Party Informality and Mediations Between Leaders and Militants in Mexico: The Cases of PAN, PRI, the PRD and MORENA*

⸢English Version⸣

Informalidad partidaria y mediaciones entre dirigentes y militantes en México: los casos del PAN, el PRI, el PRD y MORENA

Informalidade partidista e mediações entre líderes e militantes no México: os casos do PAN, do PRI, do PRD e da MORENA

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Abstract

Objective: this article aims to show the informal logistics within the political parties in Mexico, understood as a mechanism of mediation between militants and

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leaders. **Methodology**: from a qualitative approach, the role of informality in the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the National Action Party (PAN), the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), and the National Regeneration Movement (MORENA) was explored. **Results**: informality was found to be of vital importance, in some cases, its absence is a sign of internal polarization (PAN); in other cases, it supports the existence of agreements beyond what is established in the Statutes (PRI). In a few more cases, the fractional reality of the organization (PRD) is shown. **Conclusions**: informality can illustrate the discretionary role of certain leadership, as well as the implementation of strategies that contravene electoral legislation in order to maintain an advantage over potential competitors (MORENA).

Keywords: Policy; Mexican political parties; Political life; Party informality; Leaders and Militants.

Resumen

Objetivo: el artículo propone evidenciar la lógica informal al interior de los partidos políticos en México, entendida como un mecanismo de mediación entre militantes y dirigentes. **Metodología**: desde una aproximación cualitativa, se exploró el rol de la informalidad en el Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), el Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), el Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD), y Movimiento Regeneración Nacional (MORENA). **Resultados**: se encontró que la informalidad es de vital importancia, ya que, en algunos casos, su ausencia es signo de polarización interna (PAN); en otros, da evidencia de la existencia de acuerdos más allá de lo establecido en los estatutos (PRI). En algunos más, se muestra la realidad fraccionada de la organización (PRD). **Conclusiones**: la informalidad puede ilustrar el papel discrecional de ciertos liderazgos, así como la adopción de estrategias que contravienen la legislación electoral en aras de mantener ventaja sobre los posibles competidores (MORENA).

Palabras-clave: Política; Partidos políticos mexicanos; Vida política; Informalidad partidaria; Dirigentes y militantes.

Resumo

Objetivo: o artigo propõe demonstrar a lógica informal dentro dos partidos políticos no México, entendida como um mecanismo de mediação entre militantes e líderes. **Metodologia**: a partir de uma abordagem qualitativa, foi explorado o papel da informalidade no Partido Revolucionário Institucional (PRI), no Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN), no Partido da Revolución Democrática (PRD) e no Movimiento Nacional de Regeneración Nacional (MORENA). **Resultados**: verificou-se que a informalidade é de vital importância, uma vez que, em alguns casos, sua ausência é sinal de polarização interna (PAN); em outros, evidencia a existência de acordos além do estabelecido nos estatutos (PRI). Em alguns outros, a realidade fracionária da organização é mostrada (PRD). **Conclusões**: a informalidade pode ilustrar o papel discricionário de certos líderes, bem como a adoção de estratégias que violam a legislação eleitoral, a fim de manter uma vantagem sobre os concorrentes em potencial (MORENA).

Palavras-chave: Política; Partidos políticos mexicanos; Vida política; Informalidade do partido; Líderes e militantes.

Introduction

The study of political parties from an organizational perspective has emphasized the formal dimension of internal processes. It allows us to account for the institutionalization of these organizations (Panebianco, 1990). From this approach, there is a long tradition of research that gives an account of the origin and institutionalization of parties in Mexico (Reveles, 2002, 2003 and 2004). However, some other authors raise the existence of informal logistics that are known, abided by and reproduced, which generate an atmosphere of organizational certainty, despite not being part of the Statutes (Duque, 2005; Randall y Svásand, 2002; Levitsky, 2003; Levitsky y Freidenberg, 2007).

The objective of this study is to show evidence of the existence of *party informality* which is the set of rules and practices that are not part of the statutes but anyway are followed, known, accepted and reproduced within party organizations. It is intended to contribute to a better understanding of the informal dynamics of the parties in Mexico as they have played a significant role in the organizational trajectories.

It is intended to answer the following questions: what are the informal logistics that underlay the main political parties in Mexico? and what role do these logistics play in their organizational characteristics? To answer such questions, the article begins with a general discussion on the importance of informality within parties. Secondly, the methodological aspects that guided this research are shown. Thirdly, the case of PRI is discussed as part of the results, highlighting the presidential powers held by the head of the Federal Executive such as vetting and/or removing national leaders. Fourthly, the case of the NAP is shown, where informal logistics give legitimacy to the processes of leadership or presidential candidacy. It is followed by the case of the PRD, it remarks that the informal logic has provided certainty in decision-making within the organization. Finally, in the results, the case of the MORENA party is clarified. It highlights the nomination of the Promoters of National Sovereignty by the moral leader of the party. In fact, such nominations are given to those who become candidates for election. Finally, it concludes with a discussion regarding the scope of informal logic in Mexican parties, as well as the lines of research pending in this field of study.

