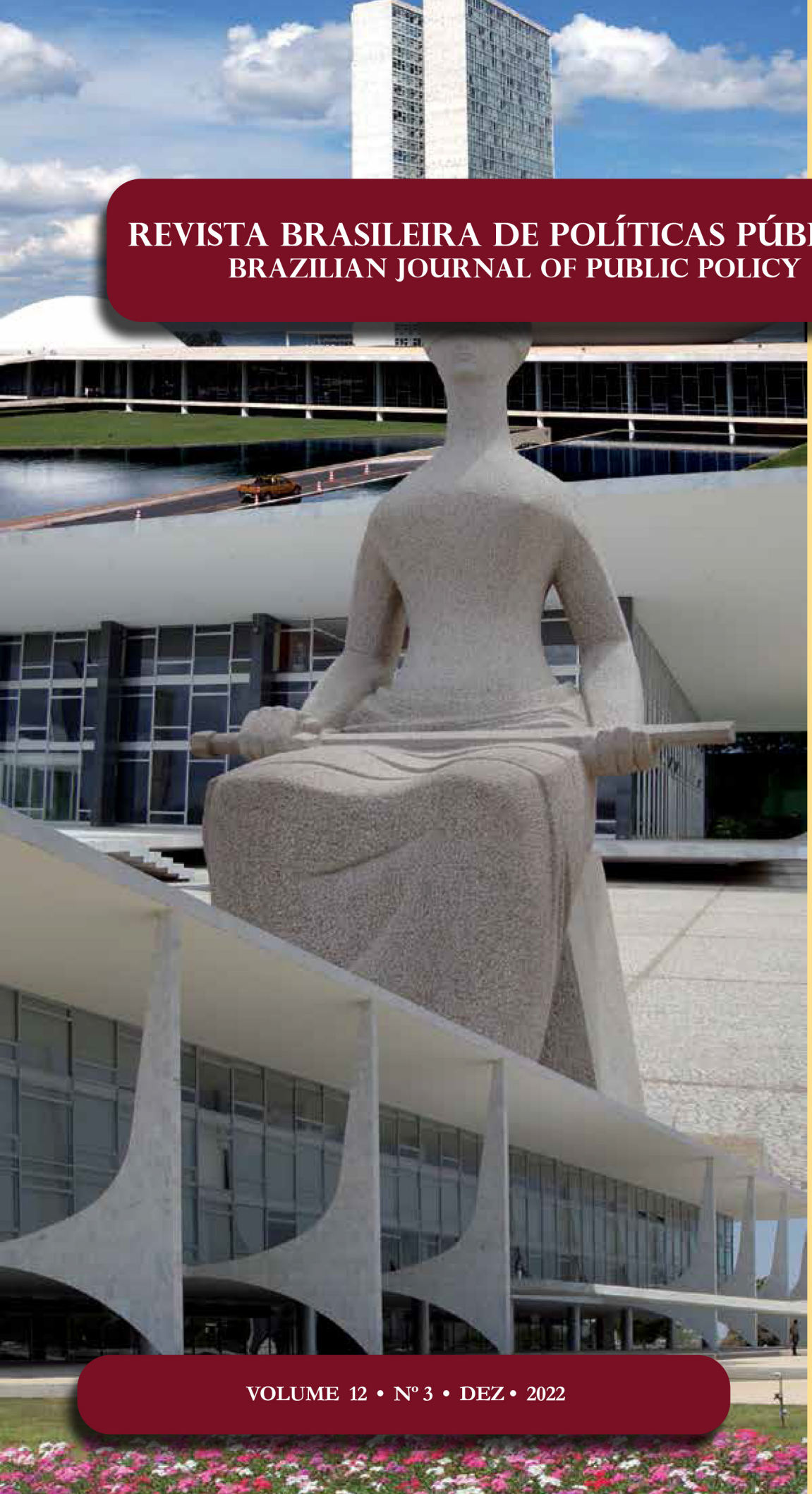

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The student movement 2011 and free education policy in Chile (2017)*

El movimiento estudiantil 2011 y la política de educación gratuita en Chile (2017)

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Victor Tricot***

Abstract

Since the return of democracy in Chile, until the 2019 October revolt, the most important and massive mobilizations had been related to the student movement. From the streets students pressured the political system for changes in the education policies, as well as attempting to be part of its formulation. This article analyzes how the 2011 student movement in Chile had an impact on the political system and the resulting free education policy. We argue that the movement actors have the capacity to adapt to the institutional context, however, this level of adaptation was not enough to comply with the demands of the movement. The analysis was developed through a qualitative strategy in which secondary sources were studied until saturation points were found, which were subsequently validated with interviews with key informants. The interviewees were actors who from various positions participated in the different stages of the process of creating public policy. A group of interviewees were presidents, vice presidents or general secretaries of student federations between 2011 and 2015. Authorities who played a role in promoting the reform (a minister and three professionals from the Ministry of Education of Chile), a deputy (former president of a student federation) as well as a senator were interviewed as well.

Keywords: student movement; public policies; free education; higher education reform; Chile.

Resumen

Desde el retorno de la democracia en Chile, hasta la revuelta social de octubre de 2019, las movilizaciones más importantes han estado relacionadas con el movimiento estudiantil. Desde la calle, los estudiantes presionaron al sistema político para cambios en las políticas educativas vinculadas con financiamiento de la educación, además lograron ser parte activa del proceso de formulación de varias leyes vinculadas a educación. Este artículo analiza cómo el movimiento estudiantil de 2011 en Chile tuvo un impacto en el sistema político y la política de educación gratuita resultante. Argumentamos que los actores del movimiento tienen la capacidad de adaptarse al contexto institucional, sin embargo, este nivel de adaptación no fue suficiente para

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cumplir con las demandas del movimiento. El análisis se desarrolló mediante una estrategia cualitativa en la que se estudiaron fuentes secundarias hasta encontrar puntos de saturación, que posteriormente fueron validados con entrevistas a actores clave. Los entrevistados fueron actores que desde diversas posiciones participaron en las distintas etapas del proceso de elaboración de políticas públicas. Un grupo de entrevistados fueron presidentes, vicepresidentes o secretarios generales de federaciones estudiantiles entre 2011 y 2015. Autoridades que jugaron un rol impulsor de la reforma (un ministro y tres profesionales del Ministerio de Educación de Chile), un diputado (ex presidente de una federación de estudiantes) y también a un senador.

Palabras clave: movimento estudiantil; políticas públicas; educación gratuita; reforma de la educación superior; Chile.

