Review of Voting Intentions in the Covid-19 Era

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Abstract

The objective of this work was to establish the relationship between pandemic mitigation and voting intention. An exploratory, cross-sectional and structural study was carried out with a selection of 400 students from a public university in central Mexico, considering their participation in professional public health practices. A factorial structure of trajectories and relationships was established that evidenced three components related to the intention to vote from a management, production and transfer of knowledge in the optimization of resources and process innovation in the face of pandemic mitigation. The results can only be discussed in relation to the research setting, suggesting the extension of the work to other pandemic and political settings.

Keywords: pandemic; mitigation; intention to vote; model; optimization

Introduction

The World Health Organization in its continuous reports about the SARS-VOC pandemic and the covid-19 disease have compared, considering a period of 25 days from March 11, the policies regarding this problem [1]. In first place are Chin, Italy in second place, Iran in third place, France and the United States with the fourth and fifth allocation of cases in a three-phase approach; Viral import, community and epidemic spread [2]. The strategies of contention, mitigation and isolation have been implemented by the governments of these countries in order to reduce the impacts of the pandemic on public health; probabilities of infections, health care and deaths [3]. In a probability matrix that ranges from the magnitude of the risk event from very high, high, medium and low with respect to the impact measured on that same scale, the mitigation and control strategy is recommended to face high risks and impacts [4]. The differences between the cases reported by the nations in question and the cases confirmed by the World Health Organization refer to the risk control process; prevention or avoidance of the potential impact of threats, minimization or reduction of the impact scale, remediation or rehabilitation once the impact has occurred, as well as compensation or acceptance of the impact [5]. Voting intention, as a central axis of the political and social impacts of risk events, is directly and significantly related to health contingency policies by indicating the attribution of responsibility of an electorate to its government or to alternation [6]. In this sense, addressing the relationship between the probabilities of choice and the expected results of a pandemic mitigation can explain and anticipate scenarios of political recognition or responsibility [7].

Theory of voting intention

The structure of the intention to vote refers to the external and internal probabilities of carrying out an unfavorable or favorable election to risk event mitigation strategies [8]. Within the externalities, ideology, leadership and political identity are considered as moderators of internalities; actors'

emotions, decisions and actions [9]. It is a model for evaluating risks in an uncertain, threatening or contingent environment that anticipates possible scenarios of recognition or change of preferences, militancy or political identity [10]. The internal process that explains the intention to vote refers to deliberate, planned and systematic phases of behavior prediction in specific situations [11]. Consequently, the difference between decisions and voting intentions is that the former is less instrumental than the probability of running an election [12].

The most studied internal process of voting intention is the influence of the media on public opinion [13]. The diffusion of the image of candidates or parties determines the electoral preference, the decision to vote and the intention to vote [14]. From the premise of rational choice, the image is a benchmark of security, utility and trust of the electorate for their current and future personal well-being, although this process does not explain the emerging social identity between leaders and followers [15].

If rational choice refers to an estimate of costs and benefits, selecting the most viable and optimal option, the theory of exchange assumes that such a process can be rewarded between the inter-parties [16]. In this way, the intention to vote in favor of the mitigation of pandemics suggests the electoral preference towards leaders who bet on the least damaging option for political and social actors, public and private sectors [17]. From the rational choice, the pandemic is assumed as a significantly offensive cause to the economy [18]. In this sense, the interested parties are forced to choose an alternative with less impact [19]. From the social exchange, the actors who choose the least impactful option see themselves as part of a circuit of power and influence [20]. In other words, the mitigation of a pandemic is seen as a unilateral instrument [21]. Or, an instrument of negotiation to establish a beneficial consensus between rulers and ruled [22]. The intention to vote appreciated from the relations between rulers and ruled, is a currency

of exchange that emerges as a result of a policy of social mitigation of a pandemic [23]. In this sense, it deals with the probability of evaluating costs and benefits in the face of confinement, microfinance, or health care in a contingency or epidemic crisis [24].

From the consequences of the exchange; a) coercive when one party forces the other to carry out the exchange, appropriate their capacities, substitute their talents, ignore their virtues, or; b) pessimistic by giving recognition to your needs, expectations or merits [25]. In this sense, the intention to vote is implemented coercively or persuasively according to the type of relationship between rulers and ruled during pandemic mitigation [26]. In the first case, the electorate obliges the State to implement contention, mitigation or isolation measures in order to guarantee the assets of militants, followers and opponents [27]. In this sense, the government assumes the leadership of the situation and obliges citizens to follow the guidelines of their health policy to the letter [28]. In the second case, rulers and ruled carry out a recognition through the vote and the policies of the situation, as well as their resources and capacities in order to build a resistance, containment, appropriation and reconstruction of their interests before an enemy common [29].

