

**A Study of the Latin American Public
Opinion Project (LAPOP)**

The Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua, 2004



NICARAGUA

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AL	Liberal Alliance
CSE	Supreme Electoral Council
CSJ	Supreme Court of Justice
FSLN	Sandinista National Liberation Front party
BID	Inter-American Development Bank
EAP	Economically Active Population
HDI	Human Development Index
INEC	Nicaraguan Institute of Statistics and Censuses
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
Km	Kilometers
LSMS	National Living Standard Measurement Survey
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OPAL	Latin American Public Opinion Project
PC	Conservative Party
PCDN	Democratic Conservative Party of Nicaragua
PLC	Constitutionalist Liberal Party
PLI	Independent Liberal Party
PND	National Development Plan
UNO	National Opposition Union
USAID	US Agency for International Development

Executive Summary

- ❑ This study has been conducted via a common survey in the participating countries of Central America, Mexico and Colombia, based on strict scientific techniques that ensure faithful and valid results. In Nicaragua, we surveyed 1,430 people (March 2004), which constituted a probabilistically representative sample of the population of the country's different regions.
- ❑ In this study we confirmed that a key element of Nicaraguan political culture is the high level of adhesion to a shared national identity, while the levels of identification and support for the existing system are much lower, and this has remained constant over recent years. At a regional level, Nicaraguans perceive that the current political system has scant legitimacy, similar to how neighboring Salvadorans, Hondurans and Panamanians value their political systems.
- ❑ Regarding political tolerance, it is worrying to observe a backsliding of the positive tendency observed in Nicaraguan between 1990 and the end of the decade, which reflects the confrontational political climate that has prevailed in the past three years among the country's main parties and political leaders. This growing intolerance, added to low support for the system, definitively translates into a politically unstable system with limited civic support for the consolidation of a democratic regime.
- ❑ Political values constitute the basis of the attitudes, perceptions and behavior of citizens, and in this regard, our study shows that the majority of Nicaraguans express having key democratic values such as rejection of non-elected and authoritarian governments and violent or illegal political actions. The historical experiences of fratricidal wars and the resource to force in political life during the 20th century seem to taught the citizenry the value of legal and peaceful means of political participation and conflict resolution in this 21st century.
- ❑ In contrast, a sector of the citizenry would approve an eventual coup d'état to surmount major economic or public security problems, which alerts us to the fragility of the democratic systems if the population's basic needs are not successfully satisfied. In this period, we observe multiple mobilizations, highway closures and confrontations with the police by social sectors that have exhausted the legal and peaceful means of petition without obtaining a satisfactory government response.
- ❑ The electoral participation of Nicaraguans in the past three national elections is noteworthy, particularly among married adults with a university education, who trust the elections and are confident that the vote can improve the current situation. This high electoral participation reflects civic interest in affecting the section of those governing them and developing a democratic political culture in the country.
- ❑ Nonetheless, we find significant electoral absenteeism from the Atlantic Autonomous regions and in the last municipal elections in 2000, held independent from the national ones. This reflects both lower civic valuing of local elections and the restrictions imposed on the smaller parties and on the civil associations in the last electoral reforms (1999) as a product of the pact between the majority parties Sandinista Front (FSLN) and Liberal Party (PLC).

- ❑ It is interesting to verify the broad civic support to the proposals made in the past three years by different political actors and civil organizations to reform the current “closed” electoral system in the sense of promoting gender equity in public posts, territorial representation of the legislators and the opportunity for civic organizations to compete in municipal elections. These results are indicators of the democratic values and attitudes that predominate in the civic political culture, contrary to the exclusionary and top-down attitudes of the political culture of Nicaragua’s party elite who have systematically opposed these measures.
- ❑ At the municipal level, we find low levels of civic participation in municipal meetings and forums, as well as in petitions to the municipal government authorities. We observe that those who participate more are men, rural or small town residents, who have confidence in the municipal officials and consider them receptive to their demands. Other factors that could influence this low civic participation in open town forms have been their centralized and top-down handling by municipal government, and the lack of information beforehand or of a broad invitation to all residents to attend them.
- ❑ In addition, there are citizens who do not participate at local level once they learn of the meager availability of financial, human and material resources of their municipal governments, given the incipient nature of “decentralization” in Nicaragua. In reality, it is a “de-concentration” of responsibilities without budget, due to the centralism prevailing in the state institutions and political party leaderships.
- ❑ It is worrying to observe that Nicaraguans make scant use of their existing rights to and opportunities for civil participation, save issuing their vote in the electoral periods and in the bills promoted by broad national networks of civil organizations.
- ❑ This study indicates that a low level of interpersonal confidence exists among Nicaraguans together with limited civil participation in community or trade associations, in which the religious groupings distinguish themselves. Those surveyed, however, recognize that there is broad liberty in the country to do so. The distrust is toward fellow citizens and in the institutions that hinder political participation and lead to passivity, since possibilities of advocating on behalf of their own interests and rights are not glimpsed. This is confirmation that a low level of social capital limits active and ongoing civic participation at both the local and national levels, affecting the political system’s legitimacy and the development of the participatory component in Nicaragua’s democratic system established in the Political Constitution.
- ❑ A challenge for democratic consolidation in Nicaragua is to strengthen periodic and civic participation in social organizations and municipal government administration, which implies changes in both the officials and the inhabitants, as well as effective implementation of a facilitating judicial framework based on the Political Constitution and on the law of civic participation recently approved in the National Assembly.
- ❑ A problematic situation felt by Nicaraguans is public corruption. A fifth of those surveyed have suffered some act of suborning in the past year, positioning them at an intermediate level with respect to neighboring countries. The institutions pointed to most frequently by

those surveyed with respect to bribery have been the Police, the Courts, the mayor's office and the work center.

- ❑ A civic perception predominates in the country that the corruption of public officials is generalized, which has an influence on the system's low legitimacy, as does the experiences suffered personally. Those interviewed who had not been victims of acts of bribery in the year before the survey demonstrate greater levels of support for the political system than those who have suffered acts of corruption. The results of this study feed the thesis that corruption is negative both for economic development and for the democratic consolidation of the political systems. In other words, the reproduction of acts of corruption at a state level can strongly erode the legitimacy of the political system and thus of its democratic stability.
- ❑ Another social problem revealed by this study is insecurity due to the crime that worries Nicaraguans on a daily basis due both to the personal experiences suffered and to the media reporting, which for the most part highlight violent events. The study shows that victimization by criminal acts and perceptions about this phenomenon have direct repercussions on political legitimacy and democratic construction in Nicaragua. In other words, the consolidation of democratic legitimacy requires policies aimed at achieving an effective, just and transparent functioning of the different institutions of Nicaragua's justice system
- ❑ The felt issue of crime and corruption are aggravated by the observation that citizens have little confidence in the justice system in Nicaragua, which is in charge of dealing with both these social problems. Nonetheless, those surveyed assign differentiated values to the main institution, stressing a high trust in the Human Rights Defense Attorney's Office.
- ❑ In a democratic political system, the system for the administration of justice must effectively and equitably protect the rights of the population, and especially the rights of ethnic groups, children and women. The existence of a rule of law requires the volition of officials to fulfill and enforce respect for the laws, needed institutional resources and civic knowledge. A basic condition is that Nicaraguans must have nearby and free access to the justice system, with the goal of defending their rights, which implies a territorial distribution of the institutions of justice and the existence of competent and free public defenders for low-income families.
- ❑ The study shows that there is a close correlation between civic confidence in the justice system and the legitimacy of the public system; that is, the citizens who trust in the institutions to protect their rights tend to express strong support for the political system. Evidently, the effective functioning of a democratic system requires fair and responsible institutions that protect civic liberties and human rights.
- ❑ The consolidation of democratic processes in Nicaragua undoubtedly involves a simultaneous dual labor that promotes democratic values and attitudes, deconstructing the inherited "Pedrarias Syndrome" on the one hand, and on the other establishes an efficient, transparent institutional-judicial framework and public officials with a conception of being "public servants" and a capacity to generate consensus.

Preface

Democratic governance is increasingly recognized as central to the development process. Applied democratic development is now an emerging field of academic study and development assistance. From an academic perspective, the great movement of political regimes towards democracy led to a new focus on the processes of democratization. Recent research has demonstrated the centrality of good governance to sustained economic and social progress. The result is a ballooning literature on regime change, democratic consolidation, and the institutionalization of good governance.

Development agencies have also begun to invest in programs that promote democratic governance both to spur growth and poverty reduction as well as an end in itself. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been at the forefront of donors in recognizing democracy and good governance as fundamental characteristics of development. Even a decade before the agency created the Center for Democracy and Governance in 1994, country missions – particularly in Latin America – began to invest heavily in justice reform, electoral assistance, local government, legislative development, civil society strengthening and other programs that have become the bedrock of our current extensive programming in “DG”. Every Administration over the past two decades has supported and expanded these efforts. At present we have democracy programs in over 80 countries, as well as large regional and global programs. Our programs in this region (Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Colombia) are all tailored to the specific country context and managed by a local Mission, but share a focus on transparent and accountable governance and strengthened rule of law.

Unfortunately, rigorous measurement has lagged behind insight and action, but it is now underway with a vengeance. Analysts are developing and refining measures of institutional strengthening, political and civil rights, democratic culture, transparency, and other attributes of democracy and governance. At a much slower pace, donors are just beginning to examine closely the impact and effectiveness of their own work in this sector. In this context, USAID missions have supported high quality democracy surveys that analyze the beliefs, perceptions, and behavior of citizens and used the results to develop strategies of support.

Of course, surveys are only one tool in the arsenal of analytic instruments needed for good programming. We also rely on assessments of institutional development in both government and non-governmental organizations, on analyses of relationships among power contenders, and on a large range of other factors that affect prospects of democratic development and good governance. Nonetheless, surveys offer information not available from other sources on the state of democratic culture and, increasingly, on the effectiveness of our programs.

USAID missions have sponsored numerous surveys, many in collaboration with Dr. Mitchell Seligson and the local research teams that have carried out the present study. These are now being put on the web and made publicly available for further analysis.

This current study, nonetheless, is pioneering. It is the first time that missions have worked in concert to develop a common transnational survey in democracy and governance, allowing reliable comparisons of the democratic attributes across all of Central America, Colombia, and

Mexico, as well as with recent studies in Andean countries. For several missions, these surveys are the second or third in a series, offering reliable measures of change for the first time. Moreover, the survey instrument itself was the product of collaboration between survey research specialists led by Dr. Seligson and the USAID Democracy Offices in the region. As a result, the data allow reliable comparisons with the growing body of democracy surveys elsewhere, but also respond to specific needs of donors. For example, there are many questions that “drill down” into aspects of corruption and local government to provide insights into these potentially fruitful areas of donor support. Potentially even more important, some of the surveys over-sample geographic areas where USAID DG programming is concentrated, so that we can measure more reliably what changes might be due to specific program interventions—an important step in rigorously measuring the impact and effectiveness of our programs.

USAID missions intent on improving democracy programs and better measuring the impact of their work led this initiative. The Office of Democracy and Governance and the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean in Washington also strongly supported the work, as an innovative effort within the Agency to standardize our measurements and better report on our progress to Congress. However, we also believe these surveys will be an important resource for policy makers and academics, offering the best data available for decision-making and further research. To this end, we are supporting not only publication of the results, but a web-based data base allowing further analysis of the data. This report, and the country reports that preceded it, are only the tip of the iceberg in terms of research possibilities.

Undertaking these surveys has had other positive outcomes. For example, previous surveys have at times been important mobilizing tools for policy reformers in Latin America, with results presented to the Bolivian congress, for example, and to cabinet officials in a number of countries. In addition, the national research teams who conducted the surveys increased their own institutional capacities that will outlast this particular piece of work. Third, the surveys offer a public “voice” for citizen concerns about democracy, and the opportunity to see how particular subgroups—ethnic groups, women, people in specific regions—are faring.

We hope these surveys will be widely used by practitioners and policy-makers and contribute to our understanding of the processes of political change now underway in the hemisphere.

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Prologue

Studying Democratic Values in Eight Latin American Countries: The Challenge and the Response

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The publication you have before you is one in a growing series of studies produced by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), known as OPAL in Spanish. That project, initiated over two decades ago, and for many years housed at the University of Pittsburgh, is now hosted by Vanderbilt University, and has received generous support in recent years from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It began with the study of democratic values in one country, Costa Rica, at a time when much of the rest of Latin America was caught in the grip of repressive regimes that widely prohibited studies of public opinion (and systematically violated human rights and civil liberties). Today, fortunately, such studies can be carried out openly and freely in almost all countries in the region.

The present study reflects LAPOP's most extensive effort to date, incorporating eight countries (Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia). The sample and questionnaire designs for all eight studies were uniform, allowing direct comparisons among them, as well as allowing for detailed analysis within each country. The 2004 series involves a total of nine publications, one for each of the eight countries, authored by the country teams, and a summary study, written by the author of this Prologue, who serves as the Director of the LAPOP, and the overall scientific coordinator of the eight-country project. Fortunately, many of the questions asked in the surveys administered in these eight countries were also included in LAPOP national sample studies carried out in 2004 in Ecuador and Bolivia, meaning that for some items it will be possible to compare across ten countries in Latin America. As of this writing, the Bolivia data for 2004 are not available, so in this volume, results for Bolivia 2002 are used. Finally, a collaborative investigation in the Dominican Republic, in which a small number of key questions from the LAPOP were included, broadens the country sample of 2004 to eleven, and gives us at least a limited picture of the Caribbean, adding to our samples of Central America and the Andes, although those data were not available for analysis at this writing. The only missing region in Latin America is the Southern Cone, a deficit we hope to remedy in the future. For several of the countries in the current round, LAPOP had previously carried surveys using identical batteries of questions. For that reason, in the country-based reports on Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, comparisons with prior results are made.

Surveys of public opinion in Latin America have become very popular in recent years. Unfortunately, all too few of those studies follow the rigorous scientific procedures that have become accepted as the norm in academic public opinion research in the United States and Europe. Those studies often suffer from poorly designed questionnaires, unrepresentative and non-random samples, poor fieldwork supervision, sloppy data entry, and data analysis that rarely

goes beyond univariate presentation of percentages.¹ As a result, such studies are often dismissed by academics and policy-makers alike.

The LAPOP project has attempted, with considerable success I would argue, to deviate from the prevailing Latin American norm to produce quality survey data that matches the highest standards of academic research in the U.S. and Europe. The surveys on which the present study relies, because it was designed from the outset to allow for cross-national comparisons, were carried out with special rigor and attention to methodological detail, as is described in this prologue and in the methodology section of this synthesis report and the individual volumes. We recognized from the outset that all survey research, by its very nature, contains error (derived from many sources, including errors resulting from probability sampling, respondent inattention, coding mistakes, and data entry failures). Our goal, was to reduce to the absolute minimum each of those errors, and do so in a cost-effective manner.

We also sought, from the outset, to make our methodology transparent and replicable. The essence of scientific research is that it can be replicated. Excitement about the prospects for “cold fusion” quickly faded when physicists were unable to replicate the initial “discovery.” All too many surveys published in Latin America contain no information whatsoever about the sample designs, or when such information is provided it is so sketchy that it is impossible to determine with any degree of detail how the sample was carried out. Equally serious, it is rare for the data base itself to be made available to the public; almost without exception the raw data are closely guarded, making it impossible for social scientists and policy makers alike to reanalyze the data looking for new insights, or to attempt to replicate the original findings. Publicly funded data bases should be available to the public. Failure to do so results in privatization of public goods. Of course, in the dissemination of data, all human subjects protection policies, as governed by Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) must be followed scrupulously so that the rights of subject to protect their identities are respected.

We embarked on the 2004 series in the hope that the results would be of interest and of policy relevance to citizens, NGOs, academics, governments and the international donor community. Our belief is that the results can not only be used to help advance the democratization agenda, they can also serve the academic community that has been engaged in a quest to determine which citizen values are the ones most likely to promote stable democracy, and which ones are most likely to undermine it. For that reason, the researchers engaged in this project agreed on a common core of questions to include in our survey. We agreed on that core in a meeting held in Panama City, in January 2004, hosted by our Panamanian colleague Marco Gandásegui, Jr. All of the country teams were represented, as was the donor organization, USAID. It was not easy for us to agree on a common core, since almost everyone present had their favorite questions, and we knew from the outset that we did not want the interviews to take longer than an average of 45 minutes each, since to go on much longer than that risked respondent fatigue and reduced reliability of the data. As it turns out, the mean interview time for all 12,401 interviews was 42 minutes, a near-perfect “bulls-eye.” The common core of questions allows us to examine, for each nation and across nations, such fundamental democratization themes as political legitimacy,

¹ A detailed recounting of the problems encountered in those surveys can be found in Mitchell A. Seligson, “Improving the Quality of Survey Research in Democratizing Countries,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (2004, forthcoming).

political tolerance, support for stable democracy, civil society participation and social capital, the rule of law, participation in and evaluations of local government, crime victimization, corruption victimization, and voting behavior. Each study contains an analysis of these important areas of democratic values and behaviors. In some cases we find striking and sometimes surprising similarities from country-to-country, whereas in other cases we find sharp contrasts.

When readers examine the findings presented in this synthesis volume, as well as the country studies, and find that the results are those that coincide with their expectations, they might well say, “That is just what I had expected, so the survey tells me nothing new.” On the other hand, when the results are at variance from expectations, readers might say, “This does not make any sense; the data must be wrong.” These reactions to survey data are common, and for some surveys emerging from the developing world, the data may in fact be “wrong.” We cannot guarantee that our results are “right,” but we have made every effort, as described below, to try to minimize error. Given that we are working with a sample of the population of each country rather than interviews with all voting-aged adults, there is always a one-in-twenty chance that our results are not within the approximately $\pm 2.5\%$ sampling error found in each of the national samples. Indeed, as we point out in the methodology section of each country report, these confidence intervals can be wider for some variables in some countries as a result of “design effects,” i.e., we used a stratified and clustered sample, which is standard practice in modern survey samples, the impact of which is to affect the precision of our estimates while keeping fieldwork costs within reasonable limits (as a result of clustering). Rarely does anyone doing surveys today use simple random sampling, and we have not done so either. In short, if readers find some results inconsistent with expectation, that may be because we are working with *probability* samples, and the odds are, from time-to-time, our results will be wide of the mark. But, 95 times out of 100, our results should be reasonably close to what we would have obtained had we interviewed the millions of voting-aged adults in the countries included in the study (an obvious impossibility). Moreover, since we have taken special pains to deal with the problem of “non-coverage,” something that we have rarely seen done anywhere in Latin America, we believe that our results are about as good as they can be.

To help insure comparability, a common sample design was crucial for the success of the effort. Prior to flying to Panama for the start-up meeting, the author of this chapter prepared for each team the guidelines for the construction of a multi-stage, stratified area probability sample with a target N of 1,500. In the Panama meeting each team met with Dr. Polibio Córdova, President of CEDATOS/Gallup, Ecuador, and region-wide expert in sample design, trained under Leslie Kish, the founder of modern survey sampling, at the University of Michigan. Refinements in the sample designs were made at that meeting and later reviewed by Dr. Córdova. Detailed descriptions of the sample are contained in annexes in each country report.

The Panama meeting was also a time for the teams to agree on a common framework for analysis. We did not want to impose rigidities on each team, since we recognized from the outset that each country had its own unique circumstances, and what was very important for one country (e.g., crime, voting abstention) might be largely irrelevant for another. But, we did want each of the teams to be able to make direct comparisons to the results in the other countries. For that reason, we agreed on a common method for index construction. We used the standard of an Alpha reliability coefficient of greater than .6, with a preference for .7 or higher, as the minimum

level needed for a set of items to be called a scale. The only variation in that rule was when we were using “count variables,” to construct an *index* (as opposed to a *scale*) in which we merely wanted to know, for example, how many times an individual participated in a certain form of activity. In fact, most of our reliabilities were above .7, many reaching above .8. We also encouraged all teams to use factor analysis to establish the dimensionality of their scales. Another common rule, applied to all of the data sets, was in the treatment of missing data. In order to maximize sample N without unreasonably distorting the response patterns, we substituted the mean score of the individual respondent’s choice for any scale or index in which there were missing data, but only when the missing data comprised less than half of all the responses for that individual. For a five-item scale, for example, if the respondent answered three or more of the items, we assigned the mean of those three to that person for that scale. If fewer than three of the five were responded to, the entire case was treated as missing.

Another agreement we struck in Panama was that each major section of the studies would be made accessible to the layman reader, meaning that there would be heavy use of bi-variate and tri-variate graphs. But we also agreed that those graphs would always follow a multivariate analysis (either OLS or logistic regression), so that the technically informed reader could be assured that the individual variables in the graphs were indeed significant predictors of the dependent variable being studied. We also agreed on a common graphical format (using chart templates prepared for SPSS 11.5). Finally, a common “informed consent” form was prepared, and approval for research on human subjects was granted by the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board (IRB). The approval document is contained in each country report.

A common concern from the outset was minimization of data entry error and maximization of the quality of the database. We did this in several ways. First, we agreed on a common coding scheme for all of the closed-ended questions. Second, we prepared a common set of data entry formats, including careful range checks, using the U.S. Census Bureau’s CPro2.4 software. Third, all data files were entered in their respective countries, and verified, after which the files were sent to a central location for and audit review. At that point, a random list of 100 questionnaire identification numbers was sent back to each team, who were then asked to ship those 100 surveys via express courier to that central location for auditing. This audit consisted of two steps, the first involved comparing the responses written on the questionnaire during the interview with the responses as entered by the coding teams. The second step involved comparing the coded responses to the database itself. If a significant number of errors was encountered through this process, the entire data base had to be reentered and the process of auditing was repeated on the new data base. Finally, the data sets were merged into one uniform eight-nation file, and copies were sent to all teams so that they could carry out comparative analysis on the entire file.

The next step in our effort to maximize quality was for the teams, once they had written their draft reports, to meet again in plenary session, this time in Santo Domingo de Heredia, Costa Rica, graciously hosted by our Costa Rica colleagues Luis Rosero-Bixby and Jorge Vargas-Cullell. In preparation for that meeting, held in mid-June 2004, pairs of researchers were assigned to present themes emerging from the studies. For example, one team made a presentation on corruption and democracy, whereas another discussed the rule of law results. These presentations, delivered in PowerPoint, were then critiqued by a small team of our most

highly qualified methodologists, and then the entire group of researchers and the USAID democracy staffers discussed the results. That process was repeated over an intense two-day period. It was an exciting time, seeing our findings up there “in black and white,” but it was also a time for us to learn more about the close ties between data, theory and method. For example, we spent a lot of time discussing the appropriate modalities of comparing across countries when we wanted to control for macro-economic factors such as GDP or GDP growth.

After the Costa Rica meeting ended, the author of this chapter, in his role of scientific coordinator of the project, read and critiqued each draft study, which was then returned to the country teams for correction and editing. In addition, the description of the sample designs was refined by including for each study a chart prepared by Luis Rosero of our Costa Rica team showing the impact of stratification and clustering on confidence intervals (i.e., the “design effect”). Those revised reports were then reviewed a second time, appropriate adjustments made, and then passed along to USAID for its comments. Those comments were taken into consideration by the teams and the final published version was produced. A version was translated into English for the broader international audience. That version is available on the web site, as is the data base itself (www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/dsd/).

What you have before you, then, is the product of the intensive labor of scores of highly motivated researchers, sample design experts, and field supervisors, hundreds of interviewers and data entry clerks, and, of course, the all-important over 12,000 respondents to our survey. Our efforts will not have been in vain if the results presented here are utilized by policy makers, citizens and academics alike to help strengthen democracy in Latin America.

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guidance throughout on sample design. The team of graduate assistants at the University of Pittsburgh have worked very hard in numerous aspects of the Latin American Public Opinion Project: Miguel García (Colombia), Daniel Moreno (Bolivia), Sawa Omori (Japan), and Rosario Queirolo (Uruguay). John Booth of the University of North Texas, and Miguel Gómez, formerly of the Universidad de Costa Rica, provided excellent pro bono advice on the questionnaire design. Chris Sani performed admirably as undergraduate assistant. Profound gratitude is owed to all of these fine people for their excellent work on this study. Finally, we wish to thank the 12,401 individuals in these eight countries who took time away from their busy lives to answer our questions. Without their cooperation, this study would not have been possible.

Nashville, Tennessee
August, 2004

1.0 National Context and Political Culture

1.1 Introduction

In this first chapter, we first present a panorama of the socioeconomic situation and the political dynamics of the country, which constitutes a frame of reference that helps us to understand better this study carried out in early 2004.

We also want to mention briefly the main studies conducted with different focuses and methodologies about the issue of Nicaraguan political culture, within which is found a series of surveys done by Dr. Seligson, that help us visualize the tendencies and variations experienced in recent years.

1.2 Socioeconomic situation

The Nicaraguan economy is characterized by a technologically backward productive structure with a predominance of primary activities (30% GDP), a weak and dispersed manufacturing sector (28% GDP) and a broad tertiary sector of personal services and informal commerce.² The economic situation Nicaragua is currently experiencing is characterized by profound imbalances provoked by a large fiscal deficit (6.8% of the GDP in 2003), limited Gross Domestic Product (US\$4.135 million nominal GDP) that only covers half of the overall demand and a strong trade deficit (US\$1.2 million in 2003) that reached 31% of that year's GDP.³

The mean annual economic growth rate for the 1994-2003 period was 3.7%, with an average inflation rate of 8%, while the population has grown at an annual 2.7% and the labor underutilization rate was 27% of the EAP in 2003. This explains why the majority of those surveyed in this study (67%) qualifies the country's economic situation as bad or very bad (see Graphic I.1) and perceives that it will remain the same or worse in the near future. A third of the population surveyed expressed positive expectations with the future implementation of the US-Central America free trade agreement (CAFTA).

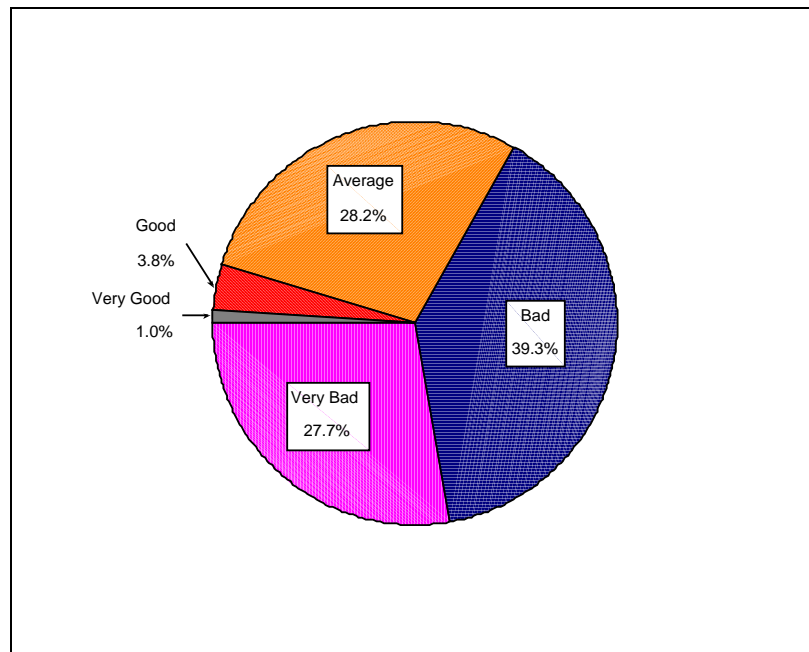
Nicaragua's foreign debt of US\$6.596 million (December 2003) was reduced at the beginning of 2004 by 80% once Nicaragua qualified in the Initiative for Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). On the other side is a huge domestic debt that originated with the credits contracted by the governments to deal with the indemnification for those whose properties were expropriated during the eighties and to cover the bank collapses of the nineties.⁴

² García-Huidobro G., *Política macroeconómica y empleo en Nicaragua*, OIT, San José, 2003 p. 9.

³ Avendaño Nestor, "Equidad e integración social de las políticas públicas: Nicaragua 1990-2003. Mimeo, 2004.

⁴ Six banks declared bankruptcies with losses of US\$530 million, which the Central Bank covered, in other words paying the contributors.

Graphic I.1 Perception of the National Economy



The international remittances from Nicaraguan workers (estimated at U\$800 million a year) coupled with the foreign aid from international donor agencies and financial institutions (U\$750 million annually in the nineties) has allowed Nicaragua to maintain this critical situation under control with relatively stable domestic prices and exchange rate.

The socioeconomic context is marked by the situation of poverty affecting the majority of the Nicaraguan population, which ranges from 45% (including 15% in extreme poverty) according to official figures based on the “aggregate consumption” method⁵ to 75% (including 46% in extreme poverty), including independent studies using the “unmet basic needs” method.

Poverty is more widespread in the rural areas than in the urban ones, and particularly affects the social groups of women, children and indigenous peoples. It is regrettable to observe that 6 of every 10 children and in a situation of poverty and 2 of those in extreme poverty. The average monthly per-capita household income is U\$60, in other words a survival income of US\$2, which buys 1.5 plates of basic food.⁶ In this study we found that 54% of the households surveyed obtain less than C\$1,500 per month (U\$90) while the basic household basket for six people was estimated in early 2004 at C\$4,500 (U\$290).

Other social indicators show us that 44% of the country’s population lives in overcrowded conditions in their homes, 32% does not have access to potable water, 48% does not have electricity service. The deterioration of the health, education and income indicators mean that Nicaragua has fallen in the Human Development Index to 121 out of 175 countries in the world (2003), putting it in Central America’s lowest place, as shown in the following comparative table.

⁵ INEC, *Encuesta de Hogares de Medición de Niveles de Vida EMNV 2001*, INEC, Managua, 2002.

⁶ PNUD, *Informe de Desarrollo Humano: Nicaragua 2002. Las condiciones de la esperanza*, Managua, p. 65.

Table I.1 Classification of the Central American countries in the HDI, 2001

Place	Country	HDI	HDI Value
42	Costa Rica	High	0.832
59	Panama	Medium	0.788
105	El Salvador	Medium	0.719
115	Honduras	Medium	0.667
119	Guatemala	Medium	0.652
121	Nicaragua	Medium	0.643

Source: PNUD, Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano 2003.

In this critical context, we observe a high population growth rate, determined by the elevated fecundity, which reaches 3.2%, double in the rural sphere (4.4%) compared to the urban areas (2.6%). Nonetheless, with a medium-term perspective, one observes a clearly declining trend in the nineties, in which it fell from 4.6% in 1985 to 3.6% in 1998 and 3.2% in 2001.

Open unemployment is 13% of the EAP, added to 36% underemployed in the informal sector. In other words, half of the population lacks stable employment with a fair income. In this study, nearly half of those surveyed (48.5%) state they were unemployed during the last year (2003) and those who have worked did so mainly in self-employed activities.

Women participate much less in the labor market than men, and female participation is greatest in the urban areas. Their income is inferior (14%) to the national average and the mean remuneration of men (21%). As Trejos notes: "This income gap is quite wide and although part of its explanation is found in the different work periods, it also shows possible problems of salary discrimination and differentiated forms of labor insertion, in which self-employment and domestic service predominate among them."⁷

In this context, emigration to Costa Rica, Guatemala or the United States appears as the best option for acquiring remunerated employment. It is calculated that 850,000 to 1,000,000 Nicaraguans live and work outside the country, many of them young people with an education level superior to the national average. These emigrants contribute some US\$800 million annually in remittances for the survival of their families, making it the country's main source of income. On the other hand, negative effects of migration have showed up in terms of family disintegration, xenophobic discrimination and violation of labor and human rights.⁸ In this survey we observed that 27% of the population has expressly stated its intention to go live or work in another country in the coming years.

Government policy to deal with this phenomenon has centered on the Strengthened Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2001-2015 (SGPRS), inherited from the Alemán government and an IMF condition for access to HIPC, which is based on 4 pillars: broad-based economic growth (projected 4.2% annual rate), investment in human capital, protection of vulnerable groups, governability and institutional development. Among the main goals proposed for achieving the ERCERP for 2005 include reducing extreme poverty from the 17% in 1998 to 14% in 2005, increasing net primary school attendance from 75% to 83%, reducing the illiteracy rate from

⁷ Trejos J.D. "Mercado de trabajo, ingresos laborales y pobreza en Nicaragua," Managua, mimeo, 2004.

⁸ Martha Cranshaw, *Análisis de las migraciones en Nicaragua*, Managua, 2003.

19% to 16%, reducing chronic malnutrition in children under 5 years old from 20% to 16% and increasing national potable water coverage from 67% to 75%⁹.

Two years into the ERCERP, the indicators signal a backslide in different variables: some 840,000 children remained out of schools in 2003 while illiteracy has risen to 30%. There is also growing unemployment, a fall in real wages, deteriorating labor conditions for those who have employment, and increasing emigration. While malnutrition and infant mortality are on the rise, public spending on health fell from US\$50 per capital in 1983 to US\$16 in 2002.¹⁰

The ERCERP has been criticized for lacking a sustainable development vision based on promoting human capacities; to the contrary, short-term compensation measures are prioritized such as a bond or payment that indigent families receive for the commitment to send one of their children to primary school. From a long-term development perspective, and as a complement to the ERCERP, the Bolaños government proposed a National Development Plan (PND) in 2003 based on the creation of “clusters” with foreign investment and tied to the external market in categories in which Nicaragua has comparative advantages, such as cattle, fishing, mining, forestry, tourism, textiles and agroindustry.¹¹

1.3 The Political Setting

Following the Sandinista revolutionary process (1979-89), which ended a half century of dynastic dictatorship by the Somozas and established a new representative and participatory democratic political system as laid out in the 1987 Political Constitution, we entered the nineties with electoral processes enjoying broad civic participation and international supervision that permitted the peaceful selection of successful governments to date. Among the advances made in strengthening the rule of law can be mentioned freedom of expression, civic organization, subordination of the armed forces to civil power and the resolution of political conflicts in the framework of institutionality.

We observe that in the latest presidential elections (1990, 1996, 2001) the forces opposing the Sandinista Front have won: Violeta Chamorro 1990-1996 with the National Opposition Union and Arnoldo Alemán 1996-2001 with the Liberal Alliance. They were both able to orchestrate broad party alliances, while observing a political polarization between two opposing bands that faced off against each other in the eighties with arms and in the nineties with votes.

The current political scene was established with the 2001 elections, which were won by the Constitutionalist Liberal Party (PLC) with 56% of the valid votes for the presidential ticket of Enrique Bolaños and José Rizo, over 52% of the votes for the Sandinista Front (FSLN) ticket of Daniel Ortega and. Agustín Jarquín.¹² The distribution of seats in the National Assembly was divided between the majority parties: 53 representatives for the PLC, including former President Arnoldo Alemán, 38 for the FSLN including the losing presidential candidate D. Ortega, and 1 for the Conservative Party. Twenty women (22%) were elected as representatives to the National

⁹ Gobierno de Nicaragua, Estrategia Reforzada de Reducción de la Pobreza, SETEC, Managua, 2001.

¹⁰ Jaime Espinoza, “Un sistema de salud que no funciona,” *envío* No. 245, UCA August 2002.

¹¹ Presidencia de la Republica, Propuesta de Plan Nacional de Desarrollo, Managua, Gobierno de Nicaragua, 2003.

¹² Allied with the FSLN in a Convergence with the Social Christian Party, the Sandinista Renovation Movement and other political figures, that has stayed together for the next elections.

Assembly (14 for the FSLN), doubling the proportion existing in the previous Assembly, and they won 8 seats (40%) in the Central American Parliament, showing a certain advance in gender equity. In a climate of tension under mutual accusations of fraud, 72% of the registered votes participated, leaving out of the event a sector that could not vote for diverse reasons: emigrants outside of the country, lack of voter cards, political indifferences, distance from the polling stations or changes of residence.¹³

A clearly polarized vote was observed between the country's two main political forces, which reflects both the exclusion of other political parties due to the electoral law reform agreed to by the PLC and FSLN within a pact to divvy up quotas of state power (2000) and the political legacy of war during the eighties between the Sandinista revolutionary movement linked to the socialist bloc and the opposition sectors sponsored by the US government. Over the "long haul," a bi-party system has been as much a backbone of the political dynamic since the 19th century as the wars and pacts between *caudillos* and power groups have been part of the national political praxis.

The analysis of the electoral results reveals that after 11 years a negative appraisal of the revolutionary process and the cruel war of the eighties remains in the self-vision of a majority of citizens that is expressed in an anti-Sandinista vote despite the socioeconomic crisis experienced in the nineties and the corruption and inefficiency of the latest governments. The FSLN unquestionably maintains the firm adhesion of an important sector of the citizenry (basically sectors of poor and middle-income strata) benefited by the distribution of resources and the participation achieved in the eighties) that put it as the main force of opposition and/or alliance with the governing party. A solid political base despite the organizational centralism that limits criticism or alternative leaderships and presenting a candidate (Daniel Ortega) for the third time who is vulnerable because he is reminiscent of the military draft and the penuries of the war in the eighties. While he enjoys broad support within the party, he is largely rejected outside of the FSLN.

The massive electoral participation must be highlighted, tripling the rates in the "developed" democratic systems. In the short term, this was the response to a "get out the vote" campaign" conducted by civic educational organizations, but also reveals progress in the appropriation of a civic right since the end of the Somoza dictatorship, a valuing of their contribution to the country's future and a hope of improving their living conditions. Thus, in our survey 2004, 76% of the Nicaraguans polled think that democracy is preferable to any other form of government, and only 14% think that in some circumstances an authoritarian government is preferable (See Chap. VIII).