1 Introduction

Since the return of democracy in Chile in 1990 and until the social outbreaks of October 2019, arguably the most important social movements and protests had been those linked to education[1]. Student movements in two moments in recent years pressured the Chilean political system for changes of a systemic scope[2]. Although both movements had an impact on the public agenda and national politics, the student movement emerged in 2011 showed great capacity to keep the debate about free higher education on the agenda and very much alive for several years, as well as positioning leaders that have become important figures in the country´s institutional politics Former leaders of the movement became representatives in the Chilean parliament, as well as becoming also members of the government of Michelle Bachelet since 2014. However, the most recognized of these presences is the current Chilean president, Gabriel Boric, elected to rule between 2022 and 2026 was also a leader in the student movement of 2011 and after acting as a representative of his region for 2 terms was elected to be president.

By making some adjustments to its original proposals, the 2011 movement managed to articulate a set of actions that kept the discussion about free higher education ongoing for six years. This was due mainly because the movement gained great support among Chilean society[3]. Creative repertoires of collective action carried out by the students were able to sensibilize and make citizens aware of their demands, these repertoires made citizens empathize with the demands[4] and made the struggle for free education become a social and political priority. It's possible to argue that the success of the movement is unquestionable since it managed to make this issue go from being social and niche to being a public matter, positioning it on the agenda as a transformative priority and need. However, its impact did not generate consensus about the way its w implemented, nor about its beneficiaries, or the reach it would have. During almost the entire process, from 2011 to the enactment of the law in 2018, there were, as one would presume, important differences between the government and the students. Despite the change of leaders, the petition of the student mo-

[1] VON BÜLOW, Marisa; BIDEGAIN, Germán. Se necesitan dos para bailar tango estudiantes, partidos políticos y protesta en Chile 2005-2013. *In*: ALMEIDA, Paul; CORDERO ULATE, Allen (org.). *Movimientos sociales en América Latina*. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2017. Available in: https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=5102827. Access on: 30 abr. 2021; CARVALLO, Camila. 'Cooperate to win': the influence of the Chilean student movement on the 2012 Budget Law. *Social Movement Studies*, p. 1–17, 2020; NAVARRETE, Bernardo; TRICOT, Victor (org.). *Social outburst and political representation in Chile*. Cham: Springer Nature, 2021.

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[4] TRICOT, Tokichen. Movimiento de estudiantes en Chile: repertorios de acción colectiva ¿algo nuevo? *Revista F@ro*, n. 15, 2012. Available in: http://www.revistafaro.cl/index.php/Faro/article/view/63. Access on: 17 out. 2015.

vement did not change continuing to demand education as a right, and because of it being a right, it should be free.

In this study, the analysis will be based on the legislative process and interaction space between governmental and non-governmental actors and the economic resources that will give life to free education are designated. This paper examines to what extent the position of the triggering actor of the demand (student movement) has an influence on the outcome (title 5 of Law No. 21.091, which allowed free education). To meet this objective, the López-Leyva[5] scheme is used to evaluate how a social movement has an impact on a political system and a public policy. In general, there is literature on how social movements manage to install a demand on the public agenda, transforming the issue from a social to a public issue. In this context, we believe that it's a contribution to the literature to analyze how actors of the movement may evolve in the institutional sphere and what their capacity to influence is, beyond their repertoires of collective action. Therefore, we think it's necessary to study a demand that arises from a movement and how it relates and continues to relate to the process of formulating a public policy[6]. The changes promoted by the movement pass to the political system including imitation, adaptation, and reuse of existing institutions[7]

When the demand for free education was institutionalized, the student movement had to adapt to the institutions that prevail in the public arena, in other words, the actors follow norms and conventions according to the logic of what is considered appropriate[8]. This analysis allows to see a typical case. In the understanding that X is the cause of Y. In this case X is the social movement and Y is free education. Although it is not representative of all social movements, it can be a starting point to study policy results from a case that meets what the literature has raised[9]. In sum, it is an exploratory work, that analyzes the influence of a movement on public policy.

The analysis was developed through a qualitative strategy in which secondary sources were studied until saturation points were found, which were subsequently validated with interviews with key informants. The interviewees were actors who from various positions participated in the different stages of the process of creating public policy. A group of interviewees were presidents, vice presidents or general secretaries of student federations between 2011 and 2015. Authorities who played a role in promoting the reform (a minister and three professionals from the Ministry of Education), a deputy (former president of a student federation) as well as a senator were interviewed as well. This intentioned sample represents actors that from different roles participated in the different stages of the process of elaboration of the policy of free education, some of which even held more than one position.

The article is structured with a first part that analyzes the theory and presents a scheme for the process. In the second part we analyze the student movement and how it impacted on public policy. We offer at the end the conclusions.

[5] LÓPEZ-LEYVA, Miguel. Los movimientos sociales y su influencia en el ciclo de las políticas públicas. *Religión y Sociedad*, v. 22, n. 55, p. 159–197, 2012.

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[7] LÓPEZ-LEYVA, Miguel. Los movimientos sociales y su influencia en el ciclo de las políticas públicas. *Religión y Sociedad*, v. 22, n. 55, p. 159–197, 2012.

[8] MARCH, James; OLSEN, Johan. The logic of appropriateness. *In*: GOODIN, Robert E.; MORAN, Michael; REIN, Martin (org.). *The Oxford handbook of public policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. p. 689–708.

[9] LÓPEZ-LEYVA, Miguel. Los movimientos sociales y su influencia en el ciclo de las políticas públicas. *Religión y Sociedad*, v. 22, n. 55, p. 159–197, 2012.

2 From the street to the public agenda: How to evaluate the impact of a social movement?

This section aims to theoretically contextualize the debate about the influence of social movements on the construction of a public policy. These can impact on different stages of the process, for example, they can contribute to the establishment of the agenda, the design of a policy, or its feedback circuits[10]. Social movements are differentiated and consistent processes through which actors are engaged in collective action[11]. Movements build their identity, which would be conditioned by strictly political variables[12]. Social movements are collective political actors that highlight issues that, usually, are not part of the political agenda. They usually have as goal to generate changes in society, although they can also mobilize to defend the status quo. A movement can carry out offensive actions, as it seeks to influence politics, economics, or institutions, or it can carry out defensive actions when it seeks to conserve and develop lifestyles[13].

One way to analyze social movements is to provide explanations about their effects using the political process model. This model considers that movements have their emergence and success from the opportunities available, which are generated by changes in the institutional structure and the ideological disposition of the groups in power[14]. Literature recognizes various political opportunities that a social movement has including those that come from political-administrative situations. These are related to the way in which the institutional and bureaucratic environment channel collective action around certain issues[15]. These opportunities are contextual and favor mobilization, as well as political restrictions that discourage it[16]. Among these opportunities we can mention the access the public agenda, and the agenda of the government. This may make visible a particular demand and pressure the authorities to take measures to solve a specific need[17].

