23)

For PrendiParte members, emotions are connected to the activities shared with students they meet in schools:

Getting in touch with students is the most beautiful thing; I like a lot the organizational part and I like when we have training meetings, I like also the board meetings, but the most emotional moment is the time spent with students (PP_3, F, 23)

Sometimes, negative emotions are experienced considering an ideological level and the most general impact of the actions of the organization on the society. The feeling of being powerless regarding attempts to create good solutions to civic and political problems is experienced by the ex-president of the organization

I think that the feeling of powerlessness is the strongest feeling I ever felt on different issues, because you feel small – as it really is- and you have to deal with this. I try to do my best, by trying to involve other people in order to multiply the possibility of everyone. (PP_5, M, 24)

2. What are the contextual factors that form active citizenship?

Youth- adult relationships

The relations within Radioimmaginaria members fill a gap because members, from adolescents to adults work together for the same objective. The relations between adolescents and adults are both friendly and professional, as confirmed by one member:

we always work together, I mean, I know certain things, I tell him [the founder], we agree on this fact [for example]: well, what to you advise me to do with the Sanremo station. They're doing this, that and the other. What do you think? To do such and such. Ah, okay, yes. It's okay now maybe, then, I hear them too. In short, these dynamics that are there, continually, of exchange. I don't know well how I consider him, certainly he's someone I like so much that it goes beyond the fact that we do Radioimmaginaria, I mean, I consider him a very important person. But in a word, I also consider him as employer. (RI_5, F, 21)

Adults are also presented as reference points for the radio activity and for life problems, as in some cases they are part of adolescents' life as if they were their parents, as a girl explains:

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They are our babs¹¹. It is a unique relation -let's say- because it often happens that we meet them more than our parents. S. is a reference point for us because she is our representative of local staff, so she has another perspective and she can give some advices. I think that we have a good relationship with them because they have things to do but, meanwhile, they suggest you how to do things, then you choose but they try to let you understand the right way to act. (RI_4, F, 17)

The relationships with adults allow young people to consider the organization on the one hand as an extended family, and on the other hand as a “creative company” where adults and adolescents are colleagues. These forms of relationships are experienced and detailed by members:

They are our ... not really our employers, they manage the most demanding part of the organization that is to relate with institutions or to manage the most difficult balanced relations; but they are also great models for us. For example, M. is like a father for me, when I am in Castel Guelfo I am at his home because often we host each other (...) at the end, it is inevitable to create a friendship or a family relation because when I set the table at his home I know where all the things are (...) it is a very positive and formative relationship. (RI_8, F, 21)

The relations with peers and younger members are kept in a funny and familiar climate.

Adults are considered colleagues for the radio activities and younger members as brothers or sisters to take care when it is necessary, as one member affirms:

We have a lot of fun, even if there is age difference of ten years. For example, I feel good with boys and girls aged 11 or 12 years old and you can find something similar maybe in an oratory but here is something completely different. We do this because we have fun and we enjoy it and we really like to do radio with other people because, any age they are, they share ideas that others didn't have. And the beautiful thing is to play with that idea, on that creativity to get out a radio content, to decide to play that music or another... (RI_2, M, 19)

The adults- youth partnerships are shaped in different forms for PrendiParte organization.

Thus, the relationships between members of the organization and high school students, puts them in a position to act as tutors of students. In fact, this position allows members of the organization to reduce the distance of asymmetrical relations between teachers and students and to create new spaces of discussion beyond the traditional classroom. Indeed, they receive a formal authorization and recognition from teachers and an informal feedback from students. An outcome of this process is the G.E.C. group (“Groups of Citizenship Education”).

Members of this group come generally from Scu.Ter. Project. Young people who decide to be part of it, show an awareness about the importance of citizenship education thanks to their own experience and believe that, through their belonging to G.E.C., it is useful to give

¹¹ Babs is the nickname that young people of Radioimmaginaria give to the adults of the organization.

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continuity to this experience, developing a focused training on the values of active citizenship. The group includes young people who are motivated to share their experience with their peers in school and to develop new projects for their school and community.

Partnerships and power relations

An important dimension for the national action of Radioimmaginaria is the collaboration with political institutions during the organization of their events. Teen Parade, the main event organized totally by members of Radioimmaginaria, is part of a major event organized by the regional business companies. During the 2017 edition of Teen Parade, adolescents explained their meaning of work, they interviewed the Italian Minister of Education and the Minister of Labor. The rationale of this event was to overturn the traditional way of approaching politicians and politics: usually politicians explain, and adolescents are supposed to listen; politicians illustrate the meaning and the essence of their work, ministries have the opportunity to detail their political program. In this event adolescents asked questions and had an active role in setting the agenda and the language of the conversation with politicians; as such they asked ministries questions about youth issues, such as school and future opportunities for job. As a member, responsible of production, remembers:

Out of the broadcast there is a formal relation, when you sit behind the desk of Radioimmaginaria there is the idea that you are the mayor, but you are seated with Radioimmaginaria. And, then if you are a mayor or a headmaster or a council member or a janitor, you are within Radioimmaginaria, so it is not a lack of respect, it is a game, you are talking with adolescents, then instead of being Fedeli ministry can be just Mrs. Fedeli, right? I call you ministra. Or I can make jokes on the last reform she did, why? Because you put very tangled articles or typing mistakes. What! Ministra! You are doing typing mistakes? (RI_3, M, 21)

A speaker explains how the scenario for the interviews was prepared:

We let the Ministry of Education sit behind a desk, it was a bit fearful and we told her: “don’t ask us things, please, be indulgent”. And, behind there was a blackboard. On the other side, seated behind on a workbench there was the Ministry of Labor and we were in front of them (RI_4, F, 17)

Members of Radioimmaginaria took a challenge, proposing an innovative format to create a dialogue with institutions. By the discussion with politicians in a protected space where the asymmetries between adults (in this case, the two Ministries) and adolescents (the members of Radioimmaginaria who are conducting the interview) are minimized, the language used, and the contents of discussion become closer to the adolescents’ perspective. As a member said in one interview *We, adolescents, we decide our language (RI_6, M, 20)*. Asymmetric power relations within the organizations are certainly not totally eliminated. There are progressive

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changes, as the opportunity given to Ultra Jay¹² to open a VAT number to implement activities for the organization, as explained by this member:

I am now VAT registered. (...) And practically speaking, now and again, especially when our activities come under competitions, in any case, in donations on a project basis, we get a contribution as consultants for that segment let's say. (...) Then we issue invoices, the only difference is that instead of outsourcing people to do these things, we specialize in that field and let's say I go to do a talk at Sarnano¹³ and if the item is in the competition, we do the consultancy. For the moment it's a very easy-going thing, we don't reckon on making millions, but it's a help because at least we'll be less of a burden on our parents. (RI_5, F, 21)

This method of funding youth members is used just for older members because of their role and responsibility within the organization. For other members, other types of reimbursement are provided such as funding for hospitality during events and meetings given by the organization itself. It seems that a progressive economic independence of members gives a certain grade of power and autonomy. This is just a part of the empowering process that the organization promotes.

Within the organization, the asymmetries of power are part of the functioning system of the organization, such as having a specific role in the board of the organization. In practices and in the activities, these internal asymmetries are transformed to create the opportunities to influence society through the activities of the organization, thus creating different relations of power to change the current political situation. A member of PrendiParte explains that membership of a voluntary organization seems the only way to influence the political scenario because political parties are perceived as not attractive (nor representative, and with unpleasant dynamics).

Because the political party scenario that is surrounding me, doesn't attract me, absolutely, partly for the internal dynamics, partly because I don't feel to support fully any party. So, it remains the associative area for me now. (PP_7, F, 21)

Finally, PrendiParte conceives that a process of promotion of *social change* can be enhanced. As the ex-president, founder of the organization says, members build opportunities for young people to be active engaged; their engagement makes them role models, with a transformative power.

In the beginning, I threw a little stone, then obviously, thanks to the engagement of the founders,

¹² Ultra-Jay are youth, with majority age, who have a role within the board of the organization that is composed by: the responsible for human resources, responsible for radio contents, responsible for logistic and production, responsible for direction.

¹³ Sarnano is a municipality in the Italian region March, known for the last earthquake happened in summer 2016. RI brought radio activities there with a mobile workstation.

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we enlarged the organization inviting friends. ... I think that each project has some people who are role models toward young people, and they, on their turn, become role models toward their friends and people they meet; concrete example is fundamental, informing and discussing is important, but it is not sufficient, you also need action, and often it is action that is effective in changing the attitudes of other people. Children were struck by us [during the activities of Scu.Ter. project], one of them asked: "why are you here? you are not paid for being here, you have to follow your university studies and you come here to help us to do our homework; are you crazy?" This is important: we are attempting to deconstruct certain mental schemes of young people. Obviously, you can do it using words, but it is especially concrete behavior that works, not the behavior of an abstract person but of a concrete person that is informed, engages with them spending a lot of his/her time with them, shows that he/she wants to know them... this is what we are attempting to do, build a relationship with young people, getting to know them really. (PP_5, M, 24)

3. How processes of construction active citizenship are embedded in organizational practices?

Learning citizenship in informal contexts

The members of the two organizations value the procedure of learning citizenship in formal and informal contexts. In the school context, the objective of their activities is to spread citizenship education by filling the gap in schools' curricula that don't deal with youth issues (RI), to discuss citizenship and democratic values (PP).