The transition process to a representative democracy has been consolidated in the past decades, but civic participation is much lower in other local, periodic arenas, such as the Municipal town hall forms, the political advocacy organizations or the audit of public spending and follow-up to the electoral promises. The option of presenting candidates to municipal government outside of the parties was rescinded in the last electoral reform, concentrating party control over local political life. Nor do the parties promote this systematic participation since they are characterized by an electoral dynamic focused on obtaining posts in a state that they visualize as a source of

¹³ UCA, "Elecciones 2001," *envío* No. 236 Nov.-Dic. 2001, Managua.

earnings and power, and are organized in a top-down structure under charismatic *caudillos* (political bosses) who shift between confrontation and pacts.

There are few arenas for civic participation in public policies, such as the National Economic and Social Planning Council (CONPES), a consultative body of the presidency created in 1999 by constitutional mandate and made up of representatives of social, professional and trade associations¹⁴ and political parties chosen by the government. Its functioning so far has offered limited possibility for advocacy by civil society in national political decisions, in which its contributions to the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the institutional reforms and the annual national budget stand out..

The corruption of public officials reached the public arena through the media during the Alemán government, becoming a heartfelt demand of many civil organizations including business associations. International actors such as the World Bank, IMF and European Union had criticized the existing corruption and the need to take measures to avoid this problem that was affecting the climate of institutional security required by investors and by development cooperation.

Enrique Bolaños took office at the beginning of 2002, launching a campaign against corruption that was widely accepted by the citizenry and the international organizations, but inevitably led to a confrontation with the PLC leader Alemán when a series of swindles were proven to have been carried out during his government (1997-2001) to his personal benefit, that of his family and of a group of collaborators. When that culminated with judicial sentencing and his imprisonment, the majority of the PLC leadership closed ranks in defense of its leader, such that the party split between those loyal to the *caudillo* and those seeking a new Liberal leadership. In the Assembly, only a small group of legislators (6) broke away from the PLC to form a new “blue and white” bench loyal to the President. This meant that the executive branch lost its base in the second branch of the state, which is indispensable for the passage of laws such as the annual national budget, international laws and appointments to positions in other branches of the state, thus generating a conflictive situation between the branches and a governmental paralysis.

The executive’s isolation is greater in the other branches of state. In the case of the Supreme Court, the Supreme Electoral Council, the Comptroller General’s Office and the Public Ministry, their top executive positions were distributed between the FSLN and the PLC as political spaces through the two-party pact. This marks the Bolaños government’s limits of action and its need for alliances, as well as for strengthening its own social base. For these reasons, the executive promoted, albeit unsuccessfully, the creation of a new party, the Liberal Unity Group, trying to unify different Liberal currents and individual figures, banking on the inarticulateness of the PLC with the sentencing of Alemán and his disappearance from the political stage.

The strong reaction of the pro-Alemán Liberal sector has aggravated the political contradiction running through the different branches of state, the Catholic Church and civil society during this extended dynamic (2002-2004), semi-paralyzing state functioning and seriously affecting democratic governance and the country’s institutionality. This confrontational climate help

¹⁴ They belong to business, union, community, university, professional, youth, journalistic and women’s organizations, NGOs, municipal organizations and those related to the Atlantic autonomous regions.

explain the results of our 2004 survey, which indicates an increase in political intolerance and a drop in the levels of support for the political system (see Chap. III) observed in previous studies conducted by Dr. Seligson in our country.¹⁵

The citizenry has come out publicly against corruption through various means, energized by recognized social networks such as the Civil Coordinator the Network for Democracy, the Women's Network, the University Student Movement, unions, communal and religious organizations and other social actors. Nonetheless, civic enthusiasm for the government's anti-corruption policy has been gradually declining for various reasons, including the alleged use of fraudulent funds in Bolaños' campaign, the high salaries and pensions of government officials, including the President, the under-the-table negotiations with implied corruption and the disenchantment due to the failure to comply with electoral promises regarding employment and basic needs.

The Bolaños government's proposed reform of the state has generated broad debate and rejection by the majority parties that control the Assembly, as it involves reducing the number of officials (legislators, judges, comptrollers), removing the party nature of the branches of state, a civil service law, the reopening of the electoral system to other parties and civil associations at the municipal level, the election of legislators by individual rather than party slate, and a reform of the immunity of government officials. The Electoral Council has reopened the electoral game by recognizing the legal status of many parties again (of 26 parties in 1996 only 3 remained in 2001) following a Supreme Court decision declaring the restrictions to the electoral law agreed to in the FSLN-PLC pact of 2000 unconstitutional.

The political scene has been energized by social movements that have put forward their demands by peaceful means such as marches and roadblocks, such as the sector of producers and workers affected by the coffee crisis, the university students defending the universities' constitutional right to 6% of the budget, the education and health workers for a minimum wage, the transport sector to adjust the fare to rising costs, the veterans for compliance with still unmet promises when they demobilized, the indigenous communities for their rights to land and the regulation of the Caribbean Coast's Autonomy Statute, which they finally got.

These mobilizations demonstrate the vitality of different sectors of a civil society rich in its diversity of cultures, projects and organizations, that have in recent years turned into arenas of civic participation that the political parties do not control and of attention to social demands to which the state does not respond. In today's Nicaragua, we find ourselves with a heterogeneous and multitudinous universe of civic organizations¹⁶ that includes unions, cooperatives, social movements, community organizations, philanthropic and religious groups and organizations for education and development. This study shows that in 2004 a majority of the population participates regularly in some civil or religious association where it finds a sense of identity, an interchange of solidarity and the collective putting forth of demands (see Chap. VIII).

¹⁵ Mitchell Seligson, *Auditoria de la democracia 1999*, University of Pittsburgh, 2000.

¹⁶ The Ministry of Government records show some 2,800 non-profit organizations, not all of which are active, and many more exist in fact that have never gone through the costly and bureaucratic steps for acquiring legal status, which requires individual National Assembly approval.

The development NGOs have stood out in recent years. They total an estimated 800 organizations working on the promotion of human development in areas such as rights of the child and of women, agro-ecology, health and rehabilitation, human rights, credit, culture and citizenship, thanks to a foreign cooperation that has been dropping in recent years and increasing the condition of its funds. A large part of these NGOs are grouped into national networks, in which the Civil Coordinator tops the list as an umbrella for 24 networks or movements with 250 organizations, followed by the Democracy and Local Development Network (38 organizations in 77 municipalities), the Women's Network against Violence (61 organizations), the Coordinator of NGOs working with children and adolescents (41 organizations), the Federation of NGOs (32 organizations), the Federation of Organizations for Rehabilitation and Integration (16 organizations), and the Network of Migrations (17 organizations).

These networks have partially helped surmount the tendency toward geographic, sectoral and thematic dispersion and lack of coordination among social actors with the goal of hammering out consensual agendas and proposals for political advocacy at the national and regional levels, such as the proposals for a sustainable development plan by the Civil Coordinator following Hurricane Mitch, the Code of Children and Adolescents, the law against family violence, the civic participation law, proposals for a national population plan and policy, the poverty reduction strategy, the decentralization policy and a policy on migrations.

These advances in civic participation have to be placed within the paradox that the efforts at political influence are directed to a state weakened by the shift of decisions to supranational entities; its fragmented, bureaucratic and deficit-ridden situation and its self-conception as a simple facilitator of the capitalist market rather than a socioeconomic regulator that should respond to social demands.

1.4 Studies on Political Culture in Nicaragua

The pioneering studies in this field were done by US political scientists Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba, who argue that the national political culture exercises an influence on the conduct of citizens. The authors define political culture as referring to specific orientations that relate the political system to its various parts, orientations or internalization of aspects and their relations in the form of the population's cognition, sentiments and evolutions, but also to an individual's attitudes and role in the political system. The relations between political culture and social system are one of interdependence as Almond and Verba state: "Political culture is clearly about both an independent and dependent variable; as something that causes structure and is caused by it."¹⁷

This hypothesis has been confirmed by recent investigations conducted in Central America by M. Seligson and J. Booth, in which they have found features of democratic political culture in countries that have had dissimilar political regimes, such as Costa Rica and Nicaragua: "If political culture is a determinant of the type of regime or vice versa, one would expect to find a democratic political culture in Costa Rica and an authoritarian one in Nicaragua.... Although in no way do we eliminate the reciprocal influence between mass culture and the type of system, it

¹⁷ Almond, Gabriel and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963.

is evident that other factors, including the elite culture, institutional evolution, utilitarian considerations and the opposed versions of justice also influence the evolution of the democratic culture and the emergence of democratic systems in Latin America.”¹⁸

In Nicaragua, we can distinguish three types of studies that have been done on the country's political culture:¹⁹ one of a historiographic nature, others of interpretive essays and a sector of empirical investigations.

In the first group can place the historic investigations of serious methodological rigor that focus on elements constituting the national political culture, highlighting the works of Bradford Burns, Frances Kinloch and Karlos Navarro.²⁰ These historians show that the process of forming Nicaraguan political culture is built on the colonial past with a clearly authoritarian profile.

Kinloch argues that the creation of a national identity has been strongly limited due to the form of organization of political power during the colony, which generated intense localisms. Following independence from Spain, we find a Creole elite absorbed with the enlightened thinking that defended social integration, equality and regional identity. Nonetheless, “The progressive evolution that inspired the grandiose visions of prosperity of the enlightened intellectuals and politicians was completely alien to the grassroots mentality. On the contrary, the peasants' hopes for the advent of a more just social order found their principal frame of reference in religion and the idealization of the past.”²¹

The patriarchal nature of society and the political culture inherited from the colonial period has been analyzed by B. Burns, who stresses its key role in maintaining social order during the conflictive period following independence from Spain. “The patriarchal family to some degree filled the political vacuum and became a vital factor for the conservation of society.” The distinctive features of this patriarchal system would be the supremacy of the father in the hierarchical structure of the family and the political arena, subordinating women, children, relatives and workers who owed personal and political loyalty to the *caudillo*-patriarch.

For his part, historian Karlos Navarro has studied the process of constructing the political culture of the power elite influenced by the Liberal and Conservative ideologies, differentiated in their philosophical foundations and in their approaches to the exercise of power. The other reveals an ideological confluence in the second half of the 19th century, bringing forth a thinking called “Liberal conservatism,” which emphasized a centralized government and a traditional social order, at the same time that it retained the paradigm of progress and modernity identified with the countries of Western Europe and the United States.²²

¹⁸ Seligson M. and Booth J.A., “Cultura política y democratización: vías alternas en Nicaragua y Costa Rica,” in C. Barbara, et. al., *Transiciones a la democracia en Europa y América Latina*, México, FLACSO, 1991. See Seligson and Booth, *Elections and Democracy in Central America, Revisited*, Univ. North Carolina, 1995.

¹⁹ According to the proposal of Cuadra E. and Montenegro S., *Cultura política de la juventud en Nicaragua*, Managua, CINCO, 2002.

²⁰ E. Bradford Burns, *Patriarch and Folk: the Emergence of Nicaragua 1798-1858*; Harvard University Press, 1991.

²¹ Kinloch F., *Nicaragua. Identidad y cultura política 1821-1858*, Fondo editorial, Banco Central de Nicaragua. Managua, 1999. Pág. 52.

²² Karlos Navarro, *Entre el poder y la historia. Ideologías transmutadas*. Managua, Centro Nicaragüense de Escritores, 2000.

Equally centered on the study of the political elite, we find a second type of recent study or essay on Nicaragua that tries to identify its distinctive historically molded features that are still reproduced today, conditioning the predominant political practices and conceptions. A precursor of this perspective on addressing the political culture, which emphasizes the determination of the past, is the well-known poet Pablo Antonio Cuadra. He posited that the defining “features” of being Nicaraguan are explained by the history of our Spanish-indigenous mix, in which the origin of the violence and cruelty of Nicaraguan politics presumably comes from the Nahuatl militarism added to the Hispanic authoritarianism.²³

Political analyst E. Álvarez Montalbán believes that culture is a structured set of principles, ideals, legends, experiences, folklore, myths and utopias that condition the economic unfolding of a nation and the quality of its political system. Based on a definition of political culture as a “position or attitude that a given social group adopts and expresses on policy-related affair,”²⁴ the author believes Nicaragua is undergoing a transition from a traditional oligarchic society to a democratic one, in which is observed a heterogeneous panorama of values and conceptions, in which a political culture historically characterized by the following features predominates:

- Authoritarianism expressed through *caudillos* or *caciques*.
- Political intolerance and violence alternating with pacts between leaders.
- Nepotism, cronyism and godfatherism.
- Patrimonialism and corruption in the management of public goods.
- Short-sightedness and political improvisation.

In a similar perspective, economist and sociologist O. René Vargas emphasizes the influence of the colonial legacy, synthesized in a political myth “The Pedrarias Syndrome,”²⁵ which has been systematically reproduced by the dominant elite right up to today. The author agrees with Montalbán on the features of Nicaraguan political culture, underscoring the presidentship and incorporating other elements such as disparagement of the law, manipulation and lying as political instruments, ecclesiastical meddling in politics, the mixtures of party and state interests, and, above all, Nicaragua as a society dominated by the past and without a vision of the future.

Another group of studies done in recent decades about the political culture corresponds to researchers who have done empirical, predominantly quantitative studies based on a theoretical-conceptual framework on the political culture, civic participation and democracy.

In the eighties, the studies of Francois Houtart and Genevieve Lemercinier²⁶ on the cultural transformations in Nicaragua stood out. They were based on a conceptualization of culture as “the set of representations produced by the thinking in precise social conditions that in turn introduce natural or social reality into the field of consciousness and simultaneously permit the

²³ Cuadra Pablo A., *El Nicaragüense*, Ed. Unión, Managua, 1968.

²⁴ Álvarez Montalbán E., *Cultura política nicaragüense*, Hispamer, Managua, 2000. Pág. 70.

²⁵ Spanish governor of Nicaragua at the beginning of the 16th century distinguished for his authoritarianism and cruelty. Oscar René Vargas. *l síndrome de Pedrarias*, CEREN, Managua, 1999.

²⁶ Centro Tricontinental of the Univ. de Louvain-la-Neuve and founders of the Centro de Análisis Socio-Cultural in the Universidad Centroamericana (CASC-UCA).

reproduction of the necessary practices for the domination of nature and the construction of social relations.”²⁷ These studies hold that one finds in Nicaraguan society a transition process between a category of “mythic thinking” of traditional societies that explain reality through supernatural phenomena, and a category of “analytical thinking” characteristic of modern societies that approach reality in terms of causal interrelations of its components. Among the catalyzing factors of that cultural transition, the authors stress the amassment of education, the national impact of the war, which accelerated migration to the cities, the high demographic growth and the upward social mobility of popular classes benefited by the Sandinista revolutionary process.

This investigative focus has been expanded in the nineties by Manuel Ortega and Marcelina Castillo (CASC-UCA) with various studies on political culture and civic participation at a local level in the municipalities and autonomous regions of the Atlantic Coast.²⁹ Their studies emphasize the political culture of the local elite in the functioning of the municipal governments, and the analysis of civic participation in the municipal elections of 2000.²⁸

The studies conducted by the Institute of Nicaraguan Studies (IEN)²⁹ note a difference between an elite political culture and a political culture of the broad majority. The first appears to be characterized by low support for democratic norms, strong political intolerance, a “zero sum” vision of the political game, leanings toward state centralization and with no long-term vision of the nation. On the other side, the main features of the citizenry’s political culture has a high level of support for the democratic norms and values of peace and reconciliation, the electoral vote as the only road to power, and gradual and peaceful means, agreed upon by all, for achieving social change and working for the common good.

With a generational approach, Sofía Montenegro and Elvira Cuadra have studied the political culture of Nicaraguan youth via an opinion survey and interviews with informants, in which they found a ideological panorama “of a hybrid nature in which some components of parochialism have stood out, alongside components of subordination and participation.”³⁰ In this heterogeneous youth culture, a conception emphasizing social order above individual liberties and an intolerance of other positions appears on the one hand. On the other, a significant sector of young people clearly opts for the democratic system, the selection of authorities by vote, respect for civil rights and political tolerance.

²⁷ Houtart F., *Transformation de la religion du paysannat et de l'espace social de l'institution religieuse dans un processus de transition: le cas de Nicaragua*, Centro Tricontinental, LLN, 1985.

²⁹ Manuel Ortega Hegg, Encuesta: cultura política y actitudes hacia las elecciones y el régimen de autonomía en las regiones autónomas, CASC-UCA, 1997.

²⁸ Manuel Ortega Hegg, Marcelina Castillo, Cultura política local y percepción ciudadana en 14 municipios de las Segovias, CASC-UCA. Ricardo Córdova Macías-Manuel Ortega Hegg. Centroamérica: gobierno local y participación ciudadana en Nicaragua. FLACSO El Salvador Program, 1996.

²⁹ Instituto de Estudios Nicaragüenses (IEN). Cultura política. Cuaderno No. 1, IEN, Managua, 1997. See also: “Gobernabilidad, Descentralización y Participación Ciudadana.” Managua, February 1999.

³⁰ Montenegro and Cuadra, Op.cit., 2001. p. 197.

The investigations conducted by Dr. M. Seligson in Latin America, including those done in Nicaragua in 1991, 1995, 1997, 1999³¹ and this one in 2004, stand out. They are based on a rigorous survey methodology with probabilistic samples and precise, homogenous and broadly validated indicators to facilitate the comparative analysis of the political culture. The successive application of the same instrument allows us to detect the evolution of key elements of our political culture such as tolerance, legitimacy and democratic values. On the other hand, the studies conducted systematically in the Central American region, permit us to do comparative analyses based on solid empirical evidence,³² especially in this 2004 study, which covers eight countries of the region.

In our study, we share the conceptualization of M. Seligson and R. Córdova of political culture as “the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, behaviors and representations shared to diverse degrees by the members of a society with respect to power, institutions, norms that regulate state functioning and how the population relates to the latter, and establishes the context in which the citizenry’s thinking and feeling are generated (socialization).”³³

This approach assumes that political culture is an historical product and a dynamic process of construction or reproduction carried out by the social and political actors, in which the coexistence of a plurality of representations, ideas and values can be observed in a synchronic cut, some shared by the greater collectivity as national identity and others belonging to specific social groups and political actors.

1.5 Conclusions

In sum, Nicaragua’s current economic context is characterized by a deep recession originating in structural factors such as an obsolete productive apparatus, a serious fiscal external accounts imbalance, all aggravated by passing factors such as the rise in oil prices and the economic retraction in the countries of the North.

At a social level, we find a situation of poverty that affects the majority of the population that lacks stable and sufficient income alternatives to cover the costs of the family basic basket, save by migrating to other countries of the region. Family remittances and foreign aid have helped palliate this situation of both external imbalance and family survival.

Politically, Nicaragua is going through a difficult process of transition from authoritarian regimes to a representative and participatory democratic system in recent decades. On the positive side of the balance is located the peaceful changes of successive governments elected by vote and the reign of fundamental political rights. Nonetheless, the rule of law and civic

³¹ Seligson Mitchell, Auditoria de la Democracia Nicaragua 1999, Univ. Pittsburg, 2000. Mitchell A. Seligson, Ricardo Córdova M. “Nicaragua 1991-1995: una cultura política en transición,” in, *Cultura política y transición democrática en Nicaragua*, FFE-FUNGO-IEN-CASC-UCA, Managua, 1995.

Seligson M. Valores democráticos en Nicaragua: 1991-1997. Mimeo, University of Pittsburgh, 1998.

Seligson, Mitchell A and Ricardo Córdova Macías. 1995. El Salvador: de la guerra a la paz. Una cultura política en transición. El Salvador, FUNDAUNGO, University of Pittsburgh and IDELA.

³² Seligson M., *La Cultura democrática de los guatemaltecos*. Cuarto Estudio 1999. Guatemala, University of Pittsburgh.

³³ M. Seligson y R. Córdova, *Cultura política, gobierno local y descentralización*. América Central, Vol. I, FLACSO, San Salvador, 2001, p. 14.

participation still need to be consolidated, at the same time moving beyond the strongman and excluding political culture of the power elite.

2.0 Methodology Used and Characteristics of the Sample

In this chapter, we present first the methodology used in the design of the sample and implementation of the survey and second the basic socioeconomic characteristics of the people surveyed.

2.1 Survey and Sample Design

This study, titled “Political Culture in Central America, Colombia and Mexico, 2004,” has been coordinated by Mitchell Seligson and is based on a common survey that would permit a comparative analysis. It is thus based on a common probabilistic sample design and a questionnaire with homogeneous main variables (with optional items in each country and for special samples). We also shared the data processing and analysis techniques, as well as the way of presenting the results.

The population that comprises this study is all over 16 years old, excluding from the sample people who at the time of employing the survey were in hospitals, orphanages, jails, barracks or were emigrants outside of the country. The survey included national coverage, differentiated in urban-rural areas of residence and in three regions of Nicaragua: North-central, Pacific and the Atlantic Coast.

The sampling method used was of the probabilistic,³⁴ stratified, clustered, multi-stage type with a random selection in all stages, including the final selection of people over age 16 to be interviewed within the household of the sample, reaching a total of 1,430 valid surveys of the initial target of 1,500, due to a high percentage of rejections, which we will analyze further on.

³⁴ Statistical sampling is a scientific technique to select a certain number of elements (sample) of a data group (population) for making inferences about the total group; for a sample to be useful it must reflect the similarities and differences found in the group as a whole.

Graphic II.1 Map of Nicaragua by Regions and Departments



The Sample Framework was put together by the cartographic inventory of the National Institute of Censuses and Statistics. For the selection of the sample, the division of the 12,070 census segments of the 151 municipalities in the country was used, broken down by urban and rural area of residence. The population data of the 1995 Population Census updated to 2004³⁵ was also used.

The sample has been stratified by regions (North-central, Pacific and Atlantic) and into urban and rural areas. It is multi-stage because it starts with the selection of Primary Sample Units (UPM, municipalities), then follows with Secondary Sample Units (USM) made up of census segments, which are housing sectors with well defined and identifiable limits in both the urban and rural area, and finally the Final Sample Units (UFM) created in clusters of 6 to 8 houses in the urban areas and 10 to 12 in the rural area.

In each housing sector of the sample, a single household has been selected as an observation unit and finally a single person over 16 has been selected and interviewed, based on a predetermined quota of sex and age range through a random process, in which the surveyor may not substitute the person assigned or replace the housing units. This rigorous procedure has played a role in increasing the number of surveys that could not be conducted on the ground.

The assigning of sample sizes ensured the sample consistency, sufficiency and efficiency for each stratum and at the level of the aggregate whole. In each of the strata, the municipalities

³⁵ Source: El Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INEC).

were selected with probability proportional to the size of each dominion according to the population estimates for 2004. The study results make it possible to obtain results valid at the national level by urban-rural area and by the three regions (North-central, Pacific and Atlantic), but not valid at the departmental or municipal level. The following table shows the high congruence of the surveyed sample with the national population according to official estimates.

Table II.1 Characteristics of the Sample and of the National Population, 2004³⁶

Characteristics	Sample %	Sample No.	Population %	Population No.
REGIONS				
North-Central	31 %	438	31 %	1,738,941
Pacific	57 %	814	58 %	3,241,871
Atlantic	12 %	178	11 %	645,680
AREAS				
Urban	58 %	879	59 %	3,295,743
Rural	42 %	621	41 %	2,330,749
TOTALS	100 %	1,430		5,626,492

The total number of municipalities was 46, which is sufficient to be representative of the whole country (total 151), given the homogeneity among municipalities belonging to the same stratum or dominion. The municipalities that had a population higher than 100,000 inhabitants were automatically included in the sample. The other municipalities included in the sample in each stratum and dominion of study were selected with probability proportional to size according to the estimated 2004 population.

The margins of error by stratum assuming a level of confidence of 95% are detailed in the following table:

Table II.2 Sample Size and Margin of Error by Stratum

Strata	Sample Size	Margin of Error (%)
Regions:		
North-Central	438	4.6
Pacific	814	3.4
Atlantic	178	7.4
Areas:		
Urban	879	3.3
Rural	621	4.0
Country total	1,430	2.6

³⁶ Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos, *Proyecciones de población 1950-2050*, Managua, 2000.

The margin of error of the Atlantic Region is slightly higher than that of the other two regions because the population size is smaller (7% of the national total living in 42% of the territory) and thus the intervals of confidence are greater than in other regions.

To ensure the precision desired for the sample, the sample system with “Adjustment for non-coverage” has been used to guarantee that the margin of error not exceed the desired 2.5%. In this survey we have found a rejection level higher than was estimated due in the rural areas to the absence of the person selected (and substitutions were not permitted) and in the urban areas to rejection given its political content in a period of acute conflicts among the parties and political *caudillos*. For this reason the planned number of 1,500 surveys was reduced to the final figure of 1,430 people.

2.1.1 Data Collection and Processing

The field work was done in the period from February 21 to March 10, 2004. The fundamental instrument in the information gathering work was the structured **questionnaire** (Annex A) made up largely of common questions defined for the international study of eight countries, which were adapted to the Nicaraguan language and reality. A pilot test was also done with 24 complete interviews that served to correct some errors and strengthen the training of the surveyors. The questionnaire contains 190 questions and the average time of application was 48 minutes. The questionnaire was complemented by a **card game** (Annex B) that was used to help the person interviewed select their responses.

Another instrument used in the field work was the **segment map** prepared by INEC with the location of the homes to be visited, the route to follow and the main reference points of the territory. The teams used a **road map** that indicated the quotas of interviews to be completed for each cluster and served to annotate the houses visited and the individuals eligible for interviews, as well as for the supervision and eventual revisit. Finally, the surveyors carried a **consent sheet** that explained the study’s objective and its confidential nature so as to obtain the interviewee’s agreement.

During the data collection process, field review and supervision was conducted to be able to correct errors on the ground. The supervision included revisits to all the households visited and verification that the interview had actually been done. With respect to the processing of the information, first a critical review was done of all the questionnaires, then they were coded to pass to the entry of the data with the CSPRO program “Census and Survey Processing System” and their verification via new entry by a different team. The database was then exported to the SPSS program “Statistical Package for Social Science” to obtain the results and the graphics.

With respect to the statistical analysis methods³⁷ to establish the association between two numerical variables, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used, which uses from 1 to 1, with the latter signifying a perfect correspondence between two values. To establish if there is a statistically significant relation between two categorical variables, the chi-squared test was used.

³⁷ In this section, we have used part of the broad technical explanation of Luis Rosero and Jorge Vargas in the parallel study titled *La Cultura Política de la Democracia en Costa Rica: 2004*.

We have constructed diverse scales by simple sum (for example, tolerance, support for the system) to integrate the information from various questions on a single variables theme. In these cases, the resulting index is normalized by giving it values from 0 to 100. As an indicator of the internal consistence or reliability of the scales thus constructed, the Crombach Alfa coefficient was used. Coefficients of 0.70 or more were considered reliable and consistent. We have also used the factorial analysis to determine the number of dimensions or factors implicit in a series of questions on a single theme.

On repeated occasions, linear models of multiple regression were estimated by minimal ordinary squaring. The regression coefficient of these models (“Beta) make it possible to concisely value the co-factors that “explain” these indices, although they are correlations or associations since with the information available it is impossible to establish causal relations. As an indicator of how good the model’s adjustment was as a whole, the coefficient of determination, or “R squared” was used, which expresses the proportion of variance explained by the model as a whole, compared to the explanation obtained with a “null” model (dependent variable estimated simply by its average).

2.1.2 Work Team

The personnel that conducted this survey in Nicaragua under the General Coordination of Dr. M. Seligson is made up of the following members:

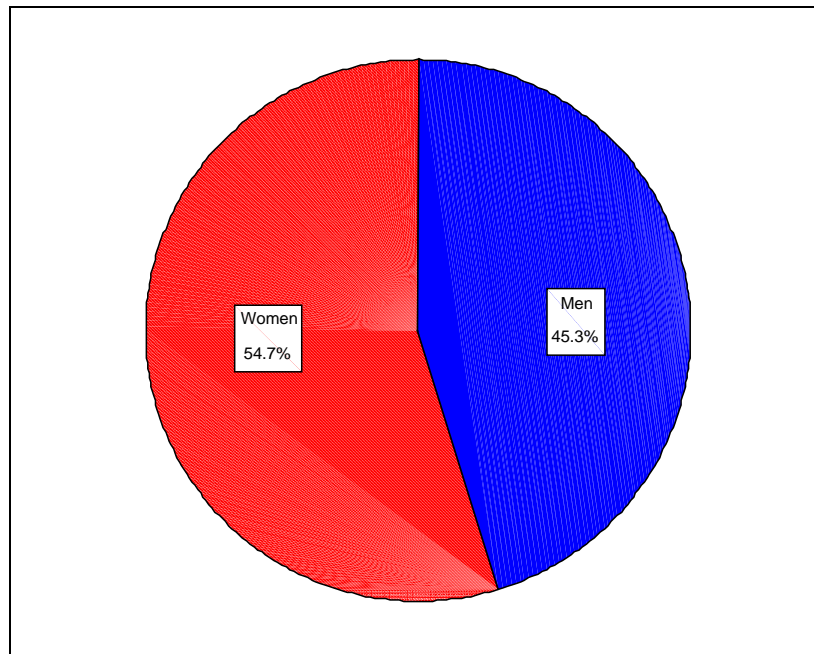
1. Professional Personnel	2
2. Administrative Personnel	2
3. Field Coordinators	2
4. Field Supervisors	10
5. Interviewers	45
6. Field Validators	10
7. Critical Codifiers	6
8. Data Enterers	10
9. Validators of Entered Data	10
TOTAL Human Resources	97

2.2 Socio-Demographic Characterization of the Sample

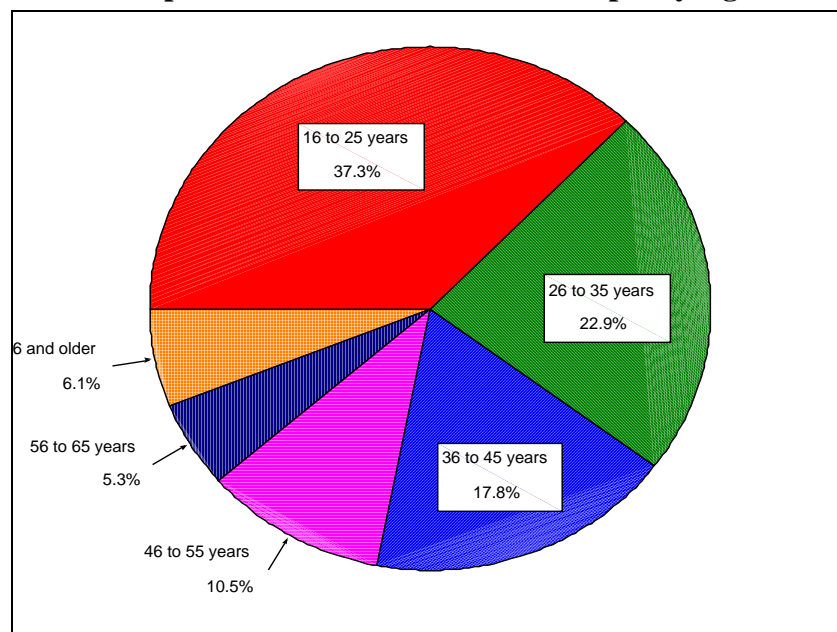
In the sample of people surveyed (Graphic I.2), we observe a quite equitable gender distribution, with a slight increase of women, which reflects both the national population structure and the

fact that, upon identifying the household and the person chosen at random to survey, more women have been found due to their domestic role in the sexual division of labor.

Graphic II.2 Distribution of the Sample by Gender



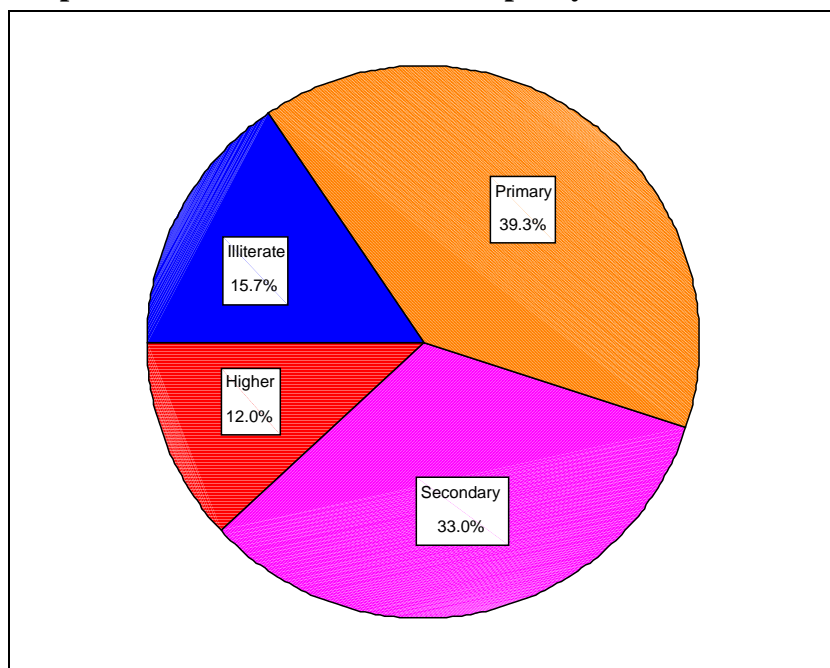
Graphic II.3 Distribution of the Sample by Age



In terms of formal education, we find in the sample an illiterate population of 15.7%, a majority (39%) of those surveyed have finished primary school, which coincides with other studies that put the national educational average at 5.1 years. The possibilities of access to secondary

education are limited (37.2% of youth from 13 to 18 years old) and even more to the university level (13% of youth between 18 and 25).³⁸

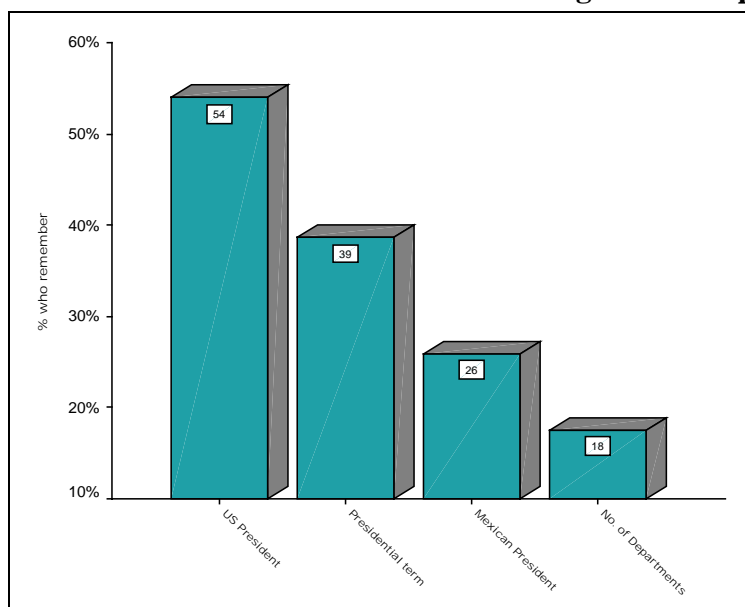
Graphic II.4 Distribution of the Sample by Educational Level



To learn the information level on political issues, we asked those surveyed if they knew the number of Nicaragua's departments, the length of the presidential term and the name of the President of the United States and Mexico. The responses revealed the low average level of knowledge on these issues, particularly the political division of the country and the presidential term, as shown in the following graph.

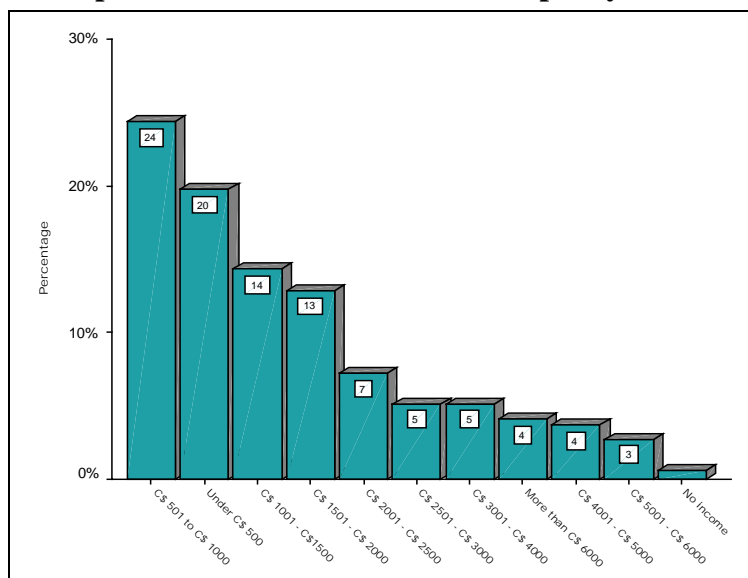
³⁸ PNUD, *El desarrollo humano en Nicaragua 2002*, Managua, pp. 66-69

Graphic II.5 Indicators of Political Information: Percentage That Responded Correctly



The income distribution in the sample indicates that 54% obtain under C\$1,500/month (U\$90) while the basic household basket (six people) was estimated at the start of 2004 at C\$4,500 (U\$290). In other words, the sample corresponds to the indicators of the poverty that affects a large part of the Nicaraguans.