The Chilean student movement successfully managed to change the different government's agendas, that had to deal with their demand for free higher education. The educational system in Chile has been characterized as an extreme case of market-oriented educational policies[18]. So, it is not strange to see that the state's response did not meet what was demanded by the students. One may ask whether the Chilean student movement had a real, tangible impact, or its major outcome was raising the demand, and positioning it on the public agenda. To consider a concrete impact is related to the formulation of public policies, that are every action taken to solve public issue, this excludes many activities of the state and includes non-state actors[19].

The analysis of public policies includes internal and external factors, that reveal the actions of the state, how it works and how the forms of governing are changing in contemporary societies[20]. In scientific research, public policies can be approached in two ways[21]. On the one hand, as a dependent variable (this article)

[10] SILVA, Eduardo. Social movements, protest, and policy. *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, n. 100, p. 27–39, 2015. p. 30.

[11] DELLA PORTA, Donatella; DIANI, Mario. *Los movimientos sociales.* Madrid (España): Editorial Complutense, 2011. p. 43.

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[15] MCADAM, Doug; MCCARTHY, John D.; ZALD, Mayer N. *Movimientos sociales:* perspectivas comparadas: oportunidades políticas, estructuras de movilización y marcos interpretativos culturales. Tres Cantos: Istmo, 1999.

[16] BENITEZ, Joaquín. Estructura de oportunidades políticas y movimientos sociales urbanos en la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (2007-2015). *Espacialidades:* Revista de temas contemporáneos sobre lugares, política y cultura, v. 7, n. 2, p. 6–33, 2017. p. 10.

[17] MCADAM, Doug; MCCARTHY, John D.; ZALD, Mayer N. *Movimientos sociales:* perspectivas comparadas: oportunidades políticas, estructuras de movilización y marcos interpretativos culturales. Tres Cantos: Istmo, 1999.

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[19] FONTAINE, Guillaume. Presentación Dossier: lecciones de América Latina sobre las dimensiones racionales, cognitivas e institucionales del cambio de políticas. *Íconos*: Revista de Ciencias Sociales, v. 19, n. 53, p. 11–30, 2015. p. 25.

[20] ROTH, Andre. *Políticas públicas:* formulación, implementación y evaluación. Colombia: Aurora, 2014.

[21] FONTAINE, Guillaume. Presentación Dossier: lecciones de América Latina sobre las dimensiones racionales, cognitivas e

and, on the other, as an independent variable (it generates effects on a reality, both social, economic and of a political nature).

Public policies emerge because of interactions within an institutional framework that allows them to interact in the public sphere. Therefore, when a movement highlights a social problem, it does not necessarily become public. By this we mean that it becomes public when the debate is positioned within a space that is political and administrative. And that achieves presence on the political agenda since it is evaluated and to generate a solution by the authorities[22]. This we argue is the case with the 2011student movement in Chile. In other words, for a problem to be classified as public it must become an issue that is controversial[23].

The state contemplates a policy design, because of government efforts to change social or governmental aspects to achieve an objective. This goal is often a mix of complex agreements between government expectation and objectives (policy goals), as well as the techniques and ways that governments use to achieve these goals (policy means)[24]. Therefore, the design of a public policy, which is a process (and not just a stage), has several instruments to carry out its implementation. Designing public policies is not easy and the interaction of actors is not necessarily highlighted in the agreements, there are different visions on how to proceed and what instruments to select. The process of development of the policy for free education was not different, therefore, it should be noted that the analysis of public policies highlights the need to observe the selection of instruments of a policy.

The design of a policy is not instrumental, but a political process in which once the problem is identified and framed towards a path in which it can lead to its solution, designers must begin to select instruments that can resolve or at least improve the problem[25]. Consequently, it is necessary to consider that the importance of a problem can vary depending on the influence of actors outside the state system[26], there could be two possible ways for social movements to influence social change and a public policy. One can observe the effects on the policies (particularly in the existing legislation, as an indicator of the degree of "success"), and, on the other hand, the results in the policies, related to the incorporation of demands in the government agenda, laws or public policies in general[27]. This since movements and their protests may or may not have an impact on different stages in the policy process[28]. In the case of this study, the analysis will be based on the legislative process and interaction space between governmental and non-governmental actors, particularly on how the regulatory instrument is resolved and the economic resources that will give life to free education are designated.

Access to the public agenda is successful depending on the levels of democracy in the country[29]. With higher levels of democracy, there are greater freedoms and safeguards to state a position and apply different repertoires of collective action with a clear objective. The use of these repertoires could be justified because the movements do not have access to formal spaces to showcase their concerns, requirements and proposals on an issue that affects a given territory. From the collective action, the social movements acquire capacity

institucionales del cambio de políticas. *Íconos*: Revista de Ciencias Sociales, v. 19, n. 53, p. 11–30, 2015.

[22] SUBIRATS, Joan *et al. Análisis y gestión de políticas públicas*. Barcelona: Ariel, 2012.

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[27] LÓPEZ-LEYVA, Miguel. Los movimientos sociales y su influencia en el ciclo de las políticas públicas. *Religión y Sociedad*, v. 22, n. 55, p. 159–197, 2012. p. 171.

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[29] TILLY, Charles. *Social movements, 1768-2008*. 2. ed. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2009.

to influence the public decisions of the state and the government[30], this action being the way in which the social movements act collectively and through which they shape their objectives[31]. This mechanism allows the movements to have visibility and generate disruption in a territory.

Following Amenta and Young[32] it would be possible to define the impact of a social movement in a public policy, when it is possible to identify and make visible a problem that has an impact beyond a group. The student movement of 2011 generated an impact on the free education policy, that affected not only those that were part of the movement. It was across the board, including those who fulfilled the requirements set by the policy to benefit of this type of free education whether they agreed with the student movement. However, the interaction of the student movement does not end there, because the regulatory instrument created did not satisfy completely the demands of the movement. This may appear as a given in any public policy process, however, in the case we are referring to, it became an incentive to continue in the streets and in the institutions.

According to Silva[33] there are mediated effects, these are political effects of protests from a social movement, combined with allies in the political system, as well as favorable public opinion. Despite this, the relations and contradictions between the political system and social movements are tense, in which the political system is transformed historically and territorially by virtue of the capacity of political influence of a movement to model public decisions with orientation to expand rights and politics[34]

When civil society organizations and social movements have an impact, they can do so from the double nature we mentioned earlier -defensive and offensive-[35]. Thus, in the next section we will see how the student movement influenced the process of public policy in this double nature. Using and offensive strategy, featuring in important mobilizations, and defensive, trying to get the idea of free higher education installed during the first phase to be implemented as a public policy. However, it is important to consider that the defensive game can also be understood as an adaptation strategy of the actors to the new situation that they created during the offensive phase. This if we consider that the actors follow of the "logic of the appropriateness"[36].