For Radioimmaginaria members the process of citizenship education is enhanced through learning about social and political issues:

We never talked about work, what we would like to do in the future. We generally think about curricular subjects, math, science, physics and that's it, these are the subjects. ... The school should instead take care of young people growth, training, and in order to pursue this aim, the disciplinary subjects are not sufficient, we need someone who can help them to understand their passions. For example, the boy who is not doing well at school because he does not like studying, and if you hear him singing or playing a musical instrument, you realize that he is wonderful. But the school is not able to see this. (RI_4, F, 17)

PrendiParte members refer to ethical values that are fundamental for an educational aim if one wishes to implement a creative learning process within schools. Learning values of solidarity and justice, responsibility is considered a fundamental process of active citizenship and has the aim to promote and support democratic inclusion through education projects.

Over and above the statute we've got an ethical charter we devised which is, fundamentally, configured in a series of quotations, or at any rate passages by people who in our view... people

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we consider inspirers. So for example: Don Milani, Danilo Dolci¹⁴, we even slipped Kant in, I tried to slip Hegel (...) (PP_2, M, 24)

The school is considered by PrendiParte members the main context to construct citizenship:

School still comes into it, more so, due to the fact that, I mean, it would be the main place for creating citizenship in our view, from one side, precisely, at the level of education, and then acting within the institution of school inasmuch as it is a community. (PP_2, M, 24)

They use a pedagogic strategy characterized by an innovative process on learning about civic and political issues based on informality and continuity. Informality characterizes the mediating role of members when they organize animation activities during the school breaks to engage young people. Continuity allows members of PrendiParte to sustain their activities and relationships with students.

Constructing democracy

A second important process is the construction of democracy that is practiced by the members of the organization and it is different according to the organizations.

In Radioimmaginaria, democracy is not explicitly defined in the organization but can be detailed in two aspects, structural and functional. The structural aspects consider the possibility to give all adolescents from 11 to 17 years old to become members, offering them an opportunity for improving their skills and developing critical awareness. As reported by a girl, responsible for human resources:

It is a media that aims to represent all adolescents, to allow them to express their views using their own words. Approaching the issue of bullying with a peer who was directly involved in a bullying episode is more effective than having a teacher explain it (...) it is a project that rejects the idea that adolescents are passive slaves of new media...I see my friends who don't study, don't work, they are dragged into their lives, this is an experience that allows to get involved in something and reconsider human relationships, because there is a lot of virtual in this for adolescents but sometimes it is not true. (RI_8, F, 21)

The functional aspect that contributes to the construction of democracy in Radioimmaginaria, is the process of gathering, offering and providing communication of good quality information to other adolescents linked to the process of attentiveness. Here one member explains in detail the value of analyzing information and disseminating it amongst adolescents.

¹⁴ Don Lorenzo Milani was a Catholic priest, an educator of poor children and an advocate of conscientious objection. Danilo Dolci was an Italian social activist, sociologist and educator. He is best known for his opposition to poverty, social exclusion and the Mafia in Sicily. Both are a reference for popular education, non-violence movement in Italy and work with marginalised people.

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Because I keep myself informed, (...) I contribute to the democratic function. We contribute to the democratic function of the press, of information, because we also give something, we try to be, precisely, the bridge that links the world of adults and the world of kids, and we give the possibility, not only us obviously, it's not that we're so... I don't want to feel superior, but we do our bit to help adolescents understand that by communicating, being informed, being interested and having an opinion you really can do something. So, I feel an active citizen very much. (RI_5, F, 21)

For members of PrendiParte, democracy is considered a strong value, it is framed ideologically, embodied within the organization and linked to the notion of legality. As a member of PrendiParte says:

There are political values that are undoubtedly transferred, such as legality, the principles on which democracy is based, like listening others' opinions. Such values are not foregone, they are political values that PrendiParte spreads, absolutely, and are those building blocks of our DNA that are incorporated in all the projects we propose. (PP_7, F, 21)

Another member of PrendiParte explains critically the opportunities and limits of the democratic processes that she experienced through her participation to the organization. This quotation highlights the structural and functional aspects of this process:

Democracy depends on participation of the different members, I would say that it is democratic, because I can tell my opinion, participate in the meetings of the board even though I am not board member ... We insist that at least the referents participate in the board meetings, and from this point of view it is democratic, as I can tell my opinion and help others in the board to have a more eclectic perspective on the organization. Then, obviously there is always a limit to democracy, you need to find a final solution, and so... we cannot always satisfy everybody. Decisions are taken that you may not approve of personally, but when you know that they were based on a debate, there was a discussion, and were not an imposed decision, ... in the end, it is always a personal thing. (PP_8, F, 22)

Political positioning

Active citizenship means also to take a position and don't be neutral. Taking a position is viewed as a political process because it initiates a process of co-construction of meaning with other youth and gives them another perspective on their own life and on civic and political issues.

For Radioimmaginaria members, this political position can be explained by the role of agents that young people have within the organization. As a member affirms:

We, adolescents, we decide our language. Sometimes M. says to some speakers who try to imitate some famous speakers (...): "ok, you are a journalist but not really a journalist. You are an

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adolescent and you have to speak as an adolescent because those who are listening are adolescents. Or he/she is an adult and wants to listen to a true adolescent, not a fake one, ok?
(RI_6, M, 20)

Moreover, the influence of the radio activities on other life contexts, in particular school seems to have a positive result. As this member explains:

In fact, [at school] I have started to write all the things that were not on the book. And then, I've said: teachers have said "when you will be informed", I said: [I've spent] days over days to study these things, but then I mean, with Radioimmaginaria you talk about things, news of current events that will give you a huge head start. For instance, being at a college of humanities, [studying] sociology we often talk about news and you can link some past facts to current events. And this will help you a lot, because maybe with the radio, the day before, you have talked about something that is related with what you are saying and so, you know something more that, then, you can use during exams. You have a wider sight. (RI_4, F, 17)

The political position of PrendiParte members can be intended as actions that can influence the common good. Given that the organization does not belong to a political party, its political vision is conceived as the opportunity to debate political issues by allowing different perspectives from its members, such as the presence of young people who declare themselves to follow opposing political ideologies. This member affirms:

I am politically distant from all Italy and all members of the organization and I was a bit scared to join an organization anthropologically different from my political ideas. But I never felt attacked or misunderstood, when I bring some different ideas we discuss, it never happened that my ideas were rejected but we find a meeting point. (PP_1, M, 21)

The opportunity to be aware of the political aim of the organization seems to be important for the development of the activities and projects but also for the future life of the organization itself. Belonging to an organization seems to have an exclusive role to bring a political message to youth:

As far as youth are concerned, my opinion is that this is the only way to do politics in schools. I don't know how it was before but, within schools, those young people who are part of political parties, youth sections of them are a low percentage that is irrelevant, and the organizations are the only ones that bring a political message in schools. (PP_7, F, 21)

This position is strengthened by the political values that are transmitted through the activities to the youth, as raising critical awareness on different topics, as the ex-president confirms:

We are not neutral, in schools we do not say: "inform yourselves", sometimes we do activities (...) we have a position. Then, in some cases we don't have a position but we try to do the counterpart, for example if I think at Scu.Ter. and the activities at school on abortion, we are in favor of the right to abort but if we meet a boy that has the same idea, we ask questions to problematize and try

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to develop a critical thinking even if we share his idea. On many issues we have a position, and this is clear, natural and inevitable. (PP_5, M, 24)

Sometimes, in PrendiParte, young people can't avoid taking a position on political issues if they want to be part of the process of construction of citizenship:

It's the attempt to be a participant in a constructive process and it is constructive that it takes place continually in what you have around you and that, therefore, it's somewhat a case of understanding what you want to build, I mean, what you want to be committed to with regard to this. So, it also means relating in a determined way to other people to carry a thing forward, for... It has a whole series of aspects, I mean, very deep, actually, with regard to... precisely to positioning yourself at a level... Meanwhile with oneself and then at the level of the social situation. (PP_2, M, 24)

It seems that concrete actions experienced within the organization are perceived as actions of citizenship and are perceived as having a transformative power. A member explains how the process to act citizenship changed through his involvement in the organization:

Since I started to develop a bit of civic sense I stopped participating to demonstrations, because... I was not particularly convinced that this was a good method. For example, part of my family shares rightwing political opinions, and never celebrated the 25 April [Liberation day]¹⁵. I have been used to not celebrate this anniversary because my family didn't. Bringing my own experience, which I can share without problems, this year I went to the main square and read pieces of Ada Gobetti [Italian partisan] (...) and I have always been reluctant to participate in demonstrations what we are doing is already active citizenship ...(...) To me, as I was used to do politics using words, without doing anything concrete, this helped me a lot. Going into schools to talk with people and you need to do this activity on the 25 April and you get informed about what happened, on everything, you form an opinion, a bit more critical and then it becomes difficult to reject completely the issue as I had always done due to my cultural background. Now I celebrate it and I am happy about this. (PP_1, M, 21)

Sometimes, having a stable political position for the organization is not a simple and clear process. As a member of PrendiParte explains, the organization has a strong political position on issues considered fundamental such as antimafia, legality, nonviolence or migrants, and promotes a critical and open discussion on emerging and confrontational themes, such as Europe:

projects that we pursue, side us, migrants' projects and Meridian of Europe. At the end, we said: the best thing to do is to take a position just on themes that are pillars of PrendiParte, themes on

¹⁵ Liberation day is the national Italian holiday commemorating the end of the Italian Civil War and the end of Fascism and Nazism occupation of the country during World War II. People, as the family of this members, who sympathises with far-right wing political ideology seemingly to the fascist ideas, may not be interested in celebrating this day.