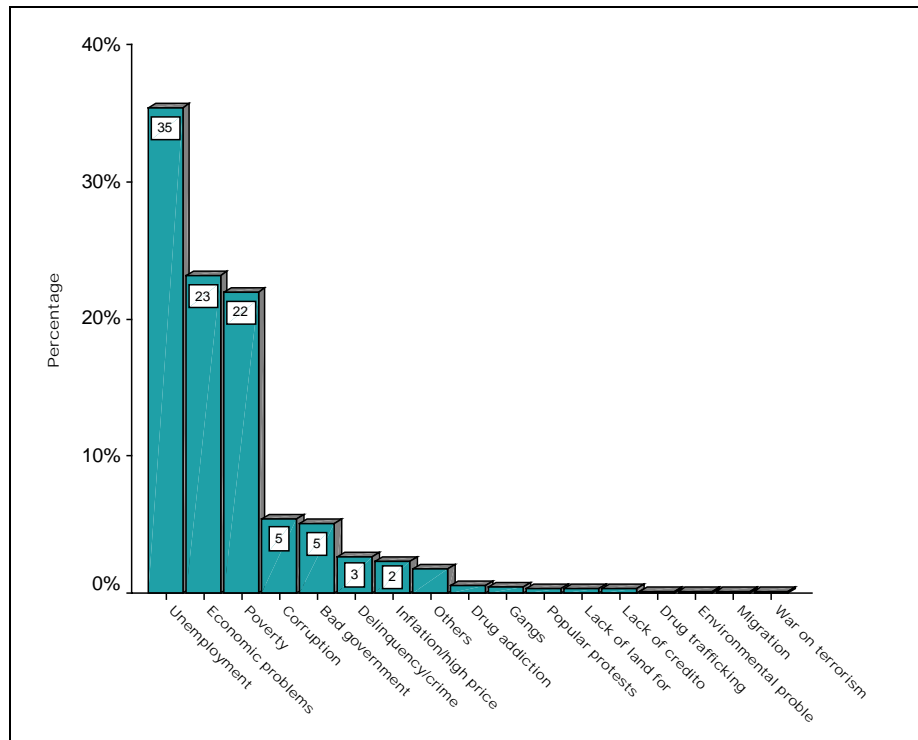
Graphic II.6 Distribution of the Sample by Income



The families that admit receiving remittances reached 15.2% of the surveyed population, a similar figure to that obtained in other recent studies, and they represent a partial contribution to the family survival expenses.

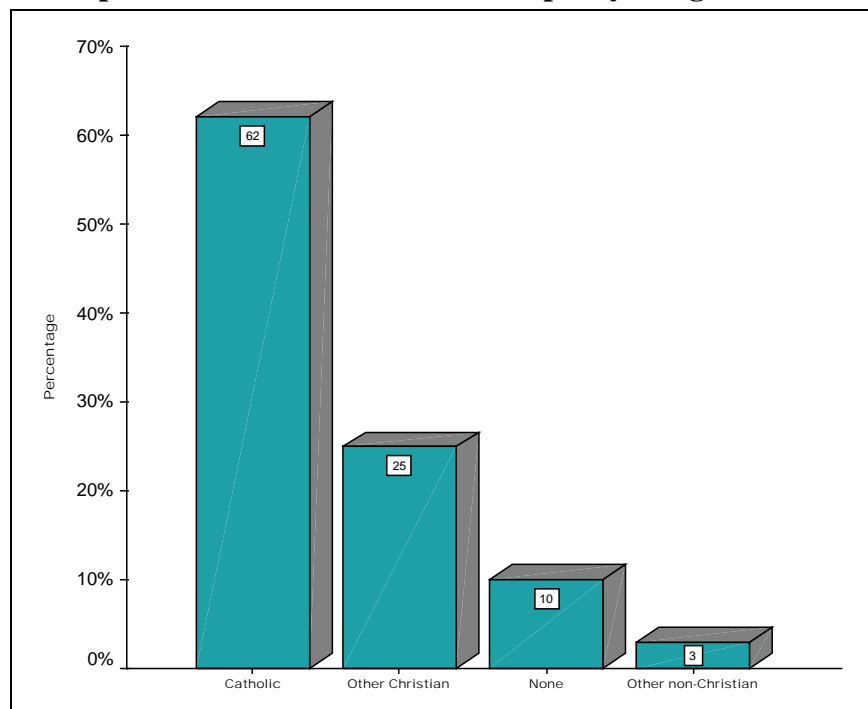
The economic situation emerges as the fundamental concern of the Nicaraguan citizenry when they are asked, “What is the most serious problem the country faces?” as the following Graphic II.7 illustrates.

Graphic II.7 Most Serious Problem the Country Faces



With respect to religious affiliation, the majority (62.1%) of the sample declared being Catholic, a growing sector belongs to diverse Christian denominations (25%), a small group professes other non-Christian creeds (3%) and a considerable group (10%) considers itself atheist.

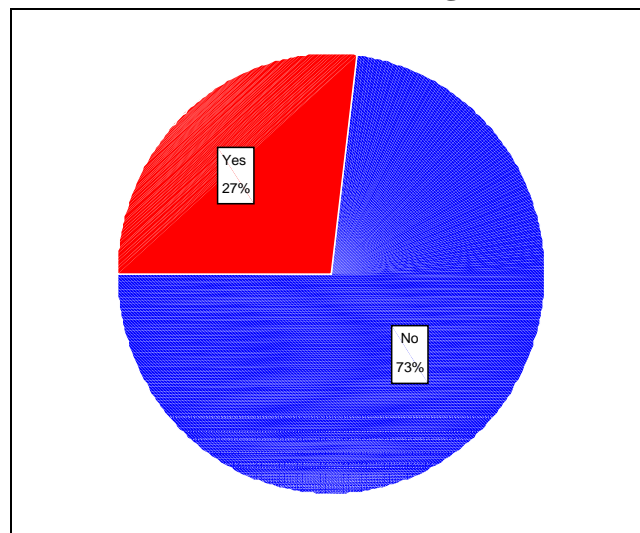
Graphic II.8 Distribution of the Sample by Religious Belief



The strong motivation to migrate to other places must be noted, in which a significant sector (27%) of those surveyed responded affirmatively to the question:

“Do you have intentions to leave to live or work in another country in the next three years? (1) Yes (2) No (8) Does not know”

Graphic II.9 Do You Have Intentions to Migrate to Another Country?

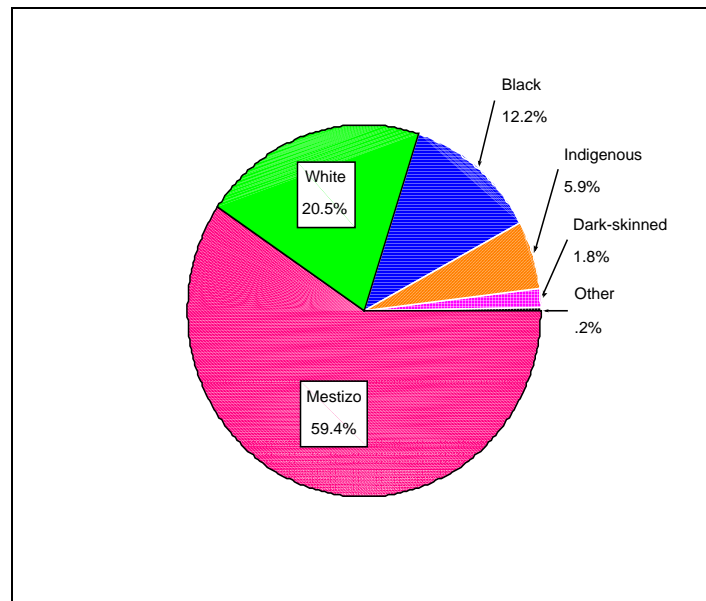


The results are an indicator of the lack of opportunities and social services suffered by the majority of the young Nicaraguan population of both sexes, who aspire to migrate to Costa Rica

or the United States as an individual or family survival strategy, in which the number of Nicaraguan emigrants abroad is calculated at 850,000.

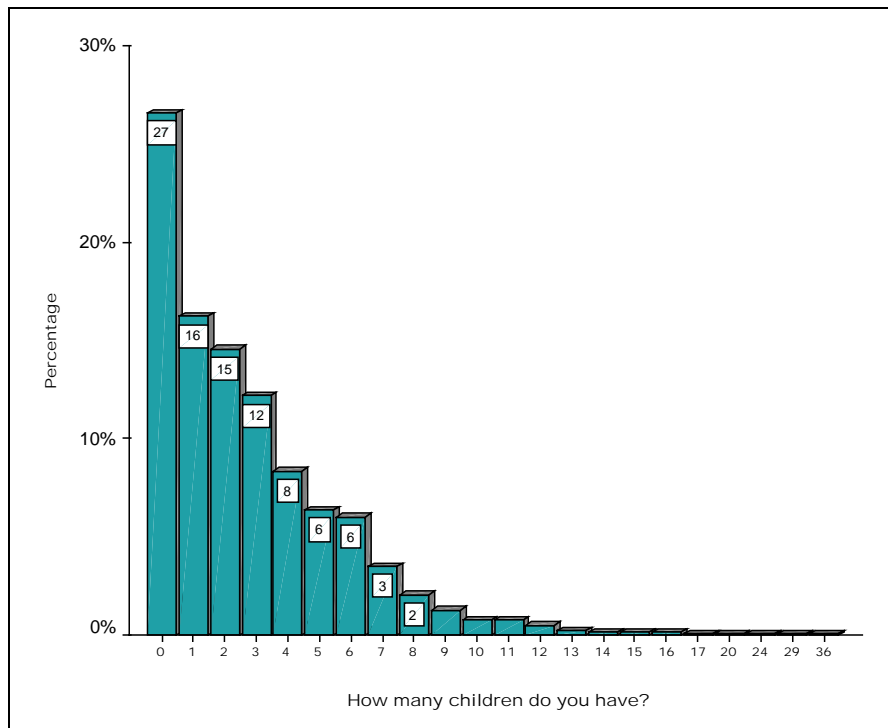
When asked if “*You consider yourself white, indigenous, mestizo or black?*” we found that a majority of those surveyed identify themselves as mestizo, with identifications as “White,” “Black,” “Dark-skinned,” or “Indigenous” in smaller proportions, as Graphic II.10 illustrates.

Graphic II.10 Ethnic Self-Identification



With respect to size of the families, a large part of those surveyed (43%) have between 1 and 3 children, a quarter of the sample (27%) said it had no children, and the rest have 4 or more children, lower than the national average of 5.3 children per household according to the National Living Standard Measurement Survey (EMNV 2001)

Graphic II.11 Number of Children



2.3 Conclusions

This study was conducted via a common survey in the participating countries of Central America, Mexico and Colombia, based on strict scientific techniques that ensure the reliability and validity of its results, as a nationally representative probabilistic sample, a questionnaire tested in various previous studies and applied by duly trained and supervised surveyors. The data were processed and analyzed using latest generation computerized statistics programs.

The 1,430 people surveyed from the different regions and municipalities of the country are a representative sample of the national population regarding age, sex, religion and other characteristics such as extended poverty level, low access to formal education and shared perceptions of the country—for example, seeing unemployment as Nicaragua’s main problem. Unquestionably, having studied this representative sample of Nicaragua’s cultural and social diversity today, it is a solid foundation for the validity of the results presented below regarding the political culture of the Nicaraguan citizens at the beginning of the 21st century.

3.0 Support to the Political System

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we present the issue of Nicaraguans' political attitudes toward support to democratic political stability. First, we address the level of support to the political system, then analyze the level of political tolerance, an attitude necessary for democratic functioning. Finally, the relationship between the level of support to the political system and the level of political tolerance are analyzed, based on a theoretical model about the scenarios for strengthening a stable democratic system.

Our main interest is in understanding the point at which Nicaraguans' attitudes and perceptions contribute to a democratic political system, which implies both a civic appraisal of the legitimacy of the constitutional political system and broad political tolerance with dissident groups and respect for the rights of minorities. The chapter presents a model in which support for the political system and support for political tolerance are seen as requisites for democratic political stability and compares the results with the other countries of the region included in this research project.

The relevance of political tolerance in the democratizing processes that Central America has experienced in the nineties has been stressed by Torres Rivas, "the political culture of transitions needs to underscore the values of civic tolerance, which are the recognition of and respect for political, ideological or any other differences (religious, racial, gender, etc.). Intolerance is a cultural component of authoritarianism because it assumes a strongly stratified, hierarchical, patrimonial and corporate universe."³⁹

There is broad consensus about the elements that characterize a democratic culture, such as tolerance of political dissidence; negotiation as the means for resolving controversies; respect for others; recognition the popular vote as the only means of acceding to political power; political pluralism; equity in political, economic, social and gender relations; and the vision of nation above particular interests. The indicators of an undemocratic culture, in low negotiation capacity and the zero-sum vision of power.

Among the questions we took up in this chapter we can mention, How much support do Nicaraguans express for their political system? Which institutions do they support most, which less? What is the level of support of the region's countries? How politically tolerant are Nicaraguans in 2004 compared to 1999 and 1995? and finally, What are the conditioning factors of support for stable democracy and what perspectives appear on the future political horizon?

3.2 Support to the Political System

The stability of a political system is rooted in the legitimacy that its citizens can perceive. In a classic study, Seymour M. Lipset defined legitimacy as "the capacity of a system to generate and

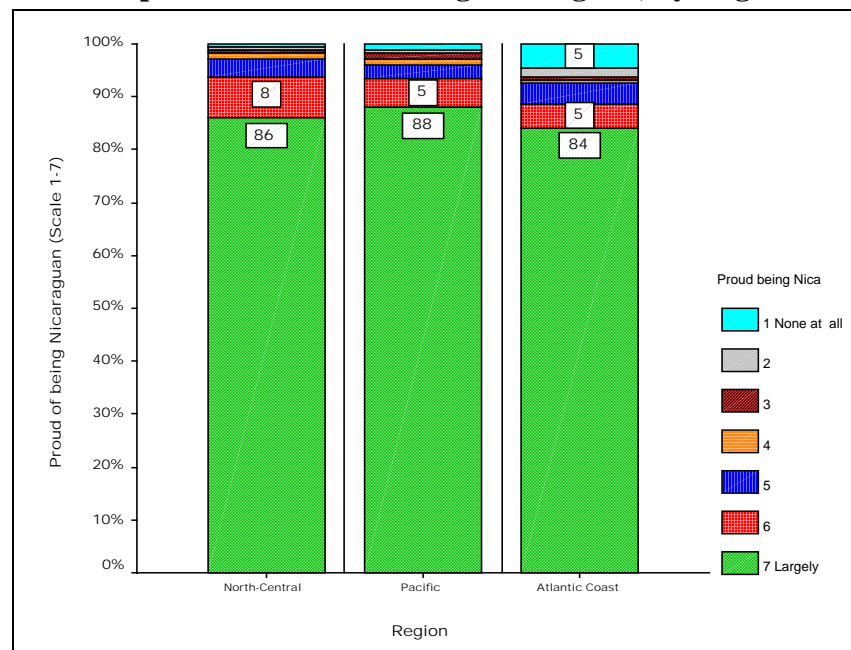
³⁹ Torres Rivas E., "Los desafíos del desarrollo democrático en Centroamérica," Anuario de Estudios Centroamericanos Vol.22, N°1, Univ. Costa Rica, 1996 Pág. 20.

maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate for society.”⁴⁰ The author posits that political systems that enjoy legitimacy by their citizens can survive strong social crisis, while those with low legitimacy levels can collapse under minor pressure. Lipset believes that a political system’s legitimacy levels can vary upwards or downwards depending on diverse factors.

Citizens’ identification with and adhesion to their nation is a basic element for the political stability of a country, as Pippa Norris has noted.⁴¹ One indicator of this sense of national belonging is the question asked of those surveyed; “To what point do you feel proud of being Nicaraguan?”

The responses of those surveyed (Graphic III.1) indicates a high degree of national identification (86.9% signaled the highest value on a scale of 1 to 7), with a slight drop in the Atlantic region, which obeys the ethnic and historic peculiarities of its population, who share a specific identity and demand a real political, cultural and economic autonomy from the central government.

Graphic III.1 Pride in Being Nicaraguan, by Region



Is confirmed with the majority perception by those surveyed who firmly approve the statement that: “*Despite our differences, we Nicaraguans have many things and values that unite us as a country.*”⁴²

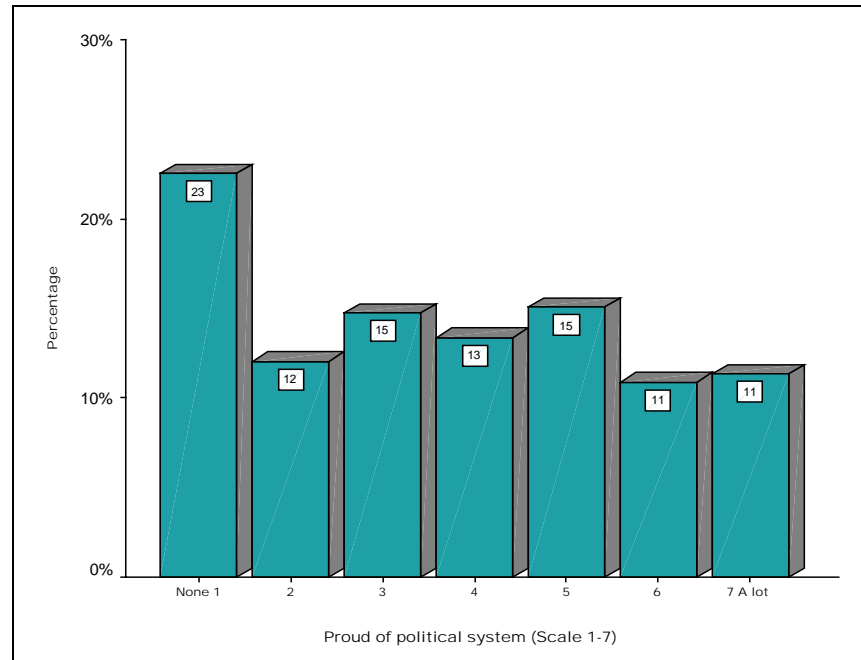
⁴⁰ Seymour M. Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Basis of Politics*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981. Seymour M. Lipset, “The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited,” *American Sociological Review* 59 (February 1994): 1-22.

⁴¹ Pippa Norris, *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

⁴² The affirmative answer reaches 73% combining the two highest levels on the scale of 1 to 7. See Item PN2 of the questionnaire.

Nonetheless, when asking “To what point do you feel proud of living under the Nicaraguan political system?”, only 11.3% of those surveyed listed the highest value on the same scale of 1 to 7 points, and in the extreme opposite, 22% said they feel no pride living under the current political system (Graphic III.2).

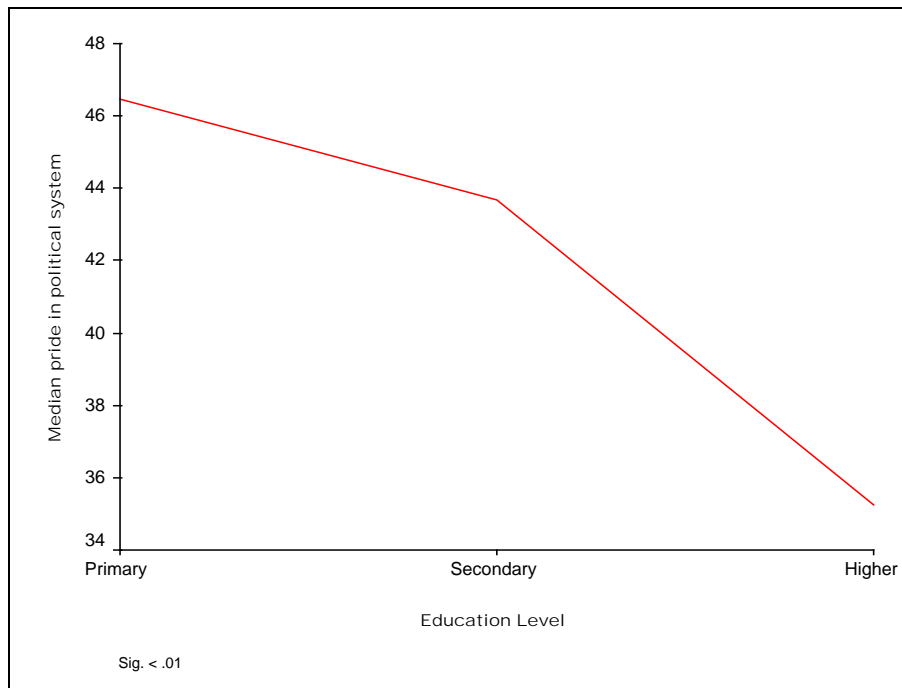
Graphic III.2 Pride in Living Under the Nicaraguan Political System



To delve deeper into the factors associated with “pride in the political system,” that is, their identification with the current institutional system, we did a multiple regression analysis of the variable recoded on a scale of 0 to 100. Socio-demographic variables and the evaluation of the current government were included as predictors. Of these, only the educational level and support for the President were statistically significant predictors of the pride of living under the Nicaraguan political system (see Annex D, Table III.1).

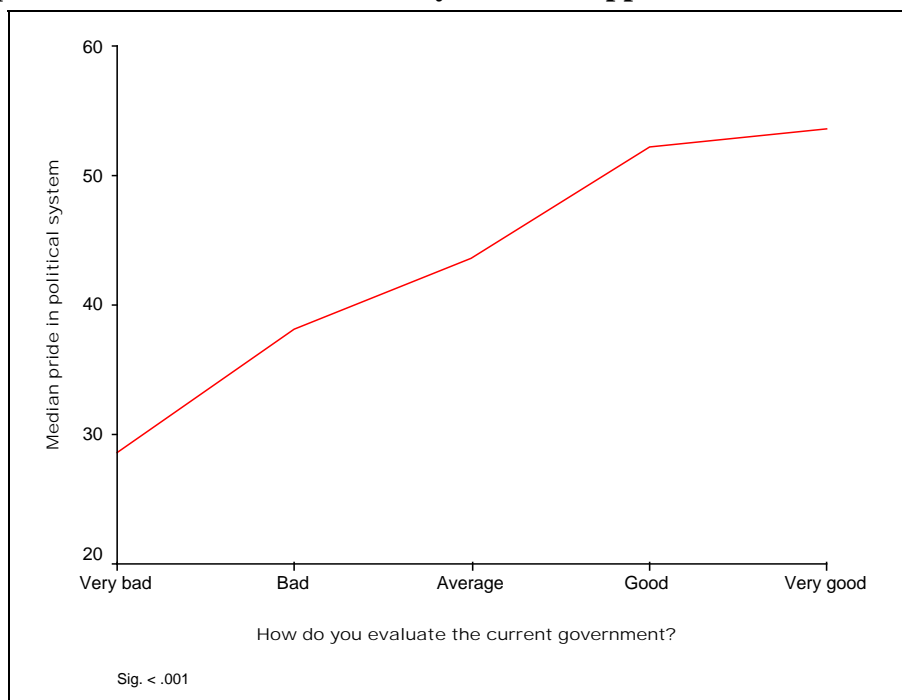
When the other factors are controlled, the educational level has a negative impact on the level of pride in the political system. The more educated an individual is, the less pride is felt in living under the Nicaraguan political system, as observed in Graphic III.3.

Graphic III.3 Pride in the Political System According to Educational Level



We similarly found that citizens whose evaluation of the current government is greater feel prouder of living under the Nicaraguan political system, as can be appreciated in Graphic III.4.

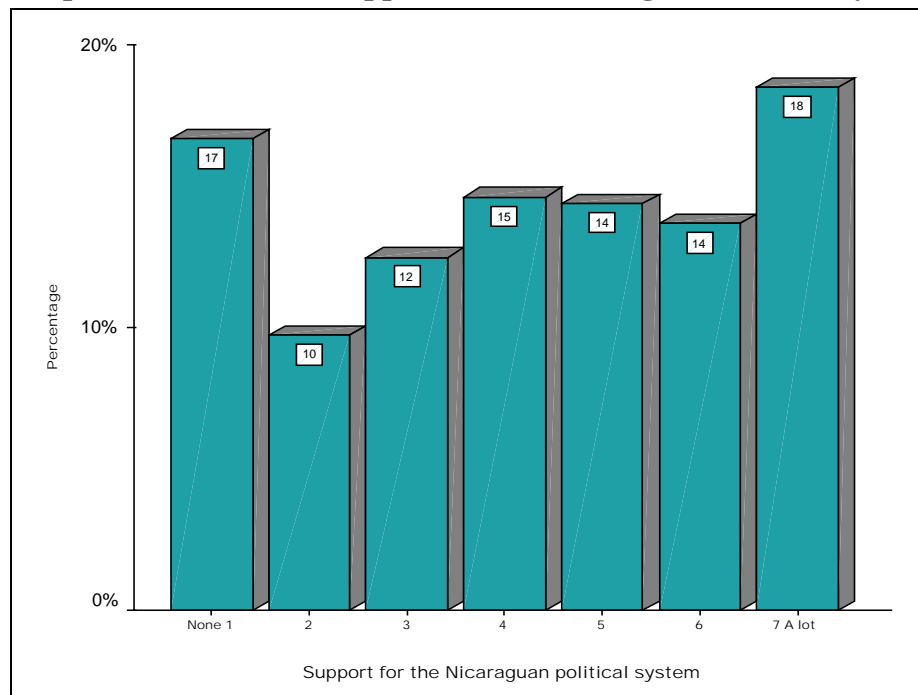
Graphic III.4 Pride in the Political System and Appraisal of the Government



3.2.1 Levels of Support for the Political System

Given the question: “To what point do you think that the Nicaraguan political system should be supported?”, those surveyed responded (on a 1 to 7 scale) in a differentiated manner, with a third (32%) indicating a high attitude of support (values 6 and 7), while on the contrary 27% demonstrated strong rejection (values 1 and 2) while 41% took an intermediate to low position of support for the current political system (Graphic III.5). On this point, however, it must be recognized that many Nicaraguans currently identify the concept of political system with the government in office at the moment, not with the structural components of the established political system—largely the Political Constitution with its latest reforms.

Graphic III.5 Levels of Support for the Nicaraguan Political System

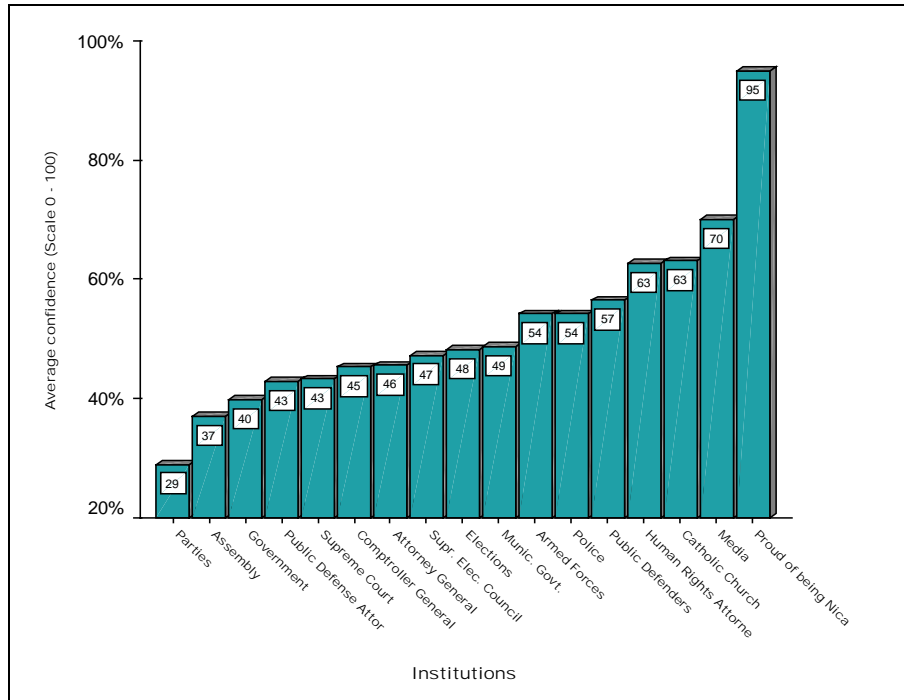


3.2.2 Confidence in the Institutions

As Graphic III.6 illustrates, the institutions that inspire the greatest confidence in the citizenry are the media and the Catholic Church, which in the latter case indicates the strong popular rootedness of religious beliefs and ecclesiastical authority, and on the other hand the untiring work of journalism in transmitting the social demands and denouncing the corruption and abuses of power.

Among the state institutions, those surveyed stress the reliability of the Human Rights Defense Attorney’s Office in first place, thus recognizing the valuable work done in different social conflicts in defense of Nicaraguans’ rights, particularly those of children, women and ethnic minorities. Other public institutions with a public confidence index higher than 50% are the Public Defenders, the National Police and the Armed Forces.

Graphic III.6 Levels of Confidence in the Institutions

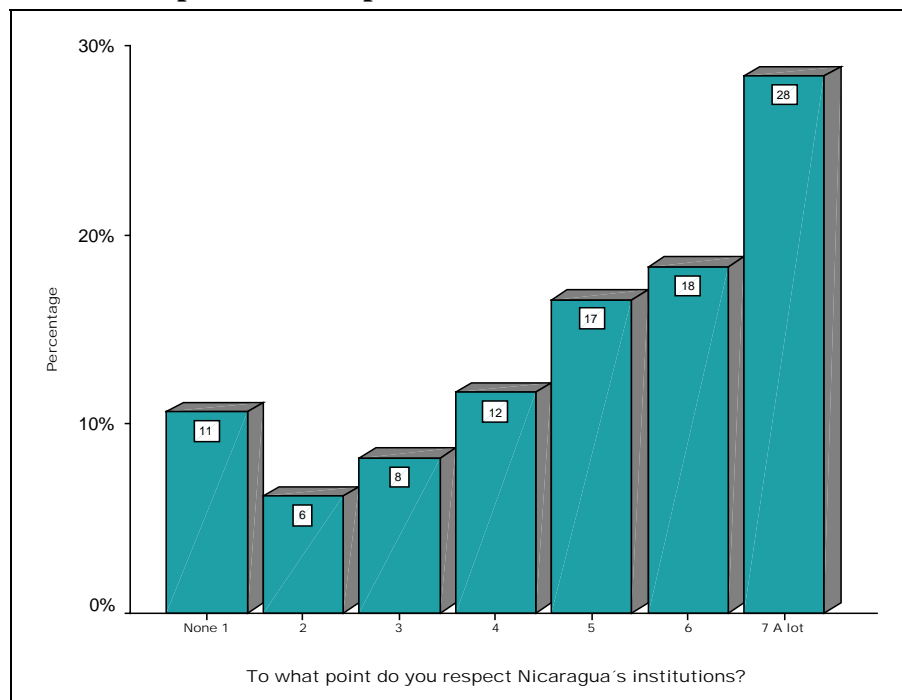


At the other extreme, we observe citizen distrust toward the “political elite” within the political parties, the National Assembly and the government. In other words, the main bodies of the state enjoy little confidence from the citizens, who demonstrate low support for the political system. Following close behind in the low range of confidence are various institutions whose role is to protect citizens’ rights, such as the offices of Public Defender General, Comptroller General and Attorney General and the Supreme Court, which are clearly distinguished from other institutions dealing with rights mentioned in the previous paragraph.

3.2.3 Respect for Public Institutions

This perception is reaffirmed with the question about respect for Nicaragua’s political institutions (B2), toward which only 28.4% gave high marks, as reflected in Graphic III.7.

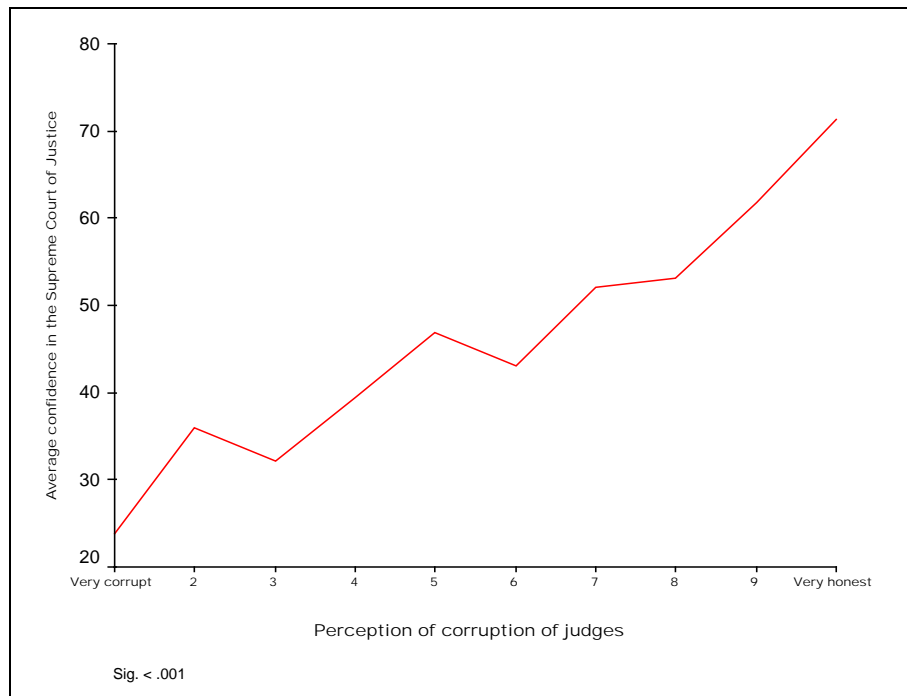
Graphic III.7 Respect for the Political Institutions



This discrediting of public institutions presumably results from various events of recent years, particularly the political parties' demagogic and manipulative electoral performance; the pact between the FSLN and PLC to divvy up top posts of state institutions (2000-04) and restrict the participation of other political parties; the high salaries, per diems and pensions received by legislators and government officials as well as the corruption scandals that came to light during the recent governments.⁴³

⁴³ The Alemán government stands out in that the former President was sentenced to prison for fraud and money laundering in 2003 (and several of his officials are still fugitives) while the current President Bolaños, at that time his Vice President and head of the Anti-corruption Commission, is accused of having financed his own electoral campaign with illegal funds.

Graphic III.8 Distrust and Corruption



One result of the survey is that the perception of those surveyed about the corruption of the governmental institutions and chiefs (PC1-21) is associated positively with citizen distrust of public officials as Graphic III.8 illustrates for us in the case of the justice system. In other words, a greater perception of honesty by judges translates into greater confidence in the Supreme court and vice versa. We similarly observe that correlation with the other public institutions, such as the offices of Public Defender General, Comptroller General and Attorney General. Considering the judicial verification of highly publicized cases of fraud against the public treasury, it can be concluded that real foundations exist for the citizenry's distrust of public officials.

3.2.4 Scale of Support for the Political System

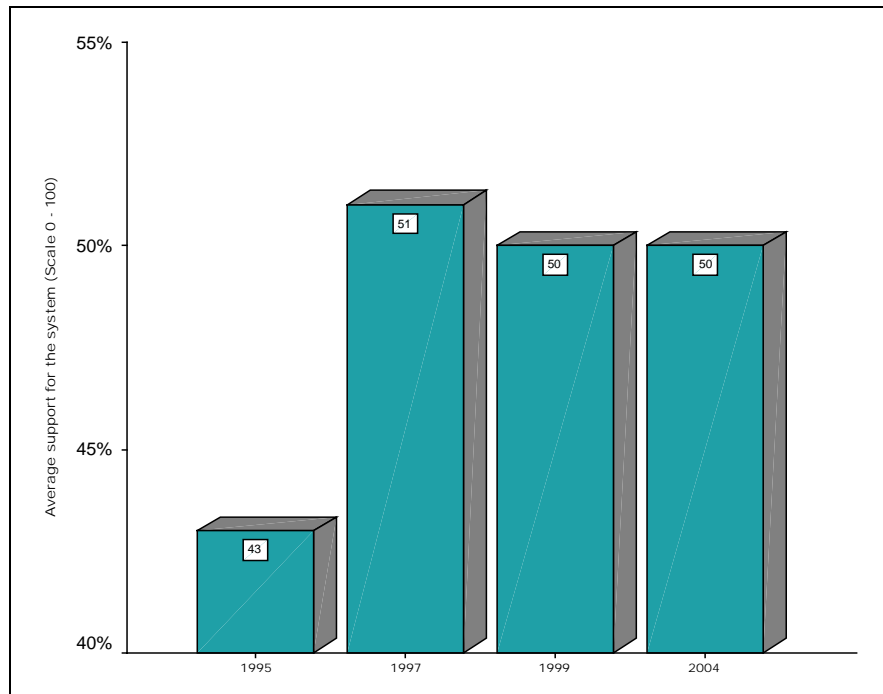
The University of Pittsburgh's Latin American Public Opinion Project has developed a reliable measurement scale for support of the political system that includes these questions (valued on a scale of 1 to 7):

B1: To what point do you believe that the courts in Nicaragua guarantee a fair trial?
B2: To what point do you respect Nicaragua's political institutions?
B3: To what point do you believe that citizen's basic rights are being protected by Nicaragua's political system?
B4: To what point do you feel proud of living under the Nicaraguan political system?
B6: To what point do you think that Nicaragua's political system must be supported?