Voting intention studies

The political system in which it is possible to observe the similarities and differences between groups for and against presidential candidates based on processes of negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration around the management and administration of Information Technologies and Communication is known as governance [30]. This is a growing phenomenon as local or federal elections approach and digital networks are exacerbated as instruments for the promotion or dissuasion of a candidate [31].

In the framework of presidential elections, the system of negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration between actors involved in the management and administration of public resources and services is known as governance [32]. In the case of an early electoral contest, governance is a phenomenon that reflects electoral preferences, perceptions of consensus and intentions to vote for parties, candidates and democratic systems [33]. In the case of the effects of the anticipated electoral contest in digital networks such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or Instagram, these are assumed as instruments for the promotion of candidates and political platforms [34]. It is a proselytism that generates expectations and voting intentions based on electoral preferences, perhaps established in traditional media such as television, radio, newspapers or films, but when filtered through digital networks, they propitiate a scenario of electoral debate that, for the purposes of the present study allow a diagnosis of the relationship that these determining factors of the elections in the near future [35].

Social psychology, through the models of reasoned action and planned behavior, has influenced the construction of an information psychology [36]. Both models start from the assumption that behavior is determined by the relationship between beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and intentions [37]. It is a process that, in the context of the information generated on the Internet, explains consumer decisions based on rational, deliberate, planned and systematic processing [38]. However, psychosocial models have been modified to adjust their relationships to information processing on the Internet [39]. These are the cases of the Technology Acceptance Model, the Trade Adoption Model and the Electronic Consumption Model [40]. These models have incorporated the psychosocial variables of beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and intentions that were proposed to explain efficient, effective and effective behavior [41]. Although Internet access is concomitant with the increase of users of social networks, these focus on Facebook and twitter not only for ease of use, but also for the usefulness of their protocols when it comes to disseminating personalized information [42]. Social networks are personalized instances of information, but the information disseminated in them requires computational skills, search and information processing skills, as well as storage and dissemination capacities [43]. Consequently, the digital divide involves not only differences between those who access digital media and those who are marginalized or excluded, it connotes differences between Internet users seeking information for

their entertainment and Internet users who process information for their knowledge and innovation [44]. Whereby Internet users are attached to a system of academic or professional training that forces them to seek information and process it in order to show meaningful learning [45].

The relevance of beliefs understood as general categories of information extends to the formation of defined attitudes such as specific categories of information, perceptions of catastrophe risk or perceptions of usefulness of information assumed as expectations that allow to anticipate scenarios of uncertainty, as well as the intentions of using the Internet to most likely process the information that is generated [46].

It is the relationships between the psychosocial variables that make relevant their inclusion in the psychological informational models because they explain the information processing of events distant or close to the daily life of Internet users [47]. In this way, the reception of real-time information is a major factor in planning strategies or lifestyles that lessen the impact of catastrophes [48]. However, the tendency of the informational psychological studies is to specify the psychosocial variables since the beliefs are very general categorizations and could not anticipate specific behaviors, although the attitudes are more delimited categorizations, they require of information perceived to activate decisions of immediate action [49].

Precisely because the intentions are decisive probabilities of carrying out a rational, deliberate, planned and systematic action, they predict the emergence of behavior, but the information generated on the Internet leads to a more emotional than rational process [50]. It is for this reason that the study of intentions with emotional and rational dimensions seems to be more pertinent in an unpredictable and incommensurable scenario as would be the electoral contests [51].

Specification of a voting intention model

The specification of a model refers to the axes, trajectories and relationships between variables that explain the phenomenon of voting intention in the face of pandemic mitigation [52]. It is a theoretical, conceptual and empirical structure that predicts voting scenarios against or in favor of public health policies in the event of risk events [53]. In this sense, the intention to vote against or in favor of pandemic mitigation is assumed as an instrument of knowledge management, production and transfer [54]. It is about the probability of choosing the management image in the intensification of the confinement norms, the image of production of treatments or vaccines and the image of communication of risks before, during and after the pandemic [55].