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which it is easy to take a decision because they are intrinsic in our DNA such as antimafia, migrants welcoming, Europe. But this solution didn't convince all...when a difficulty arises we don't take position because we don't agree then, it is not definitely but it gives the possibility to expose on some themes that belong to our daily routine, even if we don't claim it openly. (PP_7, F, 21)

Creating Opportunities for youth

The opportunities that organizations offer to their members are the conditions to express their roles and functions.

Adolescents and young adults of RI can be considered *empowered and empowering* due to their role as enactors of their own decisions and choices and to the mediating role they have for their peers. As one member says:

We want it to be the media of adolescents, OK? Instead of listening to news from anywhere, we would like that adolescents listen to us because we think that our generation is right for the others, ok? For another adolescent, it will be more comfortable to listen to something that comes from similar adolescents. It is also interesting for adults to understand what adolescents think of a terrorist attack, ok? (RI_6, M, 20)

In RI, youth have the opportunity to be active by using their language (slang and informal), improving their skills and having an active role with the initial support of adults. Broadcasts follow the language, the slang of teenagers with the aims to let them feel comfortable during the programs, to express their ideas with their words and to involve other adolescents who listen to them. Thus, RI adolescents consider themselves as protagonists of their own life. It is a “protected” protagonism, as outlined by the statute of the organization. They seem to be aware of their skills and resources and to use them in their own ways, in the context of the radio activities and, apparently, with spillover effects in other domains of their lives. Their actions try to challenge the general representation of adolescents as “slaves of a virtual world” or “passive” or “asleep”. For this purpose, they attempt to generate opportunities to establish direct relationships among adolescents and to engage them in society by using in a critical way the tools that the society offers them, such as digital devices. They perceive themselves as “awake”, critical and with “open eyes” on their life. They developed a kind of mantra that they often repeat to let adults and other people understand their position.

The objective is to let us, adolescents express our opinions: our thoughts. And, above all, we want to show that it's not true that we, adolescents, don't have interests and do not want to engage but, on the contrary, we want to do something concrete for our future. In fact, Radioimmaginaria was

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born to challenge the general opinion that adolescents are “asleep”: we felt that this is not true, and we want to demonstrate it. (RI_4, F, 17)

The process of youth empowerment is developed within the organization, moving from the apparent lack of future visions and scenarios when members first enter the organization to the hopefulness generated by the concrete opportunity to be aware, explain and prove to their peers and adults that adolescents can take care of their future from the early phases of their life.

Sometimes, you think that our future is far away, that there is time, then, you are at the last year of high school and you say: “what do I have to do now?” and you don’t know and, then you settle for one job that you find, that is not your job and you feel it is not what you really like. Let’s say that we hope to let our peer understand that, it’s never too early to take care for our future. It’s ok to deal with since now, before arriving to the end of the school, that can be late. (RI_2, M, 19)

Members of PrendiParte act as *bridging agents*, constructing weak ties between young people and Institutions. As the former president of the organization explains, they see themselves in an intermediate position between adolescents and adults:

We are not adults, and this status allows us to build a privileged relationship with them. But we are not their friends, peers, who might be a bit disregarded by the institution... The institution [school] tells us: ok come to the school, we like your project, so. Thus, we are this sort of mediating figure and this allows us, on the one hand, to establish a relationship with students and, on the other hand, to establish a relationship with the institution, school or district. (PP_5, M, 24)

This “mediating” position between adolescents and adults allows them to reflect continuously on their activities and to be critical on the issues that they present in schools.

They are approached by young people, a little older, who take them very seriously, respect their opinion and challenge them with complex questions on important issues: this elicits their interest, which allows to inform them, engage them, spread information. (PP_1, M, 21)

According to PrendiParte members, the organization is considered as an informal place to express their views, share interests and opinions with other members and with young people they meet during their activities. As this member recognizes, this is an important opportunity that the organization offers:

You see that many of them “turn on” if you ask them what they think about an issue, because maybe they heard about it, but nobody ever asked them. This should be exactly the role of the school, but it doesn’t, because the school is doing other things. So, nobody takes care about this, to ask young people: you, as a “thinking mind” – because when you are in high school you have your opinions and should have also room to express them. You should have spaces to express your views. If someone, with limited resources, during the five minutes of the break between lessons, engages them in a discussion to ask them their views, they like it... if not, the project would have

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already ended, but it goes on, because we see that it works. (PP_1, M, 21)

The two organizations members seem to give a double meaning to the concept of opportunity. For Radioimmaginaria, the organization itself is an opportunity for members and their active role can be transformed in an opportunity for their peers. For PrendiParte, members experienced their involvement in the organization as an opportunity, then they organize the activities to be an opportunity for other youth.

Discussion

This study analyzed the practices of two youth organizations, considered these as a form of Youth Active Citizenship but also as a context that promote the construction of it. We discussed the psychosocial factors, both individual and contextual and the processes of active citizenship embedded in organizational practices.

Table 4.6 shows the themes emerged from the results in a comparable view between the two organizations.

	Radioimmaginaria	Prendiparte
<i>Psychosocial individual factors underlying youth active citizenship</i>		
Motivations	<i>Initiating:</i> Previous positive experiences in similar organisations Interests in organization contents Lack of opportunities for youth <i>Continuing:</i> Sense of belonging Protected and formative organizational context Possibility to integrate school tasks with organizational commitment	Previous positive experiences in similar organisations Interests in organization contents, values and pedagogical strategies Trust in organization In this organisation, the motivations to continue the engagement are not emphasized by the members.
Attentiveness	Attention to civic and political information Use of online tools	
Critical awareness	Critical perspective on youth issues (cultural and artistic) Output of the activities	Critical perspective on civic and political issues Background condition for activities
Emotions	Positive emotions	Individual passion, enthusiasm Feeling of being powerless
<i>Contextual or micro level factors that enhance youth active citizenship</i>		
Youth- adults relationships	Adults as friends, professionals, role models. Peers as friends	Members as tutors for younger member
Partnerships	Political institutions (local, national, international) Enterprises for cultural events	Political institutions (local)
Power relations	Asymmetric relations of power	Organization as opportunity to influence political scenario Promoters of social change

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<i>Processes of construction of youth active citizenship.</i>		
Learning in informal contexts	Educational aims	Informal citizenship education: values of citizenship
Constructing democracy	Adolescents can have different roles. Function of spreading information to a broader youth public.	Democracy and legality as values. Structural limits of democratic asset.
Political positioning	Youth as protagonists	Opportunity to influence the common good
Creating opportunities for youth	Empowered youth	Bridging agents

Table 4.6 Comparable dimensions between RI and PP.

Psychosocial individual and contextual factors.

The analysis of the practices of active citizenship emphasized the dimensions, both cognitive and emotional, more significant for youth who are members of the organization and are involved in social and political issues at local and national level. It seems important that YAC starts from motivational factors. Interest seems to be a motivational initiating and sustaining factor for different forms of practices, both cultural and artistic and voluntary. The previous experiences, personal or known through meaningful peers, seem to complete the pool of initiating motivational aspects for engagement. Trust and sense of belonging contribute to sustain the membership and the active involvement in the organization. Attentiveness refers to the attention paid to sources of political information, such as the organization itself with its instruments and the contexts in which they propose their activities. This dimension is important if we refer to the tool that each organization uses and, specifically, to the configuration of Radioimmaginaria as a web radio that consists of and uses new media to spread social and political news decided by youth. Another important factor is the critical awareness that is considered not just a skill that youth acquire during their practice in the organization but becomes an approach and a perspective through which social and political issues are considered by youth (Ginwright, 2003). It is emphasized that critical awareness is an important factor that contributes to social and political development of youth (Watts et al., 2003). Members of the organization can follow a process of increasing understanding of the societal issues at local, national and worldwide level. Finally, the emotions that youth experiment during their membership to the organizations are a “test bench” that influence the decision to remain or to leave the organization and an experimentation of other future contexts in which youth can be involved during their life, such as work, family, etc. Both positive and negative emotions are felt as part of a natural process but with the support of a context- the organization- that functions as a protected niche. The role of peers and friends’ relationships is an important initiating and maintaining factor (Pancer, 2015) for youth to be involved in youth organizations, as they offer social support for discussing personal issues

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and problems considered relevant for youth. The practice from these organizations show that through strengthened peer relations, schools and workplace can be the contexts in which youth can express their voice with autonomy and self-confidence. Giving them the role of active agents of a transformative process regarding their own future. Allies of this processes are adults, in line with the Y-AP approach (as explained in chapter 3) in which different partnerships with a variety of adults are extremely necessary to legitimate and value youth actions. As emerged from one organization (RI), this alliance has a great empowering effect on youth that can discover and acquire knowledges, competencies and skills by having adults' guidance, expertise and support. In these cases, the asymmetries of power are not eliminated but blunted. In particular, the partnerships with local institutions allow a collaboration on youth topics for which youth are considered beneficiaries of interventions and, for this reason, the voice that has to be heard to implement politics that take into account their representations and perception of civic and political life. Technologies and new media are the means that youth use in their everyday life. Thus, it seems that these can't be excluded for the development of a socio-political thinking and of a participatory life. Online platforms (social networks), digital devices (smartphones, computers, etc.) are places where youth can connect to other youth and instruments through which they exchange their ideas and transform in direct interactions if opportunities are created. The youth organizations seem to be protected contexts in which youth can transform their online interactions in face-to-face relationships and, then, propose a new way of acting citizenship in their lives.