As mentioned above, we constructed an index of support for the political system taking an average of these five questions after having recoded them on a scale of 1 to 100. In Nicaragua we observe that this index of support for the political system has remained on the positive side of the scale since 1997, coinciding at the same 50-point level in 1999 and 2004, which signals a

tendency toward stability of the political system at a significant level of support that covers half of the citizenry (Graphic III.9). From another perspective, it can be interpreted that the process of growing support for the political system in the first half of the nineties has come to a halt after 1997 and its increase would be desirable to strengthen the democratization of the political system.

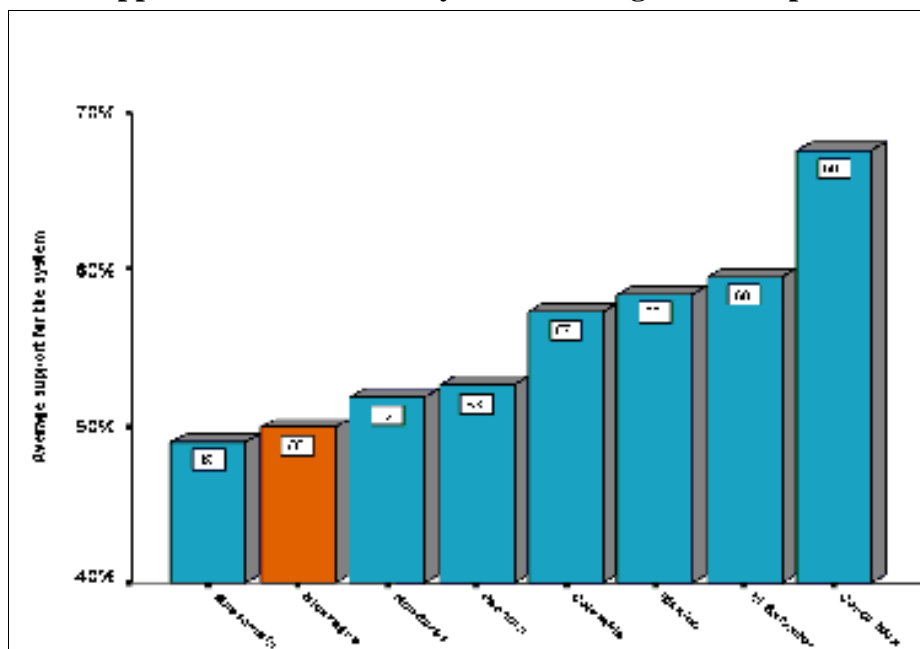
Graphic III.9 Evolution of Support for the Political System in Nicaragua⁴⁴



From a regional comparative perspective, we observe that Nicaragua is located on the lower side of the scale of support for the system, together with Guatemala, Honduras and Panama, as illustrated by Graphic III.10.

⁴⁴ Source: Seligson M. *Auditoría de la Democracia: Nicaragua 1999*, University of Pittsburgh, 1999.

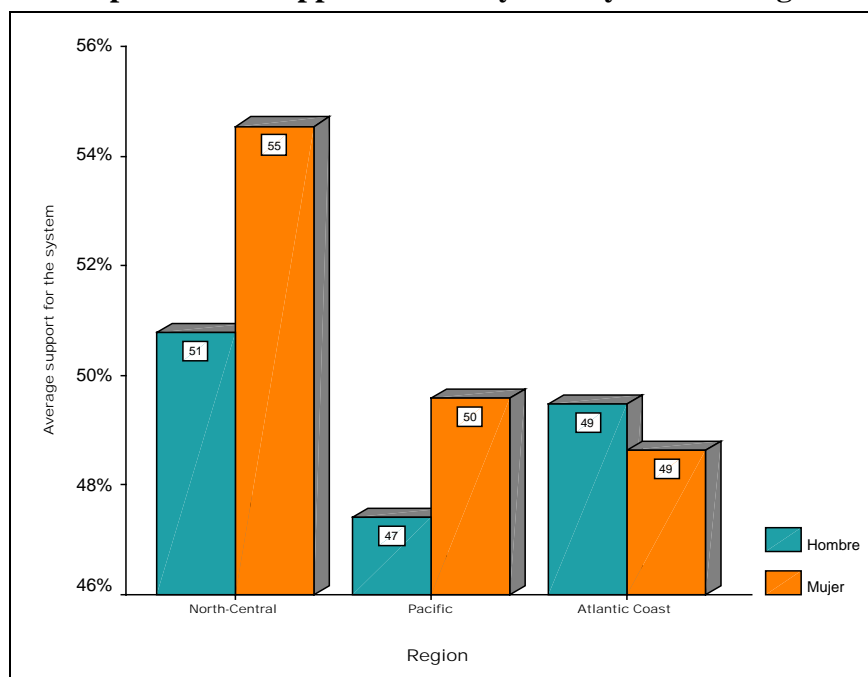
Graphic III.10 Support for the Political System: Nicaragua in Comparative Perspective



3.2.5 Support for the Nicaraguan System by Sex and Region

We observe that women reflect higher support for the political system than men, save in the Atlantic region, with a significantly higher margin in the north-central region of the country (Graphic III.11). This last region indicates a greater degree of support by its population (both sexes) for the political system than the Atlantic region, and finally the Pacific is in the lower range.

Graphic III.11 Support for the System by sex and Region



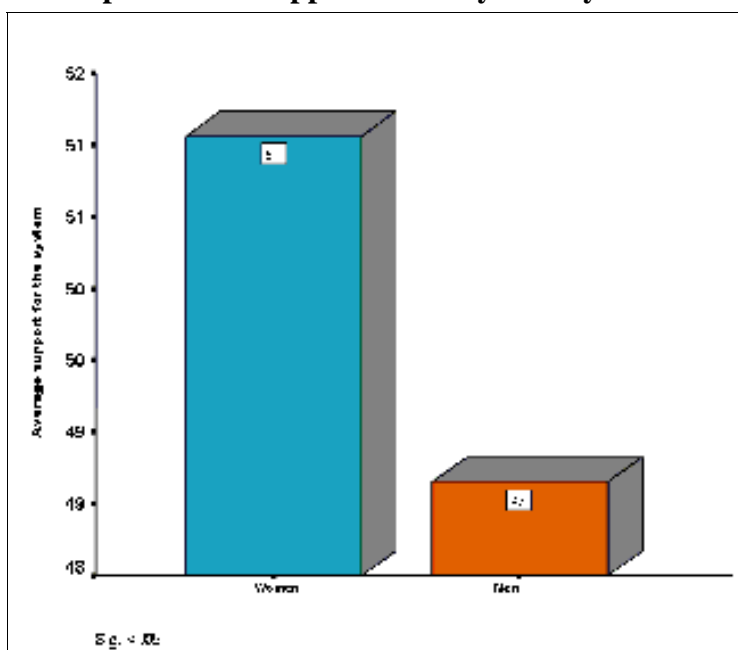
3.2.6 Predictors of Support for the System

Through a multiple regression analysis, we identified the variables that have significant influence on the levels of support for the system (see Appendix D, Table III.2). The model includes socio-demographic factors and another series of variables, of which we present those factors that have a significant impact on support for the system such as gender, education level, perception of corruption of officials, assessment of the Bolaños government, the vision of the economy and participation in political party meetings.

3.2.7 Gender, Education Level and Support for the system

According to the results of the regression model, the individual's gender is a significant factor in his/her support for the political system. Men show significantly less support than women, when the other factors remain constant. This relation is appreciated in Graphic III.12.

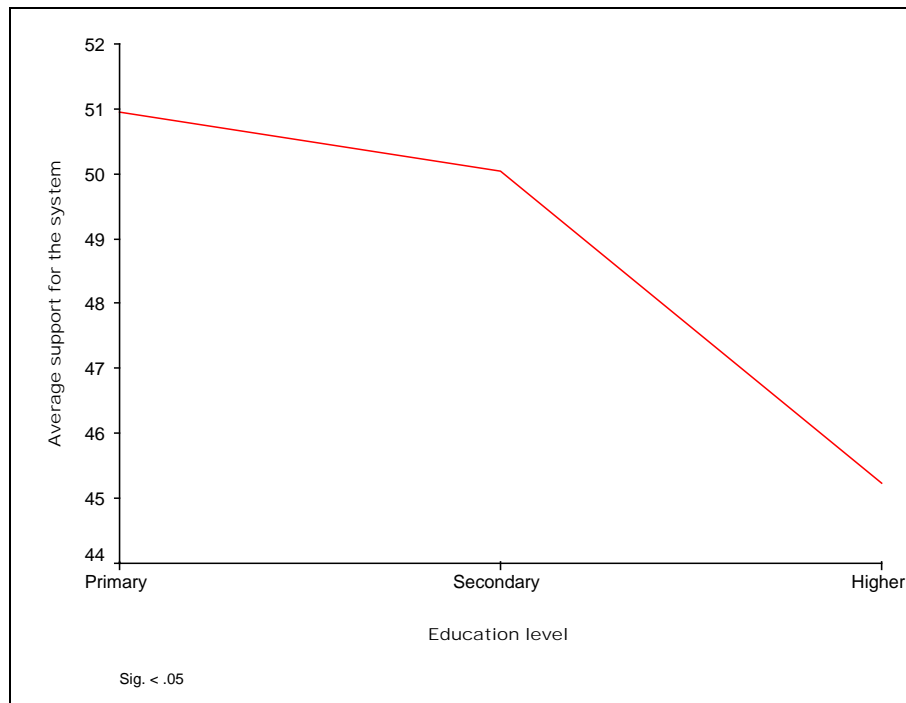
Graphic III.12 Support to the System by Gender



The correlation between support for the system and education level results in a significant relation of an inverse sign, in other words that the greater the formal education the less support for the political system (Graphic III.13), just as other studies have shown in Latin America.⁴⁵ One explanatory hypothesis points to greater access to information and knowledge of the constitutional norms and laws that any public official should obey. In Nicaragua's current political setting, the policy of budget reduction for higher education, despite the constitutional norm that assigns the universities 6% of the national budget, could have influenced the mentioned correlation.

⁴⁵ Seligson M.A. and Polibio C.A., *Auditoria de la Democracia. Ecuador*, Cedatos-Gallup, Quito, 2002.

Graphic III.13 Support for the System and Educational Level

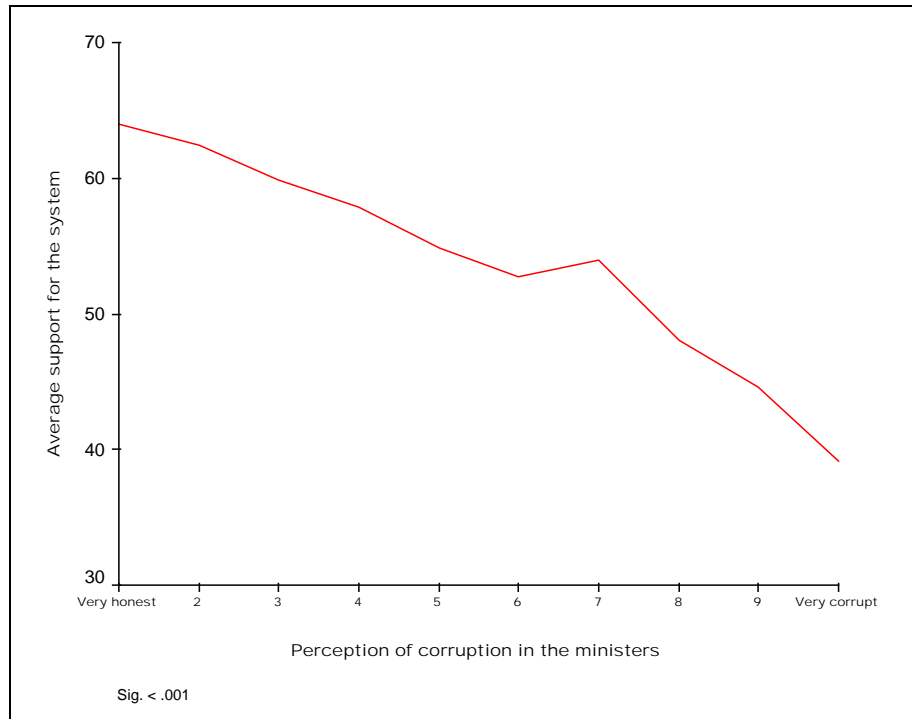


3.2.8 Perception of Corruption and Support for the System

The perception of corruption strongly conditions support for the political system. This study shows that those who believe there are high corruption levels in public officials are found in the lowest levels of support for the system, as we see in the following graphics.

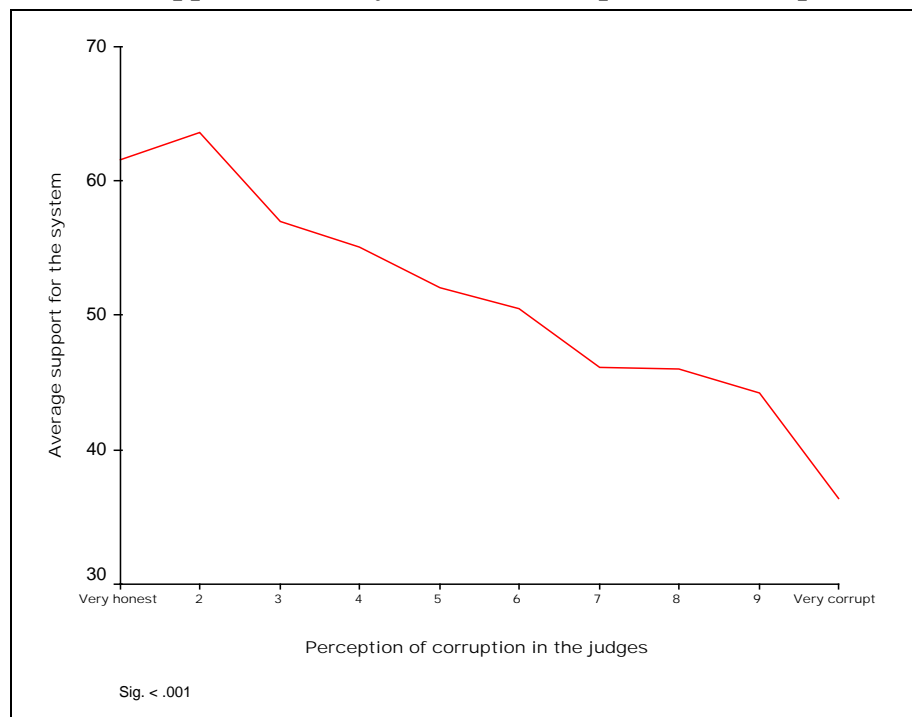
Initially, those citizens who perceive high corruption levels among the ministries profess less support for the political system, as seen in Graphic III.14.

Graphic III.14 Support for the System and Perception of Corruption in Ministers



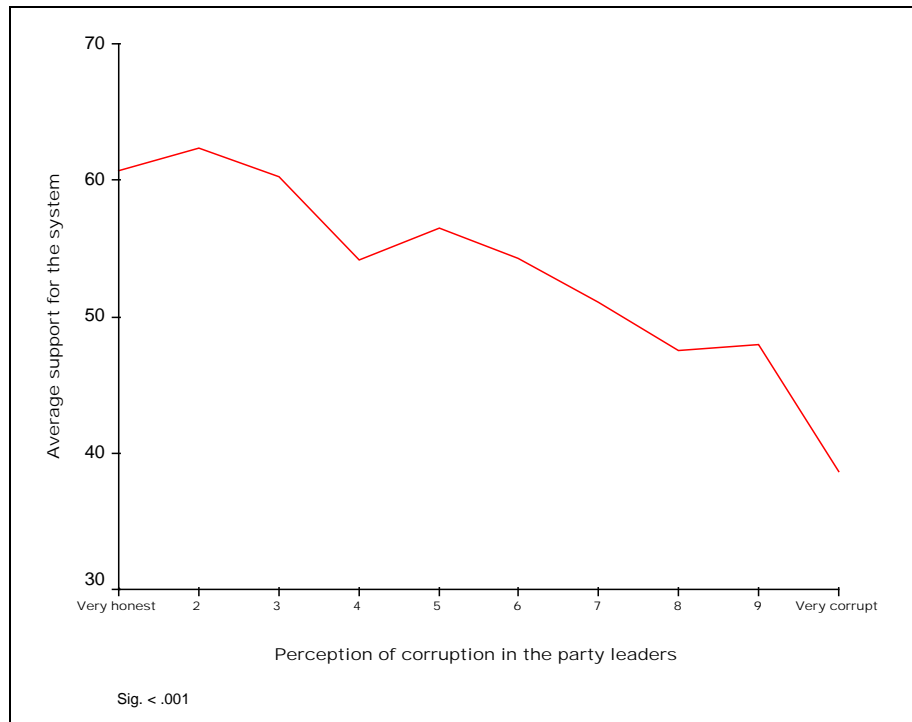
The same thing happens with the levels of corruption perceived among judges, as can be appreciated in Graphic III.15.

Graphic III.15 Support for the System and Perception of Corruption in Judges



Those who perceive high corruption levels among political party leaders also show less support for Nicaragua's political system, as seen in Graphic III.16.

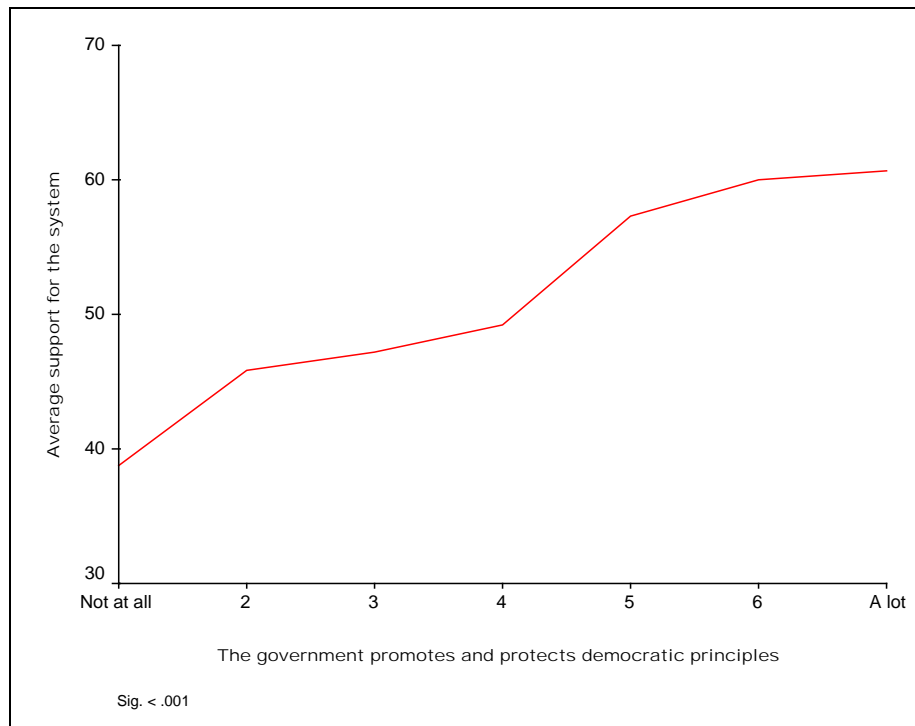
Graphic III.16 Support for the System and Perception of Corruption in Party Leaders



3.2.9 Other Predictors of Support for the Political System

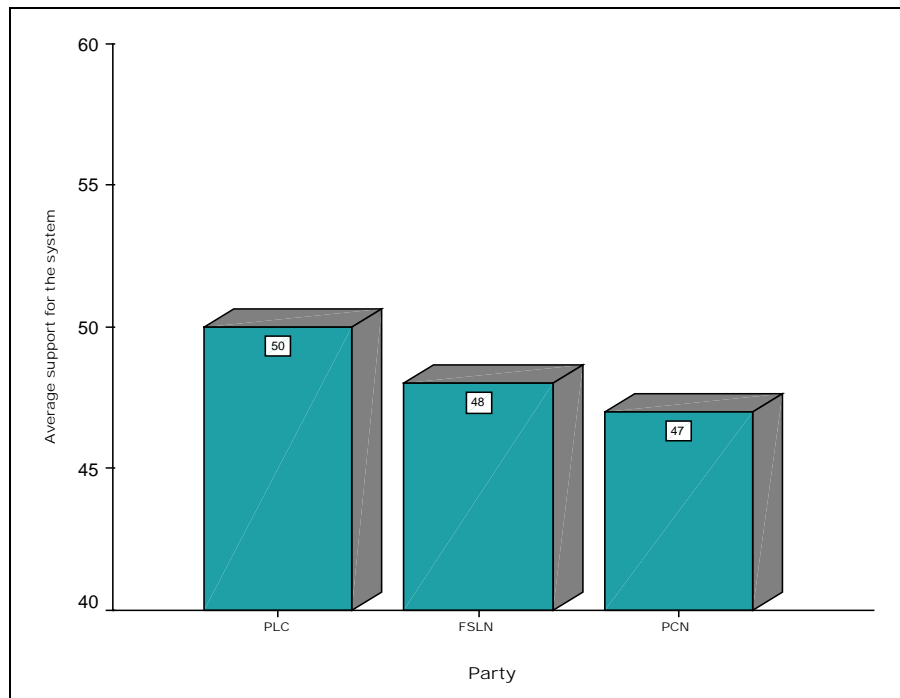
We find that a better assessment of the Bolaños government as a promoter and protector of democracy in Nicaragua has a statistically significant effect on higher levels of support for the political system (Graphic III.17).

Graphic III.17 Support for the System and Evaluation of the Government



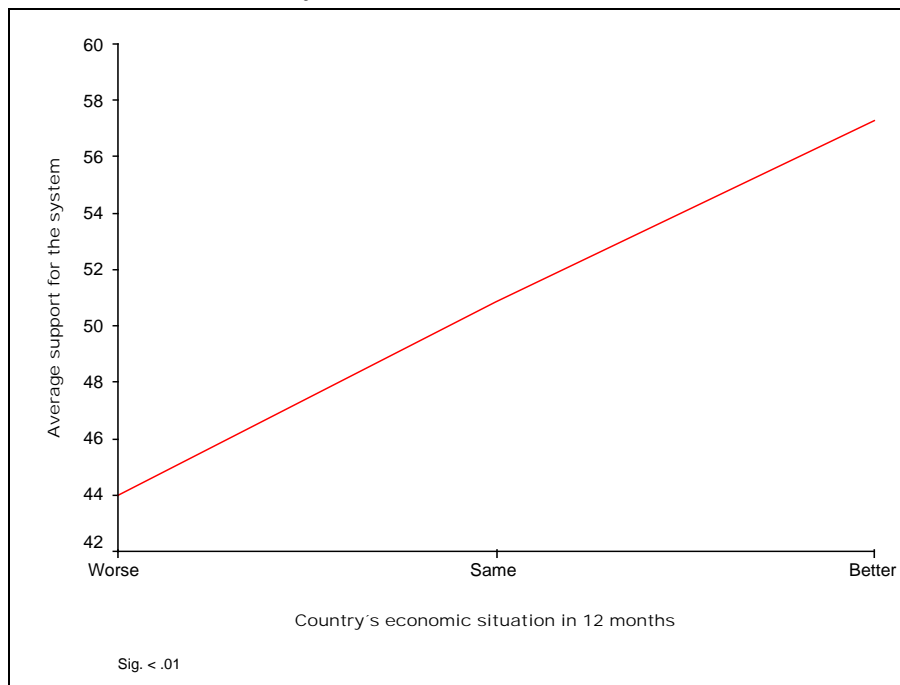
It goes without saying that in analyzing support alongside the party identification expressed in the national elections of 2001, we observe a higher level of support in the Constitutionalist Liberal Party sympathizers than in the other two parties (Graphic III.18), which is linked to the fact that this party has won the last two elections and those surveyed may tend to identify the government in office at the time with the political system. On the contrary, the lower level observed in affiliates of the Conservative Party could be linked to their critical position toward the FSLN-PLC pact that excluded other parties from the 2001 electoral race and from the distribution of posts in the branches of government.

Graphic III.18 Support for the Political System by Party Identification



An optimistic perception of the country's future economic situation correlates with greater support for the system, while those who consider that the economy will be worse show low levels of support (Graphic III.19).

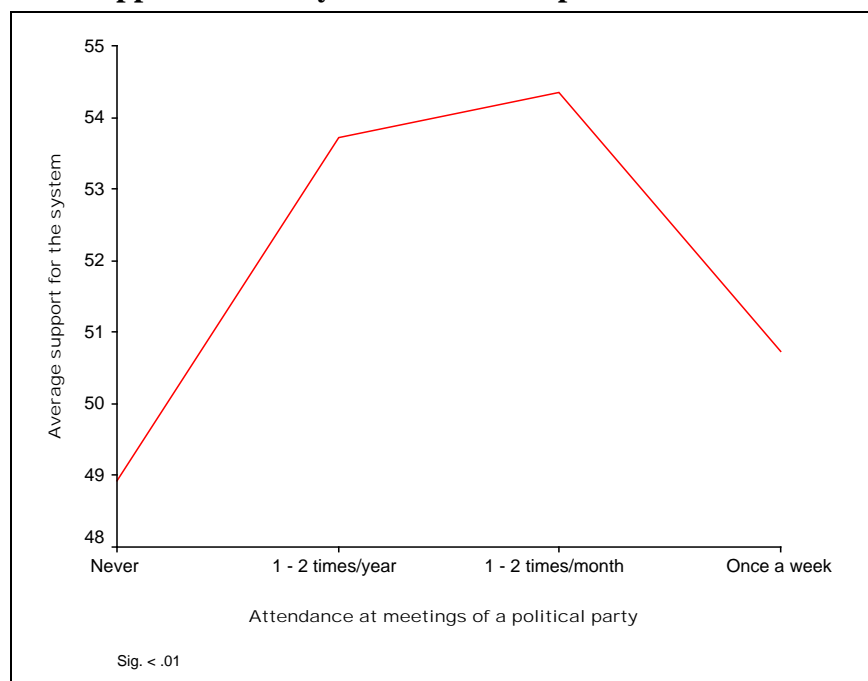
Graphic III.19 Support for the System and Evaluation of the Country's Future Economic Situation



Regarding the economic future, it is interesting to observe that over a third of the population (38%) has high expectations “that the free trade agreements will help improve the economy,” reflecting the impact of the governmental propaganda, while a third (36%) is in an intermediate position and a quarter (25%) of those surveyed believe that the economic situation will get worse with the trade opening between the USA and Central America.

Finally, those people who more frequently attend political party meetings show greater support for the Nicaraguan political system. Although the bivariate relation does not show this tendency clearly and the curve appears as an inverted U (Graphic III.20), this positive relation between attendance at party meetings and support for the system is statistically significant when the other factors are controlled.

Graphic III.20 Support for the System and Participation in Political Party Meetings



3.3 Political Tolerance

The analysis of indicators of support for the institutional system helps us understand the government’s legitimacy and the perspectives for political stability. On the other hand, it is necessary to know the degree of tolerance citizens have toward the political rights of others in order to help us assess the political system’s democratic nature.

Diverse political scientists have stressed the main elements that characterize a democratic culture, such as tolerance for political dissent; negotiation as a way to resolve controversies; respect for the rights of others; recognition of the popular vote as the only way to attain political power; political pluralism; equity in political, economic, social and gender relations; the vision of nation put above individual interest. On the contrary, the indicators of a non-democratic culture would be intolerance, *caudillismo*, centralism, exclusions and confrontations; los negotiating capacity and the zero-sum vision of power.

Similar to the index of support for the system, Dr. M. Seligson has developed a series of indicators to measure the degree of tolerance, in other words the acceptance or rejection of the political rights of other social or civic groups. The index is prepared based on the responses by those surveyed to the following questions on a value scale of 1 to 10.

There are people who never agree with what the governments do, not only the government in office, but all governments,

1 How firmly do you approve or disapprove the right of these people to vote?

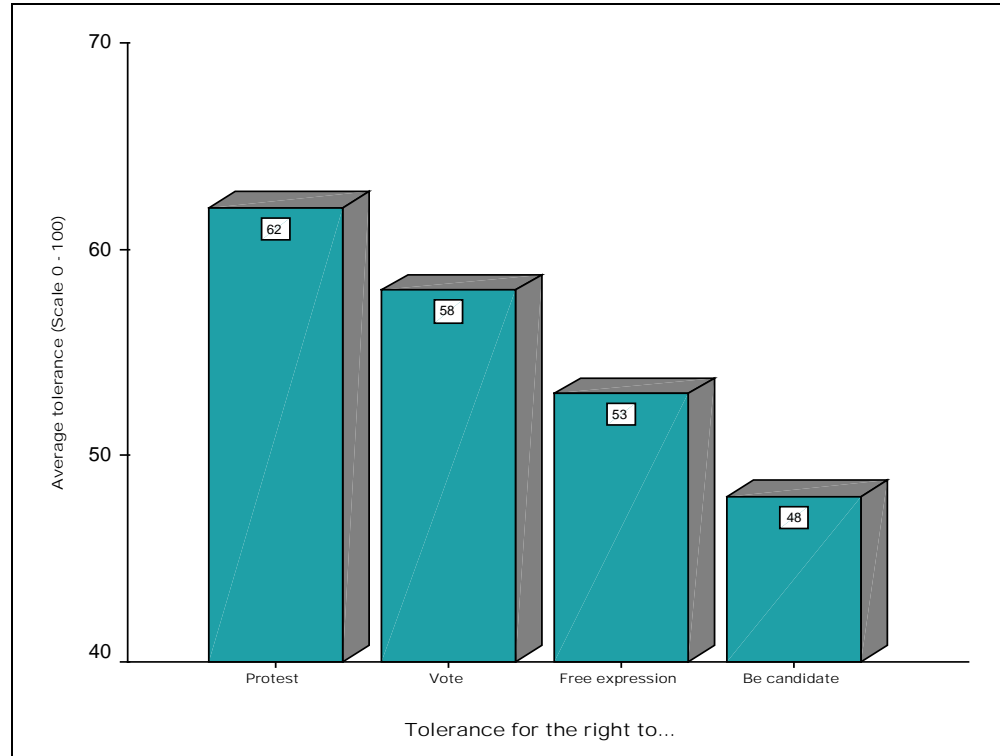
2 How firmly do you approve or disapprove letting these people carry out peaceful demonstrations to express their viewpoints?

3. How firmly do you approve or disapprove letting these people run for public office?

4. How firmly do you approve or disapprove letting these people appear on television to address the public?

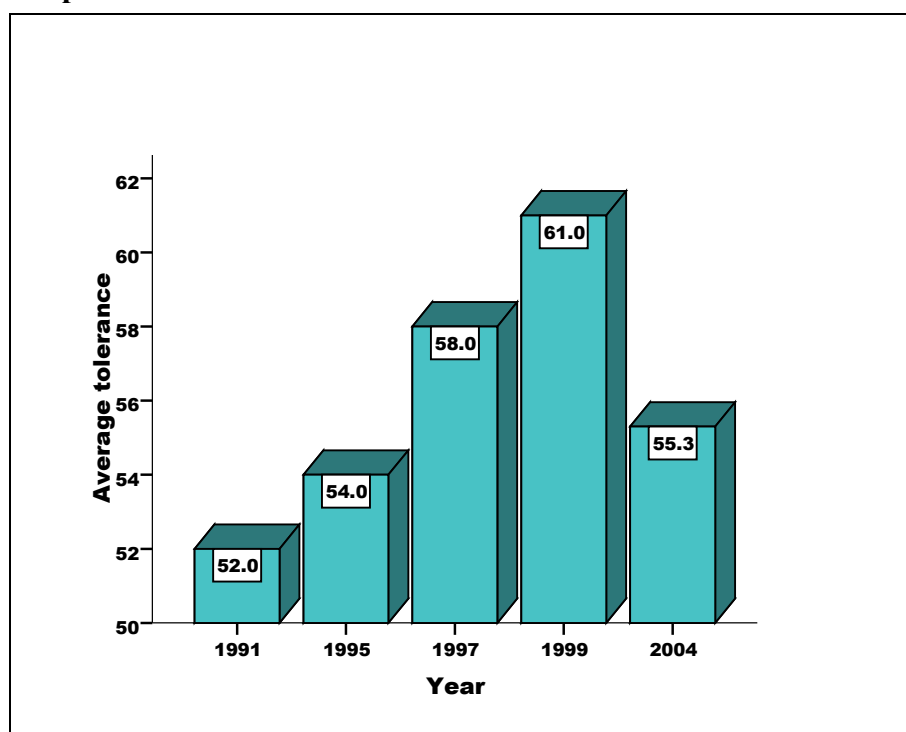
The results of this survey (Graphic III.21) show that a high level of political tolerance exists in Nicaragua for the peaceful demonstrations and voting of other citizens, while a lower level is observed regarding their right to free expression and to run for public office.

Graphic III.21 Tolerance for the Exercise of Civil Rights



The political tolerance index in Nicaragua had evolved positively during the nineties, as illustrated in Graphic III.22, based on successive surveys with the same questions conducted by Dr. Seligson. We observe that the political tolerance level increases starting in 1991 until reaching a peak point 1999 to then drop or backslide to the level found in 1995, still in the positive space (+ 50) of the scale. It would appear that the advances in tolerance found after the peace accords between the competing parties during the eighties and the respect for electoral processes in the change of governments have palpably deteriorated in the context of the strong political fights and uncovering of corruption during the final years of the Alemán government and beginning of the Bolaños administration.

Graphic III.22 Historic Evolution of the Political Tolerance Index⁴⁶

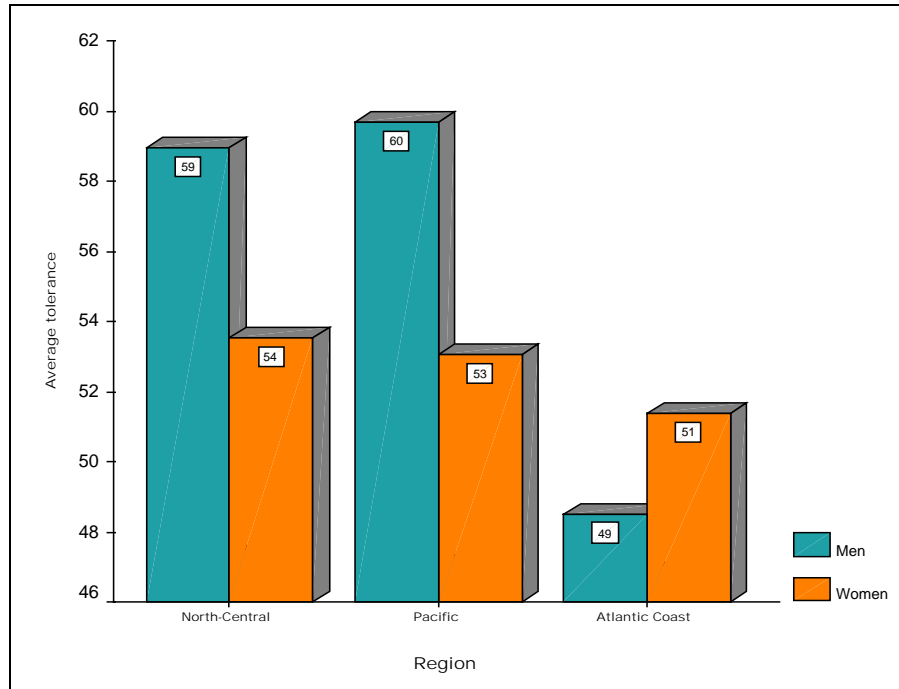


3.3.1 Political Tolerance by Region and Sex

The distribution of the political tolerance index by region (Graphic III.23) shows high and similar levels (56%) in the Pacific and north-central regions, while the Atlantic region shows lower tolerance levels. This is worrying considering the multiethnic nature of the latter population and the responsibility of creating autonomous governments able to create consensus around the sectoral interests in a common development agenda and in articulation with the central government.

⁴⁶ Source: Seligson M. Auditoria de la Democracia Nicaragua 1999, U. Pittsburgh, p. 151.

Graphic III.23 Tolerance Index by Region and Gender



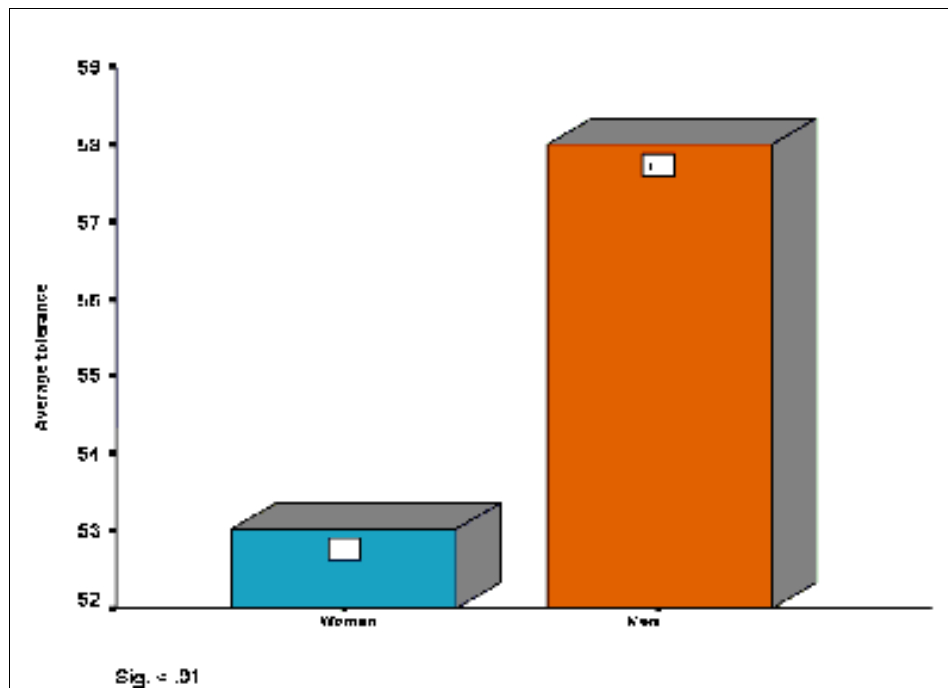
In comparative terms between genders, we observe a slightly higher level of men on the political tolerance scale compared to women, save in the Atlantic region of the country. This result is clearer in the regression model that appears below.