In this theoretical context, this article proposes that the student movement had positive impacts on public policy. The process began with the student movement of 2011 (x) and ended with the law of free education for higher education (y). Schematically it can be summarized as presented in the following graphic. Each part of the graph is presented in the next section.

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[31] TRICOT, Tokichen. Movimiento de estudiantes en Chile: repertorios de acción colectiva ¿algo nuevo? *Revista F@ro*, n. 15, 2012. Available in: http://www.revistafaro.cl/index.php/Faro/article/view/63. Access on: 17 out. 2015.

[32] AMENTA, Edwin; YOUNG, Michael P. Making an impact: conceptual and methodological implications of the collective goods criterion. *In*: GIUGNI, Marco; MCADAM, Doug; TILLY, Charles (org.). *How Social Movements Matter*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1999. p. 22–41.

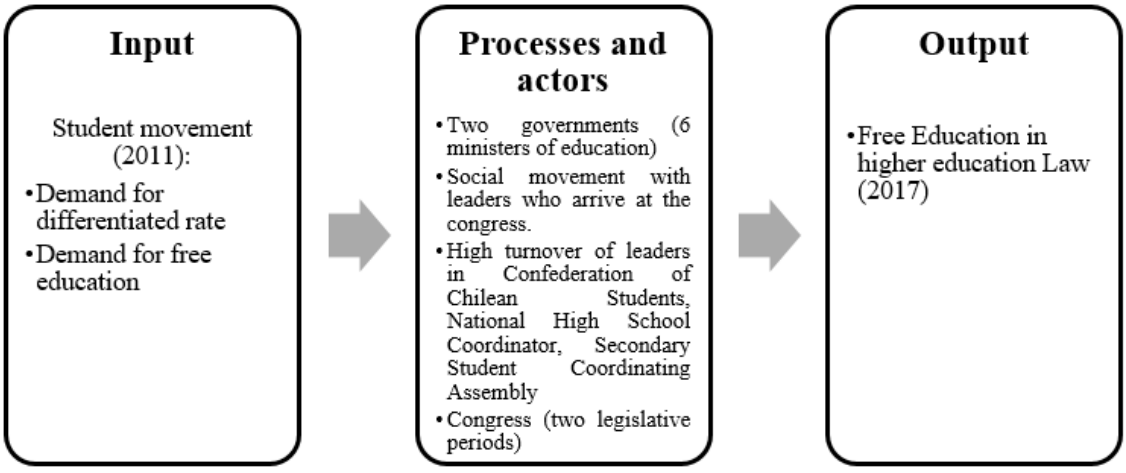
[33] SILVA, Eduardo. Social movements, protest, and policy. *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, n. 100, p. 27–39, 2015.

[34] VÉLEZ, Ramiro. Movimientos sociales y políticas públicas en el contexto de asambleas municipales constituyentes. *Administración & Desarrollo*, v. 43, n. 59, p. 65–78, 2014. p. 67.

[35] FONTAINE, Guillaume. *Petropolítica:* una teoría de la gobernanza energética. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2010. (Serie Atrio, 28). p. 66.

[36] MARCH, James; OLSEN, Johan. The logic of appropriateness. *In*: GOODIN, Robert E.; MORAN, Michael; REIN, Martin (org.). *The Oxford handbook of public policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. p. 689–708.

Figure 1. Process of the free education law in Chile



Source: Own elaboration

3 The Chilean student movement of the year 2011

To understand the student wave of mobilizations of 2011, it is necessary to contextualize it. In Chile, with the return to democracy (1990), a way of doing politics through institutions or conventional ways was favored with the supposed purpose to ensure democratic stability. This generated, among other elements, a growing distance between the political and the social sphere[37]. Anything unpredictable was interpreted as a sign of instability. The year 2006 was the first major student mobilization with a social and political reach not seen until then. These mobilizations not only demanded changes in education but questioned for the first time publicly, and with a large media coverage the political and economic consensus that had prevailed in the country since the end of the dictatorship[38]

In 2006 the main demand was the derogation of the Education Organic Constitutional Law (Ley Orgánica Constitucional de Educación LOCE) inherited from the dictatorship of Pinochet, that among other things denied the participation of students in things related to the government of schools. To pressure to achieve this objective, the main collective action repertoires were takeover of the schools, demonstrations, and other forms of pressures done by the high school's students. The answer from the government was the creation of a Presidential Advisory Committee for Education (Consejo Asesor Presidencial de la Educación) that finally proposed the modification of the law. At the beginning of 2007 the government, advised by the committee sent to the Congress a new General Law of Education (Ley General de Educación), that was finally enacted two years later.

In 2009, presidential elections were held in which right-wing candidate Sebastián Piñera was elected as the first president to come from a right-wing party after the end of the dictatorship. In the parliamentary election, the right also obtained a majority in the Chamber of Deputies. The Communist Party managed to

[37] PAREDES, Juan Pablo. Ciudadanía, participación y democracia: deuda y déficit en los 20 años de "Democracia" en Chile. *Polis*: Revista Latinoamericana, n. 28, 2011. Available in: http://journals.openedition.org/polis/1367. Access on: 24 mar. 2021.; TRICOT, Victor. Please Mind the Gap: autonomization and Street Politics. *In*: NAVARRETE, Bernardo; TRICOT, Victor (org.). *Social outburst and political representation in Chile.* Cham: Springer Nature, 2021. p. 75–89.

[38] TRICOT, Victor; ALBALA, Adrián. Institutionalization versus responsiveness: the dilemma of political representation in Chile. *In*: ALBALA, Adrián (org.). *Civil society and political representation in Latin America (2010-2015):* towards a divorce between social movements and political parties? Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018. p. 55–72. Available in: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-67801-6_3. Access on: 24 mar. 2021.

increase its representation thanks to a pact with the *Concertación*, the incumbent coalition. In the Senate, the majority remained for the *Concertación*, which controlled 20 of the 38 seats[39]. The majority of the right in the lower house and the election of Piñera generated concerns among the students, this because this sector would promote an agenda in favor of corporations and, therefore, against the interests of the student movement[40].

This configuration of the political scene, plus the agglutination of political forces related to education within different unions[41], as well as the earthquake of 2010, contributed for the country to experience the most important social protest cycle since the return of democracy[42]. Its ability to gather large masses of supporters helped to create and consolidate demands that constituted direct threats to the authorities and the most conservative parts of Chilean society[43] . The organization that brought together the different actors was the Confederation of Students of Chile (CONFECH), that became a space important for the construction of a common front among the different education actors.