The radio format they propose subverts a standard way of relating to politicians, bringing politicians closer to adolescents needs (of understanding, of a simple language, etc.) and not the opposite. Politicians continue to invite members of Radioimmaginaria to discuss with them about adolescents' issues and bringing their perspectives in the political arena. This request of consultation coming from politicians seems to be innovative within the scenario of adolescents' issues but, in some cases, it can bring to an exploitation of their views for political aims. So far, the organization is structured to protect adolescents from these risks. The processes of socialization that members of the organizations construct seem of fundamental importance. The emphasis on their method to develop their activities involves a process of de-construction of the existent reality. Members try to propose aspects of reality that are often hidden or not valued. In particular, the role of members as volunteers in schools and the perceptions from students as models led to think on a possible change of reality.

It emerges a more detailed and deepened view on factors that promote YAC compared to chapter 2 and 3. In particular, in chapter 2 the role of community was not relevant in

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promoting YAC. However, from youth organizations members, we notice that community is embodied in different factors, such as sense of belonging, the feeling of trust, the role of positive emotions and the creation of healthy partnerships. If we consider the broader concept of SoC, we can notice that all the dimensions of membership, fulfillment of need, influence and emotional shared connection (Mc Millan, 1986) are embodied in the organizations. Finally, the stress on the role of interest is strengthened from members of youth organizations.

Processes of constructing active citizenship.

The processes that underlie the emerging of these factors are the continuous learning about civic and political topics in an informal way. In this case, the organizations stand for the missing political function of the traditional educational systems such as school or family. The management of the relations between members and of the power asymmetries between the roles and the functions within the organizations, allows youth to experiment the function and the construction of democracy that, in some cases, is not just a reflection of the political system outside the organization. It is a different and innovative strategic thinking and practice to implement values and methodologies that consider youth voice as the first element to construct their contexts and their active participation. This process seems to emerge from the educational aim, latent or manifest, that the organizations pursue. It is embedded in structural and functional practices of the organization. Indeed, the political function of these organizations emerge very clear, even if the daily practice sometimes hides it. The political positioning refers to the most authentic meaning of political, as it is aimed to consider the different levels of action (local, national and international) for the well-functioning of the different contexts and beneficiaries that live in. As youth engagement in organization is considered per se a form of active participation (Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012), we consider these factors and processes as a “*conditio sine qua non*” to evaluate and promote the contemporary forms for youth to be active citizens and to give them the opportunities to analyze critically the social structure in which they are involved and to decide their strategies to intervene on it (Watts et al., 2003). The contexts offer assets to youth and improve their strengths by being involved in organizational life. The supportive and collaborative relations within the organizations seem to emerge from the possibility to have spaces and thoughts to share, to re-construct and from which have a mutual benefit. Empowerment processes lead to foster the agency of youth as they can become leaders and experiment a participative efficacy. Radioimmaginaria can be considered a creative youth- adult organization in which members can have a powerful role in promoting their own active civic protagonism. Their role in constructing active citizenship is performative as they produce everyday new narratives of

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youth (Iannelli & Musarò, 2017). Adults encourage adolescents to be critical regarding social and political issues and to use the tools they have to perform their citizenship (i.e.: smartphones, social networks, etc.). Young people are aware of their power within the organization and perceive that they have the opportunity to become leaders increasingly. PrendiParte members can be considered promoters of critical thinking. In particular, the development of critical thinking, allows participants involved in this process to take an active role within the organization and the society, developing an active and engaged listening with the students they meet during their activities, and taking care of their opinions and interests. Thanks to their personal experience, they act as *tutors* for adolescents, taking care of their social and political development.

It seems that the focus on processes coming from the organizations underline new perspectives on YAC. In chapter 3, by using a youth-led participatory action research, some insights on the role of processes in constructing YAC emerged. In this chapter, these processes are well- clarified and stands core-processes that youth should internalize to act their role of citizens. Indeed, the processes of constructing democracy and political positioning should last lifelong and be analyzed also in an adult population.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This research aimed at exploring the definition of Youth Active Citizenship by analyzing psychosocial factors, processes and practices in different contexts. The framework of this research was the ecological (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and systemic model (Lerner & Overton, 2008) with a focus on the contexts in which young people live, develop and construct their interaction with communities. In particular, the focus of the analysis concerned the process of construction of active citizenship in a general sample of Italian youth (*chapter 2*); the promotion of active citizenship in a school-based intervention and the evaluation of such intervention (*chapter 3*) and the processes of construction of active citizenship embedded in organizational practices (*chapter 4*).

The literature showed that an emphasis on youth strengths (Lerner, 2015) led to positive results for their socio-political development (Watts & Guessous, 2006). The focus of these approaches is on the continuous interactions between persons and contexts that constitute the dimension of a positive social and political development over time. “Youth participation is about the real influence of young people in institutions and decisions, not about their passive presence as human subjects or service recipients” (Checkoway & Gutierrez, 2006, p. 2).

The mixed method adopted in the present research allowed us to evaluate the strengths-based approach and the multilevel perspective on Youth Active Citizenship (Mannarini & Fedi, 2017) by focusing on possible predictors of active citizenship with a longitudinal study (*chapter 2*), emphasizing the role of psychosocial factors and processes in a school context with questionnaires; interviews and focus groups (*chapter 3*) and highlighting the developing and constructive nature of factors and processes in organizational practices with in-depth interviews (*chapter 4*).

We will comment the results of the overall research study by detailing a model of Youth Active Citizenship (fig. 5.1).

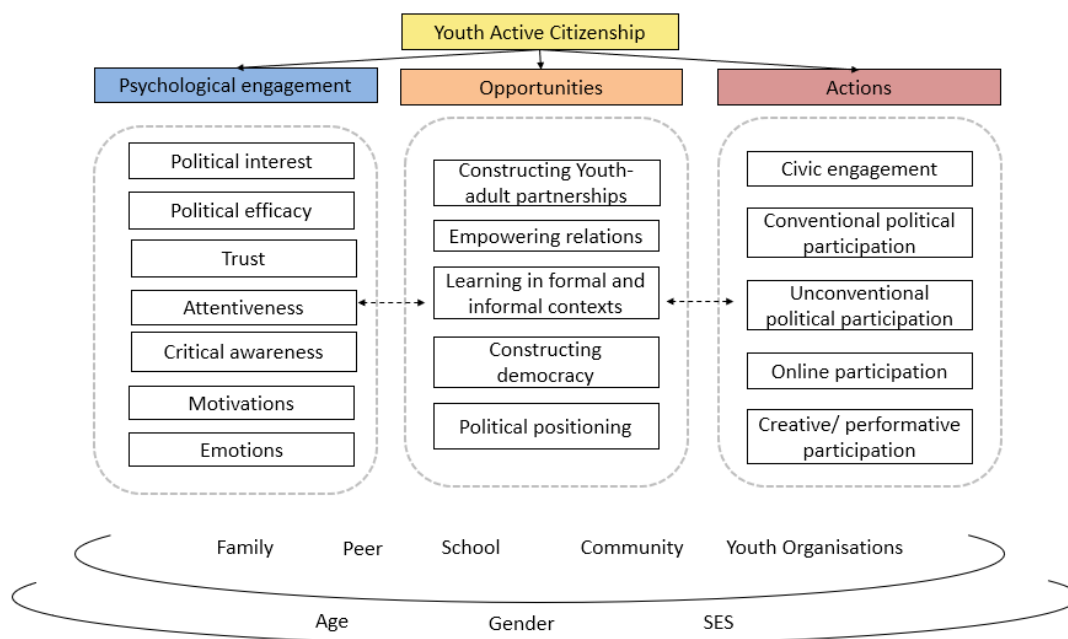


Fig. 5.1 Integrative Model of Youth Active Citizenship

The model can be composed by three pillars, respectively: psychological engagement, opportunities for active citizenship and youth citizens actions. These pillars are interrelated between them and are situated in and influenced by different contexts, organized in systemic levels: family, peer, school, community and youth organizations in a micro level, and age, gender, socio-economic status for macro or sociodemographic level. Each pillar is not exhaustive per se, but other factors, opportunities, actions and contexts can be added. The logic of this integrative model that can define YAC is based on the fact that being interested in social and political issues, being involved in constructing democracy or empowering relations, being involved in volunteerism or political activities, all of them could be considered forms of implementation of youth active citizenship. The outcomes of youth active citizenship cannot be just actions, but also psychosocial engagement and processes. The ideal young active citizen should be involved in participative actions, but youth participative behaviors are not so high in the everyday life experiences.