3.3.2 Predictors of Political Tolerance

To identify the predictive variables at the level of political tolerance, we did a multiple regression analysis that identified certain relevant variables such as gender, participation in demonstrations, political information and the vision of the economy (see Appendix D, Table III.3)

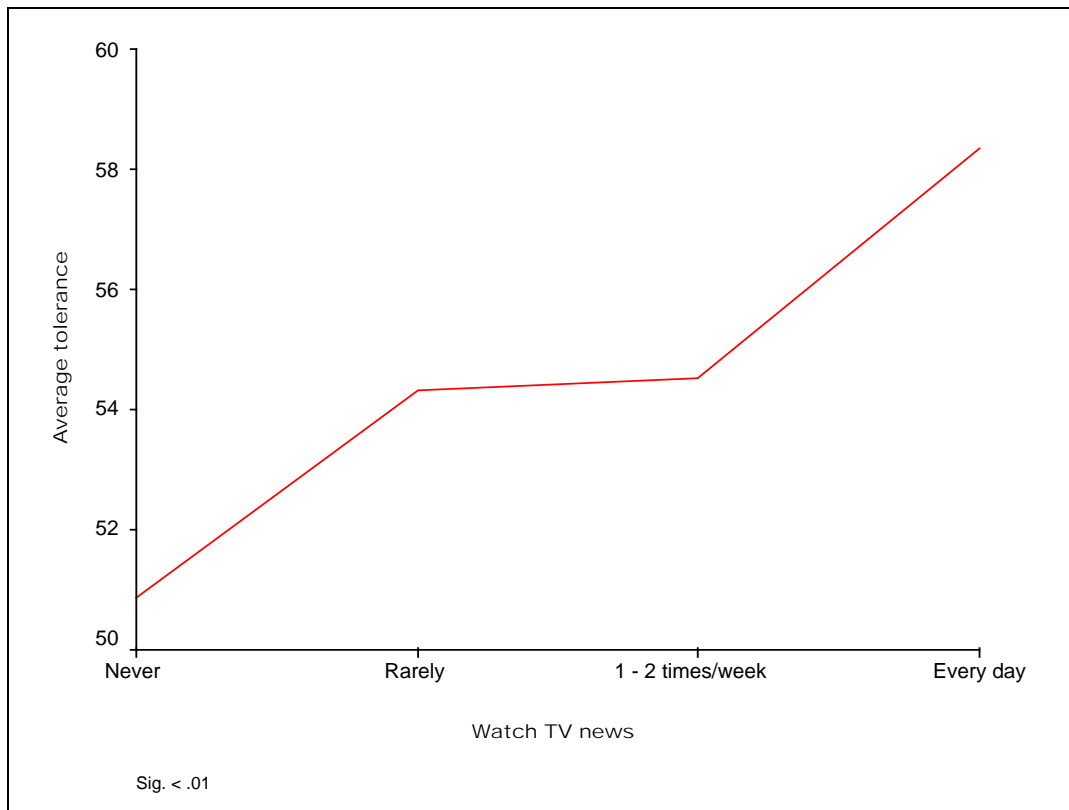
Men show greater levels of political tolerance, as is seen in Graphic III.24.

Graphic III.24 Political Tolerance by Gender



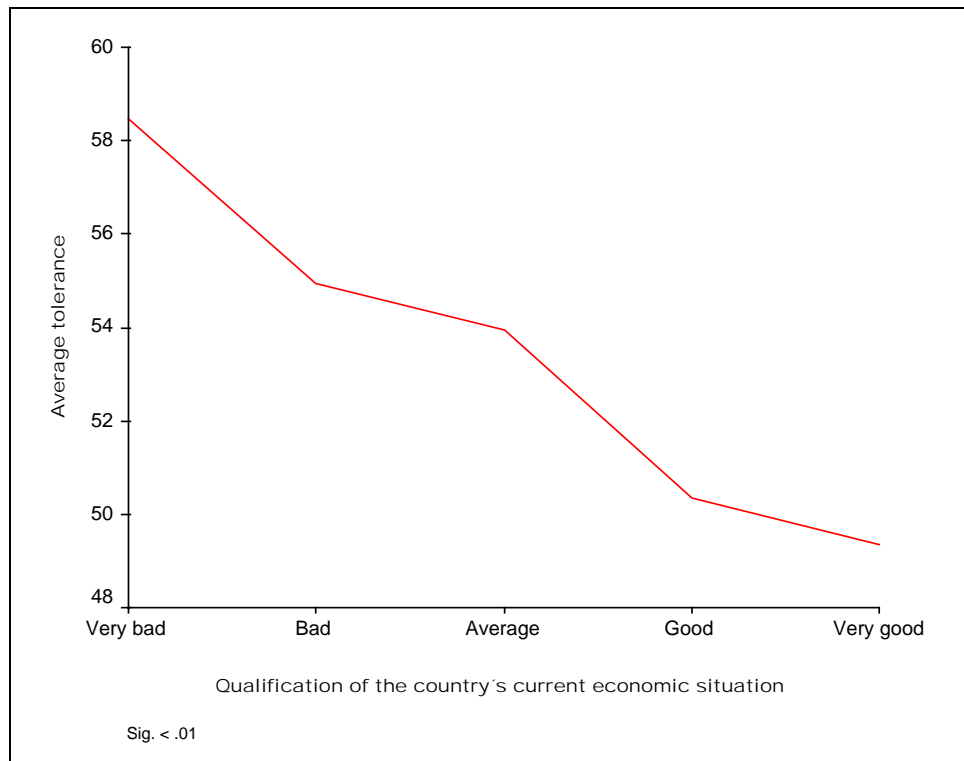
The citizens who frequently listen to the news on TV show higher levels of political tolerance (Graphic III.25); in other words, daily journalistic information contributes to a broader vision and an acceptance of other political positions.

Graphic III.25 Tolerance Level and Journalistic Information on TV



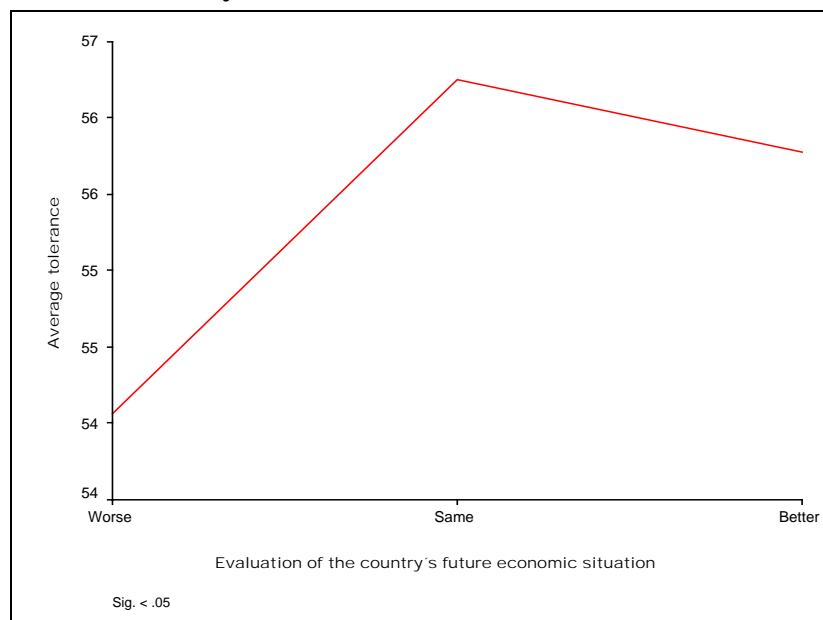
The survey results show that, when other factors are controlled, those who see the country's current economic situation as positive are less politically tolerant, as seen in Graphic III.26.

Graphic III.26 Tolerance and Assessment of Today's Economic Situation



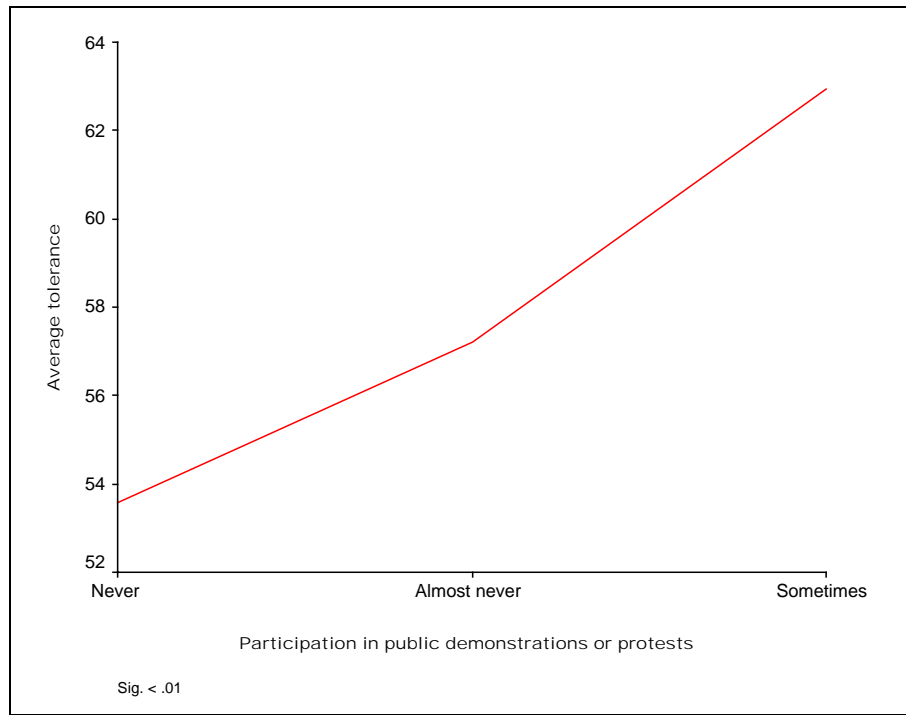
On the contrary, those who are more optimistic about the country's future economic situation show greater tolerance for the rights of others, as seen in Graphic III.27.

Graphic III.27 Tolerance and Assessment of the Country's Economic Situation in 12 Months



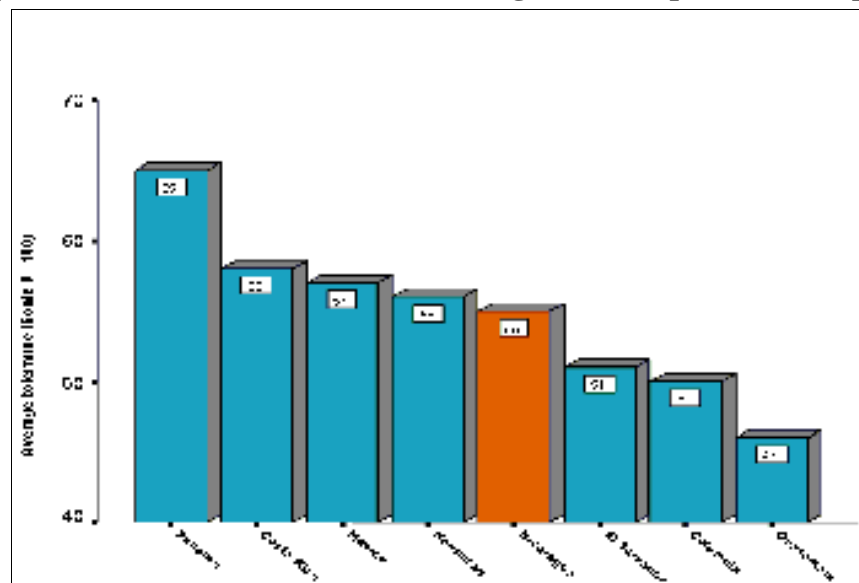
Finally, people who have participated in some public demonstration of political advocacy show a greater degree of political tolerance as the following graphic shows.

Graphic III.28 Tolerance and Participation in Demonstrations



From a regional comparative perspective, we observe that Nicaragua is located in an intermediate position of political tolerance, similar to countries such as Honduras, Mexico and Costa Rica.

Graphic III.29 Political Tolerance: Nicaragua in Comparative Perspective



3.4 Support for a Stable Democracy

In this section, we combine the variables of support for the political system and tolerance, based on the theory that both attitudes are necessary to maintain democratic stability; in other words, that citizens must both believe in the legitimacy of their political institutions and be willing to tolerate the political rights of other people.

Dr. Seligson has developed a prediction model for democratic stability based on the theoretical combinations possible between the two indicators when the two variables are divided into high and low,⁴⁷ as shown in Table III.4. This model is applied to democratic political systems where freedom to vote and regular elections exist.

Table III.4 Theoretical Relation Between Tolerance and Support for the System in Institutionally Democratic Societies

Support for the institutional system	Tolerance	
	High	Low
High	Stable democracy	Authoritarian stability
Low	Unstable democracy	Democratic rupture

This theory holds that the most stable political systems are those in which citizens have high levels of support for the system and of political tolerance. High support for the political system without tolerance for the minorities would lead to stability in the system, but of an authoritarian nature. In the case of low support for the political system, we would find a situation of instability, especially in situations of low political tolerance, which could lead to a break with the rule of law.

As Seligson explains, “This prediction is sustained in the logic that strong support for the system is needed in non-authoritarian spheres to be able to guarantee its stability. If, on the contrary, when citizens do not support their political system but have freedom of action, an eventual change of system will almost inevitably be produced. Stable systems, however, do not necessarily have to be democratic unless to ensure the rights of minorities. Systems that are political legitimate, which is shown by political support for the system, and that have citizens who are reasonably tolerant of the rights of minorities, tend to enjoy a stable democracy.”³

In the case of low political support for the system (the bottom boxes), we find an unstable situation that can have to dissimilar scenarios: a reduction of civil liberties or a democratic consolidation, depending on the values of political tolerance. In cases of low support for the system and low tolerance, we find the risk of a rupture of the democratic order, depending on diverse factors such as position of the political elite, the military, the social organizations and the international actors. The author clarifies that these predictions are applicable only in democratic systems based on competitive, regular and participatory elections.

⁴⁷ Seligson M.A., "Toward A Model of Democratic Stability: Political Culture in Central America," *Estudios interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe* 11, no. 2 July-December (2000): 5-29. The scale has a range of 1-100 and we locate the dividing point at 50.

¹³ Seligson M. and Cordova P., *Auditoria de la democracia Ecuador*, CEDATOS, Quito 2002, p. 52.

It is believed that both the political culture of the elite and the attitudes of the population influence the kind of political regime that exists, and divergences can be found between the two. In Nicaragua's case, Seligson and Booth demonstrated that these incongruities between democratic attitudes of the citizens and the authoritarian culture of the Somoza regime contributed to the downfall of the dictatorship in 1979.⁴⁸

The results of the 2004 survey show a positive association between support to the political system and tolerance (sig.= 0.012), in other words, that the more tolerant citizens are, the more they support the political system. If we observe the results of the survey in Table III.5 with respect to the model explained above, we find that nearly a third (28%) of those surveyed combine high tolerance and high support (upper left box), and thus they show a clear option for stable democracy. In the extreme opposite box (lower right), however, we find a slightly smaller group of citizens (25%) with a low value in both variables and thus in a position to facilitate a rupture of the democratic order.

On the other hand, we observe a similar percentage of those polled in the lower left box of the table who express a high political tolerance but low support for the system, which would signify a situation of political instability. In the upper right box, we find a fifth (20%) of the Nicaraguans who show high political support for the system but low political tolerance, a situation that would facilitate an option for the system's authoritarian stability.

Table III.5 Empirical Relation Between Tolerance and Support for the System in Nicaragua, 2004

Support for the institutional system	Tolerance	
	High	Low
High	Stable democracy 28%	Authoritarian stability 20%
Low	Unstable democracy 27%	Democratic rupture 25%

Sig=0.012

If we compare the results of this survey with earlier ones conducted by Dr. Seligson using the same methodology (Table III.6), we observe a reduction of the population that opts for a stable democracy, while the risk of instability and rupture of the political system increases as the other options with low values of tolerance and support for the system are higher.

⁴⁸ Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Political Culture and Regime Type: Evidence from Nicaragua and Costa Rica," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 55, No. 3, August 1993, pp. 777-792.

Table III.6 Evolution of the Support for Stable Democracy in Nicaragua

Support for the system	Tolerance									
	High					Low				
High	Stable democracy					Authoritarianism				
	1991: 28%	1995: 19%	1997: 30%	1999: 32%	2004: 28%	1991: 36%	1995: 18%	1997: 23%	1999: 16%	2004: 20%
Low	Unstable democracy					Democratic rupture				
	1991: 19%	1995: 35%	1997: 25%	1999: 30%	2004: 27%	1991: 17%	1995: 28%	1997: 22%	1999: 22%	2004: 25%

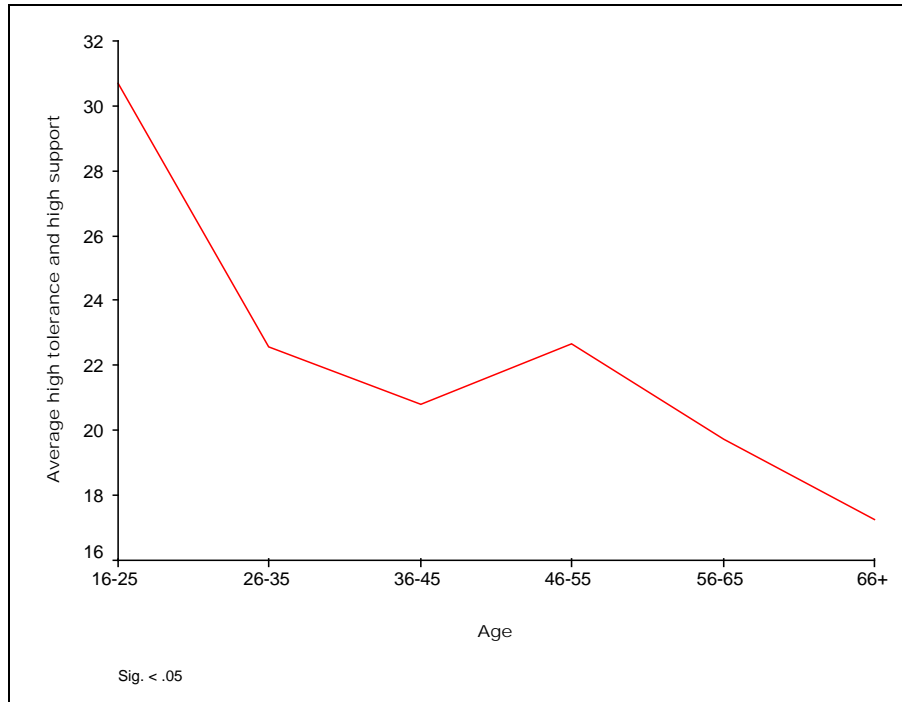
According to this theoretical model, in cases where support for the system is high but tolerance is low, the system tends to remain stable, but the democratic government could be turned into an authoritarian government that restricts democratic rights.

3.4.1 Predictors of Support for Stable Democracy

To ascertain the factors that influence the probability of a citizen expressing support for a stable democracy, we created a logistical regression model including as predictors socio-demographic variables as well as factors related to evaluation of the economy, experiences of victimization by corruption, and an approval index of the government in office made up of three variables (N1, N3 and N9) that measure the President's performance regarding the fight against poverty, protection and promotion of democratic principles and the fight against corruption.⁴⁹ We find that the variables revealed by the regression analysis as significant predictors of support for stable democracy were age, the perception of the country's economic situation and the level of approval of the President (see Appendix D, Table III.7). In the first place, age is a negative predictor of the probability of support for a stable democracy. Older citizens have less probability of expressing their support for a stable democracy, as can be appreciated in Graphic III.30.

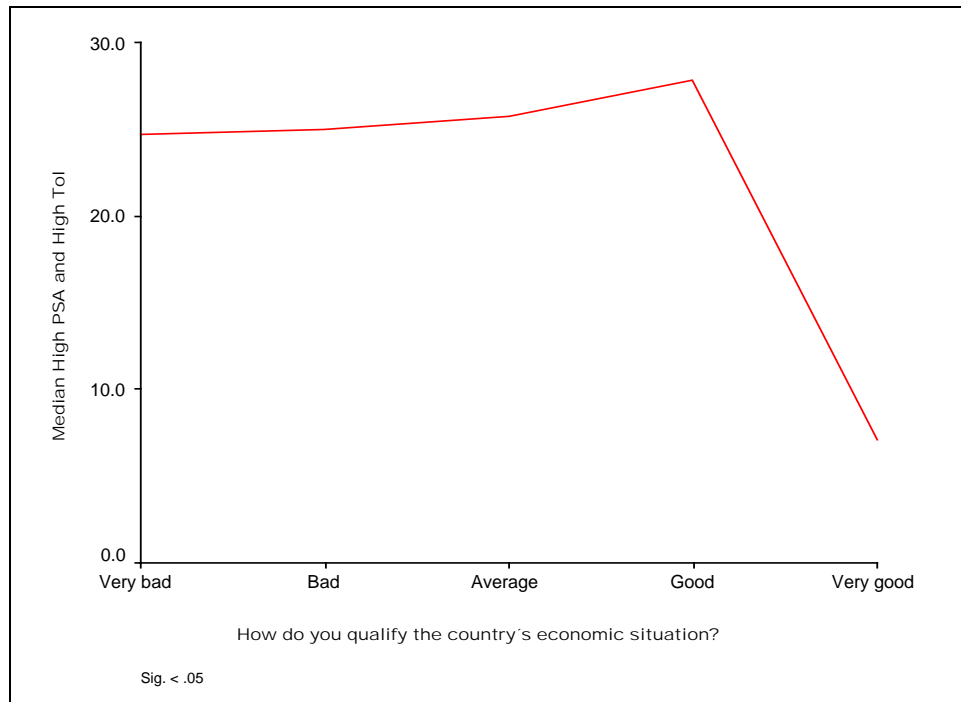
⁴⁹ This is a reliable scale, with a Cronbach Alpha of 8.

Graphic III.30 Support for a Stable Democracy by Age Ranges



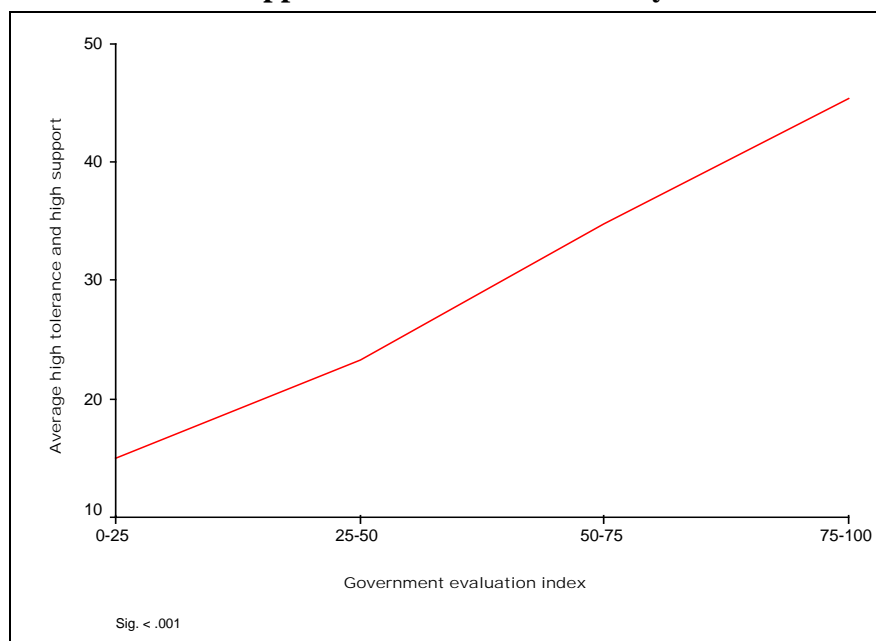
For its part, the assessment of the country's current economy has a slight, although significant effect on the probability of support for a stable democracy in the negative sense. Especially, those citizens who think that the economy is going very well express less support for democratic stability, as is seen in Graphic III.31.

Graphic III.31 Evaluation of the Country's Current Economy and Support for a Stable Democracy



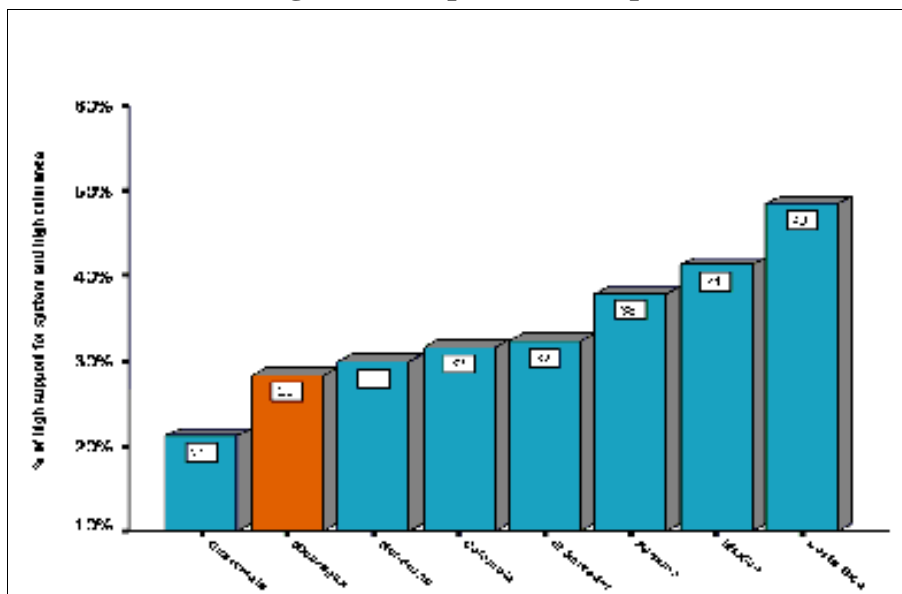
Finally, those citizens who evaluate the achievements of the Bolaños government most highly tend to back democratic stability most strongly, as is seen in Graphic III.32.

Graphic III.32 Evaluation of the Current Government and Support for a Stable Democracy



If we compare it with the region's other countries (Graphic III.33), we observe that Nicaragua is located at a low level of support for stable democracy, slightly higher than Guatemala and significantly lower than Costa Rica, Mexico and Panama. This result could be linked to the growing citizen dissatisfaction with a political system that does not duly deal with their social demands, thus eroding the government's legitimacy and the credibility of a representative democratic system that leaves aside compliance with the broad socio-economic rights established in Nicaragua's Constitution.

**Graphic III.33 Support for a Stable Democracy:
Nicaragua in Comparative Perspective**



3.5 Conclusions

In this chapter we have observed that Nicaraguans have a high level of adhesion to a shared national identity, but the levels of identification with and support for the current political system are much lower, having remained at an intermediate point on the scale mentioned above for the past five years. At a regional level, Nicaraguans are situated at the lowest levels of recognized legitimacy for the current political system, on a par with neighboring countries such as Guatemala, Honduras and Panama.

With respect to political tolerance, it is worrying to observe a backsliding of the positive tendency observed in Nicaragua during the nineties, which reflects the confrontational political climate that has prevailed in the past three years among the country's main political leaders and parties. This increasing intolerance, added to low support for the system, translates into a situation of political instability and limited citizen support for the consolidation of a democratic regime.

4.0 Corruption and Legitimacy

4.1 Introduction

In Latin America, corruption has been viewed as a serious problem that impedes the sustainable development of our countries, and has been situated as a priority on the political agendas of international organizations such as the United Nations.⁵⁰ From an economic viewpoint, different studies have been carried out that demonstrate the negative impact corruption has had on the growth of developing nations.⁵¹

Political analysts have maintained an ambivalent position vis-à-vis corruption, since some authors have stated that corruption is a functional part of political systems since it acts as a lubricant in Latin America's overly bureaucratic state systems. It has been argued that corruption is beneficial to authoritarian political regimes, since it would allow more civic freedoms and facilitate the "pre-distribution" of public resources.⁵²

In contrast, recent studies have focused on the effects of corruption on citizens' confidence in institutions, the legitimacy of the political system, levels of crime and the conduct of politicians. Nonetheless, few studies present solid empirical evidence that proves a clear relationship between corruption and legitimacy. Among these is the Pharr and Putnam study⁵³ of European countries, which demonstrates that corruption reduces confidence in the government's capacity to address citizens' demands. In the case of Mexico, research by Morris⁵⁴ also found a strong relationship between perceptions of corruption and a lack of confidence in the political system.

Undoubtedly, researching these sensitive themes is difficult, since public opinion surveys cannot measure the magnitude of corruption among high-level government officials. Nevertheless, surveys do inform about the types of corruption that affect citizens in their daily lives and in their interaction with low-level functionaries. In this respect, the organization Transparency International has issued yearly worldwide reports, the results of which have been used to create a Corruption Perception Index for purposes of measurement and comparison, although its database is limited to the perceptions of consulted experts.

In an effort to move beyond the sphere of citizens' opinions, which are strongly influenced by the media, and to collect solid evidence about corruption in Latin America, we have made use of various studies by the Latin American Public Opinion Project of the University of Pittsburgh.

⁵⁰ UNDP, Informe sobre la Democracia en América Latina, 2004.

⁵¹ A study by P. Mauro in more than 100 countries demonstrates that when corruption increases by 2 points on a scale of 10 points, the GDP reduces by 5% and investments drop by 4%. Paolo Mauro, *Why Worry About Corruption?* Economic Issues, Vol. 6 (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 1997). Cited in Seligson M., Quito 2002, pg. 134 (see pp 132-142 for an expanded theoretical reference to the theme).

⁵² This initial part is based on the study by M. A. Seligson, *Auditoría de la Democracia Ecuador*, University of Pittsburgh and CEDATOS Gallup, Quito, July 2002, pp. 132-137.

Becquart-Leclercq. "Paradoxes of Political Corruption: A French View." In *Political Corruption: A Handbook*, Eds. A.J. Heidenheimer and V.T. LeVine, New Brunswick, NJ, 1999. Cited in Seligson, *ibid*.

⁵³ Susan J. Pharr and Robert D. Putnam, Eds., *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2000.

⁵⁴ Stephen D. Morris, *Corruption and Politics in Contemporary Mexico*, Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 1991.

These have focused primarily on citizens' personal experiences of corruption, and contain perceptions about the honesty of institutions and government officials.

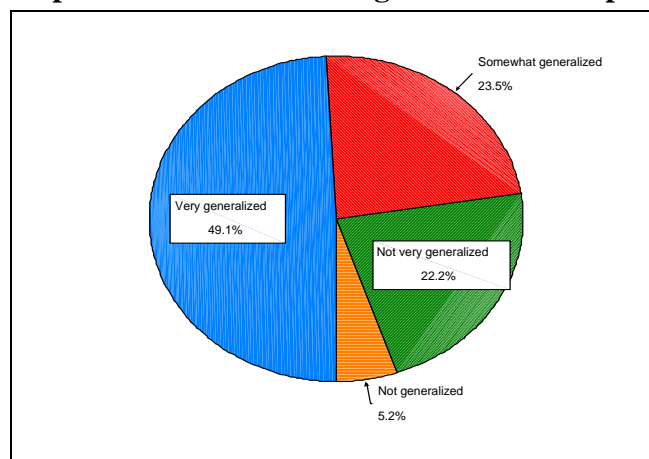
4.2 Magnitude of Corruption

In Nicaragua, corruption has historically been one of the most serious problems affecting both the state and private spheres. Noteworthy cases of corruption in both the government and banking sectors have abounded in recent years. The theme of corruption has been on the public agenda recently thanks to the rigorous efforts of journalists, who have mobilized both civil society sectors and political parties opposed to the government of Dr. A. Alemán (1996-2001).

Later, Enrique Bolaños assumed the government in early 2002, unleashing a campaign against corruption that was welcomed by the citizenry and international organizations. A series of fraudulent state transactions were discovered that added up to more than US\$600 million in benefits for the Alemán family and a group of collaborators, most of whom have been judged and criminally sanctioned. Moreover, there has also been notorious corruption and fraud in the private sector, particularly leading to the failure of five banks with losses totaling more than US\$500 million. These funds were covered by the Central Bank, and the cost was ultimately passed on to all taxpayers.

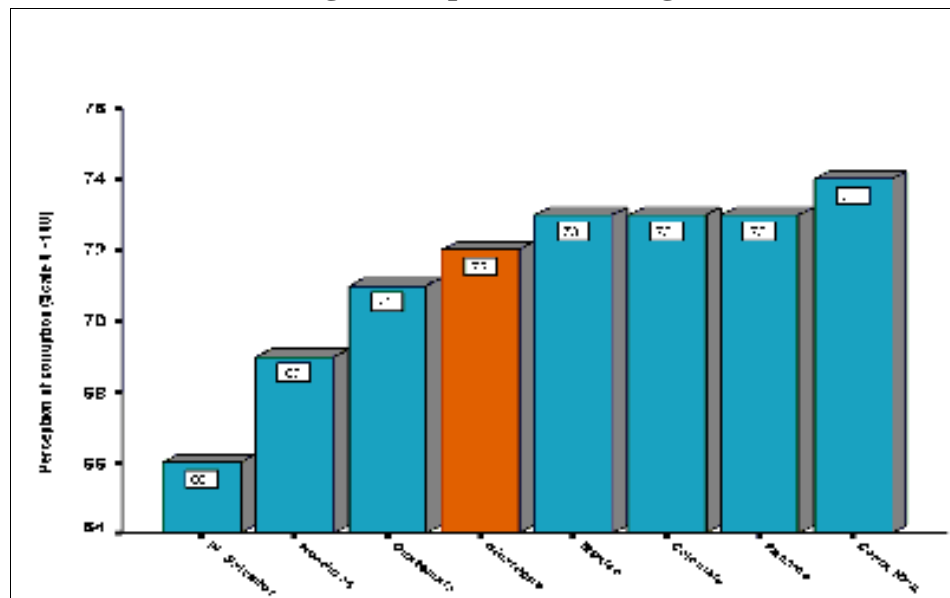
There is a generalized perception by the citizenry in Nicaragua that all public figures are corrupt, as illustrated in Graphic IV.1. This perception coincides with the latest International Transparency report, which assigns Nicaragua a 2.5 rating on a scale from 0 (extreme corruption) to 6 (no corruption). Most of those interviewed (85%) indicated that government officials should not enjoy immunity (as they currently do), because it simply favors impunity and protects them from being prosecuted for their crimes.

Graphic IV.1 Perceived Magnitude of Corruption



Regionally, we find that Nicaragua is ranked in an intermediate position in relation to the perceived corruption of public officials (Graphic IV.2). This perception is high in all Central American countries, Mexico and Colombia.

**Graphic IV.2 Perceived Corruption of Public Officials.
Nicaragua Compared to The region⁵⁵**

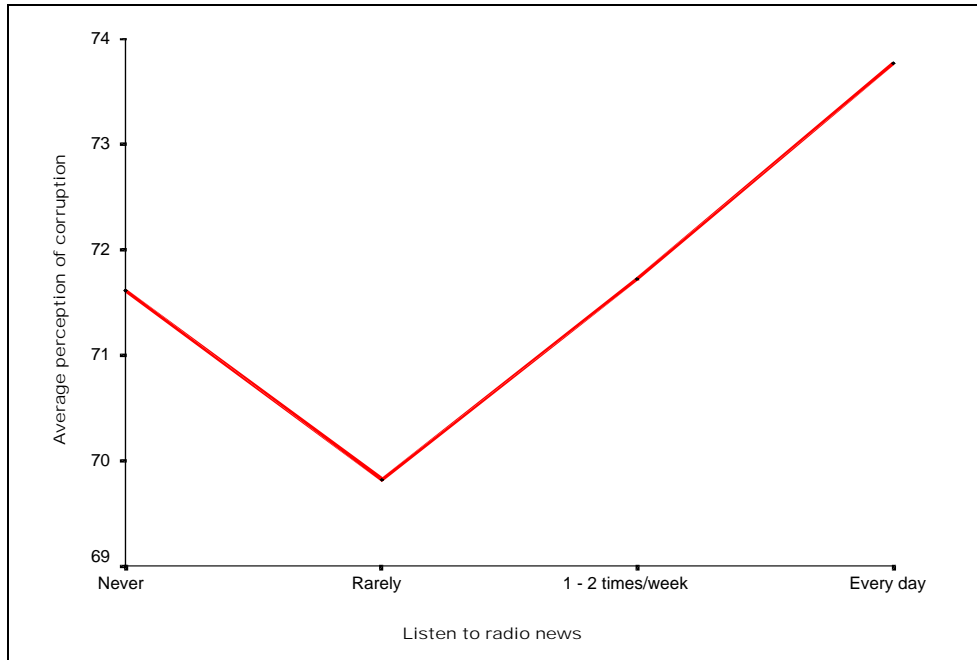


Citizens' perceptions of the corruption of public officials have possibly been influenced by the mass media. Those interviewed were asked about their degree of exposure to news reports on radio, television and in the newspapers. The following graphics demonstrate the relationship between that exposure and perceptions of the degree of corruption of public officials.