According to Araujo (2009a), Latin America is a region that provides evidence on a historical and conflicting relationship with the law, generating pejorative interpretations of such societies. Thus, the issue of rules has only been addressed about its deficiencies, reinforcing the idea that societies in the region are determined by a culture of transgression via moral duplicity.

However, the interest in studying norms has been relatively recent due to the processes of transition to democracy in the region, as well as the emergence of research that analyzed the relationship with rules from a factual perspective. In this regard, two research lines are highlighted both of which share the intention of understanding and explaining the role of regulation on moral condemnation.

The first line of research, cultures of transgression, abandons the "unequivocal cultural condemnation". Instead, it endorses a comprehensive vocation of sociocultural and political interpretation through which it explores the mechanisms by which cultures of transgression are perpetuated, renewed and reproduced. They are studied, from institutional traditions and administrative practices to tolerated daily interactions. This is the case for Girola (2009), who explores the plurality of social, political and economic factors that underpin the cultures of transgression in Mexico. The author shows a particular relationship with rules, through the idea of the culture of "as if", which involves different aspects of the normative problem in Mexico, such as: "the loss of normative sense, the breakdown of the value system, the tolerance of transgression, the non-validity of rules" (Girola, 2009, p. 22). Hence, in politics "we pretend to be convinced of the value of democracy, but in fact, we would often like others to make the decisions" (Girola, 2009, pp. 47-48). The author concludes that the dysfunctions of formal rules can be seen as the beginning of underlying normative orders which respond to the lack of and non-validity of ideal orders that operate as models.

The second line of research focuses on informal rules in interaction contexts. It focuses on the cognitive, emotional, political and social elements that accompany the daily use of the rules by setting aside the moral judgment. It emphasizes the study of the effective ways by which actors mobilize and face the rules. These studies reject the simplistic idea of good and bad, either because the law transgressed in the name of morality because the rule is enforced through transgression, or because alternative uses are arranged. In this sense, Araujo (2009b) focuses on the sectors with lower resources in Chile to propose that the social ideals and experiences of the individual built a specific type of individual that relates to others and the institutions. For this reason, it describes the social experience of "passing in" with two central cores: discrimination, as it reveals invisibility to the other (the one who has more); and the other who suffers violence and abuse of power. Thus, the normative ideal is weakened because the non-functioning of the principle of equality is evident and that the rule, as well as the law, don't have the potential to regulate the relations of individuals and their relations with institutions.

Four types of subject configurations came up: 1) the outraged individual who claims for the effective operation of a regulatory body; (2) the pragmatic

individual who submits to the standard as a strategy of inclusion and mainte-nance in the system; (3) the disenchanted individual who, in helplessness and defeat, is a passive and resigned actor; 4) the anti-systemic individual who has two modalities, the one takes the law into hands because of inoperability of the ideal, and the other leaves the playing field and builds other scenery which can-not be touched either by the rules or by the others.

Therefore, informality re-emerges as a relevant research question in social sciences, far from moral condemnation. In this regard, Latin American political parties also began to rethink by incorporating the dimension of informal logic, as shown below.

The organizational tradition focused on study the parties has shown sig-nificant progress, since its origin with Michels (1983) and Ostrogorski (2008). Qualitative leaps have been made in understanding parties as complex bodies that tend to develop characteristics of more or less stable organizations, from its conception, that parties are organizations in which the militant subordinates the leader, and the leader to the organization. This is the result of its internal history and dynamics, and external factors such as the institutional framework they are in and the political competition. At the same time, it has to do with organizations that strengthen links, one way or another, with the population. Both organizational aspects and rooting are often encompassed in the concept of institutionalization[1].

One of the most widely used authors to understand the levels of institutio-nalization of political parties is Angelo Panebianco, who presents an attractive and useful analysis scheme for measuring this concept. In the scheme of the Italian theorist, there are parties that seem doomed to failure, depending on the components. For example, party organizations that include charisma and fractionalization, almost disastrous aspects for the organization, condemn them to a weak institutionalization. However, parties with both aspects have achieved stability over time, as happened with the PRD and the PRI. In the case of the former, it was born of a multiplicity of groups on the charism of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas; and the second, supported by the presidential power that interfered with and defined the party's fate.

This invites a rethink of a crucial aspect because if there are parties with informality components and which nevertheless survive, the routinization must be rethought as a component that exists beyond formal pathways. For Pane-

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1. For a timely review of different ways of addressing and measuring institutionalization, as well as criticisms of classical formal contributions see Duque (2005) and Martinez (2005).

bianco (1990), institutionalization corresponds to organizational consolidation through normal ways[2].