In his first annual speech addressing the country (05/21/2011), President Piñera announced that it would be the "year of higher education", highlighting reforms to the quality of education, the creation of the Agency for Quality and Superintendence of School Education. To face the problems of indebtedness and financing, the government proposed to improve the existing mechanisms by increasing scholarships and rescheduling debts of defaulters of the Solidarity Fund[44]. The students expressed their total rejection to these announcements, 16 universities were seized by the students and stopped their activities. With this, the student movement sought to become a *veto player* of the reform discussion. Besides opposing to the announcements of the new government, the movement sought to solve juncture problems, promote as an alternative the delivery of more resources for public education, and free education for students of low economic levels (differentiated fees). The demands related to financing evolved from the latter (payment according to income) to free education. As confirmed in the interviews with former leaders, the initial demands were less "powerful than the final ones… we ended up talking about free education, new constitution, tax reform and nationalization of natural resources" (interviewee 3). The demand for differentiated fees failed to agglutinate due to its complexity. "On the other hand, the idea of free education achieved transversality and greater support by other social actors, this because in part it presented a critique of the current tax system and education at the same time" (interviewee 5).

The collective actions in this context sought to make visible the educational problem and that the citizenship became part of the movement. For this, a socialization strategy was used that included marches, artistic, cultural and sports interventions in public spaces, political demonstrations and seizures of schools and universities. These were repertoires where "public space was taken", transforming the street into the privileged place for the expression of their demands[45]. The reinvention of traditional repertoires of protests

[39] The coalitions that participated in the election were: Coalition for change integrated by right wing parties: Unión demócrata independiente (UDI), Renovación Nacional (RN) y Chile Primero. In the center left the Concertation: formed by Democracia Cristiana (DC), Partido por la Democracia (PPD), Socialista (PS), and Radical Social Demócrata (PRSD).

[40] JACKSON, Giorgio. *El país que soñamos*. Santiago de Chile: Debate., 2013. p. 58.

[41] Unitary Central of Workers, College of Teachers, Association of Officials, Corporation of Parents and Guardians (CPG), secondary students.

[42] BIDEGAIN, Germán. Cada vez más lejos: la autonomización partidaria de los movimientos sociales en Chile (1990 - 2014). *In*: LUNA, Juan Pablo; MARDONES, Rodrigo (ed.). *La columna vertebral fracturada:* revisitando intermediarios políticos en Chile. Santiago de Chile: RIL Editores, 2017. p. 201-228.; OLIVARES, Alejandro; CARRASCO, Camila. Social movements and public policies in Chile: analysis of the student movement of 2011 and the No+AFP movement of 2016. *Studia Politica:* Romanian Political Science Review, v. 20, n. 2, p. 203–222, 2020.

[43] AVENDAÑO, Octavio. Fracturas y representación política en el movimiento estudiantil: Chile 2011. *Última Década*, v. 41, p. 41–68, 2014.

[44] PIÑERA, Sebastián. *Discurso a la Nación 2011*. Available in: https://www.camara.cl/camara/media/docs/discursos/21mayo_2011.pdf21. Access on: 24 mar. 2021

[45] SEGOVIA, Carolina; GAMBOA, Ricardo. Chile: el año en que salimos a la calle. *Revista de ciencia política,* Santiago, v. 32, n. 1, p. 65–85, 2012. p. 66.

is observed in this context, with creative ways of mobilizing, they gave new added value to the demands[46]. Until October 2011, the student movement had been able to hold more than 250 protest events in the main cities of the country[47], mobilizing millions of people of all ages, not only in Santiago, the capital of Chile, but also, all over the country.

Another characteristic of this movement was its autonomy from traditional political parties[48]. Although an important part of the leaders of the movement were members of parties or movements, this did not influence the decision-making process since the militancy went to the background and the actions were being decided in a collective way. At the beginning of the movement most of the leaders of the federations were members mainly of the Communist Party[49]. During the development of the mobilizations, others of other more radicalized groups that had a markedly anti-systemic discourse, rejecting any negotiation formula that was carried out through the formal institutional channels[50].

Following the logic of the double nature - defensive and offensive of Fontaine[51], this "offensive stage", managed to install education as a priority, to the point that as the election year approached (2013), the demands of the movement were still very present. Therefore, presidential candidates had to take a position on the issue. For example, the incumbent candidate Evelyn Matthei pointed out that "she did not believe in free education for everyone in the university"[52]. Michelle Bachelet the opposition candidate, when presenting her candidacy, declared that in her government program she would establish free education in higher education as a right. Just this statement, led to Camila Vallejo, Carol Cariola, and Giorgio Jackson[53], former student leaders, to support Bachelet, who eventually became president for the second time.

3.1 Actors and their participation in the project to reform higher and the free education policy

Free education was defined by the movement as a mechanism to guarantee the access and permanence of students with lower incomes who otherwise would not have access to higher education[54], this is not trivial because until the student movement emergence, this was unthinkable and not part of the political agenda. The second government of Michelle Bachelet understood education as a social right, therefore, free higher education is considered a necessity that must be covered by the State.

[46] TRICOT, Tokichen. Movimiento de estudiantes en Chile: repertorios de acción colectiva ¿algo nuevo? *Revista F@ro*, n. 15, 2012. Available in: http://www.revistafaro.cl/index.php/Faro/article/view/63. Access on: 17 out. 2015.

[47] MONTERO, Violeta; MUÑOZ, Carlos; PICAZO, María Inés. Estrategias y recursos empleados por el movimiento estudiantil en el 2011. *Universum (Talca)*, v. 32, n. 1, p. 137–157, 2017. p. 139.

[48] BIDEGAIN, Germán. Cada vez más lejos: la autonomización partidaria de los movimientos sociales en Chile (1990 - 2014). *In*: LUNA, Juan Pablo; MARDONES, Rodrigo (ed.). *La columna vertebral fracturada:* revisitando intermediarios políticos en Chile. Santiago de Chile: RIL Editores, 2017. p. 201-228. p. 220.

[49] MIRANDA, Juan Pablo; ROZAS, Joaquín. Masividad de la protesta de los movimientos estudiantil y de trabajadores en el Chile post dictadura: políticas dinamizadoras y autonomización de la movilización social. *In*: CONGRESO LATINOAMERICANO DE CIENCIA POLÍTICA, 9., 2017, Montevideo. *Anais* [...]. Montevideo: [*S. n.*], 2017. Available in: www.congresoalacip2017.org/arquivo/downloadpublic2?q=YToyOntzOjY6InBhcmFtcyI7czozNToiYToxOntzOjEwOiJJRF9BUlFVSVZPIjtzOjQ6IjI1NzMiO30iO3M6MToiaCI7czozMjoiZDU5NzA5MDVjYWNmZWMxYWQ1YmMyNmM5NWY3MDE2ODkiO30%3D. Access on: 8 nov. 2022.