Although those people who never listen to the news on radio perceive higher levels of corruption than those who listen to the radio rarely, perceived levels of corruption increase with radio exposure from this point onward. However, the differences are not statistically significant (Graphic IV.3).

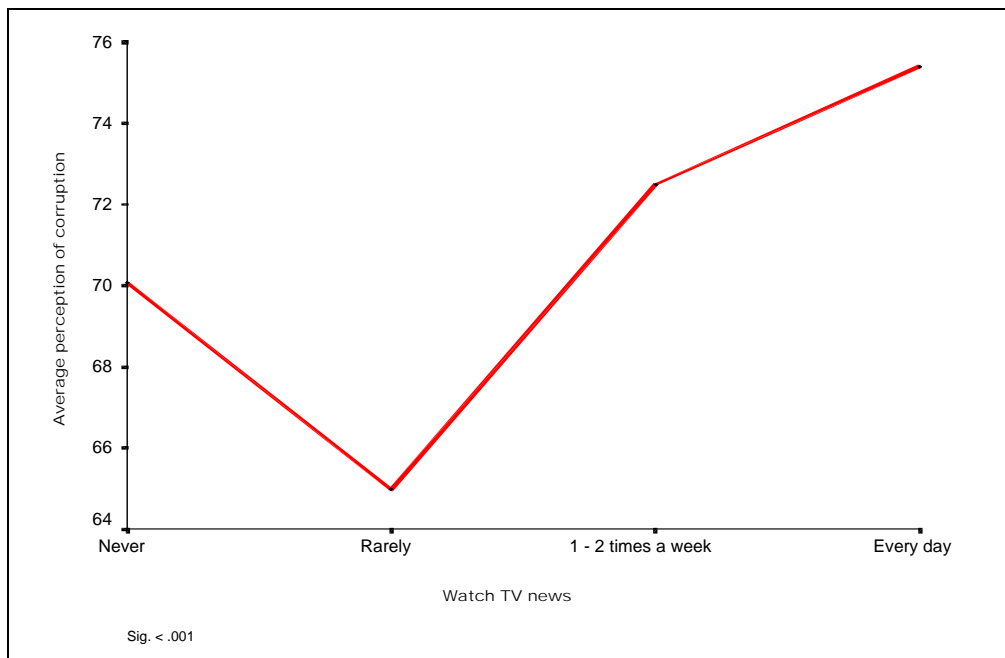
⁵⁵ Source: Dinorah Azpuru, "Cultura Democrática en Guatemala 2004," pg. 72.

Graphic IV.3 Perception of Corruption and Exposure to Radio News



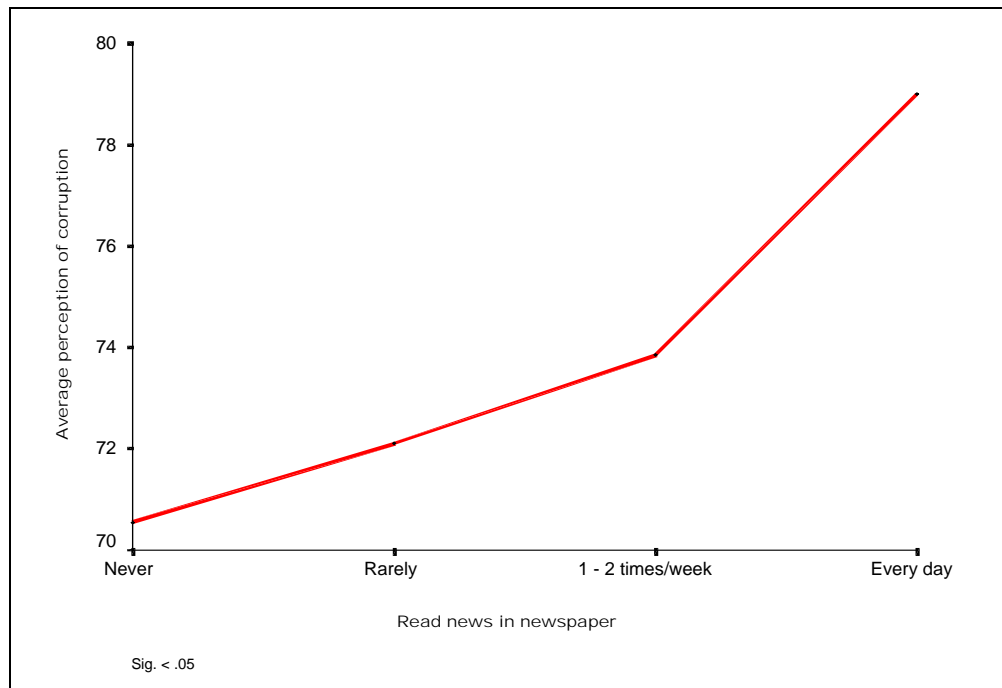
A similar relationship is found with respect to exposure to television news programs. In this case, however, the difference in the perceptions of corruption among people with different degrees of exposure to television news is statistically significant, as detailed in Graphic IV.4.

Graphic IV.4 Perception of Corruption and Exposure to Television News



Finally, there is a positive relationship between reading newspapers and perceptions of corruption, as we see in Graphic IV.6.

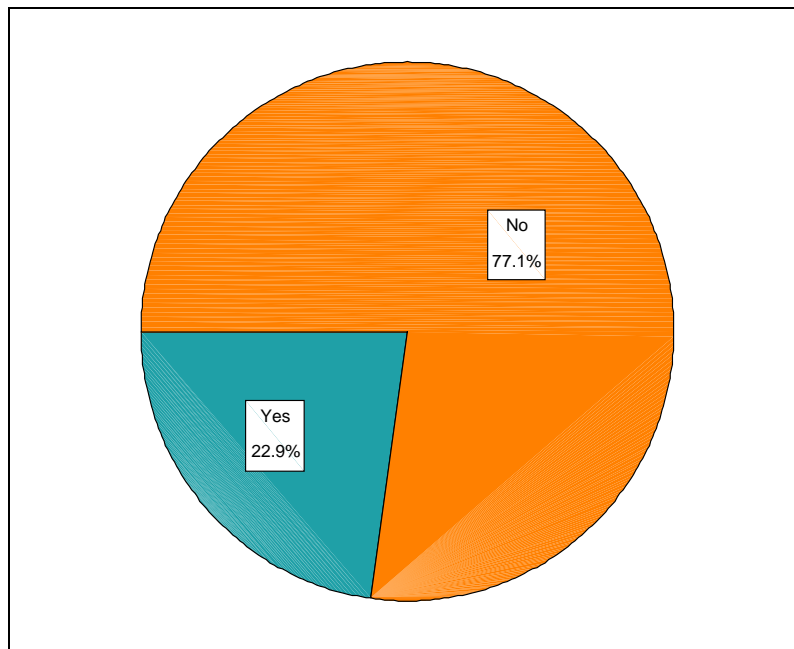
Graphic IV.5 Perception of Corruption and Exposure to Newspapers



4.2.1 Judging Corrupt Situations

The commission of corrupt acts by government officials assumes a certain acceptance and complicity by those who request “favors” from them. In this respect, the study indicates that a significant sector of those interviewed (22.9%) justifies the use of bribes due to the poor quality of public services (Graphic IV.6).

Graphic IV.6 Bribery Justified Because of the Deficiency of Public Services

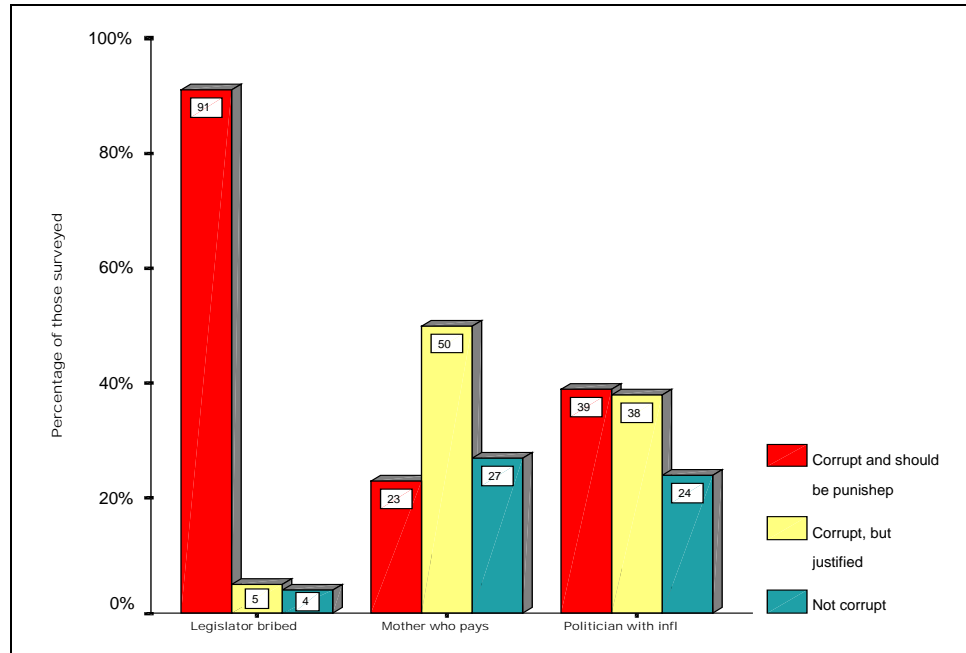


Those surveyed were asked to evaluate various corrupt situations. The following questions were used:

I would like you to indicate what you think about the following situations: (Read the 3 response options for each question)	
DC1. For example: A legislator accepts a bribe of ten thousand dollars from a company. Would you believe that the legislator is: 1) corrupt and should be punished 2) corrupt, but justified 3) not corrupt DK=8	DC1
DC10. A mother with various children needs to obtain birth certificates for each of them. To avoid spending time waiting, she pays an extra 50 córdobas to a municipal public employee. Do you think that the woman is: 1) corrupt and should be punished 2) corrupt, but justified 3) not corrupt DK=8	DC10
DC13. The brother-in-law of an unemployed man is an important politician, and the man uses his relationship to obtain a public job. Do you think the politician is: 1) corrupt and should be punished 2) corrupt, but justified 3) not corrupt DK=8	DC13

As detailed in Graphic IV.7, those surveyed believe that acceptance of a bribe by a legislative representative is an act of corruption meriting sanction, which is understandable given that this is the case of an elected official who is supposed to protect the common good. In contrast, the case of the mother who paid a “bribe” to obtain a service for her child is considered justifiable corruption, and does not merit any sanction for the majority (77%) of those surveyed. In the case of the public official who obtained a public job for a relative, only 39% of the population considers this a corrupt act, while the rest view it as justifiable or not corrupt. This reflects a high regard for family ties, based on the logic of reciprocity and mutual protection from risks.

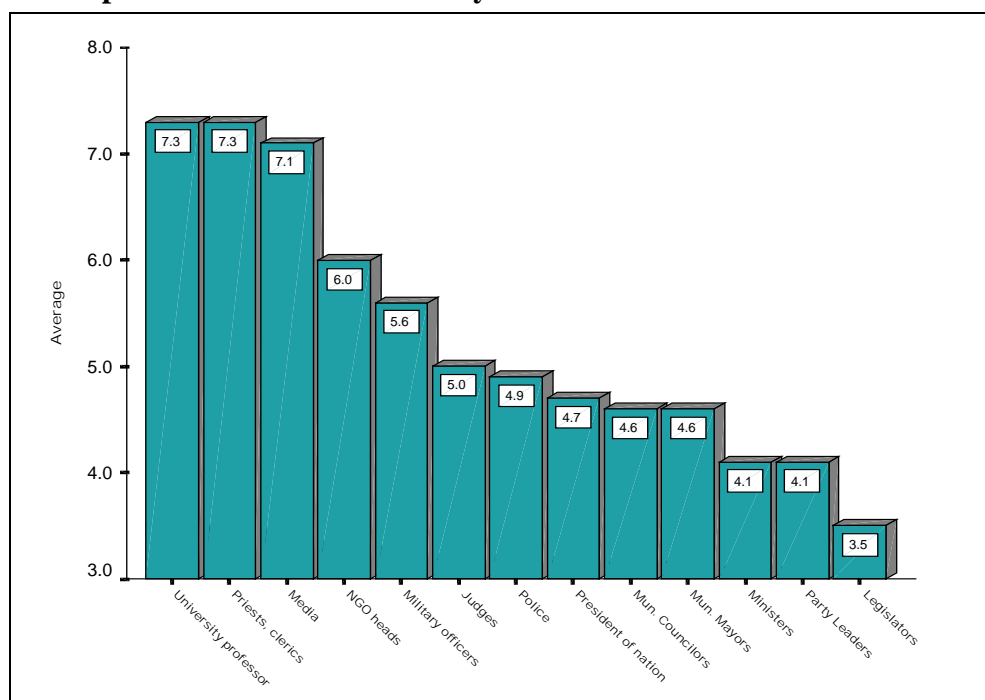
Graphic IV.7 Judging Corrupt Situations



4.2.2 Judging Public Institutions

When asked to rate the level of honesty of different institutions and public actors (on a scale of 1-10), we found that the institutions and people judged as very honest by those surveyed were university professors, priests and pastors, and the media (Graphic IV.8). At the other end of the scale, those judged very corrupt were the “political elite”: legislative representatives, government ministers and political party leaders. This coincides with the indicators about degrees of trust in institutions mentioned previously (Chapter III).

Graphic IV.8 Perceived Honesty of Public Institutions and Actors⁵⁶



4.3 Experiences With Corruption

To find out about the personal experiences of those interviewed, we asked the following series of questions:

EXC1. Has a policeman accused you of committing an infraction that you did not really commit during the previous year?

EXC2. Has a policeman asked you for a bribe during the previous year?

EXC4. Have you seen someone pay a bribe to a policeman during the previous year?

EXC5. Have you seen someone pay a bribe to a public employee for any type of favor during the previous year?

EXC6. Has a public employee asked you for a bribe during the previous year?

EXC11. Have you had to conduct any business with municipal government during the previous year? If YES, have you had to pay any sum in addition to that required by law?

EXC13. Do you work? If YES, have you been asked to make any incorrect payments at your job during the previous year?

EXC14. Have you had any dealings in the courts during the previous year? If YES, have you had to pay a bribe in the courts during the previous year?

EXC15. Have you used any public medical services during the previous year? If YES, have you had to pay any bribes?

EXC16. Have you had a child attending school during the previous year? If YES, did you have to pay any

⁵⁶ Scale of 1-10. 1: Very corrupt; 10: Very honest.

bribe?

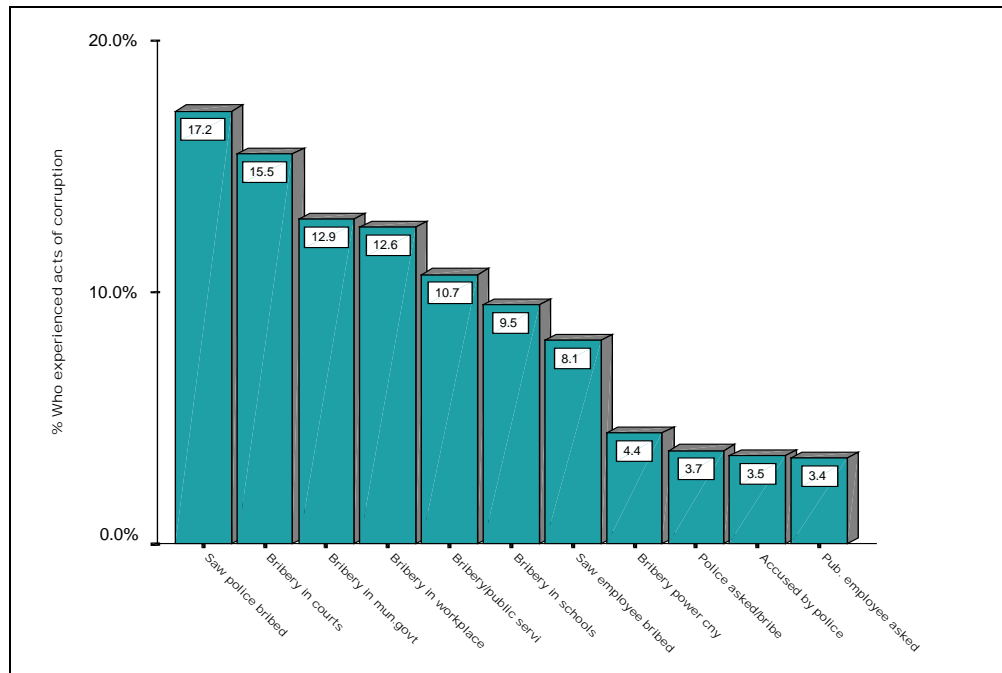
EXC17. Has anybody asked you for a bribe to avoid paying for electricity service?

EXC19. Do you think that paying bribes in our society is justifiable because of the poor quality of public services, or not justifiable?

EXC7. Taking into consideration your experiences, the corruption of public officials is...? (1) Very generalized; (2) Somewhat generalized; (3) Not very generalized; (4) Not generalized (8) DK/NA

Those who have experienced corruption directly have indicated the most frequent places as the Police, the courts, municipal government and the workplace, as shown in Graphic IV.9.

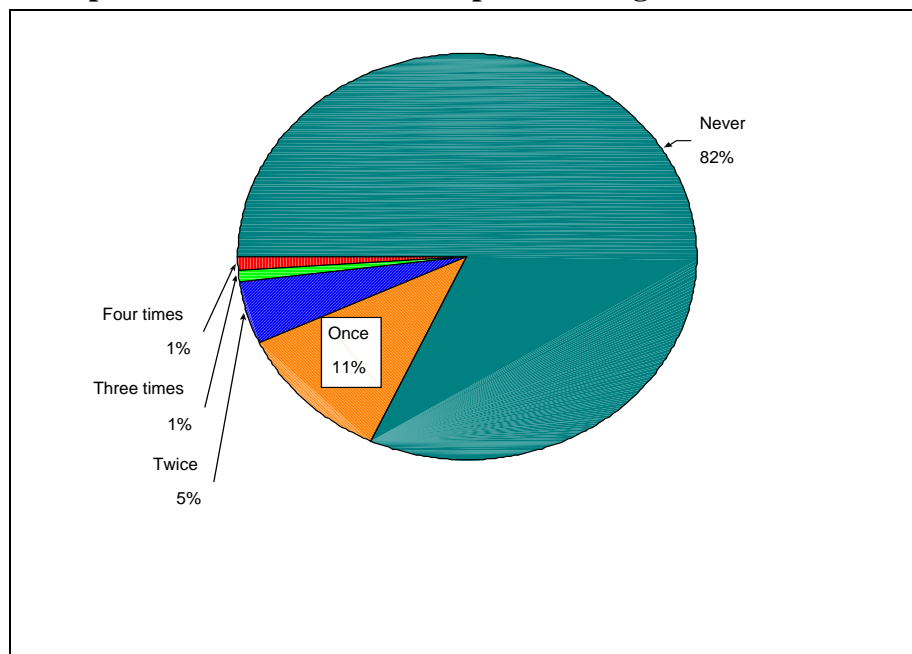
Graphic IV.9 Experiences with Institutional Corruption



4.3.1 Victims of Corruption (Bribes)

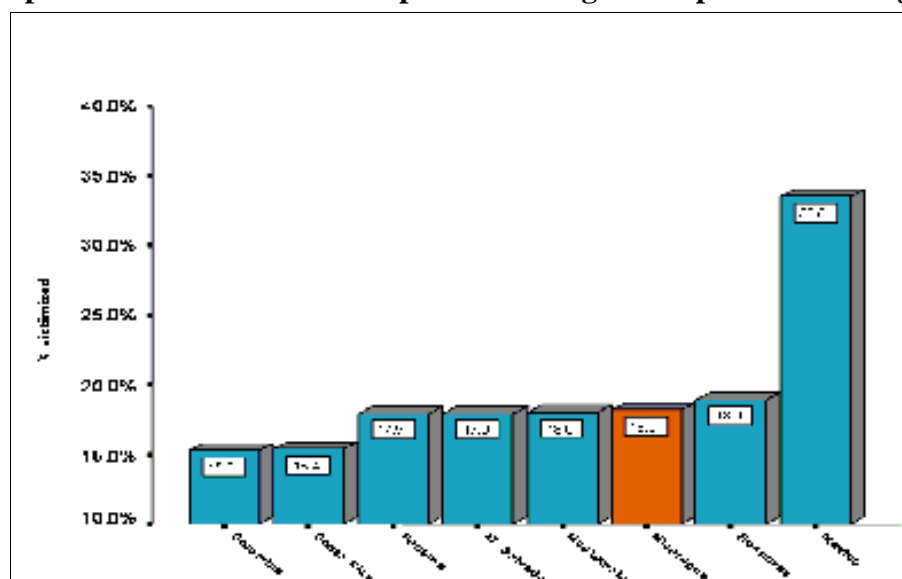
Some 18% of those interviewed indicated that they had been victims of an act of corruption (bribes) during the year prior to the interview (Feb. 2003-Feb. 2004), mostly one or two times, as opposed to the majority (82%), who had not been involved in any act of corruption (Graphic IV.10).

Graphic IV.10 Victims of Corruption During the Previous Year



Within the region, as we see in Graphic IV.11, the level of victimization from corruption in Nicaragua is in the intermediate range, similar to other Central American nations but less than in Mexico.

Graphic IV.11 Victims of corruption: Nicaragua compared to the region



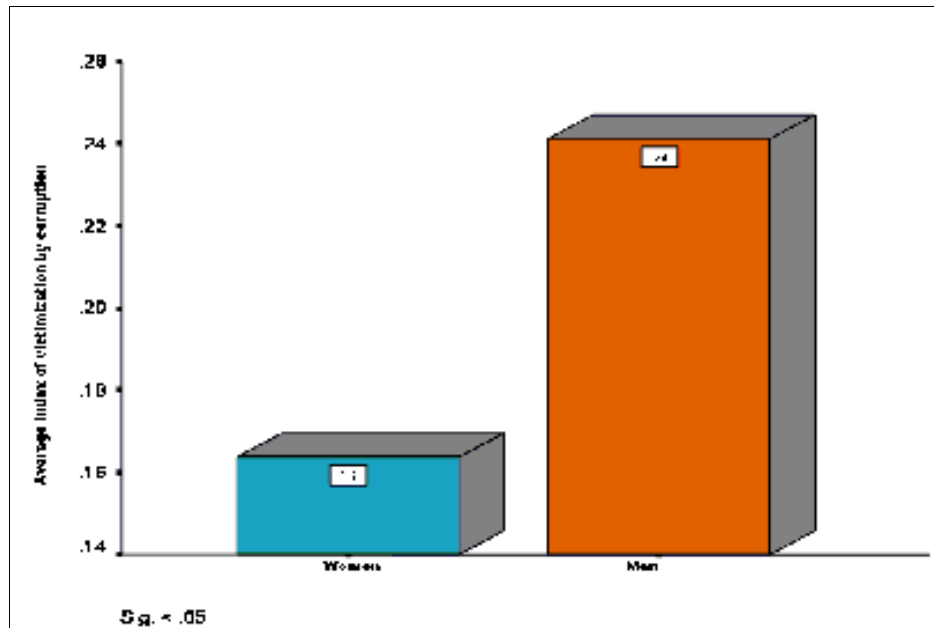
4.4 Predictors of Victimization

In a linear regression model, we find that the significant predictors of victimization from corruption are gender and educational level, independent of a range of other variables: area of

residence, age, marital status, economic status, size of place of residence, and number of children (see Appendix D, Table IV.1).

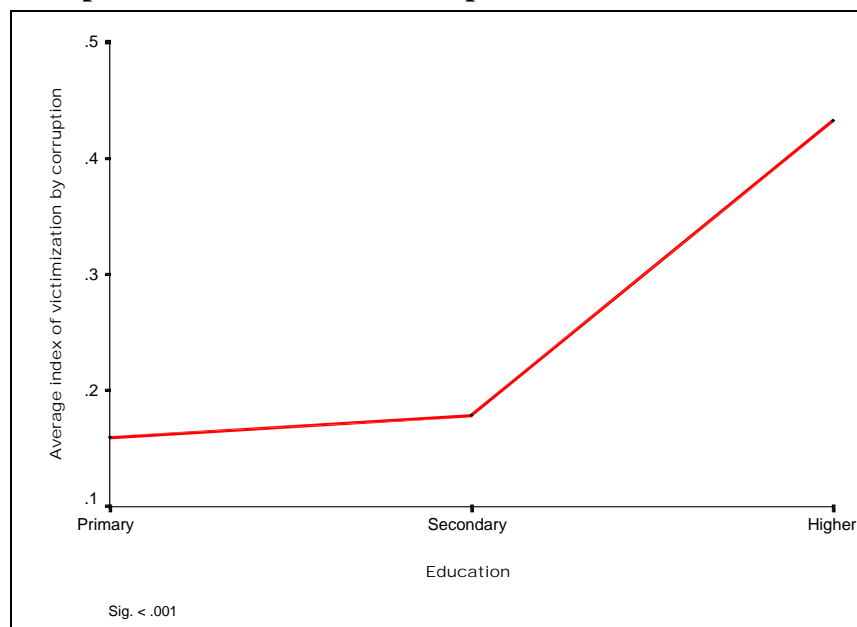
As illustrated in Graphic IV.12, men are more frequently victims of corruption than women.

Graphic IV.12 Victims of Corruption and Gender



There is a positive relationship between victimization from corruption and educational level. More educated people are more likely to be victims of acts of corruption, as detailed in Graphic IV.13.

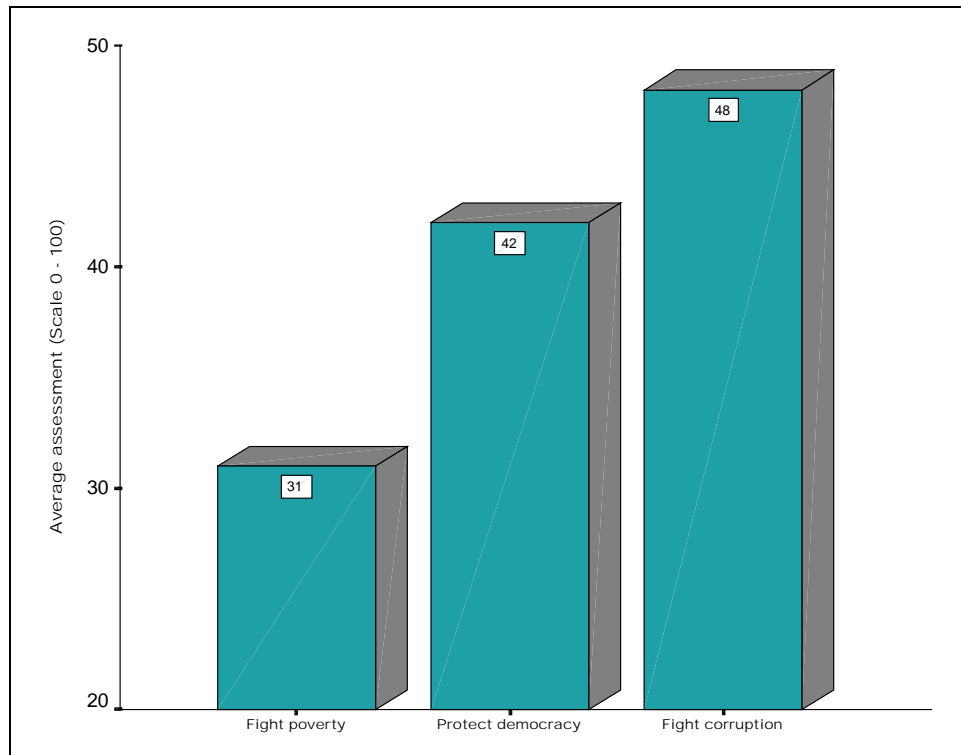
Graphic IV.13 Victims of Corruption and Educational Level



4.4.1 Assessment of the Bolaños Government's Anti-Corruption Policy

The Bolaños government's policy that receives the highest marks is the fight against corruption, and to a lesser extent its efforts to protect democracy. In last place is the government's anti-poverty policy. (Graphic IV.14)

Graphic IV.14 Assessment of the Bolaños Government

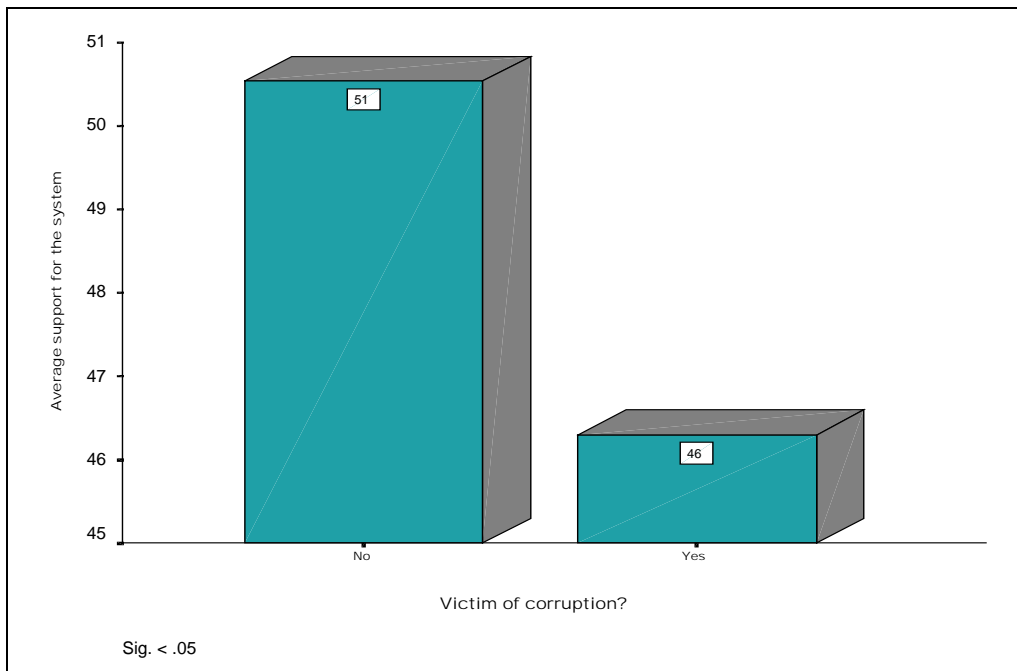


4.5 Corruption and Support for the System

We have seen in Chapter III that the phenomenon of corruption strongly conditions citizens' support for the political system. This study shows that victims of bribes or those who believe that public officials are highly corrupt have the lowest levels of support for the system, as illustrated in the following graphics.

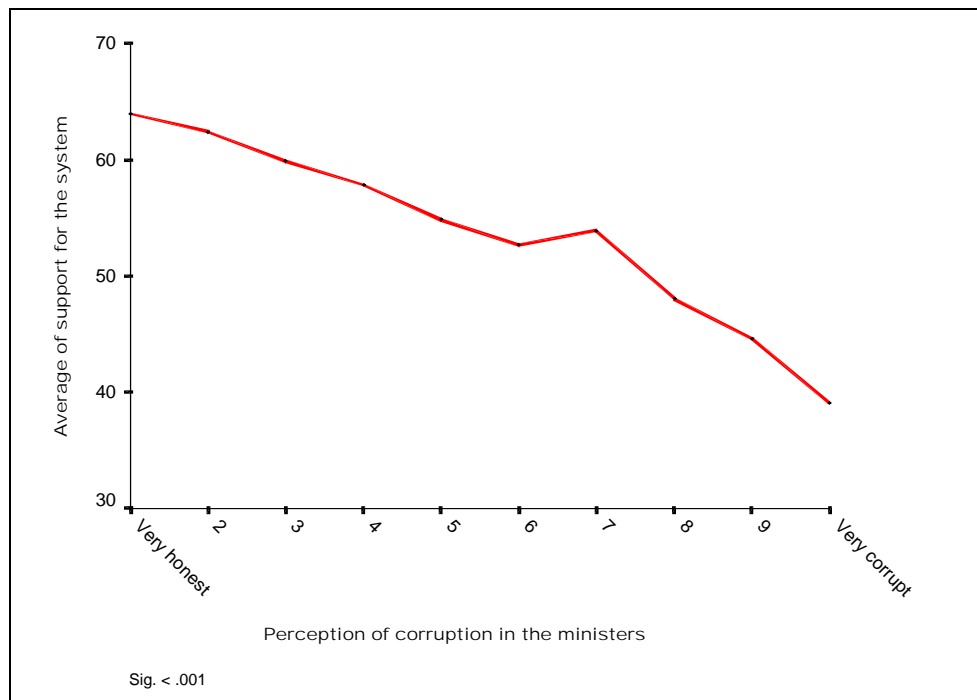
In the first place, people who have been victims of corruption during the previous year show significantly lower levels of support for the political system than those who have been immune from this practice (Graphic IV.15).

Graphic IV.15 Victims of Corruption and Support for the Political System

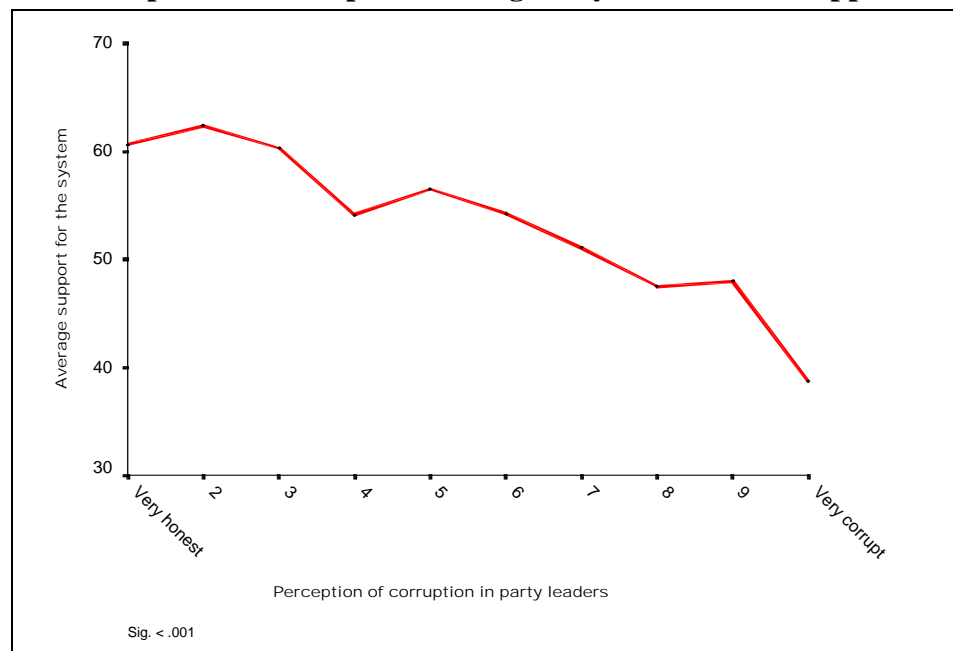


Moreover, perceived corruption among government ministers (Graphic IV.16) and leaders of political parties (Graphic IV.17) is correlated with the level of support for the political system among those interviewed.

Graphic IV.16 Perception of Corruption among Ministers and Support for the System



Graphic IV.17 Perception of Corruption Among Party Leaders and Support for the System



4.6 Conclusions

The survey shows that daily corruption is extremely commonplace in Nicaragua, affecting one fifth of the adult population during the previous year. This ranks Nicaragua at an intermediate level in relation to neighboring countries. In interviews, the institutions most frequently cited as being involved in bribery are the Police, the courts, municipal government and the workplace.

The perception predominates among citizens in Nicaragua that corruption among public officials is generalized. This affects the political system's legitimacy and personal experiences. Those interviewed who had not been victims of acts of bribery during the year prior to the survey expressed higher levels of support for the political system than those who had had personal experiences with corruption.

The results of this study support the thesis that corruption is negative for both economic development and the democratic consolidation of political systems. In other words, the state's replication of acts of corruption could strongly erode the political system's legitimacy, and therefore its democratic stability.

5.0 Rule of Law

5.1 Introduction

Our conceptualization of the rule of law involves a political system in which established laws and legal regulations are respected and citizens' rights are protected.⁵⁷ These conditions, combined with other key elements such as government elections through free and transparent voting, are necessary in order to ensure the validity of a democratic political system.

Observance of the law by all citizens helps to limit occasional abuses of power by government officials and criminals who disrespect the rights of other individuals and social groups.

The validity of the rule of law depends not only on state officials and institutions but also on citizens' behavior. It is thus necessary to develop institutions and a democratic legal framework on the one hand and a political culture involving citizens who are aware and respectful of established norms and institutions on the other.