According to this review, it is necessary to use another type of literature that, although it recognizes the classic contributions of authors such as Panebianco (1990) or Huntington (1968), explain the informality in the frame of Latin America in general, and Mexico in particular. In this regard, there are theoretical and empirical studies that should be summarized. Levitsky's (2003) distinguishes two concepts of relevance in understanding the role of informal rules in political parties in Latin America. On named *infusion of value*, defined as an aspect that the organization acquires when the organization's preservation becomes a goal. There is also routinization which refers to the process by which the rules are known, accepted and followed, whether formal or informal (Levitsky, 2003, p. 254). Therefore, informal routinization may occur, accompanied by the infusion of value, therefore becoming a different institutionalization than the proposed by Panebianco.

Hence, it is possible to recognize institutionalization as more than just strict adjustment to formal rules due to its relevance. This gives a fair recognition of the reality in Latin America and, in particular, to what O'Donell (1997) states for more than twenty years with "the other institutionalization". The web of well-known regularized guidelines practiced and accepted that lead human interaction.

Helmke and Levitsky (2003) clarifies that the term informal institution must be differentiated from *culture, personal networks, clientelism, corruption, clan, and mafia*, among others.

Therefore, it is prudent to understand them as shared, unwritten, created, communicated and implemented rules outside the official channels. The parties can have a cluster of informal institutions, which does not mean that they are not institutionalized. It is a different institutionalization that, thanks to informality, achieves certainty in its internal processes. Even the party can stick closer to formal rules, but that does not mean that some informal practices will no longer exist.

Thus, authors such as Ortiz Loaiza (2008) focus on describing the party practices around the party in the party system in Guatemala, during electoral or non-electoral seasons. They also focus on identifying the contradictions between these practices and what the statutory framework establishes, the identification of unregulated or non-existent practices, and activities within the legal

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2. Something similar happens in Huntington (1968) who, despite referring to the institutionalization of the party system, like Panebianco, the definition emphasizes on normal rules. Hence Martinez (2005) argues that in some cases it is "impossible to prove the parameters of a rigorously formal institutionalization" (p. 139).

framework which the party carries out in accordance with its own customs and values.

Levitsky (2003) analyses the Justice Party of Argentina, whose origin is marked by the charisma of its leader, who afterwards died. About the routinization, it is not a formally institutionalized party, because its leader frequently stopped the establishment of formal rules and the proscription of the match for a long period. Regarding the infusion of values, the organization is valued by its members and leaders who have committed themselves to the survival of the party.

Pedrosa (2005) conducted research on informal networks and institutions in the Radical Civic Union party in Argentina. The author finds that the web of personal networks, links, behaviors exchanges of material and symbolic resources bring the party to life and enable its goals to be achieved. This research provides evidence of a large number of flexible informal groups, usually commanded by a warlord who is embedded in party committees. This results in a mixture of formality and informality that brings vitality and permanence to the party.

In Mexico, Martínez (2005) shows how fractions and charisma can increase the process of institutionalization, as happened in the PRD, as they are constituted as " means of a less formal but existing institutionalization" (Martínez, 2005, p. 367). This provided some *sui generis* stability to the organization thanks to informal practices for selecting leaderships.

However, taking into account that the objective of this research is to show evidence on what is here called party informality, the main theoretical-methodological frame implemented are explained below. Firstly, it is necessary to clarify the selection of cases. It was decided to investigate the main parties in Mexico, based on the votes and positions they obtained in the last federal election, held in 2018. The selected organizations are PRI, PAN, PRD, and MORENA. The first three organizations have been main parties since 1989. They form a moderate pluralist party system. PRI was the hegemonic party in Mexico for a long time (from 1946, until the 1990s, when it began to lose relevant places of power such as governorships, municipalities and seats in the legislature). To this end, PAN won the Presidency of the Republic in 2000 and in 2006. And, the PRD finished second in 2006 and 2012. As for MORENA, this organization was formed after the exodus of Andrés Manuel López Obrador from the PRD, where it became the most successful party with the most electoral success in Mexico[3].

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3. The last federal election of 2018, obtained the following percentages. In the case of the presidential election, MORENA, together with the (minority) Parties of Labor and Social Encounter, achieved 54.74% of the vote; the PRI with its minority allies, The Green Ecologist Party of Mexico and New Alliance Party, obtained 16.89% the PAN, the PRD and the minority Citizen Movement achieved 22.92%. In the Senate, the vote was: 45.46, 23.74 and 28.74%, respectively, while in the Chamber of Deputies the percentage was 45.33, 24.86 and 28.81%, respectively.

According to the typology generated by Helmke and Levitsky (2003, pp. 12-16), the possible presence of informal institutions is conceived: 1) complementary, since they fill the gaps of formal rules without violating them and improving their performance; (2) complacent, as they violate the spirit, but not the formal rule and helping to reconcile divergent interests; 3) competitors, since they coexist with ineffective formal rules and following one rule (formal or informal) violates the other (particularistic rules); (4) substitutes, as they are created or used to achieve the results that were not possible through the formal rules.