[50] AVENDAÑO, Octavio. Fracturas y representación política en el movimiento estudiantil: Chile 2011. *Última Década*, v. 41, p. 41–68, 2014. p. 60.

[51] FONTAINE, Guillaume. *Petropolítica:* una teoría de la gobernanza energética. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2010. (Serie Atrio, 28.

[52] MATTHEI: "No creo en la educación gratuita para todos en la universidad". Santiago: CNN Chile, 2013. 1 vídeo (2 min). Available in: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wi2qnrfQetU. Access on: 30 abr. 2021

[53] All three former university leaders ran for a position in congress, being representatives since 2014 until 2022. In the presidential elections of 2021, the former Student leader Gabriel Boric ran and won the presidential election. Giorgio Jackson and Camila Vallejo, both also former student leaders of 2011, are now ministers of his government.

[54] PAREDES, Ricardo. *Reflexiones sobre las propuestas de gratuidad para la educación superior en Chile***.** Santiago de Chile: Centro de Políticas Públicas UC, 2014. (Temas de la Agenda). Available in: https://politicaspublicas.uc.cl/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/reflexiones-sobre-las-propuestas-de-gratuidad-para-la-educacion-superior-en-chile.pdf. Access on: 24 mar. 2021. p. 9.

It has been suggested that the importance of a problem may vary depending on the influence of actors outside the state system[55]. In this case there was support to the educational demands, which allowed to put a private problem (family debts due to university credits) in the public sphere. For example, we can see that in a decade the number of students with debts went from 291,776 to 722,035[56], in addition there were problems of access and distributive equity[57].

The first response to the demands of the movement was in 2015, when the government presented a special form of financing related to free education[58]. The proposal included in the annual budget a part that would generate a targeted subsidy, for the eligible universities for 2016[59]. According to the interviewees, who were part of the government, this proposal included the movement's requests (respondents 6, 7 and 8). In this decision, the allocation of public resources can be observed, using the budget law for each year. Education would be free for people until the sixth decile, and the mechanism for the universality of free education was established by law. Despite all the latter, this policy had criticisms from different educational actors.

Among the University Presidents (*Rectores*) of the universities, this financing logic by annual parts of the budget and not by a specific law generated some criticism. For example, the rector of the Andrés Bello University, said that "Starting the free education in 2016 was an unnecessary and wrong measure by the government. The result of this decision was, finally, to take out a policy based on the fiscal wallet"[60]. On the other hand, the rector of the University of Santiago de Chile, said that "despite the difficulties I am convinced that, with the free education, although initially granted to a minority group, Chilean families and students won"[61]. Meanwhile, the rector of the Diego Portales University, indicated that "if the free education policy of 2017 is done just like the current one, the system will suffer severe damage and the responsibility will force the institutions to think about it two or three times before taking part of it again"[62] .

From the leaders and former student leaders there was criticism to the governments project since it did not comply with the principles of the demand for free education of the social movement for education[63]. The former student leader, and at the time representative in parliament for the Communist Party, Camila Vallejo, stated that, although

> she valued the project, she insisted on making the modifications in sync with those provided by the different incumbent organizations such as: the student movement, the rectors, academics, the higher education officials.[64]

[55] FONTAINE, Guillaume. Presentación Dossier: lecciones de América Latina sobre las dimensiones racionales, cognitivas e institucionales del cambio de políticas. *Íconos*: Revista de Ciencias Sociales, v. 19, n. 53, p. 11–30, 2015. p. 47.

[56] VEGA, Fernando. Créditos para educación: 616 mil estudiantes deben US$4.500 millones y 27% está en mora. *Ciper*, 4 maio 2018. Available in: https://www.ciperchile.cl/2018/05/04/creditos-para-educacion-616-mil-estudiantes-deben-us4-500-millones-y-27-esta-en-mora/. Access on: 8 nov. 2022.

[57] PAREDES, Ricardo. *Reflexiones sobre las propuestas de gratuidad para la educación superior en Chile***.** Santiago de Chile: Centro de Políticas Públicas UC, 2014. (Temas de la Agenda). Available in: https://politicaspublicas.uc.cl/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/reflexiones-sobre-las-propuestas-de-gratuidad-para-la-educacion-superior-en-chile.pdf. Access on: 24 mar. 2021. p. 15.

[58] SALAS, Víctor. *Análisis de la glosa presupuestaria para la gratuidad 2016 en Educación Superior*. 2015. Available in: https://fae.usach.cl/fae/docs/observatorioPP/Minuta4.pdf. Access on: 24 mar. 2021.

[59] SALAS, Víctor; GAYMER, Mario. *Aproximación al análisis de la política de gratuidad en educación superior en Chile*: costo de oportunidad y efectividad. 2016. Available in: https://fae.usach.cl/fae/docs/observatorioPP/Minuta8.pdf. Access on: 24 mar. 2021.

[60] MUÑOZ, Daniela. Rector de la Unab: "La gratuidad es una política pública que discrimina". *La Tercera*, 2015. Available in: https://www.latercera.com/noticia/rector-de-la-unab-la-gratuidad-es-una-politica-publica-que-discrimina/. Access on: 8 nov. 2022.

[61] ZOLEZZI, Juan. Gratuidad: ¿hasta cuándo nos entrampamos? *El Mostrador*, 2016. Available in: https://www.elmostrador.cl/noticias/opinion/2016/01/18/gratuidad-hasta-cuando-nos-entrampamos/. Access on: 8 nov. 2022.

[62] MUÑOZ, Daniela. Rector de la Unab: "La gratuidad es una política pública que discrimina". *La Tercera*, 2015. Available in: https://www.latercera.com/noticia/rector-de-la-unab-la-gratuidad-es-una-politica-publica-que-discrimina/. Access on: 8 nov. 2022.

[63] CONTRERAS KALLENS, Pablo Andrés; CARVALLO, Fernando. *Minuta de análisis de la reforma a la educación superior, parte I*: educación de mercado y derechos sociales. Santiago: Centro de Estudios de la Federación de Estudiantes de la Universidad de Chile, 2016. p. 17.

[64] CAMILA Vallejo: "La reforma a la educación superior requiere una mirada sistémica". *Cooperativa.cl*, 29 jun. 2016. Available in: https://cooperativa.cl/noticias/pais/educacion/proyectos/camila-vallejo-la-reforma-a-la-educacion-superior-requiere-una-mirada/2016-06-29/141815.html. Access on: 8 nov. 2022.