Psychological engagement

It can be explained as the system of psychosocial factors at individual or collective level that can enhance active citizenship but, as we argued in this dissertation, it can be also an outcome of youth active citizenship. Starting from the first study (chapter 1), in this pillar we can recognize the importance of political interest as a factor that is strictly linked to the active side of youth citizenship. In the sample of our study, for both adolescents and young adults there is a positive relation between political interest and active participation. In this

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sense, independently from age, political interest can act as a promoting factor of actions. However, results show that active participation decreases in one year both in younger and in older sample. Nevertheless, we can argue that a focus on psychological engagement of youth and, particularly, on political interest must be stressed to consider youth not just as apathetic and distant from being involved but protagonists of their engagement. Political interest can influence the typology of actions to undertake, such as civic and online participation, as emerged from the results, this confirms that existing political activities are not the most appropriate to express youth political interests. The other factors of institutional trust and political efficacy seem to be less influential than political interest. The first is negatively related to the decreasing level of active participation -in particular, civic engagement- while the latter is related only to unconventional political participation. Institutional trust is a promoter factor of online participation for young adults but an inhibitor of civic engagement for younger people, with non-effect on conventional or unconventional political participation. We have discussed about the “paradox effect” of institutional trust (chapter 2) that seems to emerge. It is possible to consider the emergence of trust as a more proximal process that young people need to develop in order to become active citizens. Political efficacy seems to be perceived as a participative efficacy (van Zomeren et al., 2013), in the sense that young people feel that they can “make a difference” when they act as a collective and not as individuals.

From the evaluation of the school-based intervention, we can learn that the main positive outcome in psychological engagement is the emerging of critical awareness as a reflective perspective on participative behaviors, that is a reflection on possible actions. Critical awareness can take different forms, from being a sustaining factor of active citizenship to a form of practicing active citizenship by critically thinking and considering different political topics. As different models from community psychology and critical perspective on participatory research argued (Watt et al., 2003; Kagan, 2012), the critical awareness or consciousness seems to be the first step of a process that leads to the agentic role of youth citizens. In this case, it is considered an outcome of a participative process in which youth could have a voice in decision-making process and in implementing their activities. From the third study on youth organizations practices, it emerged the importance of critical awareness having the role of a key factor of ongoing processes within the organizations. In this pillar, the attention level of psychological engagement can be also shaped in the form of attentiveness, that is the attention to contents, sources and themes that are the topics of debates between youth in different contexts. In youth organizations, attentiveness stands as a

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step forward political interest because it increases the focus of youth attention on social and political issues. The fact that youth devote special attention to the contents of their actions could lead to a major care for youth voices and thoughts. Young people take care of the contents of their broadcasts as explained from the Radioimmaginaria members, or their activities in school to influence and make other peers be engaged, as happens in PrendiParte. Motivations articulated in background experiences and both positive and negative emotions, have a role of initiating and maintaining (Pancer et al., 2007) the involvement in the organizations.

Opportunities for Youth Active Citizenship

It is an open and required system of processes to construct youth active citizenship. The concept of power within these processes seems to be transversal, meaning that we need to enable youth to express their social and political attitudes and promote participation “to break up voluntarily and through experience the asymmetrical relationship of submission and dependence implicit in the individual” (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991, p.5). The focus on opportunities and the creation of good and favorable conditions for youth to develop social and political attitudes seem a prerequisite. Structural and functional opportunities can be considered the starting point to favor and promote the development of YAC at different levels and contexts. These opportunities consist in creating supportive and collaborative relations between youth, as emerged from the second study. In a school-based intervention, the possibility to consider youth as co-researchers and collaborators in exploring social and political issues, to experiment new methods of working and learning, gave the students the chance to experiment their agency. A youth co-led participatory action research offered the method to link action and reflection (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991; Kagan et al., 2011) and to create and co-construct new knowledge or introduce new insights into the existing knowledge. The practices within the organizations analyzed in the third study, show that opportunities needed to be found also in the structure of the organizations, thus making sure that youth can have access to the organizational boards and activities. Empowering relationships, in this sense, need to be developed and constructed. For a socio-political development (Watts et al., 2003) young people need to learn, understand and analyze how social power produces and sustains social injustice and, then, change the systems by acting as citizens. These are the relations that allow youth to have a voice, to be responsible, to express their interests that contribute to act their agentic role. One of the possible approaches to enhance empowering relations is to promote the partnership between youth and adults that, as showed in chapters 2 and 3, is itself an empowering process for people who join the

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partnership. An “authentic partnership” (Zeldin et al., 2013) between students, teachers, researchers and stakeholders from community organizations has a positive influence on different systems, such as school, community and the overall society. An important partnership is with institutions, both from civic society and politics, because it can have a broader impact on different actors of citizenship but can be also instrumental for political purposes.

The other processes that are necessary to construct active citizenship are the learning processes in different contexts, from the family to the broader society. It emerges that to construct active citizenship, it is necessary to educate and to learn on social and political issues from adults and youth perspective. Citizenship education in formal (schools) and informal (associations, youth groups, etc.) contexts is crucial to the processes of civic regeneration (Davies, 2014) which offer means for connecting young people to the political system, and thereby strengthening democracy (Kisby & Sloam, 2014). It emerged from our studies the importance to interconnect the informal and the formal, as youth organizations do with their practices. Being radio speakers who discuss with politicians about European institutions or about work in a formal conference seems to be a good strategy to reach positive results in active citizenship. The learning processes can be implemented through formal and informal methodologies or by pedagogic strategies that strengthen creative and playful modalities, being more attractive for youth.

The democratic structure of the organizations expressed by members comes from the idea that democracy is a value and members can share their democratic practices with other young people. Organizations can be seen as contexts in which members try to experience the best form of democracy for youth because they can have a voice, express their ideas and transform them into concrete projects and activities. The democratic processes created within the organization are different from the democratic processes that youth can live outside the organization, in the broader society. In other words, democratic practices are, at least partially, structured and enabled through the way in which participation is defined. The definition of participation allows to think, to name and to communicate the participatory processes and is simultaneously constituted by specific practices (Carpentier, 2012). Active citizenship means also to take a position. This process is viewed as political because it initiates a process of co-construction of meaning with other youth and gives them another perspective on their own life and on civic and political issues. Young people cannot avoid taking a position on political issues if they want to be part of the process of construction of citizenship. The political meaning of their activities considers the adjective “political” as a

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reference to the opportunity to exercise critical thinking about civic and political issues through the participation to the organization. Membership to an organization gives youth the possibility to understand their own political ideas, to elaborate a political position and to have an impact on other youth.

Actions

This pillar considers the actions of citizenship participation that youth can implement. It seems that participative behaviors are not the best indicators to describe youth active citizenship; even if youth recognize civic or voluntary activities, conventional politics such as work for a political party and unconventional one such as demonstrating or taking part in a protest and online activities as close to their everyday lives. The findings of our research tell us that youth do not feel to be really involved in such actions. Some explanations of this phenomenon can be given considering the political and cultural scenario of the Italian context. In the years of the research, an increasing mix of ideologies and some breaking points events happened. The national government collapsed, and the European asset registered the Brexit phenomenon. We suppose that, partly due to these political events, youth became more distant and alienated from all types of participative actions. Indeed, it seems necessary to take a step back in considering youth active citizenship, by taking into account the psychological engagement or the psychosocial factors that are meaningful for youth to perceive themselves as active citizens. In this sense the results from our quantitative study highlight this issue. Youth feel active citizens because they show their interests in civic or political domains. The ways to express and give action to this interest are to find good conditions, both structural and relational, to create and construct their process of active citizenship. The two qualitative studies give an in-depth view on different opportunities as actions that can be enhanced and promoted in schools and community organizations. Another piece that we can add on the existing literature on different types of participation (Barrett & Zani, 2015) is that youth online participation is rapidly increasing, and it is considered by youth a form of engagement in social and political issues. Web and digital devices are spaces and tools that youth can use for their interests. Online participation seems to be a more accessible form of political debate for youth. The case studies highlighted that a fruitful use of such tools can enhance constructive processes that characterizes a youth active citizen. Using online tools becomes also a form of performative citizenship (Iannelli & Musarò, 2017), as detailed by members of the web radio. It seems important to highlight how the good practices of using online tools with the support given by adults can stand as a positive case beyond the increasing negative effects of digital tools. This means that youth act their roles as citizens and experiment

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different citizenship processes in a protected context. This latter can be the organization or the school, in which a frame of supportive partnerships is created to let them experiment their agency and their participative attitudes. In this sense, creativity is included as the aspect that constitutes the different and new forms of citizenship participation (Barrett & Zani, 2015).

Influential contexts of Youth Active Citizenship

The emphasis on contexts of influence to promote psychological engagement, process and actions of citizens participation can be considered crucial. In particular, the proximal contexts or microsystems have an influence on youth socio and political development. Family is considered a great influential context, in which parents' behaviors, their support for citizenship activities, involvement and their modelling role have a strong function in enhancing offspring active citizenship. The first study confirmed the impressive and predominant role of family on the participative behaviors (Cicognani et al., 2012). Italian young people are influenced by their parents when dealing with social and political issues. The role of family, as a context of socialization of values, norms and behavioral models of engagement, overhang the influence of the other contexts. Family can exert direct effects on young people through the discourses and practices that operate and circulate within the home context; hence, for example, parental modelling of participatory behaviors and parental political partisanship are often linked directly to youth patterns of participation.