From the above, the aim was to show what kind of informal logic has existed within the main political parties in Mexico.

Methodology

A qualitative method for the collection and analysis of information to analyze informal logic, a historically relevant aspect in organizational defeats was chosen according to the objective of the research. Thus, official party documents, hemerographic, and some in-depth interviews were used with the aim of triangulating the data. The selection of such information was carried out under sampling of convenience (Patton, 2002). The intention, in conducting the data analysis, was "to see if all the facts that are somehow relevant to the proposed framework conform to or support a single interpretation" (Ragin, 2007, p. 175). That is, if the informal institutions present in the four cases studied support any of the possibilities or guiding concepts set out above.

Results

a) Presidential Power over the Institutional Revolutionary

The PRI emerged in 1946. Its immediate background is the Mexican Revolutionary Party (1938) and the National Revolutionary Party (1929). In all three, the weight of the President of the Republic was abysmal above the other warlords (PNR), sectors (PRM) and militancy (PRI), which ran via informal channels.

In this sense, informality was one of the springs of presidentialism since the attribution to appoint its successor, as well as removing and appointing national leaders and governors was not inscribed in any statute. This prerogative was central to the period from 1946 to the 1990s, as the relationship between the

subnational and national levels resulting from the advancement of the opposition and the acceptance of defeats on the part of the President was complicated during that decade. However, the PRI had a long time of informality and this was decisive in sustaining the pyramid headed by the President.

Although the attribution of the "*dedazo*", referring to the selection of the presidential successor (Carpizo, 1987), as well as the selection and removal of governors (Hernández, 2008) have been studied, it has not been the case with the selection and removal of national leaders.

With regard to the selection of leaders, the history of PRI shows that such a decision has been taken in accordance with the interests of the President, "or the political circumstances of the moment" (Corona, 2003, p. 164). Table 1 covers the total PRI leaders in 1946 and even before the Republic lost the presidency. It reports 26 national leaders. A record number when you consider that each leader should have spent three years on the commission.

Table 1. PRI National Leaders (1946-1999)

Period	National Leader	President of the Republic
1946	Dr. Rafael Pascasio Gamboa	Manuel Ávila Camacho
1946-1952	Gral. Rodolfo Sánchez Taboada	Miguel Alemán Valdés
1952-1956	Gral. Gabriel Leyva Velázquez	Adolfo Ruíz Cortines
1956-1958	Gral. Agustín Olachea Avilés	
1958-1964	Gral. Alfonso Corona del Rosal	Adolfo López Mateos
1964-1965	Lic. Carlos Alberto Madrazo Becerra	Gustavo Díaz Ordaz
1965-1968	Dr. Lauro Ortega Martínez	
1968-1970	C. Alfonso Martínez Domínguez	
1970-1972	Prof. Manuel Sánchez Vite	Luis Echeverría Álvarez
1972-1975	Lic. Jesús Reyes Heroles	
1975-1976	Li. Porfirio Muñoz Ledo	
1976-1979	Lic. Carlos Sansores Pérez	José López Portillo
1979-1981	Lic. Gustavo Carvajal Moreno	
1981	C. Javier García Paniagua	
1981-1982	Lic. Pedro Ojeda Paullada	
1982-1986	Lic. Adolfo Lugo verduzco	Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado
1986-1988	Lic. Jorge de la Vega Domínguez	

Period	National Leader	President of the Republic
1988-1992	Lic. Luis Donaldo Colosio	
1992	Rafael Rodríguez Barrera	
1992-1993	Genaro Borrego Estrada	Carlos Salinas de Gortari
1993-1994	Fernando Ortiz Arana	
1994	Ignacio Pichardo Pagaza	
1994-1995	María de los Ángeles Moreno	
1995-1996	Santiago Oñate Laborde	
1996-1997	Humberto Roque Villanueva	Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León
1997-1999	Mariano Palacios Alcocer	

Source: Authors' based on PRI (2003)

Similarly, the political situation has prevailed over any other criterion for naming a leader. In addition, that decision was exclusively for President in turn. Thus, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and Luis Echeverría named three leaders in their six-year period, which was increased to four in the period of José López Portillo. While the opposition wins at the sub-national level, the number of leaders increased. Hence, Carlos Salinas had five and Ernesto Zedillo had five leaders. In all cases, the appointee was assisted by the President and came into office without competition. In fact, the assemblies (for ordinary election) or national councils (for extraordinary) to elect the leaders were only instances of legitimization of a decision previously made by the President.

Espejel-Espinoza (2016) states that, in the case of some leaders, to accomplish presidential interests, in turn, the appointments aimed to lead the party during a succession electoral process. Therefore, once the process was completed, the leaders received a secretariat of the state as a reward. For example, when José López Portillo was appointed President, Porfirio Muñoz, was commissioned by the Education Secretary.

