

# Quality of Participation in Youth Organizations: Relationships With Identity and Sense of Sociopolitical Control

Youth & Society  
2017, Vol. 49(7) 968–993  
© The Author(s) 2015  
Reprints and permissions:  
sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav  
DOI: 10.1177/0044118X15604341  
journals.sagepub.com/home/yas



**M. Loreto Martínez<sup>1</sup>, Luis Ignacio Loyola<sup>1</sup>,  
and Patricio Cumsille<sup>1</sup>**

## Abstract

Through a cross-sectional design, this study examines whether practices of active participation (AP; that is, opportunities for decision making and leadership) and quality of relationships (QR) established between members of youth organizations (i.e., affective and instrumental support) relate to dimensions of youth's identity (i.e., personal purpose, personal meaning) and sense of sociopolitical control (i.e., leadership, political efficacy). Participants ( $n = 347$ ; 17–26 years) were drawn from 38 youth organizations in two regions of Chile. Results from multiple regression models controlling for demographics, length of involvement, and aim of the organization yielded significant interactions between QR and practices of AP on both indicators of identity and political efficacy. Only length of involvement in the organization was related to leadership outcomes. Findings highlight the powerful effects of the quality of the relational context of youth programs and organizations to actualize the benefits of AP.

## Keywords

civic engagement, identity, prosocial involvement

---

<sup>1</sup>Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago.

## Corresponding Author:

M. Loreto Martínez, Avda. Vicuña Mackenna 4860, Santiago, Chile.  
Email: mlmartig@uc.cl