Moreover, it emerged that school as it is organized today, does not offer good opportunities to construct active citizenship. The focus on external relations and partnerships with educational institutions or community organizations give the chance to initiate a process of co-construction of active citizenship. In the second study, an "authentic partnership" (Zeldin et al., 2014) between schools, actors and other community organizations (from voluntary associations to University) allowed to frame a possible model of construction of active citizenship focusing on the agency role of students. In the third study, the focus on youth organization highlighted the great contribution of citizenship education in community along the process of construction of active citizenship. The perspective on community issues from youth as members of the organizations seems to be fundamental in reframing the aims and the topics of a process that seeks to construct and maintain youth active citizenship. Voices and interests of youth must be heard in order to let them be active.

Community organizations are means for people seeking to participate, enable them to acquire power and implement it, by improving their ability to affect power relationships in the community (Checkoway, 2011). The community organizations stand as opportunities for young people to experiment something different from their activities in family and school and

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with their peers. Being member of youth organizations allow to develop a sense of participative efficacy (van Zomeren et al., 2013), thus leading to other different citizenship actions. The organizations most related to the different types of citizenship actions, seem to be the student organizations, religious groups and organizations for social or political issues. The differences between younger and older in youth organizations membership are few: younger belong to religious groups and students' organizations, while older are members of groups for social issues, religious groups and students' organizations. This is reflected by the national and historical scenario. Religious groups, such as scout organizations, supplemented the education of young people and helped them to create a value system that underlines their constructive role in improving society by playing and having fun with other boys and girls (Lenzi et al., 2012; Marzana et al., 2012). Students' organizations refer also to the historical students' movement in Italy and the contexts in which some aspects of school values are reported, are experimented with their peers and acted outside the physical context of school or out of the curricula time (Malafaia, Teixeira, Neves, & Menezes, 2016). It seems that the role of community is replaced by the organizations that offer a safer place to improve attitudes and skills related to the development of active citizenship.

Strengths and challenges

The use of mixed methods design has some important strengths in order to give a dialectical perspective through engaging multiple views (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). First, the possibility to consider a complex phenomenon – Youth Active Citizenship- from different perspectives. Second, the use of a sequential design, using quantitative data collection and analysis followed by a qualitative data collection and analysis, allowed to find some explanations and contextual analysis of quantitative findings. The studies reported in this dissertation analyzed data separately but, an integrated model was created to interpret the results. The research questions used for quantitative data were expanded and detailed in depth in the qualitative studies. Quantitative methods gave an accurate framework of factors at different levels related to the participative behaviors considering a great population of youth. Moreover, a longitudinal analysis showed the strength of these relations over time. The challenge of the quantitative method was to incorporate different levels of analysis in a unique model that could give an overview on the entire phenomenon (Jason & Glenwick, 2016).

Qualitative methods, such as focus groups and interviews, allowed to detail the dynamic nature of the relations between factors. The challenge of using qualitative data and thematic analysis was to ensure the quality of the analysis itself by considering its transparency and credibility (Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016).

The evaluation of youth-led participatory action research (YPAR) was a closer view on the processes and factors related to a case study school-based intervention. Considering the particular nature of this type of participatory research, this allowed to consider a different process of knowledge construction on youth issues that is the promotion of young people as researchers, opening up possible directions in this field when actual opportunities are provided (Jason & Glenwick, 2016). The challenge of using this method was to promote the intentionality of youth in promoting the core empowerment and youth development goals.

Mixing methods can enhance the validity of inferences and assertions by providing mutual confirmation of findings, converging them in explaining a unique phenomenon and highlighting on the differences between findings. The triangulation served for this purpose even if the process of combining and missing data was a complex task (Jason & Glenwick, 2016).

Limitations

These findings are not exhaustive, considering the limits of each study and the intrinsic difficulties of studying such a complex concept. In the quantitative research, different relations between factors, at different levels could be tested. Mediating roles of micro-level variables and moderating relations for age or gender could better explain some results. Moreover, macro levels variables could be added, and directions of relations could be analyzed, such as from participation activities to factors and contexts. A more complex model for longitudinal studies is required to be tested, considering nested models for subsamples of young people according to different range of age. In the qualitative studies, even if the results cannot be considered representative for their nature, a broader impact on community level could be explored, by including stakeholders as witnesses of the construction process of active citizenship.

Implications

The findings have implications for recommendations towards the educational system and policy makers. Adopting participative methods in schools to develop youth role of actors of citizenship could be an improvement in educational activities. Focusing on the strengths of youth could be a good starting point for teachers and for politicians to construct specific programs and policies to foster youth voices and power. It is highlighted the importance of enhancing young people's agency, through a direct involvement in the process of research on locally experienced social issues (ownership), requiring critical analysis of information sources (including direct access to the sources of information: e.g. stakeholders), in order to

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better understand their nature and their root causes and reflect on measures that can be adopted to address them, in dialogue with stakeholders and other adults. In school, participatory interventions dealing with local issues should be incorporated into the curriculum; teachers should be engaged, to ensure sustainability and collaborations with community stakeholders should be improved to extend the role of youth agency in different contexts. Having young citizens equipped with critical awareness, skills in debating and discussion, and capacity to independently value sources of contrasting information will make the young citizens less vulnerable to fake news, and propaganda.

In youth organizations, an extra time to enhance processes of constructing active citizenship should be taken; democratic discussions on political issues, learning and bottom-up processes, and playful and creative activities should be enhanced by members of organizations. Youth should have a chance to lead, to contribute their ideas publicly, to voice demands on behalf of the organizations. Opportunities and structural programs that involve youth organizations should be promoted by supporting activities that foster active citizenship of young people. National and European institutions should ensure effective recognition of the soft skills and transversal skills acquired during the activities within the organizations.

An integrated action between educational and political system should improve a collaborative construction of active citizenship with programs and services, by considering as target the ‘young-person-situated-within-an-ecological-context’, with this unit being construed as an integrated and holistic system that is continuously changing over time. Through a mixed-method approach using quantitative and qualitative data, this dissertation provided an in-depth perspective on the complexity of the process of becoming active citizens. Future research could deepen this process of construction of youth active citizenship.

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APPENDIX A

EFA and Logistic regression results

Model	Chi square (df)	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
2-factors model	591,760 (34)	,098	,95	,92	,074
3-factors model	300,043 (25)	,080	,97	,94	,055
4-factors model	41,084 (17)	,029	,99	,99	,015

Table 2.5a Exploratory factor analysis with Geomin Rotation first wave 11 items

Model	Chi square (df)	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
2-factors model	239,156 (34)	,067	,95	,92	,075
3-factors model	122,472 (25)	,054	,97	,95	,053
4-factors model	32,943 (17)	,026	,99	,98	,022

Table 2.5b Exploratory factor analysis with Geomin Rotation second wave 11 items

	Political interest	Institutional Trust	Political Efficacy	Family norms	Friends norms	Open school climate	Sense of community
Political Interest	---	,18**	,39**	,27**	,10**	,07	,14**
Institutional Trust		---	,15**	,19**	,12**	,26**	,26**
Political Efficacy			---	,33**	,21**	,11**	,28**
Family norms				---	,44**	,05	,22**
Friends norms					---	,03	,19**
Open school climate						---	,14**
Sense of community							---

Table 2.11 Correlations between independent variables for younger model, **p< .01

Table 2.12 Logistic regression for Civic engagement (T2) in younger sample (N=685)

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,340	,118	8,312**	1	1,404	1,115	1,769
Institutional Trust	-,268	,127	4,468*	1	,765	,597	,981
Political Efficacy	-,021	,157	,019	1	,979	,720	1,331
Micro-level variables							
Family norms	,263	,132	3,931*	1	1,300	1,003	1,686
Friends norms	,085	,107	,638	1	1,089	,883	1,343
Open school climate	,150	,104	2,069	1	1,162	,947	1,425
Sense of community	-,025	,109	,055	1	,975	,788	1,206
Macro-level variables							
Age	-,178	,115	2,396	1	,837	,668	1,048
Gender (1)	,262	,180	2,124	1	1,300	,913	1,850
Income	,047	,141	,110	1	1,048	,794	1,383
Civic engagement T1 (1)	1,398	,205	46,704**	1	4,048	2,711	6,045

Notes: *p < .05 **p < .01

(1) reference category for Civic engagement is 1=yes, for Gender is Female

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 95,902$, $df = 11$, $p = .000$ Cox and Snell $R^2 = .14$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .19$ (HL) $\chi^2 = 5,0725$, $df = 8$, $p = .75$

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Table 2.13 Logistic regression for Online participation (T2) in younger sample (N= 685)

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,454	,115	15,589**	1	1,575	1,257	1,974
Institutional Trust	-,147	,119	1,525	1	,863	,683	1,090
Political Efficacy	,178	,154	1,337	1	1,194	,884	1,614
Micro-level variables							
Family norms	-,121	,127	,909	1	,886	,691	1,136
Friends norms	-,066	,102	,415	1	,936	,766	1,144
Open school climate	,049	,100	,241	1	1,050	,863	1,279
Sense of community	,013	,104	,017	1	1,014	,827	1,242
Macro-level variables							
Age	,252	,112	5,047*	1	1,286	1,033	1,602
Gender	-,057	,170	,111	1	,945	,677	1,319
Income	,036	,136	,069	1	1,036	,794	1,352
Online participation T1 (1)	1,122	,176	40,542**	1	3,072	2,175	4,339

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Online participation is 1=yes, for Gender is Female

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 87,196$, $df = 11$, $p = .000$

Cox and Snell $R^2 = .12$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .17$