As a result, other leaders lead the party for six years. For example, Rodolfo Sánchez from 1946 to 1950, Alfonso Corona del Rosal from 1958 to 1964, Jesús Reyes Heroles from 1972 to 1975, Adolfo Lugo from 1982 to 1986 and Luis Donaldo Colosio from 1988 to 1992, among others. Hence, the great voter of PRI leaders in its pre-2000 history was the President in turn.

As for the removal, in the same period, only the President could remove leaders. Moreover, that removal was carried out by informal causes, since the statutes did not raise such an attribution. As noted above, some leaders were removed by the newcomer to the presidency, as a reward for loyalty during the

presidential campaign. In other cases, however, the removal occurred because the leader disrupted informal agreements between the President and the party or when they were unable to maintain stability in the organization.

The first case of removal happened when during the six year presidency of Carlos Salinas, Genaro Borrego was removed when he tried to provide some autonomy to the party. Similarly, Carlos Sansores was removed in 1979, due to the problems he had with Jesús Reyes Heroles, when he was Secretary of the State (Institutional Revolutionary Party [PRI], 2003, p. 194).

The second case of removal happened when Adolfo Lugo Verduzco was removed for the impossibility of appeasing the Democratic Current in the late 1980s (PRI, 2003, p. 213). Hence, the repository of political control of the leaders, prior to the year 2000, was the President, either rewarding loyalty or punishing disobedience or null effectiveness.

Thus, PRI is a party that presented a strong content of informal aspects, i.e. rules far from the statutes that are known, followed, accepted and helped to give certainty to the internal actors. Following the classification of Helmke and Levitsky (2003), PRI provides evidence of complementary logic, since compliance with the informal rule (appointing and removing leaders from the President in turn) constitutes a violation of the ineffective formal rule (appoint leaders through congressmen). At the same time, the enormous concentration of power in the hands of the President in turn is clear as he was the "great elector" of the leaders, as well as the only one capable of exercising political control towards them, from 1946 until before the year 2000.

With the loss of the Presidency of the Republic, PRI moved to a state of the orphanage, a situation that allowed the emergence of other power centers such as governors, parliamentary leaders and leaders. With this, control was reduced; although this did not eradicate authoritarian inheritances, in 2012, when the PRI managed to win the presidency, Pedro Joaquín Coldwell was rewarded for loyalty by moving from party leader to Secretary of Energy, under the government of Enrique Peña Grandson.

b) The "Informal" Courtesy in *Acción Nacional*

In 1939 the so-called 'blue and white' party emerged, an organization that has shown signs of wide formal institutionality throughout its history; however, the surviving informality since its genesis has been little explored. Suffice to say that, in its beginnings, Manuel Gómez Morín was at the head of the leadership for 10 years, despite contravening the statutes. Although it was a justified decision by the organizational deficiencies and the risks of the source moment (González and Gómez, 2010), it is still significant the presence of informality

in its origin, especially in a party arising in response to the predominance of leaders and caudillos over institutions and, therefore, the great importance to formal rules. In this sense, informality in the PAN reappeared in events of the first order such as the selection processes for leaders and presidential candidates. They configure a rule themselves, *informal courtesy*, which implied that the second place would decline in his/her aspirations so that the first place reached the required percentage. This unwritten rule allowed cordial competitions to be held by the designation of a leader.

Thus, the decline of a candidate in favor of another occurred at various times in the life of *Acción Nacional*, showing that the competition ran through normal course. Such was the case of the XIII National Convention of 1957, at which time José González Torres decided to hand over his votes to Luis H. Álvarez in the second vote, so that he would achieve the 80% required to be a presidential candidate. In 1970, Salvador Rosas Magallón withdrew his candidacy after a second round of voting, allowing the victory of Efraín González Morfín. This tendency to decline was presented in most of the cases until 1999, when the PAN decided to designate its presidential candidate through militancy decisions.

However, where there were situations without declining, polarization was present. For example, in the national conventions of 1975 and 1976, no contender withdrew their candidacy, causing the PAN to be left without a presidential candidate, since no contender reached the necessary 80%. Thus, upon polarization, the informal rule of the second place withdrawing his/her candidacy was broken.

As for the designation of national leaders, this trend was repeated. In cases where polarization did not emerge, the candidate ranked second declined in favor of the first. However, there were occasions when polarization did not allow for a decline (as in 1990), which was the prelude to the crisis to come (as occurred in 1975).

Examples of declining were presented in 1987, when Pablo Emilio Madero, after two votes, declined in favor of Luis H. Álvarez, who achieved the 66% requested by the statutes. In 1996, after the first round, Ernesto Ruffo declined in favor of Felipe Calderón. In 2002, Carlos Medina Plascencia declined in favor of Luis Felipe Bravo, allowing the triumph of the group that marked a distancing from Vicente Fox. However, in 2005, Carlos Medina Plascencia declined in the second round in favor of Manuel Espino, who was a leader related to Vicente Fox, while in 2010 Roberto Gil Zuarth declined to go for a second round, a fact that allowed Gustavo Madero to win. The above led to the defeat of the candidate related to Felipe Calderón, then President of Mexico.