In relation to risk management, the intention to vote is directly related to the political image of who is attributed the purchase or sale of products and services related to the state and institutional response to the pandemic [56]. A line of research related to trust in science, technology and government is linked to the probability of voting against or for whom the failure or success of management is attributed [57]. This is the case of the presidents of the United States, Korea and Japan that managed the rapid tests for detection of the infection as a pandemic mitigation strategy [58]. Regarding the production of medicines associated with health care in the face of the pandemic, the electorate evaluates mitigation based on progress in terms of solutions for public, collective, community, sector, union or personal health [59]. The possibility of reaching a medicine or vaccine against the pandemic by scientists from the United States, China or Germany would represent the evaluation of the image of their governments and would be reflected in the ballot box [60].

Regarding risk communication, the communiqués, conferences and declarations of political leaders regarding the pandemic and the state and institutional responses make up the transfer of data that will determine the voting intention of the electorate in need of information [61]. Countries with a preponderant political figure and an electorate influenced by the discursive image of their representatives, such as Spain or Mexico, exemplify these cases [62].

Method

The research was carried out in a locality of central Mexico with low level of human development, considerable birth rate, low level of per capita income and professional instruction, as well as high citizen participation in municipal issues of fundraising, social entrepreneurship and innovation in the commercialization of products and services.

A non-experimental, cross-sectional, exploratory and correlational study was carried out with a non-probabilistic selection of 400 students from a public university, considering the system of professional practices and social service, as well as the framework of strategic alliances between the institution and dedicated organizations to the creation of knowledge.

$$E(F) = E(0) + \sum_i \left(\frac{\delta E(F)}{\delta F_i} \right)_0 F_i \qquad (1)$$

The Scale of Intentions to Vote was used, which measures eight dimensions relative to; 1) gestion, 2) production and 3) transference related to the optimization resources or process innovation. All reagents are answered with any of the options ranging from 0 "not likely" to 5 = "quite likely". The Delphi technique was used to select, compare and integrate the allusive reagents to each of the tree dimensions, following the evaluations and recommendations of expert judges in the field. The students were surveyed in the facilities of their university, provided written guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality of their responses to the possible effects of the results of the investigation. The information was processed in the statistical analysis package for social sciences (SPSS version 20.0). The parameters of normality, reliability, adequacy, sphericity, validity, fit and residual were estimated in order to contrast the null hypothesis regarding the significant differences between the theoretical relationships of the variables with respect to the empirical relationships to be observed. The authors will declare that the document is free from conflict of interest, provided that in a framework of free access to information the dignity and integrity of the parties involved are guaranteed.

Results

Table 1 most the parameters that indicate the normal distribution of responses to the instrument that measures voting expectations. It is a scale that obtained scores higher than those required (alpha of, 700) for general reliability (alpha of 0.762) and sub-scales (respective alpha of 0.758, 0.747, 0.739), as well as factorial weights higher than the minimum indispensable (0,300) for three factors that explained 54% of the total variance.

Ítem	Sub scale	M	SD	α	F1	F2	F3
r1	I would vote for whoever delivers results	4,32		,780	, 663		
r2	I would vote for a responsible proposal	4,19		,753	, 757		
r3	I would vote for whoever acts in solidarity	4,29		,721	, 813		
r4	I would vote for a strategic vision	4,30		,704	, 682		
r5	I would vote for a long-term project	4,18		,769	, 757		
r6	I would vote for whoever offers tangible solutions	3,94		,734		.673	
r7	I would vote for who anticipates the crisis	3,12		,752		, 846	
r8	I would vote for whoever prevents risks	3,17		,704		, 822	
r9	I would vote for who promotes innovations	3,45		,785		, 850	
r10	I would vote for who optimizes resources	3,02		,723		, 810	
r11	I would vote for whoever spreads scientific diagnoses	1,89		,705			,658
r12	I would vote for whoever promotes win-win	1,03		,794			, 780
r13	I would vote for who defends co-responsibilities	1,72		,782			, 948
r14	I would vote for whoever appeals to the national union	1,45		,776			, 870
r15	I would vote for who respects local identity	1,15		,741			, 948

Table 1: Descriptive of the instrument

Note: Elaborated with data study. Extraction method: main axes, rotation promax. Adequacy and Sphericity [χ2 = 324.25 (45gl) p = 0.000; KMO = 0.672] F1 = Gestion (19% total explained variance), F2 = Values (18% total explained variance), F3 = Perceptions (17% total explained variance).

Once the three factors were established by exploratory factor analysis of principal axes with promax rotation, we proceeded to estimate their structure of correlations and covariances in order to observe the possible dependency relationships between the factors and the emergence of a second order factor common to the three first-order factors. In order to observe the structure of relationships between variables, the correlations and covariances were estimated (see Table 2).