Giorgio Jackson, also a former student leader and current representative of a new party called Democratic Revolution, (*Revolución Democratica*) spoke out against the project, since the law did not even closely meet the expectations of the student movement, because the free education would exist if there were more tax revenues proportional to GDP, and not just more income[65]. As well, the representative and former student leader Gabriel Boric highlighted that the government with this law preferred not to bother those who see education as a business[66].

The vision of the authorities was different, for example, interviewee 6, points out that "the student movement was key. There was no possibility of avoiding such an issue supported by society and expressed by the social movement for years", these arguments were stressed by all respondents linked to the government. A critical point is indicated by the interviewee 9, who, thinking in a long-term logic, sustains that "from the Ministry of Education there was a willingness to consider students and other actors, if the listening levels of the 1990s were compared to this, we can find that there is more dialogue, but that they are heard does not imply that there is a translation into real policies". Specifically, as stated in the following table, there was a low presence of students in the process. According to interviewee 7 this is explained by the quality of the student leaders, "between 2014-2017, they were not as influential compared to those who led the students in 2011 and did not contribute enough with their proposals in the institutional spaces due to the disagreement with the policy presented by the government".

The government project, with definitions of operating logic, requirements, limitations, sanctions (both from institutions and those who want to access this benefit), and transitory articles for institutional financing of the free education[67], entered to the congress in July 2016. In the legislative discussion the interested actors participated as guests to the commissions where the project was discussed (table 1). In this article, participants are considered those who had an alternative program and/or project to the one presented by the Executive. The student leaders had a low participation: only 10% of the guests were leaders. The group with the most intervention capacity was the rectors of the universities, 33% of the interventions are from this group. As mentioned, this group is not homogeneous and represents various positions. The main line of division between them is the financing structure (private versus public). Researchers and interest groups ratify this division. Guest academics tend to represent the options of the universities to which they are part of. Interest groups and other organizations represent positions and are usually in coordination with political actors, they are invited to reinforce positions of those who are part of the commissions.

[65] GIORGIO Jackson duro con proyecto del gobierno por gratuidad: o hubo un mal cálculo o se prometió algo que se sabía que no se podía cumplir. *El Mostrador,* 5 jul. 2016. Available in: https://www.elmostrador.cl/noticias/pais/2016/07/05/giorgio-jackson-duro-con-proyecto-del-gobierno-por-gratuidad-o-hubo-un-mal-calculo-o-se-prometio-algo-que-se-sabia-que-no-se-podia-cumplir/. Access on: 8 nov. 2022.

[66] GABRIEL Boric y reforma educacional: "No cumple con las expectativas". *T13*, 10 jul. 2016. Available in: https://www.t13.cl/noticia/politica/gabriel-boric-gobierno-prefirio-no-incomodar-ven-negocio-educacion. Access on: 8 nov. 2022.

[67] Transitional articles between the thirty-third and the forty-second of paragraph 7 of the transitions of institutional financing for free. Law No. 21.091

Table 1. Exhibitors in the commissions for the discussion Project of Higher Education Law

Commission	Date of entry	Constitutional procedure	Leaders of student movement	Rectors Institutions Higher Education	Researchers and academics	State institutions	Interest groups - others
Education Chamber of deputies of Chile	11/04/ 2017	First report first procedure	8	23	18	5	24
	4/07/2 017	Second report first procedure	3	11	9	2	0
Finance Chamber of deputies of Chile	13/07/ 2017	First report first procedure	0	0	2	3	0
Senate Education Commission	12/12/ 2017	First report second procedure	4	18	9	5	3
	21/01/ 2018	Second report second procedure	0	1	1	5	0
Senate Finance Commission	23/01/ 2018	First report second procedure	0	1	0	6	1

Source: Own elaboration

There were multiple actors who participated in the process. As mentioned, rectors of universities, both public and private, were strategic and predominant to present their positions to the Executive, and actively tried to impact the legislative branch.

In the lower house of congress, the work and influence of the former student leaders of 2011, among them Camila Vallejo, Gabriel Boric, Karol Cariola and Giorgio Jackson (on the so-called "student bench") was decisive. Even though they did not completely agree with the outcome, they were fundamental to voice the student position from within the institutions, no longer as part of the movement, but as members of political parties that competed in the elections. They participated in a first stage as members and leaders of the student movement, and in a second stage from Congress and the Education committee of the lower chamber, pressing from there so that the demands were part of the new law. When reviewing their participation, we can evidence the "adequacy logic" that we mentioned before. They in the first phase led demonstrations, now as representatives they played a different role.

It's important to highlight, that this student bench, as it was called by the media, worked from the driven tendencies of their political organizations and not necessarily from the request's of 2011 movement. Among the interviewees that were linked to the 2011 student movement, we can see that there was coordination among some of these deputies, due to their common history as student leaders. Also, this articulation happens despite being part of different political structures, even when these demands went beyond of what the government parties were willing to do (interviewed 1 2 3 4). On more than one occasion, Camila Vallejo, had to face her coalition to defend positions that came from the student demands. The former leaders from the congress managed to be an important part of the debate, but it did not reach a higher level of articulation with current leaders or among them. The interviewee 8 points out that "having been in the Ministry of Education legislative team and before […] I could say that the student bench never existed. That was a communicational construction rather than a reality "this despite the efforts of former leaders who tried to be articulators with the student movement".

In the Senate, the project review chamber, the participation of the actors in general was less however, the rectors stand out again. This could be because the way of financing their institutions would be modified. Student leaders again didn't have much participation. Our interviews show that although they participated in the parliamentary debate and with the Executive (as pre-legislative work). What complicated the relationship was the high turnover of student leaders, and that the sectors that dominated the CONFECH, did not want to establish a genuine negotiation with the Executive.

As a result of this part of our analysis, we could argue that the considerations stated by Edwin Amenta and Michael Young are verified.[68] The impact of the student movement manages to answer to a problem and, at least initially, there are beneficiaries who study for free, beyond having participated in the movement or not. The movement impacts on the political and public agenda setting, managing to position a demand that includes free education for all. However, this does not happen in the two subsequent moments, because they had low participation and influence both in the institutional space and in the mobilization.

Finally, in January 2018, when President Michelle Bachelet was still in power, with 102 votes in favor and only two abstentions, the Chamber of Deputies approved the Law of Higher Education No. 21,091. From the government's point of view and despite the differences within the coalition, there was satisfaction with the result. At this point all respondents identified with the ruling party, agree. For example, the interviewee 10 highlights that "It is unquestionable that a set of transformations of the depth of those carried out could only take place in a center-left government".