However, there have been cases in which said informal practice (declining) has not occurred, provoking conflicts within the party. In 1990, the leadership was contested by Luis H. Álvarez and Gabriel Jiménez Remus; situation resulting in four rounds of voting. It is striking that Jiménez did not withdraw his vote, which showed a clear indicator of conflict within the PAN, and led to the formation of the Democratic and Doctrinal Forum of *Acción Nacional* in 1992. This Forum represented the most important division of PAN, since among those who left the party were former leaders and former presidential candidates (José González Torres and Pablo Emilio Madero), as well as former party secretaries (Bernardo Bátiz and Jesús González).

Consequently, although PAN is a party in which formal institutionalism is essential, the organization has not been exempt from informal practices at important moments, as it has happened when designating presidential candidates and national leaders. Coinciding with Helmke and Levitsky (2003), PAN provides evidence of the existence of a complementary logic, since the courtesy of declining for the first place allowed the designation processes of leaders to succeed, without wearing out the party. Thus, in situations without the present of the informal rule, the polarization of the party was evident, reaching extreme cases such as in 1976, in which PAN was unable to appoint a presidential candidate, or in 1990, when during the process of selecting a national leader, no one declined. In both cases, non-compliance with the informal rule was a sign of the exits and crises that occurred later, as occurred in 1978 with the *Efrainistas* and, in 1992 with the *Foristas*.

c) The "Modus Vivendi" of the Revolution, Democratic?

PRD, or the Sol Azteca party, is a *sui generis* case in the partisan conformation in Mexico. Its origin presented two factors of little value by partisan literature: the charismatic leader and the previously organized groups. This allowed the party to have a distinct interaction because from 1989 to 1999 the charismatic leader predominated. However, starting in the year 2000, within the organization a conflict emerged between consolidated groups and the charismatic leader. This gave rise to a stage in which those are the ones who make the main decisions and, in addition, instrumentally use charismatic leaders (Espejel-Espinoza, 2016).

In this regard, the daily life of the PRD has been permeated by informality which is understood as a mechanism generating certainties among the dominant coalition, specifically on issues such as the selection of leaders, the criteria of the election and the actions that they must be carried out in the absence of the head of the leadership. In turn, informality alerts the militancy and second

line management about their possibilities of influencing the party (as long as it belongs to a group) and about the actual functioning of the party (in internal processes).

As for the certainty that it grants to the dominant coalition, the PRD has been characterized for being a party where political control is deposited in the groups that comprise it. In this sense, the informal practice known as "*quitapon*" which is the absence of the leadership member, by resignation or removal of political group, it is the same political group to place the successor. The above is far from what the statutes establish. Thus, "when for some reason someone declines, resigns, has a problem or there is a debate or discrepancies, and a substitute has to be designated, such substitute belongs to the same party that appointed him" (Saúl Escobar, interview with the author, October 8, 2011). This practice has emerged in national and sub-national contexts (Espejel-Espinoza, 2010).

Regarding the certainty in the second line management and the militancy, there are two phrases exemplifying the weight of the groups on the recruitment and the possibilities that political actors outside the leading sectors belong to the dominant coalition. In the first place, the phrase "you line up or stay out" refers to the fact that in party meetings, in which decisions will be made, the "on foot" militant has little to do as in order to influence such a divided party one must align oneself with a group to obtain some material or selective incentive. In that sense; "You either belong to some political trend within the party or you do not aspire… Within the PRD you come, join and as an affiliate you are nothing… you are worth the votes you bring, if you are alone, you are worth nothing… [sic] " (Netzahualcóyotl González, interview with the author, May 20, 2005).

Finally, regarding the certainty about the real functioning of the party, the phrase "agreement kills statute" of PRD coinage is one of the best known in political slang, and it refers to the possibility for the groups to make agreements, regardless of the statutes. Either on the definition of the party's political line, the approval of any candidacy or any approach with other parties or external political or economic actors. In this sense, within a national or state congress or council, "the more someone from the PRD shouts, it is because they are weaker, the quiet ones are those who already have the "agreement kills statute". And the councils are that, it is the steamroller of the groups that already agree, for whose the discussion is worth nothing" [sic] (Rosalbina Garavito, interview with the author, January 25, 2010).

Now, in the event that an agreement is not reached informally, within the framework of a selection process within the party, the phrase "a clean knife" emerges, which refers to the fact that, in the absence of an agreement between groups in the electoral process, "anything is worth", that is, any practice such as

buying and coercing the vote. This phrase "represents the lack of a culture of dialogue, of respect for legality and the lack of a culture of agreement building ... and is a means of confrontation using methods, in many cases, not legitimate and democratic" (Jorge Calderón, interview with the author, January 7, 2010).