The insecurity that results from criminal behavior and violence is an important factor to consider for democratic stability, as is corruption (as demonstrated in the chapter above.) The generalized perception of insecurity affects citizens' confidence in the political system's institutions and can lead to the rise of authoritarian governments that ignore electoral systems and human rights.

The rule of law implies effective functioning of the justice system and its unrestricted access to all citizens. As noted by Seligson: "Without the rule of law, state power remains unregulated and citizens are left without legitimate protection against crime, opening possibilities for generalized violence and/or arbitrariness by the government or individuals, and thereby leading to a profound crisis of legitimacy."⁵⁸

The traditional approach to the rule of law has been criticized for being limited to individual political rights and equality under the law while ignoring the protection of economic, social and cultural rights. In this sense, Rodolfo Stavenhagen believes that "the rule of law cannot be conceived independently of problems of inequality and poverty...that deny citizenship."⁵⁹ We must consider socioeconomic factors and their interaction with the legitimacy of a political system.

In this chapter, we first present survey results that allow us to assess the level of citizens' confidence in the main judicial and rights institutions in Nicaragua, including the courts, the Supreme Court, the offices of Public Prosecutor General, Attorney General, Public Defender and Comptroller General and the National Police. Then, we analyze existing relations between citizens' confidence in the judicial system and the legitimacy of the political system.

⁵⁷ Ronald Dworkin, *A Matter of Principle* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1985).

⁵⁸ Seligson, M. and Cordova, P., *Auditoria de la Democracia Ecuador*, CEDATOS, Quito, 2002, p. 103.

⁵⁹ Cited by Perez, O. and Gandasegui, M., *Cultura democrática en Panamá 2004*, Chap. 5.

Secondly, we discuss crime and insecurity as reflected in survey results related to personal experiences with and perceptions of crime in the country, as well as their repercussions on the legitimacy of Nicaragua's political system.

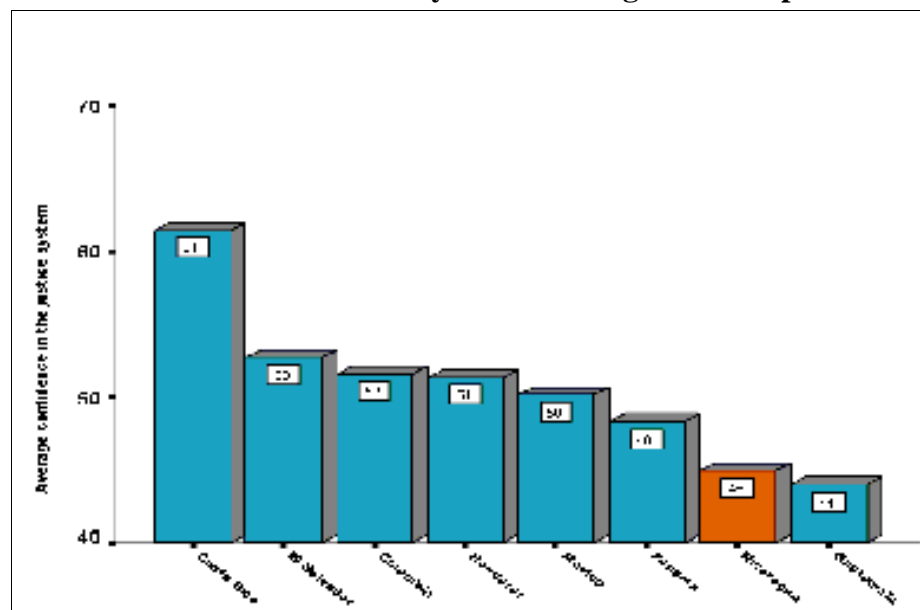
5.2 Confidence in the Justice System

In a democratic system, courts of justice must impart agile, complete and equal justice to all, without interference by other state powers or political parties. The idea is to provide effective protection of civil, political and social rights and liberties, as well as to protect citizens' control over public affairs.

An initial indicator of general or, according to the terminology used by Easton⁶⁰, "diffuse" confidence (a feeling of adherence to an institution or system in a stable manner independent of particular actions) is found in survey responses to the question: "How much confidence do you have in the justice system?" Answers ranged from 1 = No Confidence to 7 = Great Confidence.

Graphic V.1 shows that, at a regional level, Nicaragua is found with the lowest level of confidence in its justice system, along with Guatemala. Most countries are found at an intermediate level, and Costa Rica stands out with a higher level of citizens' confidence in the justice system.

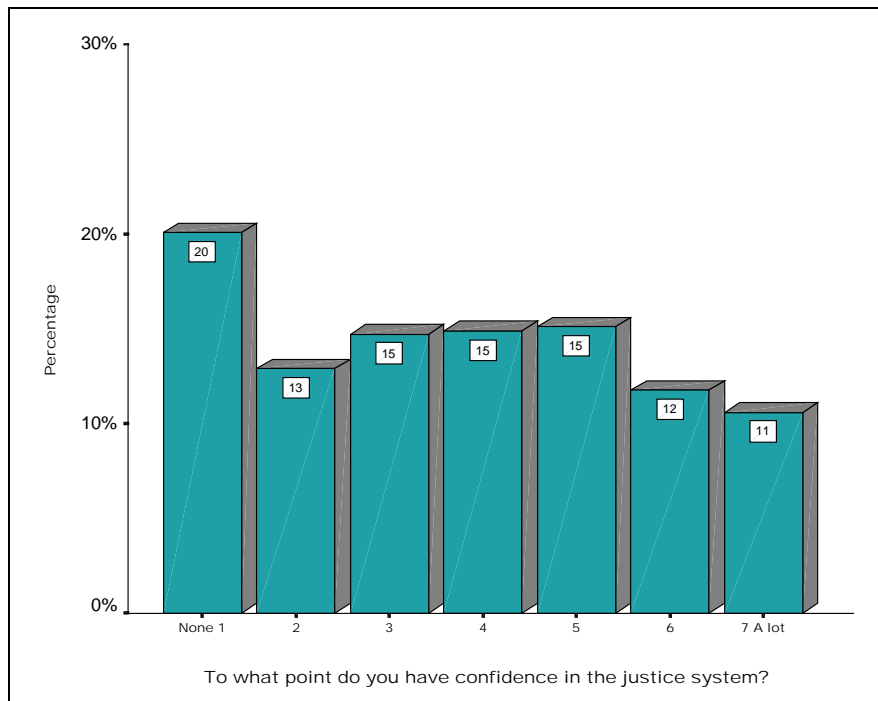
Graphic V.1 Confidence in the Justice System: Nicaragua in Comparative Perspective



Graphic V.2 shows that half of Nicaragua's citizenry is located within the three positions of least confidence. On the contrary, only one third is found within the three positions of greatest confidence in the justice system.

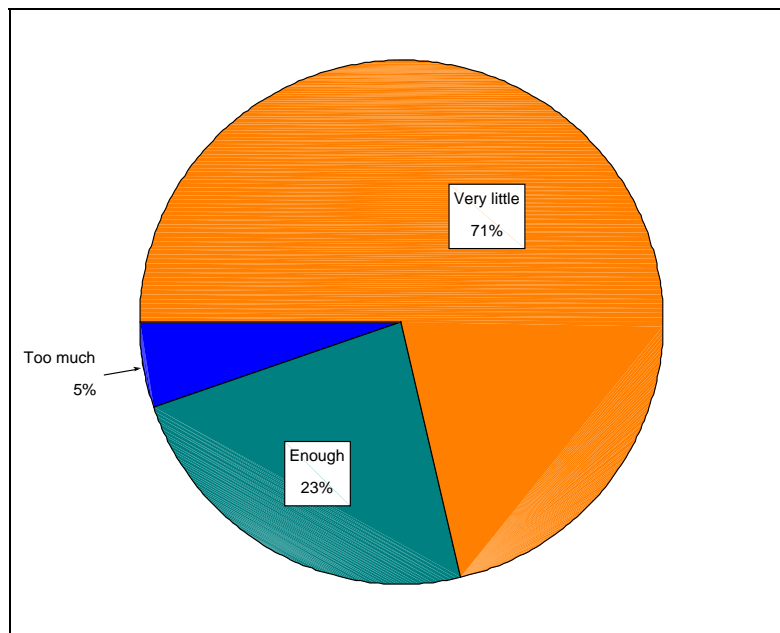
⁶⁰ Easton, David. *A System Analysis of Political Life*, N. York, J. Wiley, 1967. D. Easton. "A re-assessment of the concept of political support," *British Journal of Political Science* 5 (1975) pp.435-457.

Graphic V.2 Confidence in the Nicaraguan Justice System



Similarly, a large majority of those surveyed (71%) feels that there is very little protection of human rights in Nicaragua, whereas over one fifth (23%) believes that there is sufficient protection and 5% feels that such protection is excessive (Graphic V.3).

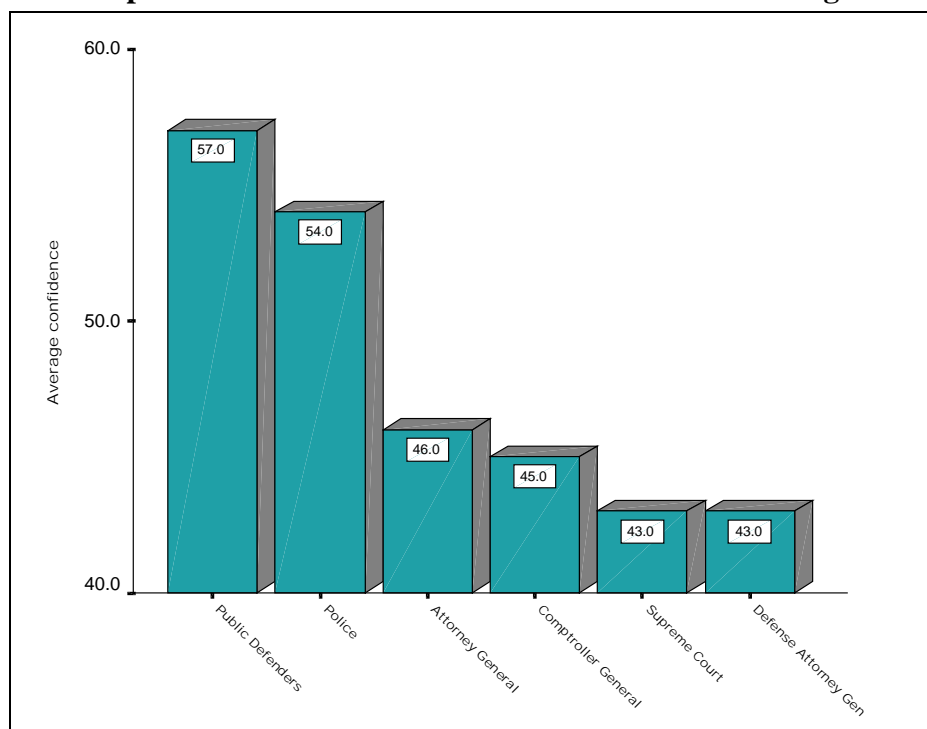
Graphic V.3 Protection of Human Rights in Nicaragua



In order to analyze the specific perceptions of each state institution within the justice system, those surveyed were asked: “How much confidence do you have in ...?” Graphic V.4

demonstrates that two institutions enjoy high levels of citizens' trust: the Special Defense Attorneys' Offices and the National Police. On the other hand, Nicaraguans have little confidence in the Supreme Court and in the offices of Attorney General, Comptroller General and Public Prosecutor.⁶¹

Graphic V.4 Confidence in Institutions That Protect Rights



5.2.1 Satisfaction With Services

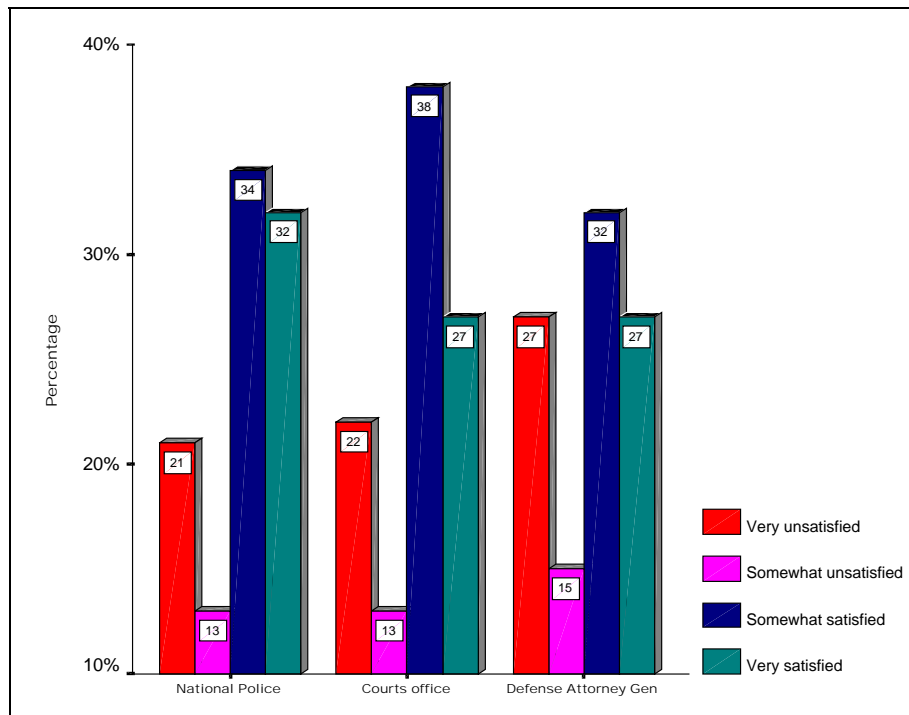
The citizenry's appraisal of the justice system and its institutions is intimately linked to attention received from these institutions upon request of any services. The graphic below illustrates different levels of satisfaction with respect to three fundamental institutions: the Public Prosecutor's Office, courts and National Police.

Those surveyed were asked: "In carrying out procedures with the National Police, Public Prosecutor's Office and courts of justice, do you feel very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?"

From a comparative perspective (Graphic V.5), it is clear that the three institutions share an above-average level of satisfaction (combining "very satisfied and "somewhat satisfied"). Independently, the National Police attained the highest level of "very satisfied." On the opposite extreme, the highest level of "very dissatisfied" was obtained by the Public Prosecutor's Office. However, we must be careful not make categorical affirmations, since a significant percentage of those surveyed claimed never to have carried out procedures with these entities.

⁶¹ The Office of the Special Human Rights Defense Attorney enjoys the highest level of confidence, as seen in Chapter III.

Graphic V.5 Satisfaction with Legal Institutions



5.3 Crime and Citizens' Insecurity

Recent studies have emphasized the impact of insecurity, violence and corruption on processes of democratic transition, especially in regions characterized by high levels of violence such as Latin America.⁶² In Central America, studies in El Salvador and Guatemala found that direct victimization to delinquency and the feeling of insecurity affect the level of support for the political systems in these countries.⁶³

Within the regional context, Mexico and El Salvador stand out with the highest levels of victimization, followed closely by Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama as illustrated in Graphic V.6.

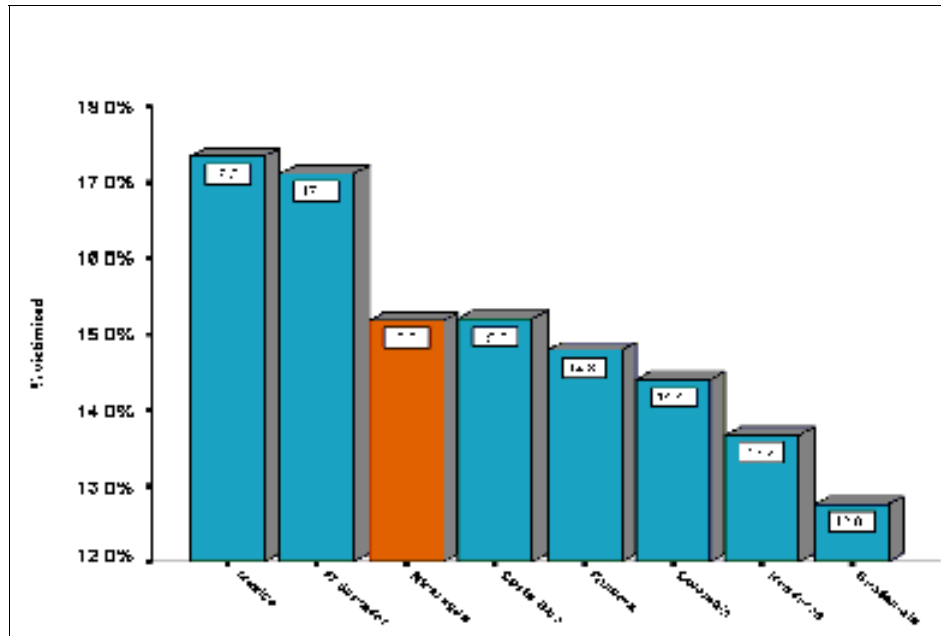
⁶² Cruz, José Miguel. (2000). "Violencia, democracia y cultura política." *Nueva Sociedad* 167. 132-146.

Holston, J. and Caldeira, T. "Democracy, Law, and Violence. Disjunctures on Brazilian Citizenship." In: Felipe Agüero and Jeffrey Stark (eds.) *Fault Lines of democracy in Post-transition Latin America*. 1998, Miami: North-South Center Press.

⁶³ Pérez, Orlando. (2003). "Democratic Legitimacy and Public Insecurity: Crime and Democracy in El Salvador and Guatemala." *Political Science Quarterly*, 118 (4). Winter 2003-2004.

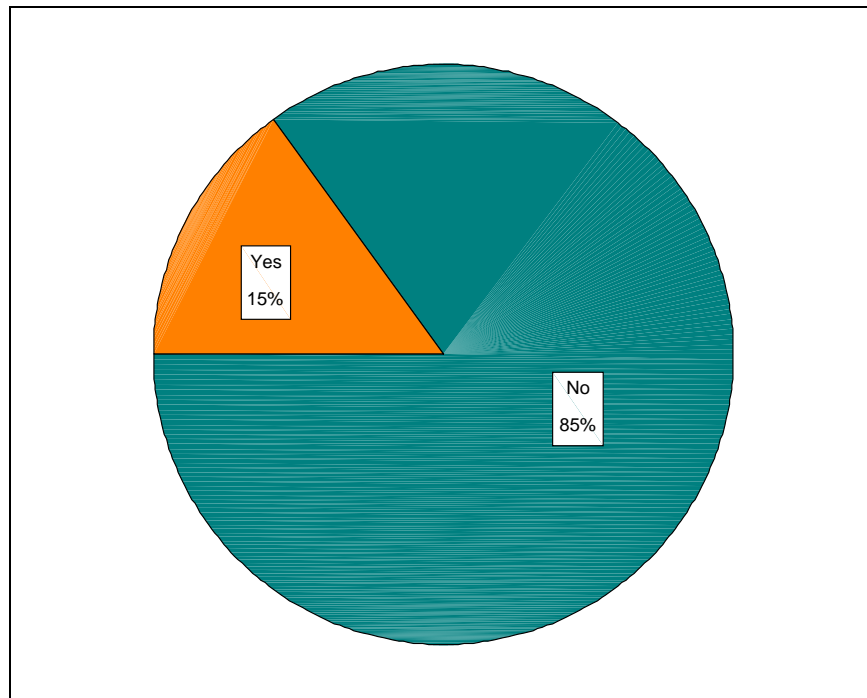
Cruz, José Miguel. (2003). "Violencia y democratización en Centroamérica: el impacto del crimen en la legitimidad de los regímenes de posguerra." *América Latina Hoy* 35, 19-59.

Graphic V.6 Victimized by crime: Nicaragua in comparative perspective



Results of the 2004 survey in Nicaragua show that a limited sector (15%) claimed to have been victims of crimes during the prior year, whereas 85% did not experience attacks on their human rights during this period (Graphic V.7).

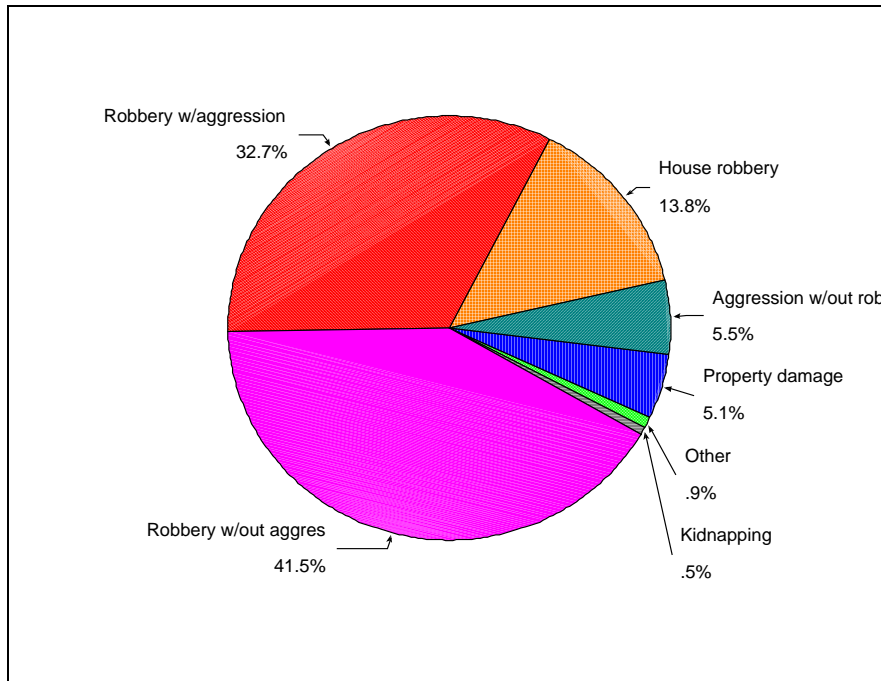
Graphic V.7 Have You Been a Victim of Crime During the Past Year?



5.3.1 Types of Crimes Committed

A great majority of the crimes experienced by surveyed citizens were against property. One third of the cases involved violent robbery, as demonstrated in Graphic V.8. These results match National Police statistics, which show an increase in economic crimes over the past few years (although these crimes remain at generally lower levels than in neighboring countries.)⁶⁴

Graphic V.8 Types of Crimes Experienced Within the Last Year

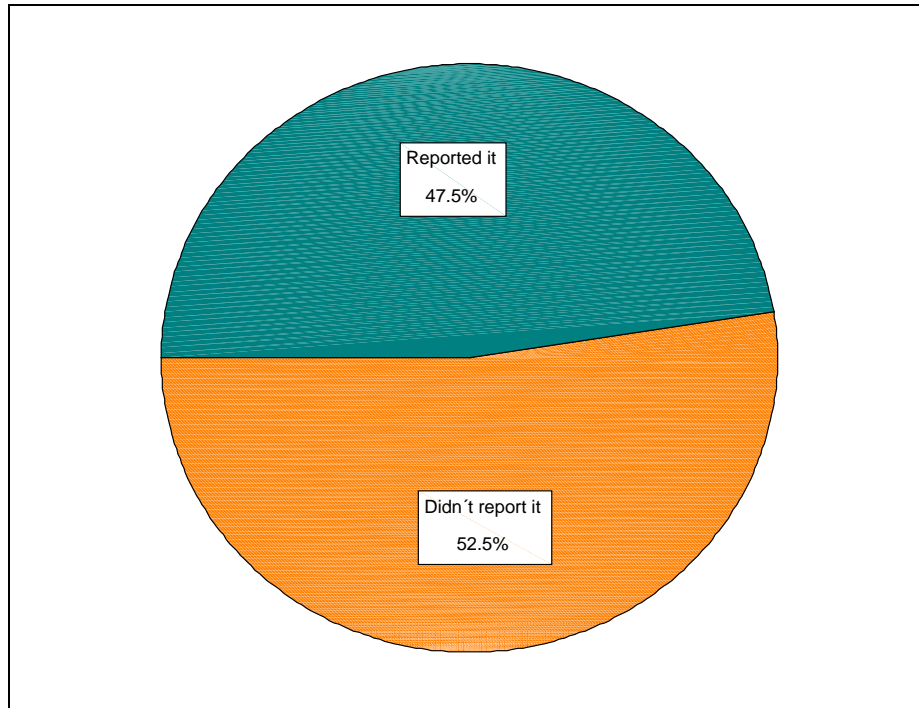


5.3.2 Reporting of Crimes

Study results show that less than half (47.5%) of crime victims claim to have reported the incidents to corresponding authorities. In other words, most of the (alleged) crimes were not reported to legal institutions and, therefore, the supposed perpetrators were not investigated or processed. This reproduces risks and threats to public safety (Graphic V.9).

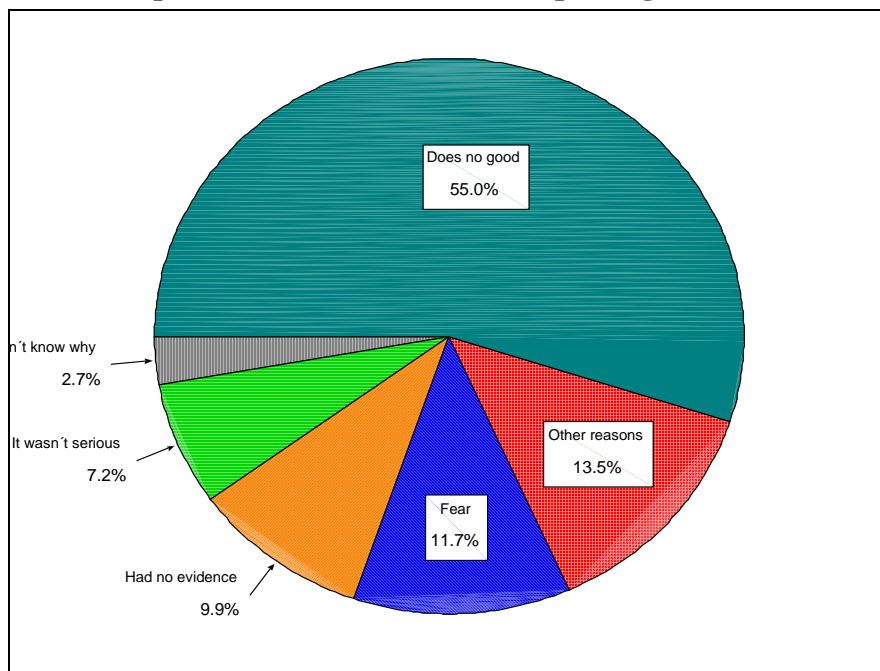
⁶⁴ National Police. *Anuario Estadístico 2002 y 2003*, Ministerio de Gobernación, Managua.

Graphic V.9 Reporting of Crimes



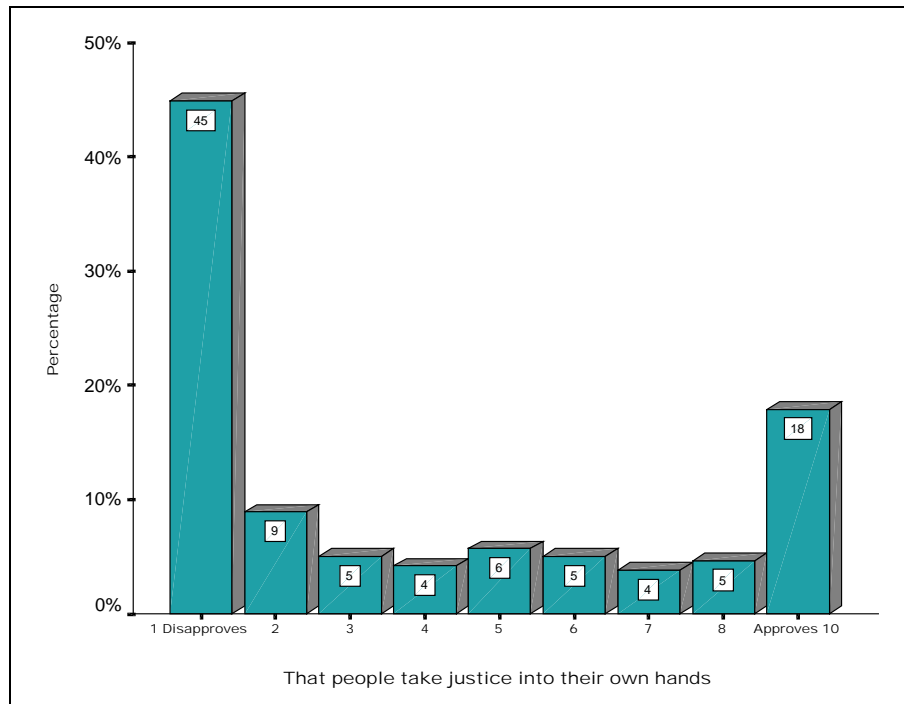
As illustrated in Graphic V.10, the main reason offered by crime victims for not having reported the incidents is that “it does no good.” In other words, they lack confidence in the effectiveness of police and judicial authorities. Other reasons include “fear of reprisal” by the criminals, the victims’ “lack of evidence” and that the crime was considered “not too serious.”

Graphic V.10 Reasons for Not Reporting the Crime



One indicator of the citizenry's high level of respect for the rule of law is demonstrated by the fact that most of those surveyed rejected the option of "taking the law into their own hands." Rather, they favored intervention by state institutions when asked to respond on a scale from 1 to 10 to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of people taking the law into their own hands when the state fails to punish criminals?" (Graphic V.11).

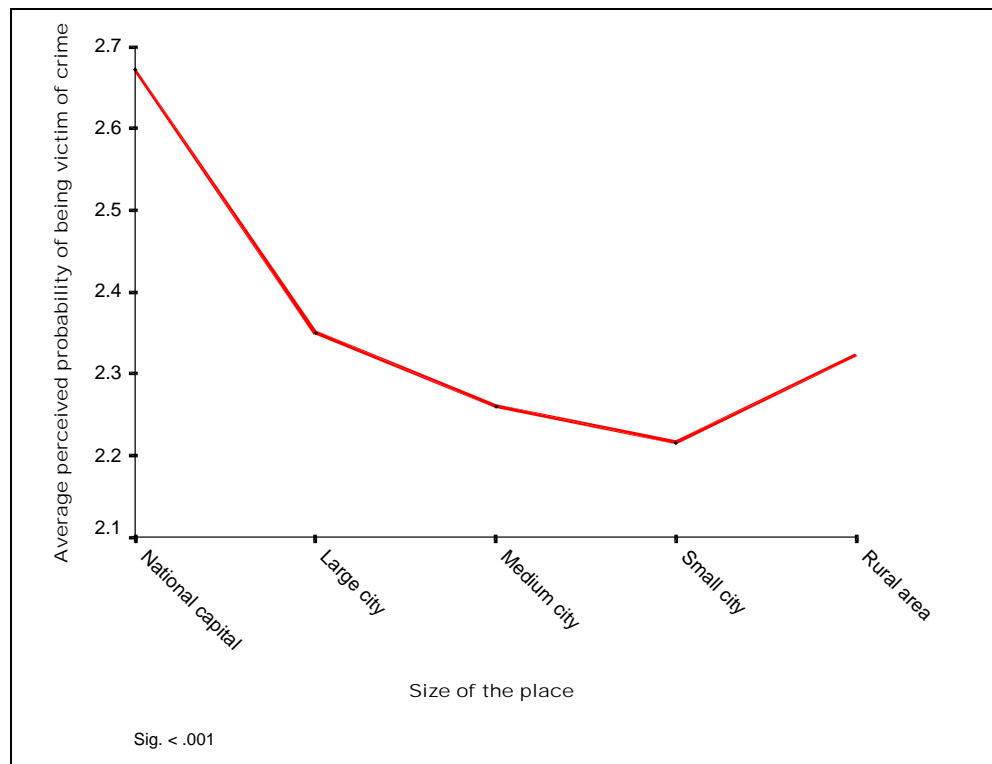
Graphic V.11 Approval of "Taking the Law Into Your Own Hands"



5.3.3 Crime and Urbanization

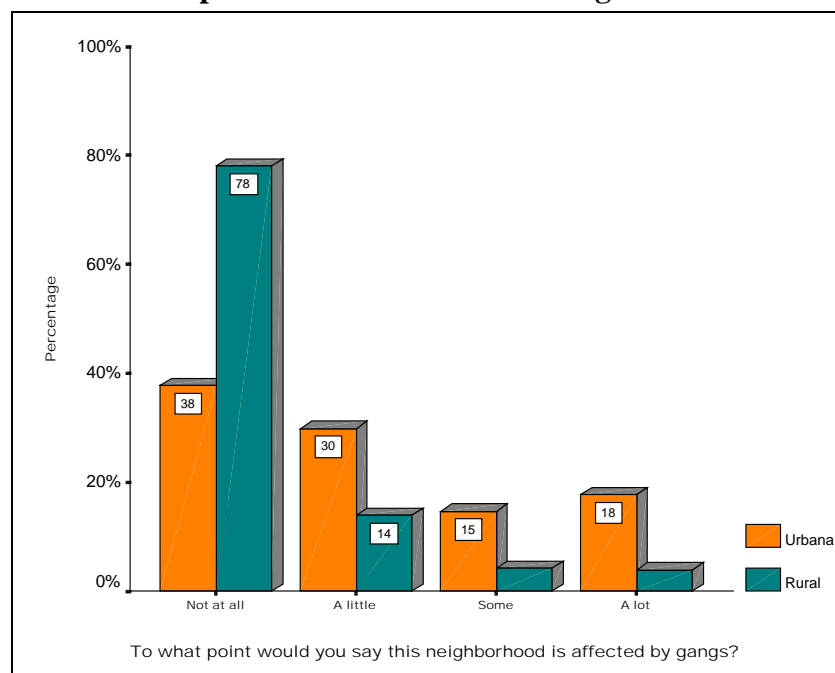
Citizens have a higher perception of crime levels in larger cities than in small towns. Annual National Police reports show similar results (Graphic V.12).

Graphic V.12 Perception of the Probability of Being a Crime Victim, by City/Town Size



Similarly, when those surveyed were asked about their perceptions of risk from gangs in their neighborhoods or communities, we found a higher level of threat in cities than in the countryside (Graphic V.13).

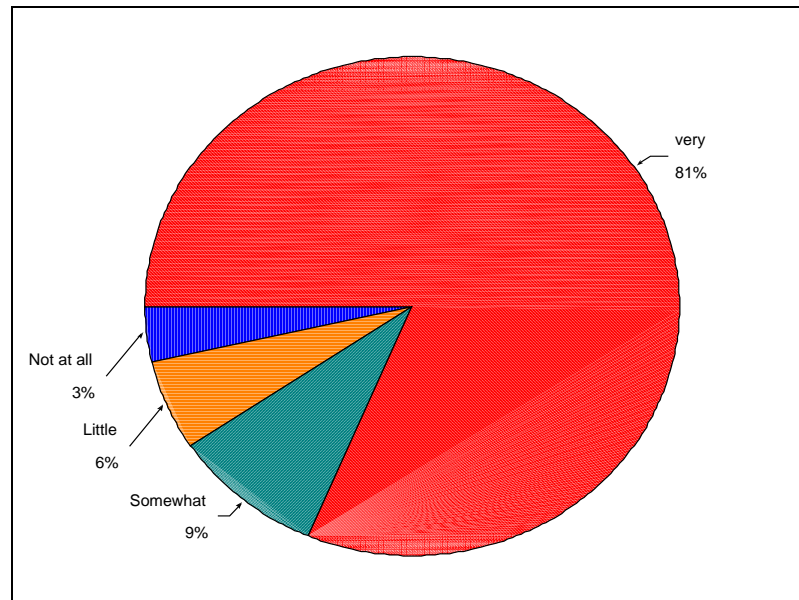
Graphic V.13 Assessment of Gang Threat



5.3.4 Assessment of the Severity of Crime

Although only 18% of those surveyed had suffered criminal acts within the prior year, a large majority claimed that there is a high crime level in the country, constituting a severe threat to citizens' safety (Graphic V.14).

Graphic V.14 Assessment of the Threat Represented by Crime



5.4 Conclusions

The results presented in this chapter demonstrate that citizens have little confidence in Nicaragua's justice system. They differentiate between the main institutions, however, maintaining higher levels of trust in and satisfaction with services provided by the National Police.

The study shows a close correlation between citizens' confidence in the judicial system and the legitimacy of the political system. In other words, those who confide in the institutions that protect rights also tend to express high levels of support for the political system.

On the other hand, the problems of crime and insecurity are of great concern to Nicaraguans because of both personal experiences and news reports disseminated by the media. The study shows that crime victimization and the perception of this phenomenon have direct repercussions on political legitimacy and democratic construction in Nicaragua.

The system for the administration of justice must effectively and equitably protect the rights of the population, and especially of ethnic groups, children and women. One basic condition is that Nicaraguans have free and proximate access to the justice system in order to defend their rights. This requires that legal institutions be distributed throughout the country and that competent public defenders be made available at no cost to low-income families.

6.0 Municipal Government and Citizens' Participation

6.1 Introduction

Citizens' participation is one distinctive element of a democratic system, whether it be through elected representatives or directly through petitions and proposals. Participation in public management requires a legal framework that establishes the rights and opportunities for citizens' intervention. It also requires willingness on the part of citizens to exploit such legal possibilities to influence public policy, express their demands and ensure proper accounting for the use of public resources.

In Latin America, many processes to decentralize political systems have developed over the past decade. These processes have been supported by national governments, international organizations and local actors interested in increasing their competencies, capacities and resources in order to cover local demands and promote municipal development plans.