	M	SD	F1	F2	F3	F1	F2	F3
F1	25,21	13,21	1,000			1,789	,510	,488
F2	29,31	10,45	,492	1,000			1,989	,379
F3	20,15	15,21	,384	,502	1,000			1,897

Table 2: Correlations between factor

Note: Elaborated with data study. M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, F1 = Gestion, F2 = production, F3 = Transference of knowledge. * p< ,01; ** p < ,001; *** p < ,0001

The associations and covariances between the factors refer to an emerging factorial structure that the literature identifies as voting intention, which would be made up of three components related to the management, production and transfer of knowledge in the optimization of resources and the innovation of processes for pandemic mitigation. In order to observe the structure of relationships between these factors with their indicators, a reflective model was estimated (see Figure 1).
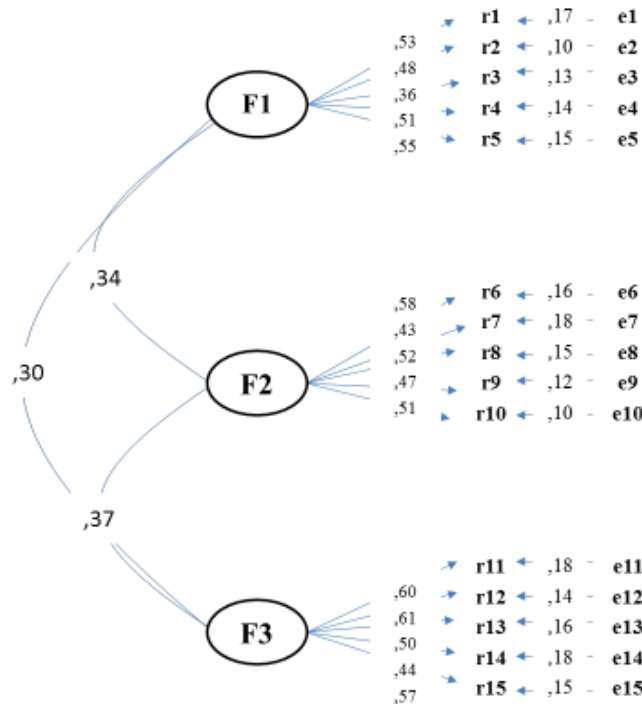
Note: Elaborated with data study. F1 = Gestion of Knowledge in optimization and innovation, F2 = Production of knowledge in resources optimization, F3 = Transference of knowledge in resources optimization and process innovation; R = Reactive, item or indicator, d = Disturbance measured factor, e = Error measured indicator; ←→ relations between factor, ← relations between disturbance and factors or errors and indicators, → relations between factor and indicators.

Figure 1: Structural equation modelling

The adjustment and residual parameters [$\chi 2$ = 214.35 (47gl) p = 0.007; GFI = 0.990; CFI = 0.997; RMSEA = 0.001] suggest the non-rejection of the null hypothesis regarding the significant differences between the theoretical relations of the variables with respect to the model of structural equations in their modality of reflective exploratory relationships.

Discussion

From an exploratory factorial structure of main axes and with simple and oblique promax rotation in which the correlations among the factors of the Consensus Expectation Scale stand out, the present work has provided a provisional model to the study of the electoral preferences and their Effects on the intention to vote. Non-experimental design and non-probabilistic selection, however, limit the students' results to the public university of the State of Mexico. In this sense, it is expected to carry out the test of the model in a representative sample of students from the Mexican city in order to anticipate the results of the state elections to be held and the federal elections. However, digital networks as a framework of agendas, advertisements, opinions, preferences and intentions, represent a small percentage of the electorate that will participate in the elections. This is because unlike traditional media, digital networks not only reproduce information but also produce expectations in potential voters. Such a difference between the Internet, television, radio, the press or cinema makes it necessary to reflect on the studies of mass communication center on the establishment of agenda, the framing effect and its consequences on the intentions to vote. That is to say that the study of the digital networks supposes a differentiation of sectors even among the users of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram with respect to others of digital networks. Therefore, it is necessary to study in greater depth the study of the similarities and differences of internet users of digital networks with respect to potential voters of the elections in question.

Conclusion

The objective of this paper was to establish the factors around the intention to vote, considering possible scenarios of positive, negative and spurious effects, although the research design limited the findings to the research scenario, suggesting the extension of the work towards revisions systematic prospective since the retrospective review suggests trajectories of spurious dependency relationships.

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