Thus, unlike PAN where informality can arise at critical junctures, in PRD it is the norm. Therefore, these informal practices are known, followed, accepted and reproduced generated certainty to the actors within the party. As Helmke and Levitsky (2003) state, Sol Azteca offers evidence of a competing logic because the informal rules (exemplified by the phrase "agreement, kills statute") suppose the systematic violation of ineffective formal rules. In addition, more than being practices that show the cordiality of the competition, it usually refers to opposite practices to the internal democracy.

d) The "Great Elector" in the National Regeneration Movement

Registering in 2014, MORENA is, along with *Partido Encuentro Social*, one of the youngest parties. However, most of the few academic works on this organization converge in highlighting the predominance of its charismatic leader: Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) (Espejel-Espinoza, 2015; Navarrete, Camacho and Ceja, 2017; Bolívar, 2017). Now, this predominance has materialized thanks to the fact that the charismatic leader became a "great elector", in charge of swindling, presenting and legitimizing militants under the figure of "Promoter of National Sovereignty" (PSN). Later, those who were named PSN became MORENA's "unity candidates". Thus, "AMLO gave them a boost when they said: these are my chosen ones, the others have neither voice nor vote. And that is an undemocratic decision [sic]" (Gerdoñez, interview with the author, July 17, 2017).

Although MORENA is a recently created party, its vote in areas such as Mexico City, in 2015, and the State of Mexico, in 2017, were outstanding. The practice of naming a PNS emerged in 2015, in the context of the first contest in which MORENA participated, in the delegation area of Mexico City; however, it was also manifested in the designation of the candidates for governor in 2015.

Table 2. MORENA Promoters and Candidates in Mexico City (2015)

Branch	Promoter of National Sovereignty	Coincidence with the candidate in 2015
Álvaro Obregón	Martha Pérez	Yes
Azcapotzalco	Pablo Moctezuma	Yes
Benito Juárez	Jesús González Schmal	Yes
Coyoacán	Bertha Luján	Yes
Cuajimalpa	Jenny Saltiel Cohen	Yes
Cuauhtémoc	Ricardo Monreal	Yes
Gustavo A. Madero	Ramón Jiménez	Yes
Iztacalco	Jesús Martín del Campo	Yes
Iztapalapa	Clara Brugada	Yes
Magdalena Contreras	Patricia Ortiz	Yes
Miguel Hidalgo	José Agustín Ortiz Pinchetti	No: Hector Vasconcelos
Milpa Alta	Guadalupe Chavira	Yes
Tláhuac	Rigoberto Salgado	Yes
Tlalpan	Claudia Sheinbaum	Yes
Venustiano Carranza	Patricia Ruiz	Yes
Xochimilco	Avelino Méndez	Yes

Source: Authors'

In the case of Mexico City, in July 2014, AMLO gave notice, through its Facebook account, to the PSNs in the delegation area (*La Jornada,* July 16, 2014). Ultimately, as shown in Table 2, it turned out that 15 of the 16 anointed as PSN would be MORENA's delegation candidates in Mexico City. In the case of the Miguel Hidalgo Delegation, the PSN declined for health reasons.

Tabla 3. Promotores y candidatos de MORENA a gubernaturas (2015-2017)

Election for Governor, June 2015			
Date of designation as Promoter of National Sovereignty	Entity	Promoter of National Sovereignty	Coincidence with the Governor candidate in 2015
May 2014	Colima	José Francisco Gallardo	Yes
March 2014	Campeche	Layda Sansores	Yes
June 2014	Querétaro	Celia Maya	Yes
June 2014	San Luis Potosí	Sergio Serrano	Yes
June 2014	Guerrero	Lázaro Mazón	No: Amilcar Sandoval
May 2014	Michoacán	María de la Luz Núñez	Yes
June 2014	Sonora	Carlos Javier Lamarque	Yes
June 2014	Baja California Sur	Víctor Manuel castro	Yes
			Rogelio González Ramírez
Election for Governor, June 2016			
August 2015	Aguascalientes	Nora Ruvalcaba	Yes
August 2015	Chihuahua	Víctor Quintana	No: Javier Félix Muñoz
August 2015	Hidalgo	Salvador Torres	Yes
October 2015	Durango	Guillermo Favela	Yes
January 2016	Oaxaca	Salomón Jara	Yes
January 2016	Puebla	Abraham Quiroz	Yes
September 2015	Quintana Roo	José Luis Pech	Yes
October 2015	Sinaloa	Jesús Estrada	Yes
September 2015	Tamaulipas	Héctor Martín Garza	Yes
Election for Governor, June 2017			
July 2016	State of Mexico	Delfina Gómez	Yes
August 2016		Armando Guadiana	Yes
August 2016		Miguel Ángel Navarro	Yes

Source: Authors'[4]

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4. It should be clarified that in the concurrent elections for the 2018 presidential election, the figure of Territorial Coordinator was used instead of that of Promoter of National Sovereignty. However, the informal logic remained the same.