HL $\chi^2 = 12,133$, $df = 8$, $p = .14$

Table 2.14 Logistic regression for Political participation (T2) in younger sample (N= 685)

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,105	,161	,425	1	1,111	,810	1,522
Institutional Trust	,314	,167	3,516	1	1,369	,986	1,901
Political Efficacy	,047	,223	,044	1	1,048	,677	1,622
Micro-level variables							
Family norms	,075	,187	,160	1	1,078	,747	1,554
Friends norms	-,013	,149	,007	1	,987	,738	1,321
Open school climate	-,085	,147	,332	1	,919	,688	1,226
Sense of community	,011	,156	,005	1	1,011	,745	1,372
Macro-level variables							
Age	-,016	,160	,010	1	,984	,719	1,347
Gender	-,915	,265	11,973**	1	,400	,238	,672
Income	-,099	,196	,256	1	,905	,616	1,331
Political participation T1 (1)	1,129	,285	15,676**	1	3,091	1,768	5,404

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Political participation is 1=yes, for Gender is Female

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 39,586$, $df = 11$, $p = .000$

Cox and Snell $R^2 = .06$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .11$

HL $\chi^2 = 12,822$, $df = 8$, $p = .12$

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Table 2.15 Logistic regression for Unconventional Political participation (T2) in younger sample (N= 685)

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	-,251	,186	1,807	1	,778	,540	1,122
Institutional Trust	-,196	,201	,942	1	,822	,554	1,221
Political Efficacy	,028	,251	,013	1	1,028	,629	1,681
Micro-level variables							
Family norms	,151	,212	,508	1	1,163	,767	1,764
Friends norms	-,086	,171	,251	1	,918	,656	1,284
Open school climate	-,276	,165	2,784	1	,759	,549	1,049
Sense of community	,058	,177	,108	1	1,060	,749	1,499
Macro-level variables							
Age	-,227	,189	1,437	1	,797	,550	1,155
Gender	-,071	,290	,061	1	,931	,527	1,643
Income	-,189	,221	,734	1	,828	,537	1,276
Unconventional Political participation T1 (1)	1,006	,383	6,897**	1	2,735	1,291	5,796

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Unconventional Political participation is 1=yes, for Gender is Female

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 16,682$, $df = 11$, $p = .118$

Cox and Snell $R^2 = .02$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .06$

HL $\chi^2 = 15,521$, $df = 8$, $p = .05$

Table 2.16 Logistic regression for Civic engagement (T2) in general sample (N=1294).

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,396	,097	16,778**	1	1,486	1,229	1,795
Institutional Trust	-,079	,097	,653	1	,924	,764	1,118
Political Efficacy	,042	,130	,106	1	1,043	,809	1,345
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	,253	,523	,233	1	1,287	,462	3,589
Political parties or their youth organizations	-,424	,320	1,756	1	,654	,350	1,225
Student or youth organizations	,365	,165	4,894*	1	1,440	1,042	1,990
Religious organizations or groups	,833	,172	23,581**	1	2,300	1,643	3,219
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	,778	,204	14,557**	1	2,177	1,460	3,247
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	,137	,157	,760	1	1,147	,843	1,561
Macro-level variables							
Age	,031	,026	1,441	1	1,032	,980	1,085
Gender	,269	,154	3,060	1	1,309	,968	1,770
Income	,018	,104	,029	1	1,018	,830	1,248
Civic engagement T1 (1)	1,278	,182	49,481**	1	3,591	2,515	5,127

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

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(1) reference category for Civic engagement is 1=yes
 Omnibus $\chi^2= 241,897$, $df=13$, $p=.000$
 Cox e Snell $R^2=.18$, Nagerlkerke $R^2=.26$
 HL $\chi^2 = 5,626$, $df= 8$, $p=.689$

Table 2.17 Logistic regression for Online participation (T2) in general sample (N=1294).

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,562	,096	33,914**	1	1,753	1,452	2,118
Institutional Trust	,038	,094	,166	1	1,039	,864	1,249
Political Efficacy	,152	,129	1,379	1	1,164	,903	1,500
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	-,309	,446	,480	1	,734	,306	1,760
Political parties or their youth organizations	,080	,329	,060	1	1,084	,569	2,064
Student or youth organizations	-,081	,156	,272	1	,922	,679	1,251
Religious organizations or groups	,011	,153	,006	1	1,012	,749	1,366
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	,397	,181	4,835*	1	1,488	1,044	2,120
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	-,068	,158	,186	1	,934	,685	1,273
Macro-level variables							
Age	,058	,025	5,603*	1	1,060	1,010	1,113
Gender	,064	,148	,190	1	1,067	,798	1,425
Income	-,066	,102	,422	1	,936	,767	1,143
Online participation T1 (1)	1,345	,155	75,540**	1	3,840	2,835	5,200

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Online participation is 1=yes
 Omnibus $\chi^2= 274,583$, $df=13$, $p=.000$
 Cox e Snell $R^2=.20$, Nagerlkerke $R^2=.28$
 HL $\chi^2 = 14,229$, $df= 8$, $p=.076$

Table 2.18 Logistic regression for Political participation (T2) in general sample (N=1294).

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,271	,117	5,382**	1	1,311	1,043	1,647
Institutional Trust	,135	,107	1,581	1	1,144	,927	1,412
Political Efficacy	,221	,166	1,775	1	1,247	,901	1,725
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	,084	,400	,044	1	1,088	,496	2,385
Political parties or their youth organizations	,631	,269	5,502**	1	1,879	1,109	3,183
Student or youth organizations	,498	,191	6,785**	1	1,646	1,131	2,395
Religious organizations or groups	,090	,184	,238	1	1,094	,763	1,568
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	-,001	,206	,000	1	,999	,667	1,495
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	-,252	,200	1,588	1	,778	,526	1,150
Macro-level variables							

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Age	,037	,028	1,697	1	1,038	,982	1,097
Gender	-,570	,180	10,013**	1	,565	,397	,805
Income	-,046	,122	,139	1	,955	,752	1,214
Political participation T1 (1)	1,337	,188	50,770**	1	3,808	2,636	5,500

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Political participation is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 203,607$, $df = 13$, $p = .000$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .15$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .26$

HL $\chi^2 = 15,343$, $df = 8$, $p = .053$

Table 2.19 Logistic regression for Unconventional Political participation (T2) in general sample (N=1294).

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	-,236	,141	2,808	1	,790	,599 1,041	
Institutional Trust	-,197	,134	2,180	1	,821	,632 1,067	
Political Efficacy	,343	,198	3,008	1	1,410	,956 2,079	
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	,402	,453	,788	1	1,495	,616 3,629	
Political parties or their youth organizations	-,001	,354	,000	1	,999	,499 2,002	
Student or youth organizations	,769	,239	10,368*	1	2,158	1,351 3,447	
Religious organizations or groups	-,068	,225	,091	1	,934	,602 1,451	
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	,293	,247	1,405	1	1,340	,826 2,174	
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	-,341	,243	1,979	1	,711	,442 1,144	
Macro-level variables							
Age	-,024	,036	,452	1	,976	,909 1,048	
Gender	-,378	,217	3,053	1	,685	,448 1,047	
Income	-,088	,140	,390	1	,916	,696 1,206	
Unconventional Political participation T1 (1)	1,361	,235	33,560**	1	3,902	2,462 6,184	

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Unconventional Political participation is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 78,827$, $df = 13$, $p = .000$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .04$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .14$

HL $\chi^2 = 4,878$, $df = 8$, $p = .771$

Table 2.20 Logistic regression for Civic engagement (T2) in older sample (N=609).

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,382	,167	5,223*	1	1,465	1,056 2,032	
Institutional Trust	,062	,159	,151	1	1,064	,779 1,451	
Political Efficacy	,243	,230	1,119	1	1,275	,813 2,001	
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	,266	,792	,113	1	1,305	,276 6,167	
Political parties or their youth organizations	-,600	,443	1,833	1	,549	,231 1,308	
Student or youth organizations	,600	,282	4,520*	1	1,823	1,048 3,170	

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Religious organizations or groups	1,092	,313	12,185**	1	2,979	1,614	5,498
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	,922	,289	10,190**	1	2,515	1,428	4,432
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	,158	,257	,381	1	1,172	,709	1,937
Macro-level variables							
Age	,019	,060	,099	1	1,019	,906	1,146
Gender	-,042	,297	,021	1	,958	,536	1,714
Income	,023	,152	,023	1	1,024	,759	1,380
Civic engagement T1 (1)	1,484	,376	15,597**	1	4,412	2,112	9,216

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Civic engagement is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 92,802$, $df = 13$, $p = .000$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .15$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .24$

HL $\chi^2 = 5,567$, $df = 8$, $p = .696$

Table 2.21 Logistic regression for Online participation (T2) in older sample (N=609).

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,797	,178	20,176**	1	2,220	1,567	3,143
Institutional Trust	,356	,169	4,455*	1	1,427	1,026	1,986
Political Efficacy	,129	,243	,282	1	1,138	,707	1,831
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	,223	,834	,071	1	1,249	,244	6,403
Political parties or their youth organizations	,723	,593	1,488	1	2,061	,645	6,585
Student or youth organizations	,098	,278	,124	1	1,103	,640	1,900
Religious organizations or groups	,173	,275	,397	1	1,189	,694	2,039
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	,265	,280	,899	1	1,303	,754	2,254
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	,268	,273	,968	1	1,308	,766	2,231
Macro-level variables							
Age	-,018	,060	,089	1	,982	,872	1,106
Gender	,447	,299	2,226	1	1,563	,869	2,810
Income	-,108	,159	,464	1	,897	,657	1,225
Online participation T1 (1)	1,822	,315	33,532**	1	6,186	3,338	11,463

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Online participation is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 121,209$, $df = 13$, $p = .000$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .19$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .31$

HL $\chi^2 = 2,171$, $df = 8$, $p = .975$

Table 2.22 Logistic regression for Political participation (T2) in older sample (N=609).