Table 2 gives an account of the different moments of the legislative process for free education and the impact of the student movement. Following López-Leyva[69], it is important to consider legislative processes because in this space, both legislators and citizens, show their ability to pay attention to policy problems at the same time. For this reason, the legislative process is decisive on which instrument will guide the implementation of a policy. This body has national presence and representatives are elected periodically, it also defines the rules of the game that will prevail, in this case, in the free education policy. In general, there is literature on how social movements manage to install a demand on the public agenda, transforming the issue from a social to a public issue. In this context, we believe that it's a contribution to the literature to analyze how actors of the movement may evolve in the institutional sphere and what their capacity to influence is, beyond their repertoires of collective action.

Table 2. Moments of the free education legislative process and the impact of the student movement

Moment	Objective of the movement	Impact on the system
Setting the political agenda	Change the plans and agendas of political leaders	Introduce a topic in the agenda
Establishment of the content of legislation	Influence the content of the proposals in Executive and Legislative. Former leaders of the time are deputies in the legislative period of the discussion, participate in the education commission Camila Vallejo and Giorgio Jackson (political differences of free application) and leaders at the time of processing participate little in the debate.	Changes in the content of the proposal increases the probability of obtaining a greater potential value of collective benefits. The year 2011 stops proposal of reform of the Government of Piñera. 2016-2017 it is not possible to change content (criticism that free education follows with commercial logic and operates as a scholarship system).
Enactment of legislation	Influence legislators for approval.	It manages to influence legislators to vote for the initiative of their choice, increases the probability of obtaining specified collective benefits (content).

Source: Prepared by the authors based on López-Leyva (2012: 175)

[68] AMENTA, Edwin; YOUNG, Michael P. Making an impact: conceptual and methodological implications of the collective goods criterion. *In*: GIUGNI, Marco; MCADAM, Doug; TILLY, Charles (org.). *How Social Movements Matter*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1999. p. 22–41.

[69] LÓPEZ-LEYVA, Miguel. Los movimientos sociales y su influencia en el ciclo de las políticas públicas. *Religión y Sociedad*, v. 22, n. 55, p. 159–197, 2012.

There is a coincidence between former student leaders, parliamentarians, and representatives of the Executive that the free education policy is a result, in general terms, of the demands, and the constant presence and mobilization of the student movement. That managed to put on the public agenda the need to have a different financing policy for the education system. For example, interviewee 9 argues that "the influence of the movement is super important so that free education was on the agenda. This movement was able to put the issue in the public sphere and the possibility of legislating on this policy is 100% attributed by what this movement did".

The leaders who had to represent the demands of the movement in the Bachelet period participated in meetings with the Executive branch and with the Legislative. However, their influence in the processing of the law was low, the level of mobilization did not impact enough to be a legitimate voice when it came to incorporating its indications in the design of the law. Failing to change the governments road map, despite having expressed their rejection to the objectives that were being worked towards by the Government, which are a significantly different with the movement that took place in 2011.

4 Conclusions

Social movements both in Chile and in Latin America, in the last decades have emerged as influential collective political actors, that try, among other things, to influence or even to be part of the decision-making process of governments, and the elaboration of public policies.

New forms of interaction in the political system between the agents, and the changes in the role of the state have led to new ways of dealing with issues. From a unidirectional perspective (where the state takes charge of solving hierarchically) towards a more bidirectional position (state interaction with non-state actors). In this context, the student movement of 2011 impacts with its demand for free education, through demonstrations, innovative repertoires of collective action, and the use of communications as a tool to influence the responses of the government to an educational problem, particularly, its financing.

They also enter the institutional sphere with the objective of influencing more directly, the content of the free education policy and positioning their interests and objectives, which go beyond the agenda.

This article examined part of the legislative process and the interaction of the actors who sought to influence the design of the norm that incorporates free education in tertiary education. As it usually happens in these processes, this law failed to respond in its content to student demands, therefore, its leaders were dissatisfied.

From the moment the debate was institutionalized with the proposals that came from the government, an interaction began between the actors of the student movement, who were interested in participating, they took an "offensive" position. However, due to the low influence within the political they did not achieve their central objective, which was free education as a right for all students. The leaders of 2011 were in a different role, since they were representatives who, although tried from their position to be consistent with the demands of the movement, could not include an accurate reflection of the movement demands.

As stated, a fact that may play against the possibility of the movement participating more actively in this legislative debate, is the high turnover of student leaders, which change every year. Therefore, it is feasible to assume that it is better for legislators to establish dialogues with actors from more stable institutions. This could explain, in part, why in the last two moments of the legislative process, there were mostly interactions between representatives of educational institutions, academics, researchers and study centers, highlighting the participation of the rectors as protagonists of the reform.

However, a new question is also raised about the fact that most of the people who presented in the commissions are attached to thought centers, organizations, groups, and universities related to political parties. That makes us question the purpose of these visits and ask to what extent their participation is nothing more than reaffirmation of positions, elements that each one of the representatives already thought before beginning the process.

It's possible to argue that the social movements wanting to influence the process of formulating a public policy must enter the institutional field and adapt to the rules, norms, values, and customs. The student movement was able to influence the public agenda and develop the public policy, however in this process of design and implementation understandably the initial process was not expressed as it was proposed by the students. This means that its influence was partial in the institutional arena. When the social movement demand is institutionalized, as we have seen in this article, the influence seen in the streets is not reflected in the parliament, or in the participation in the commissions.

The work presented some objective limitations. Those of a temporary nature, the completion of the analysis, in this case of the enactment of a law for the development of a policy was a reality seven years after the development of the student movement of 2011. On the other hand, this study does not reflect the impact of public policy (if it was successful or failed), because it is still a recent policy.

This does not mean that it would not be interesting to investigate the evaluation of the policy in the framework of its design in the future. Particularly, it would be a contribution in the discipline to develop a study from the public policy design framework that not only observes the decision of a combination of instruments but also how this process develops. A good instrument will depend on the context in which it will be used, and it could be observed what is the role of a social movement in this reality. In future research related to educational policy, this could be analyzed from the moment it is implemented and be able to evaluate the result of the policy, but not necessarily evaluate an impact, but also see in depth what is causing the effect, that is, what is the causal mechanism that is producing causes and effects through process tracing.

This case illustrates how the actors of the movement adapted to the context and the institutional sphere. However, this adaptation did not allow them to reach the demand as they expected it in the policy. This caused powerful groups to mobilize within an institutional environment formed by public and private sector organizations. Likewise, it is reaffirmed that the effects of the movement in the formulation of a public policy can be tested in other cases beyond the Chilean case, as a comparative analysis can also be performed to also know other types of cases such as deviants.

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