As depicted in Table 3, in the 2015 election, seven of the nine candidates for governor were previously nominated as PSN in their states. In some cases, the designation was made more than a year before the process. The other two cases had to do with problems surrounding the candidate or the entity. In Guerrero, due to the unfortunate event that involved the disappearance of 43 students from the Isidro Burgos Rural Normal School in September 2014, Lázaro Mazón was removed from the PSN position, as well as the possibility of becoming a candidate. In some states, the absence of the PSN responded to the lack of emblematic second line management of MORENA, as happened in Nuevo León, where the state leader turned out to be the candidate.

Meanwhile, in 2016, the logic of the PSN continued, as eight of the nine candidates for governor acquired such designation before the sub-national dispute. Finally, the logic was perpetuated in 2017, as three of the announced candidates, a year earlier were nominated as PSN.

With the above, it is clear that said informal practice allowed the party to violate the electoral law by having a candidate long before its electoral contenders. As PSN, the candidates were presented to the militancy with the endorsement of their moral leader. Following Helmke and Levitsky, MORENA shows a competing logic, since, along with ineffective formal rules, more effective informal rules work for designating candidates. Such informal mechanisms illustrate the deficit in internal democracy in MORENA by allowing single candidates, as they led to elections with single candidates.

Conclusions

Informal logic is unavoidable of party reality in Latin America (Levitsky and Freidenberg, 2007), however it is an issue that has not received as much attention as studies that privilege formal institutionalization. This means that the "other institutionalization", an area of great relevance in political analysis in Latin America, has been ignored. As could be noted, the absence of informality in some cases is a sign of possible polarization and divisions within the organization, as in the case of PAN. A different dynamic is the one taking place in PRI, where informal logistic is a manifestation of arrangements behind the scenes and far from the statutory sphere.

Other experiences, such as that of PRD, show informal practices embodied in a fractional reality where decisions, agreements and conflicts take place outside the statutes. It should be noted that informality emerged in less divided parties, as in the case of MORENA, given the prevalence of a charismatic lea-

der. In turn, informality was configured in a mechanism that has allowed the party to have a certain advantage over its adversaries, by appointing potential candidates in advance.

The study of partisan informality is a rich area of research. However, this first approach only paid attention to the role that informality plays in the organizational configuration of political parties in Mexico. In this sense, the contribution of the work lies in providing empirical evidence on how informality provides the hallmark to partisan organizations which is usually an issue ignored by existing literature.

Therefore, further investigation is necessary to provide empirical evidence on party informality, particularly on its role in specific contexts, as well as its consequences.

This study concludes that the weight of informality differs between the cases presented. Thus, while in PRD this has been a constant in organizational life, in MORENA, informality seems to occupy an increasingly predominant place in decision-making. Although in the first case it is expressed as the existence of a cluster of internal groups, in the second, informality is manifested in the presence of a charismatic leader who decides on the preferences of the militancy. Meanwhile, at a different time, during Mexican presidentialism, PRI was a clear example of a party subordinate to the holder of the Executive Power. Despite these particularities, in all three cases they are competitive informal institutions whose compliance supposes the violation of ineffective formal rules where the militancy is marginalized.

In addition, *Acción Nacional* has been the organization where informality has only occurred at certain situations; however, it is an effective indicator in identifying the level of internal conflict. In this party, informality is a complementary institution, since it allowed improving the performance of formal rules. However, militancy is also marginalized in making relevant decisions. Additionally, it is worth noting that informality shows that organizational flexibility does not always means concentration of power, as it shown in the three previous cases. Informality can show the fragmentation of power at the hands of internal groups (as it occurs in PRD). It either tends to focus on the President (PRI), or the charismatic leader on duty (MORENA). In this sense, it is worth inquiring, in future research, how informality does not always means deterioration of internal democracy. At the same time, it is necessary to identify the role that informality has in other types of parties such as minority parties ((Partido del Trabajo, Partido Verde Ecologista de México, Movimiento Ciudadano, Partido Nueva Alianza o Partido Encuentro Social) (Labor Party, Green Ecological Party of Mexico, Citizen Movement, New Alliance Party or Social Meeting Party).)

Furthermore, it is valuable to research on diversity (Ragin, 2007) with other realities that allow us to appreciate the multiple manifestations and functions of informality. In this sense, one could compare some of the parties analyzed here with their counterparts in Latin America. For example, the case of PRD with Frente País Solidario, because both are divided parties; or, PRI with the Justicialista Party, organizations that maintained a dominant position for a long period.

Finally, it is necessary to advance in the study of party informality. Analyzing this type of political phenomenon leads the understanding of party reality, thanks to which it will be possible to propose causal hypotheses, as well as comparisons accounting for variations and similarities. This would lead the advancement of knowledge with respect to the organizational dynamics of the parties.

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