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							

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Political Interest	,649	,184	12,436**	1	1,914	1,334	2,746
Institutional Trust	-,008	,149	,003	1	,992	,741	1,327
Political Efficacy	,352	,259	1,845	1	1,421	,856	2,360
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	,441	,543	,660	1	1,554	,536	4,505
Political parties or their youth organizations	,625	,326	3,661	1	1,867	,985	3,541
Student or youth organizations	,793	,275	8,342*	1	2,211	1,290	3,787
Religious organizations or groups	,206	,258	,636	1	1,229	,741	2,037
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	-,099	,276	,127	1	,906	,527	1,558
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	,058	,291	,040	1	1,060	,599	1,876
Macro-level variables							
Age	,159	,060	7,055*	1	1,172	1,043	1,318
Gender	-,027	,276	,010	1	,973	,567	1,670
Income	-,070	,167	,175	1	,932	,672	1,294
Political participation T1 (1)	1,502	,263	32,681**	1	4,489	2,683	7,511

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Political participation is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 171,556$, $df = 13$, $p = .000$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .26$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .39$

HL $\chi^2 = 11,045$, $df = 8$, $p = .199$

Table 2.23 Logistic regression for Unconventional Political participation (T2) in older sample (N=609).

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)
Individual level variables						
Political Interest	-,223	,220	1,021	1	,800	,520 1,233
Institutional Trust	-,196	,184	1,128	1	,822	,573 1,180
Political Efficacy	,660	,322	4,190*	1	1,935	1,028 3,639
Micro-level variables						
Trade unions	,454	,558	,661	1	1,574	,528 4,695
Political parties or their youth organizations	-,116	,423	,075	1	,891	,389 2,040
Student or youth organizations	,506	,360	1,982	1	1,659	,820 3,357
Religious organizations or groups	,092	,312	,086	1	1,096	,595 2,020
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	,680	,357	3,633	1	1,974	,981 3,972
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	-,288	,363	,627	1	,750	,368 1,529
Macro-level variables						
Age	-,044	,071	,381	1	,957	,832 1,100
Gender	-,746	,327	5,213*	1	,474	,250 ,900
Income	-,002	,189	,000	1	,998	,689 1,446
Unconventional Political participation T1 (1)	1,573	,318	24,498**	1	4,823	2,587 8,994

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Unconventional Political participation is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 71,665$, $df = 13$, $p = .000$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .12$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .24$

HL $\chi^2 = 5,429$, $df = 8$, $p = .711$

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Table 2.24 Logistic regression for Civic engagement (T2) in younger sample (N= 685)

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,371	,125	8,855**	1	1,449	1,135	1,849
Institutional Trust	-,190	,127	2,248	1	,827	,645	1,060
Political Efficacy	-,052	,160	,105	1	,950	,695	1,298
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	,349	,725	,232	1	1,418	,342	5,876
Political parties or their youth organizations	-,477	,505	,893	1	,621	,231	1,669
Student or youth organizations	,216	,208	1,079	1	1,241	,826	1,865
Religious organizations or groups	,775	,212	13,354**	1	2,170	1,432	3,288
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	,535	,291	3,390	1	1,708	,966	3,019
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	,085	,204	,172	1	1,088	,730	1,623
Macro-level variables							
Age	-,158	,118	1,776	1	,854	,677	1,077
Gender	,398	,189	4,452*	1	1,489	1,029	2,155
Income	,040	,146	,075	1	1,041	,781	1,387
Civic engagement T1 (1)	1,283	,213	36,190**	1	3,608	2,375	5,480

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Civic engagement is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 116,633$, $df = 13$, $p = .000$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .17$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .23$

HL $\chi^2 = 3,302$, $df = 8$, $p = .914$

Table 2.25 Logistic regression for Online participation (T2) in younger sample (N= 685)

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,443	,119	13,932**	1	1,558	1,234	1,966
Institutional Trust	-,145	,117	1,549	1	,865	,688	1,087
Political Efficacy	,123	,154	,641	1	1,131	,837	1,528
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	-,551	,618	,795	1	,576	,172	1,936
Political parties or their youth organizations	-,589	,486	1,470	1	,555	,214	1,438
Student or youth organizations	-,104	,194	,289	1	,901	,616	1,318
Religious organizations or groups	,037	,192	,038	1	1,038	,713	1,512
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	,418	,248	2,850	1	1,519	,935	2,468
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	-,201	,198	1,033	1	,818	,555	1,205
Macro-level variables							
Age	,270	,115	5,563*	1	1,310	1,047	1,640
Gender	-,074	,176	,176	1	,929	,658	1,312
Income	-,026	,138	,037	1	,974	,744	1,275
Online participation T1 (1)	1,170	,182	41,211**	1	3,221	2,254	4,603

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Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Online participation is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 90,116$, $df = 13$, $p = .000$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .14$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .18$

HL $\chi^2 = 6,440$, $df = 8$, $p = .598$

Table 2.26 Logistic regression for Political participation (T2) in younger sample (N= 685)

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	,133	,167	,631	1	1,142	,823	1,584
Institutional Trust	,283	,164	2,985	1	1,327	,963	1,828
Political Efficacy	,094	,223	,177	1	1,098	,709	1,702
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	-,165	,776	,045	1	,848	,185	3,876
Political parties or their youth organizations	,050	,575	,007	1	1,051	,340	3,247
Student or youth organizations	,255	,282	,818	1	1,290	,743	2,242
Religious organizations or groups	,196	,279	,494	1	1,217	,704	2,104
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	-,102	,357	,081	1	,903	,449	1,818
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	-,454	,287	2,511	1	,635	,362	1,114
Macro-level variables							
Age	-,006	,164	,002	1	,994	,721	1,369
Gender	-,820	,270	9,233**	1	,440	,259	,747
Income	-,092	,197	,218	1	,912	,619	1,343
Political participation T1 (1)	1,112	,291	14,572**	1	3,039	1,717	5,378

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Political participation is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 41,669$, $df = 13$, $p = .000$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .06$, Nagerlkerke $R^2 = .12$

HL $\chi^2 = 8,192$, $df = 8$, $p = .415$

Table 2.27 Logistic regression for Unconventional Political participation (T2) in younger sample (N= 685)

	Beta	S.E.	Wald	df	OR	95% I.C.per EXP(B)	
Individual level variables							
Political Interest	-,356	,201	3,126	1	,701	,472	1,039
Institutional Trust	-,252	,200	1,594	1	,777	,525	1,150
Political Efficacy	,139	,254	,302	1	1,149	,699	1,889
Micro-level variables							
Trade unions	,279	,914	,093	1	1,322	,220	7,930
Political parties or their youth organizations	,318	,762	,174	1	1,375	,309	6,127
Student or youth organizations	,983	,332	8,782**	1	2,672	1,395	5,118
Religious organizations or groups	-,117	,338	,120	1	,890	,459	1,725
Organizations or groups for social issues (human rights, anti-racism, peace, environment, animal protection etc.)	-,348	,430	,654	1	,706	,304	1,641
Leisure organizations or groups (music, art, sports etc.)	-,444	,340	1,705	1	,641	,329	1,249
Macro-level variables							

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Age	-,205	,193	1,124	1	,815	,557	1,190
Gender	,016	,304	,003	1	1,016	,560	1,845
Income	-,263	,221	1,424	1	,768	,499	1,184
Unconventional Political participation T1 (1)	,983	,410	5,759**	1	2,673	1,197	5,965

Notes: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$,

(1) reference category for Unconventional Political participation is 1=yes

Omnibus $\chi^2 = 22,859$, $df = 13$, $p = .043$

Cox e Snell $R^2 = .03$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .08$

HL $\chi^2 = 9.536$, $df = 8$, $p = .299$

APPENDIX B

GLM repeated measures results.

	Items	F	P value
1.	How interested are you in politics?	1,25	,27
2.	How interested are you in what is going on in society?	,05	,83
3.	How interested are you in national politics?	1,89	,17
1.	I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of important societal issues.	1,92	,17
2.	I consider myself capable to become engaged in societal issues,	,17	,68
3.	I think that by working together, young people can change things for the better.	,30	,58
4.	By working together, young people are able to influence the decisions which are made by government.	,77	,38
5.	If I really tried, I could manage to actively work in organizations trying to solve problems in society.	,00	,99
6.	If I really tried, I could manage to help to organize a political protest.	,00	,99
7.	If I really tried, I could manage to take part in a demonstration in my home town.	,38	,54
1.	I trust the European Union.	3,36	,07
2.	I trust the national government.	,85	,36
1.	... felt that there were a variety of points of view being discussed.	,32	,57
2.	... observed conflicting opinions that brought up new ways of perceiving the issues in question.	1,47	,23
4.	... felt that participating was very important to me as a person.	2,86	,09
1.	My friends would approve it if I became politically active.	,01	,91