State decentralization is thought to facilitate efficiency in the provision of public services, promoting rapid response to local needs and allowing for direct citizens' control. In addition, it has been argued that decentralization with citizens' participation is like a school for democracy at the base, as De Toqueville argued in his analysis of the US political system of the 19th century: the strength of democracy is based on local-level organization and participation.

From a favorable perspective, decentralization is thought to promote development of civil organizations and of citizens' involvement in public management, resulting in positive repercussions on the legitimacy of the political system as a whole. There is, however, an exclusive and centralist political tradition in Latin America that makes it difficult to implement effective decentralization, and certain disadvantages in these processes must not be ignored. According to Seligson: "Local governments can prevent the effective establishment of national policies. It is enough to consider the significant difficulties Argentina faced over the past few years in exercising fiscal control at the national level over provincial governments to see that the elaboration of macroeconomic policies can become complicated when local governments are strong."⁶⁵

Nicaragua's Constitution defines its political system as a democratic, participatory and representative republic (Art. 7) and establishes the citizenry's right to participate in public affairs and governmental management (Art. 50). In recent years, the government has promoted a deconcentration policy targeting improvements in administrative efficiency and reductions in state investment in the social area. This policy has transferred responsibilities to municipal governments without providing them the necessary resources. Municipal governments and local stakeholders thus propose an effective decentralization with sufficient budget allocations to ensure sustainable local development.⁶⁶ The recently approved Law of Citizens' Participation provides an open opportunity for civil organizations to wield influence. It facilitates participation

⁶⁵ Seligson, M. and Córdova, P., op.cit., Quito, 2002. Pg. 77.

⁶⁶ Cuadra, E. and Montenegro, S., *La descentralización en Nicaragua: diagnostico del proceso*. Managua, CINCO, 2004.

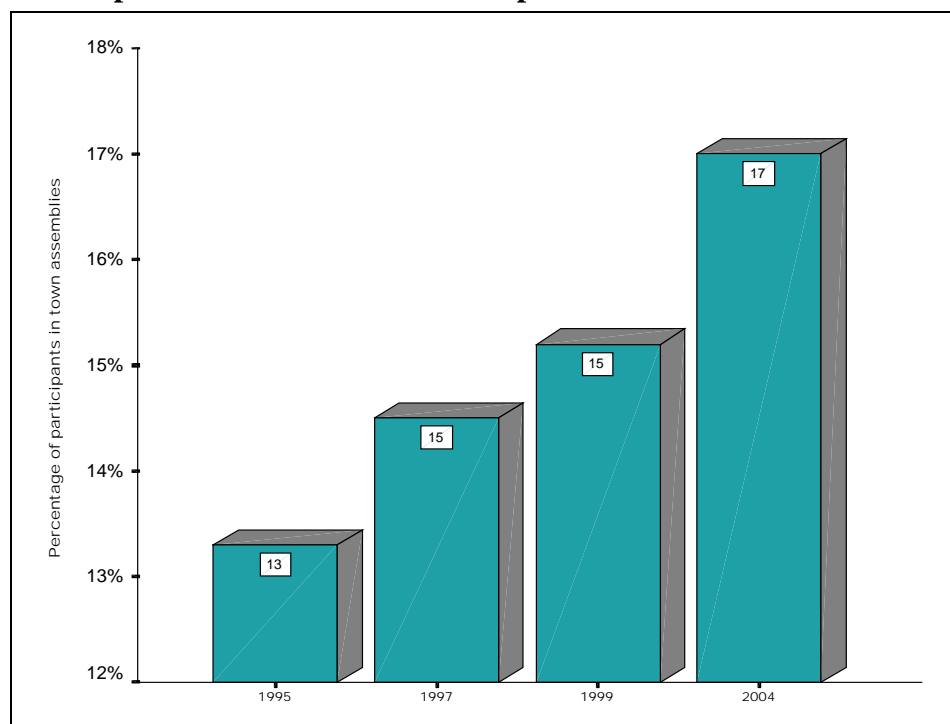
through different means, such as proposed laws, consultations on public policies and civil and trade associations.

In this survey, coverage of the topic of municipal government was limited to certain aspects presented in this chapter: citizens' perceptions about the performance of local governments and forms of participation in municipal public management. The topic of popular participation in civil organizations will be discussed in Chapter VIII.

6.2 Participation in Town Assemblies

The Law on Municipalities establishes three basic forms of citizens' participation: town assemblies (*cabildos*), attendance at Municipal Council sessions, and development committees. Open assemblies are an important local arena for citizens' participation. By law, municipal governments must convene such assemblies at least once a year to present their respective management reports and plans for future action. This survey, however, shows a low participation level (16.4%) in municipal assemblies last year, although Graphic VI.1 illustrates that last year's participation was slightly higher than in prior years.

Graphic VI.1 Evolution of Participation in Town Assemblies⁶⁷

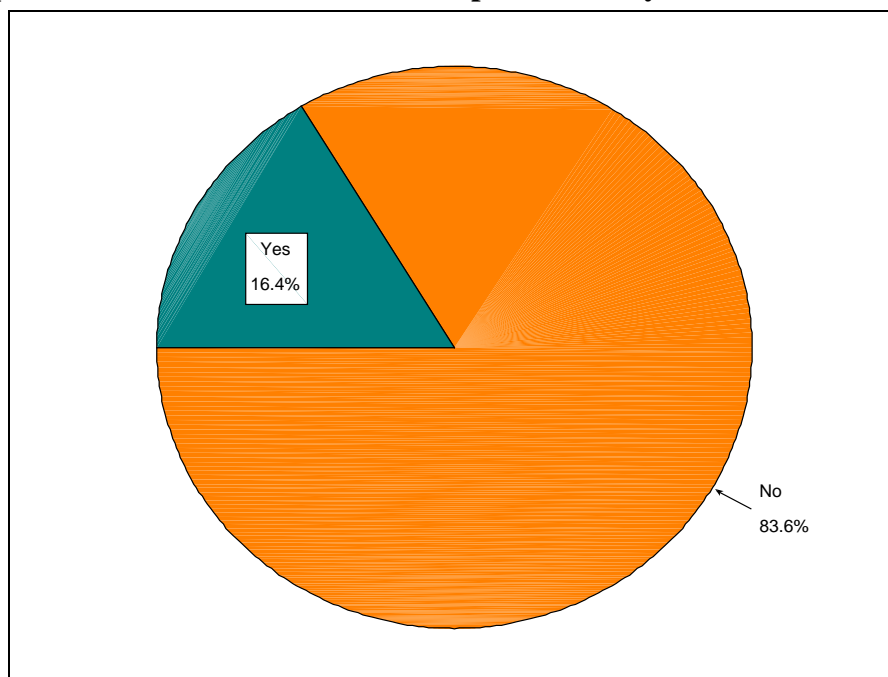


The great majority of those surveyed (84%) claimed not to have participated in any town assemblies or meetings convoked by their respective municipal governments within the prior year, as demonstrated in Graphic VI.2. This cannot be attributed simply to lack of interest among the population; the survey revealed other reasons, such as lack of information or invitation, aversion by municipal governments to hold open assemblies, the centralist “*caudillo*” style of

⁶⁷ Source: Seligson, M., *Auditoría de la Democracia Nicaragua 1999*, and CAM survey, 2004.

authority, partisan political polarization and lack of adequate methodologies to encourage active and constructive citizens' participation.⁶⁸

Graphic VI.2 Have You Attended an Open Assembly Within the Past Year?



6.2.1 Predictors of Participation in Assemblies

In order to identify factors that affect the probability that a citizen will participate in a municipal assembly, we present a logistical regression model that uses responses to the following question as the dependent variable.

NPI: Have you attended an open assembly or any other meeting called by the municipal government within the last 12 months?

Multiple regression analysis was used to explain citizens' participation in assemblies according to the following variables: gender, wealth, confidence in the attention provided by municipal officials and presentation of petitions to the government. (See Annex D, Table VI.1.)⁶⁹

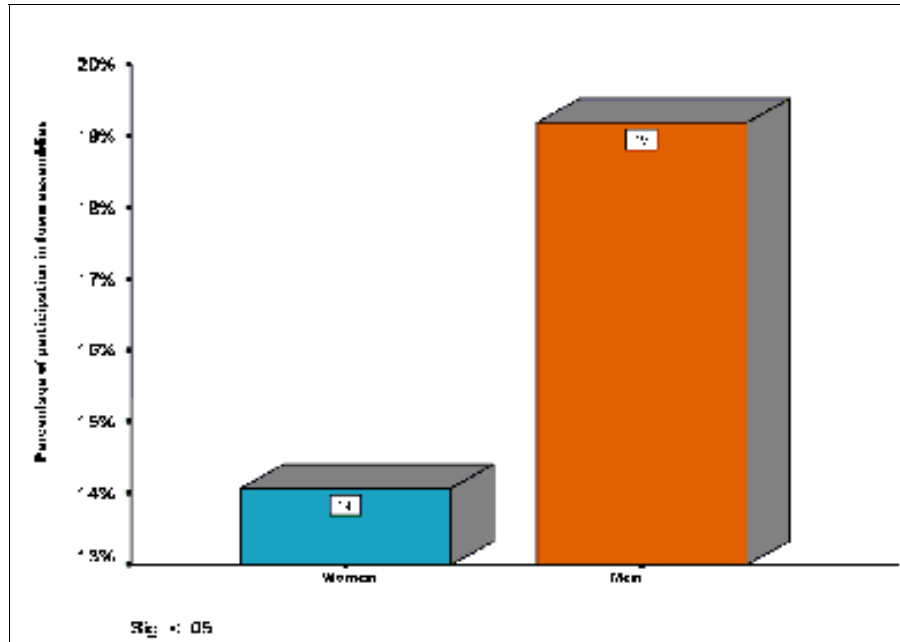
In the first place, gender is a relevant predictor of a citizen's participation in local arenas. Men participate significantly more than women in open assemblies, as demonstrated in Graphic VI.3. This difference corresponds to traditional gender roles, in which men are privileged with public spaces. Nevertheless, there is a historic trend toward growing participation by women, reflecting

⁶⁸ Ortega, M. and Castillo, M. *Cultura política local y percepción en 14 municipios de Las Segovias*. CASC-UCA-IPADE-DANIDA, 1999.

⁶⁹ This variable was recoded as 1 if the person had participated and 0 if the person had not participated. Socio-demographic factors as well as variables related to citizens' expectations of the response they would obtain from municipal officials and Council members were included as indicators in the regression model. Also included was a variable indicating whether the person had presented any petition to his or her local government, and the person's general evaluation of services provided by the municipality.

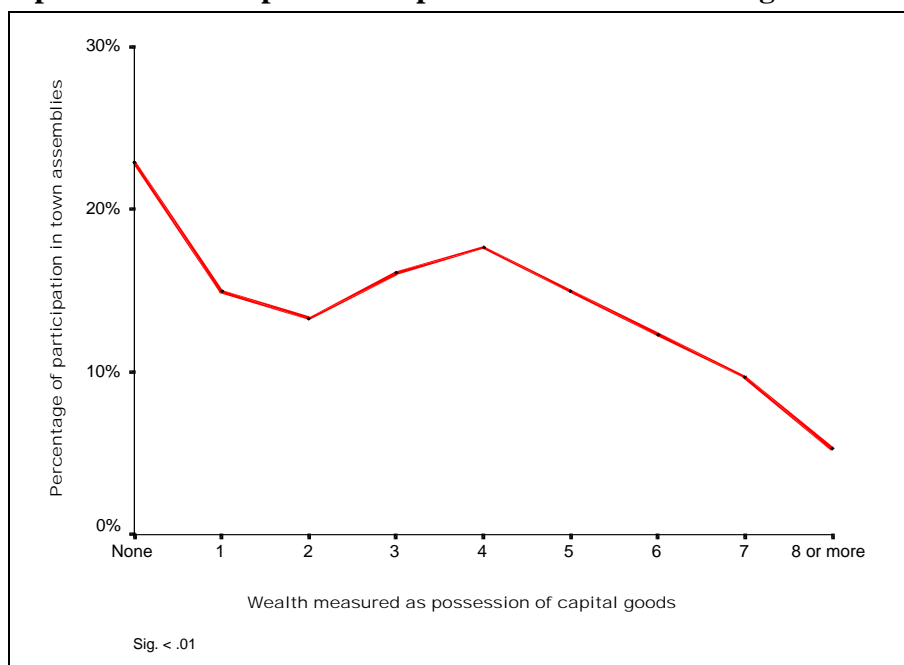
two elements: first, the change in gender roles in favor of equality promoted by the women's movement in recent decades; and second, the participation of women heads of household (one third of Nicaraguan families are headed by women.)

Graphic VI.3 Participation in Open Assemblies by Sex



Wealth, measured as the possession of capital assets, also affects—negatively—the probability of participation in open assemblies. The wealthiest citizens tend to participate less than those with fewer resources, as illustrated in Graphic VI.4.

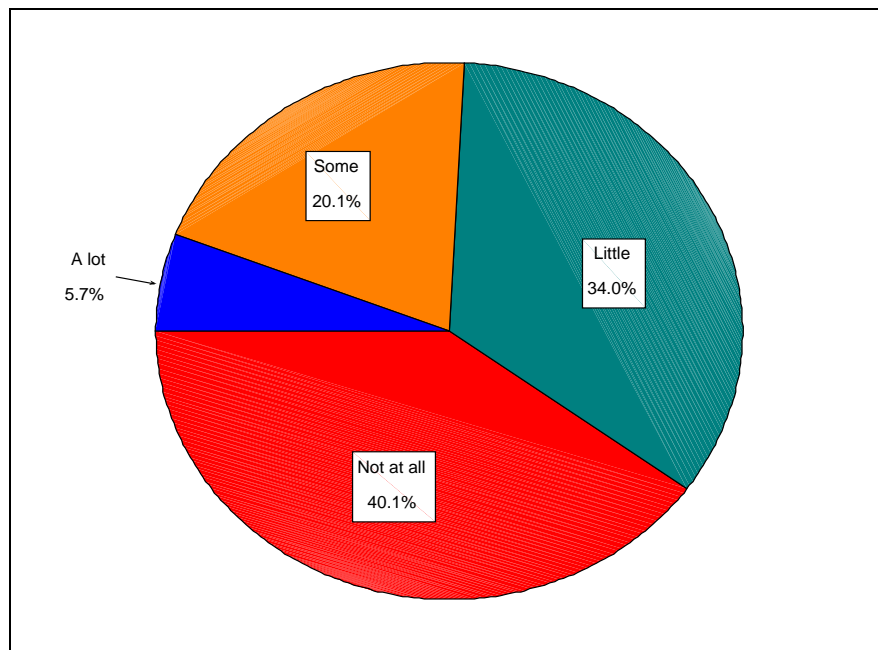
Graphic VI.4 Participation in Open Assemblies According to Wealth⁷⁰



Participation in assemblies is also related to citizens' perception of the attention provided by municipal officials to the problems raised. When asked, "How much attention do you think municipal government officials pay to people's demands at these meetings?" 40% of those surveyed responded "None," whereas at the other extreme only 6% responded "A Lot." The rest of the responses were distributed between "Little" and "Some," as seen in Graphic VI.5.

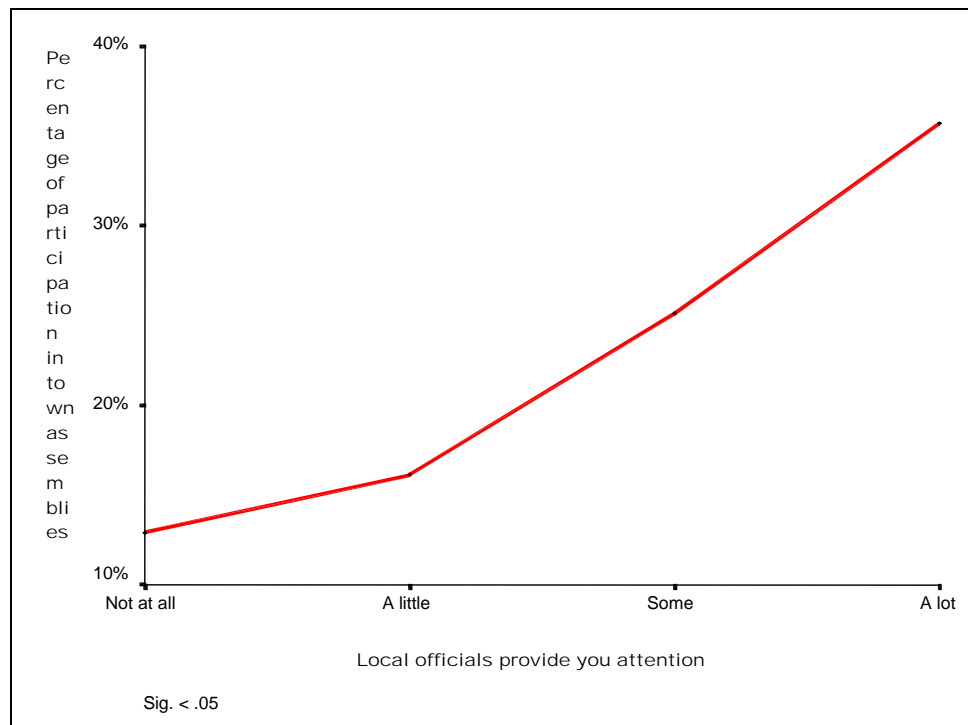
⁷⁰ In order to illustrate the relation between wealth and participation in municipal assemblies, we consolidated categories 8 and 9 from the original scale into a single category.

Graphic VI.5 How Much Attention Do You Think Municipal Officials Pay to People's Petitions?



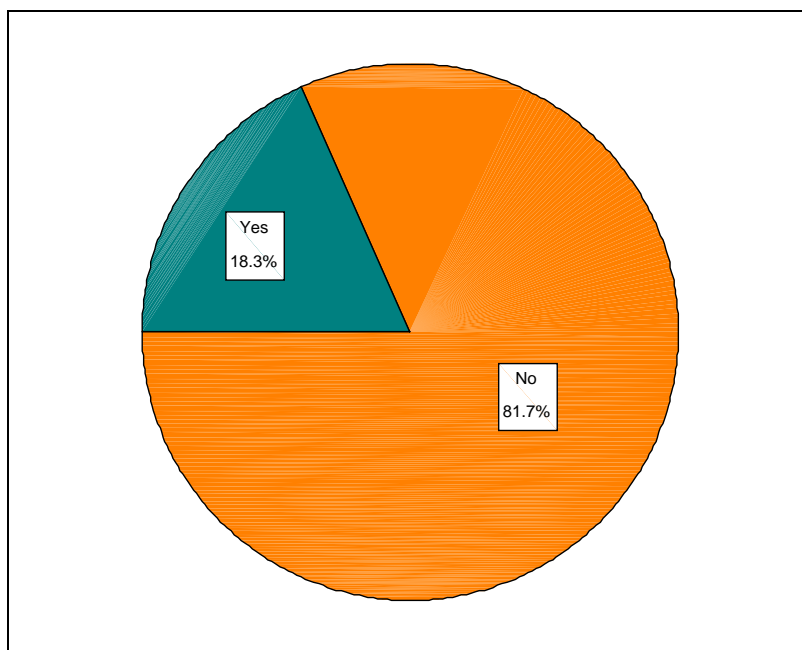
Not surprisingly, the survey shows that those with higher expectations of receiving an appropriate response from municipal officials tend to participate more frequently in assemblies, as illustrated in Graphic VI.6.

Graphic VI.6 Participation in Open Assemblies According to Confidence in the Response by Local Officials



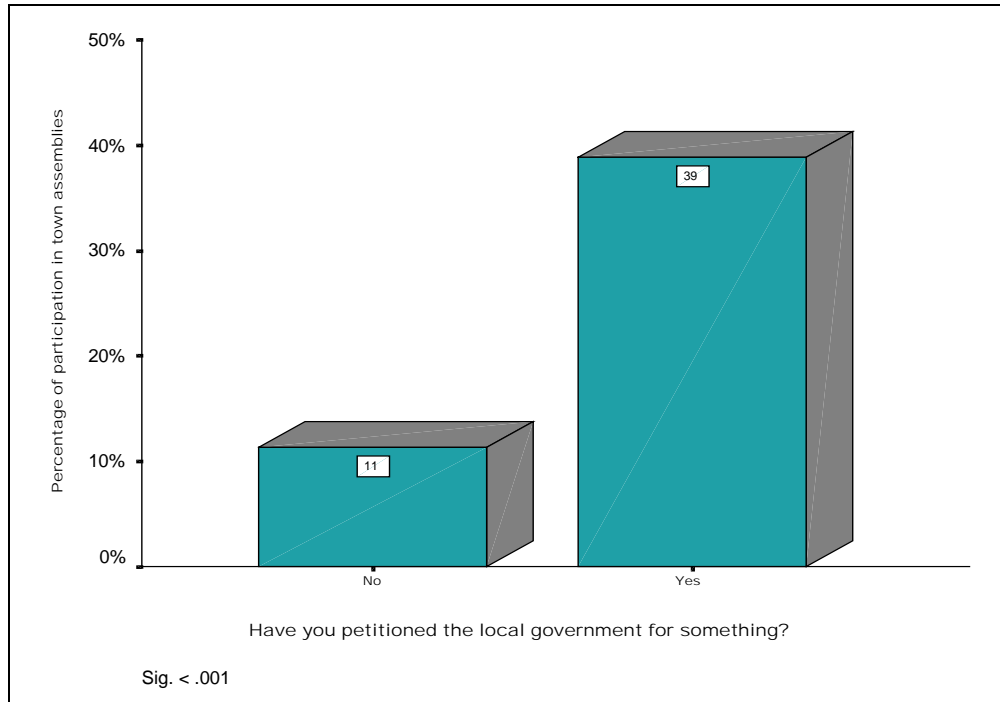
The lack of credibility in municipal government capacities was accompanied by limited presentation of citizens' petitions in the year before the survey. Only 18% of the survey sample claimed to have requested assistance or cooperation from their respective local governments, as shown in Graphic VI.7.

Graphic VI.7 Have you Presented Any Petitions to the Local Government Within the Last Year?



Those who had submitted petitions to the municipal government within the previous 12 months were also more likely to have participated in open assemblies, as illustrated in Graphic VI.8.

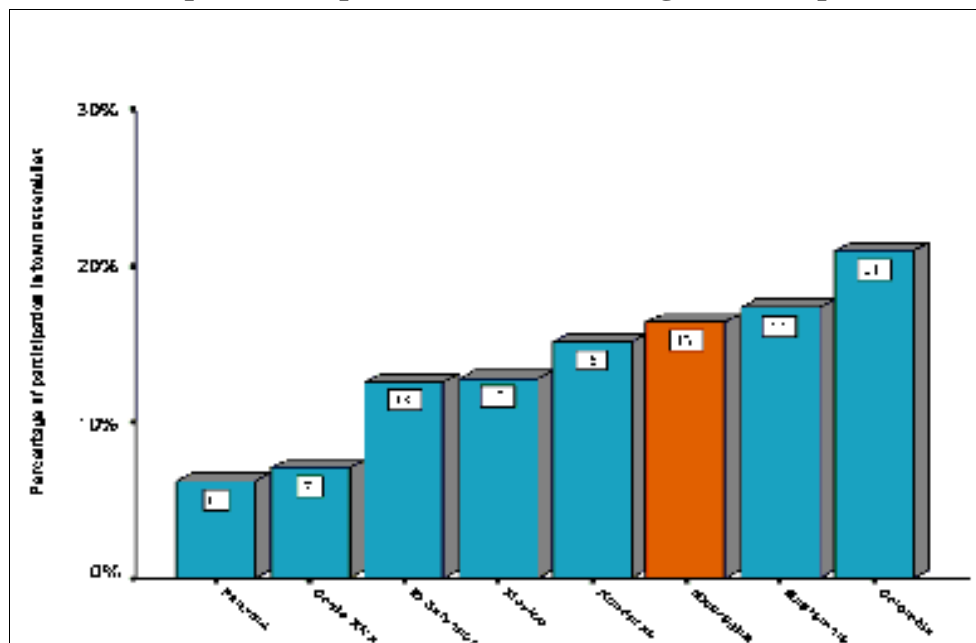
Graphic VI.8 Participation in Open Assemblies and the Petitioning of Local Government



6.2.2 Comparative Vision of Citizens' Participation in Local Assemblies

At the regional level, Nicaragua, along with Guatemala and Colombia, is ranked at a high level with respect to citizens' participation in open assemblies or municipal meetings. As illustrated in Graphic VI.9, Panama and Costa Rica are found at lower levels.

Graphic VI.9 Participation in Open Assemblies: Nicaragua in Comparative Perspective

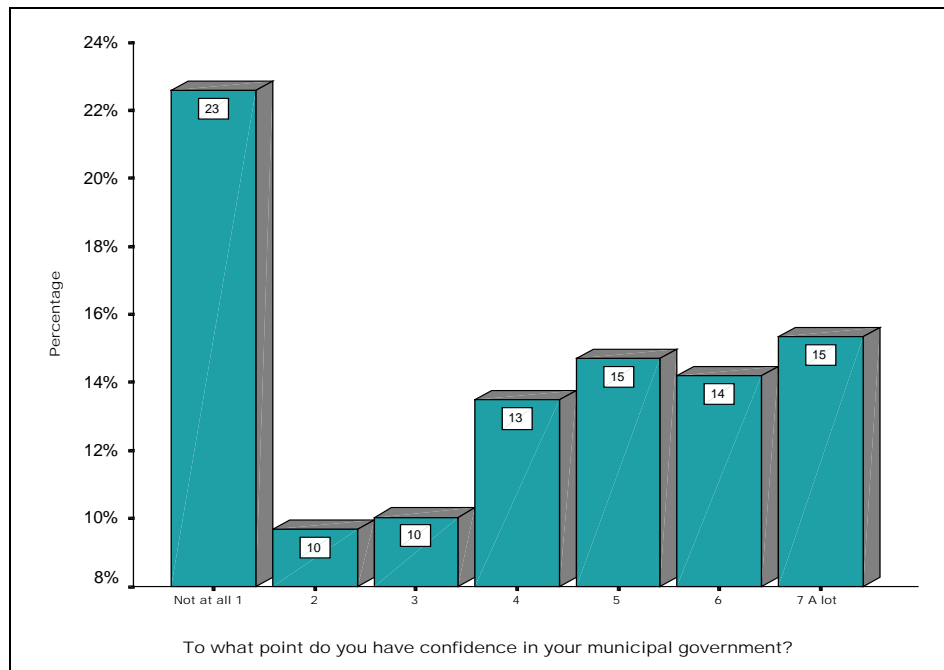


6.3 Assessment of Municipal Governments

Those surveyed were asked to respond on a scale of 1 (No Confidence) to 7 (Great Confidence) to the question, “How much confidence do you have in your municipal government?” Graphic VI.10 shows a heterogeneous situation reflecting differentiated performance ratings of different municipal governments within the country.

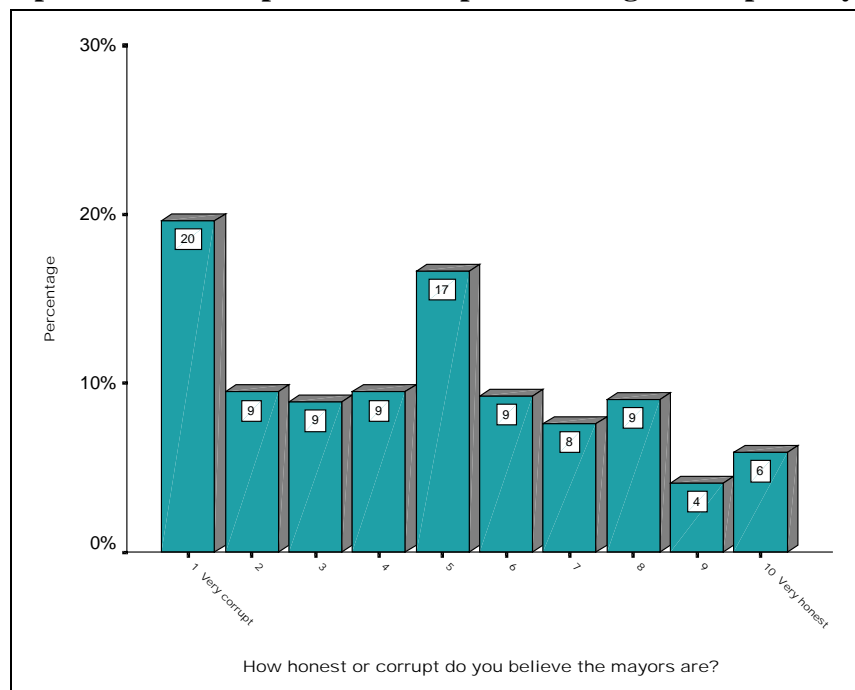
On one extreme, we see that a third of the population has low levels of confidence in its respective municipal government (combined 33% for responses 1 and 2), and another third expressed high levels of confidence (combined 30% for responses 6 and 7.) The rest are found at intermediate positions on the scale.

Graphic VI.10 Confidence in the Municipal Government



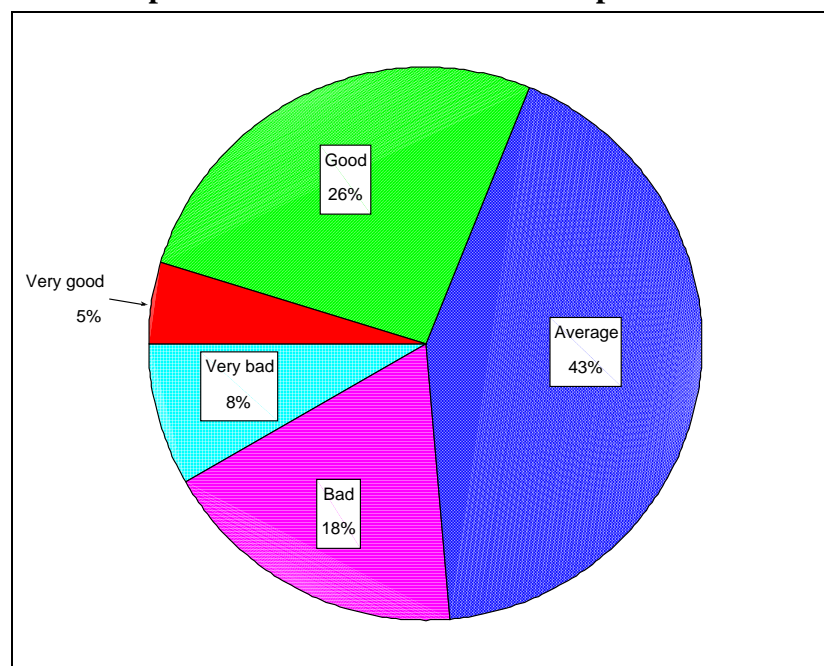
The counterpart of citizens' confidence in municipal government is their perception of corruption among municipal officials. Graphic VI.11 demonstrates the assessment of those surveyed with respect to the corruption or honesty of their municipal mayors on a scale of 1 = Very Corrupt to 10 = Very Honest. Fewer people perceive their local mayors to be honest (combined 19% for responses 8, 9 and 10) than those who see high corruption levels (combined 38% for responses 1, 2 and 3.) Those surveyed provided similar appraisals of their local Municipal Council members.

Graphic VI.11 Perception of Corruption Among Municipal Mayors



Those surveyed were asked to assess services provided by the municipality. One third of the participants in the sample (31.1%) expressed satisfaction with municipal services, categorizing them as “Good” or “Very Good.” On the other hand, a significant percentage (26.4%) rated such services as “Bad” or Very Bad.” A majority ranked them within the intermediate category of “Average” (Graphic VI.12).

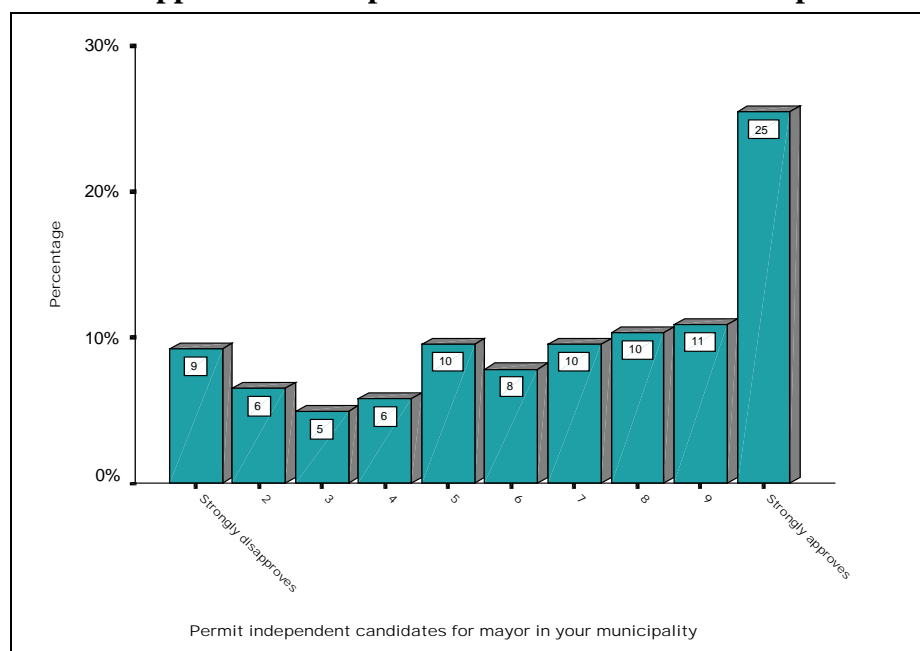
Graphic VI.12 Assessment of Municipal Services



6.4 Popular Petition Associations

Electoral reforms in 2000 eliminated the option of presenting candidates for municipal government through popular petition associations, leaving as the only option those proposed by political parties recognized by the Supreme Electoral Council. This situation has been criticized by different political actors and by the population in general, as reflected in this study and illustrated in Graphic VI.13. Nearly half of those surveyed (a combined 46% in the three top responses) claimed to favor allowing municipal candidates who are independent of national political parties—a democratic opportunity that has proved effective in former governments.⁷¹

Graphic VI.13 Approval of Independent Candidates for Municipal Government



6.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, we saw that there are low levels of citizens' participation in municipal assemblies and meetings, combined with low levels of citizens' petitions to municipal authorities. We analyzed how these factors correlate with citizens' perceptions of the honesty of or their confidence in municipal officials and their level of satisfaction with services provided by local governments in Nicaragua. Other factors that may influence citizens' behavior include a lack of notification or prior information about open assemblies.

In this study, we found that the appraisals and perceptions of those surveyed about their respective municipal governments are heterogeneous, given the diversity of situations and behavior of the authorities in different municipalities. It is clear, however, that a significant percentage of citizens lack confidence in municipal authorities. These perceptions help us understand the low attendance at municipal meetings and limited number of petitions presented to local governments.

⁷¹ Sánchez, K. and Miranda, E., *Las Asociaciones de suscripción popular en Nicaragua*, Red Des.Local, Managua, 2000.

In addition, some citizens do not participate locally because they are aware of their municipal governments' lack of financial, human and material resources due to the incipient nature of the "decentralization" process in Nicaragua (a sort of deconcentration of responsibilities without corresponding budget allocations) and the centralism that still prevails within state institutions and political party leadership. Electoral reforms resulting from the FSLN-PLC pact in 2000 have also discouraged citizens' participation. These reforms prevented participation by other political parties in municipal and national elections in 2000 and 2001, respectively. They also blocked civil society from proposing independent local candidates for municipal government.

To ensure Nicaragua's democratic consolidation, one challenge will be to strengthen citizens' periodic and direct participation in municipal government management. This will require changes in attitude by both government officials and community members, as well as the effective implementation of a facilitative legal framework based on the Constitution and on the Law of Citizens' Participation recently approved by the National Assembly.

7.0 Electoral Behavior

The free election of public authorities is a fundamental component of contemporary representative democracy. The importance of elections has been reiterated in different international treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states: “All people have the right to take part in governing their country, either directly or through freely elected representatives” (Article 21).

The democratic functioning of electoral processes assumes the existence of an appropriate legal and institutional framework, the availability of public information about different candidates, and a political culture of citizen participation and mutual tolerance. It is important that the judicial framework facilitates the participation of all existing political parties in elections and publicizes their proposals, and insures peaceful competition that respects the rights of all citizens. Political parties should be internally regulated by democratic principles, in other words with guarantees of freedom of expression and the participation of members in selecting candidates and defining electoral policies and proposals. The party’s leaders should be fully accountable to all members.

From the institutional perspective, a democratic political system requires impartial and effective electoral authorities that are independent of other powers (state, party, religious or economic). It also requires a sufficient budget to cover its functions and responsibilities. A democratic system also relies upon an independent and truthful media that reports on the electoral process, citizen rights and duties, and the positions of different political parties.

There has been a high level of electoral participation in Nicaraguan democracy, in comparison to other Latin American nations. However, one weakness of the electoral system has been that despite the population’s formal backing of elected representatives through their vote, these have not provided a sense of representation to the citizenry. Nicaraguan political parties have performed poorly, with nepotism and “*caudillismo*” prevailing. Intolerance and exclusionist tendencies toward other political parties and a series of unfulfilled promises to the citizenry have predominated in the Nicaraguan political scene.

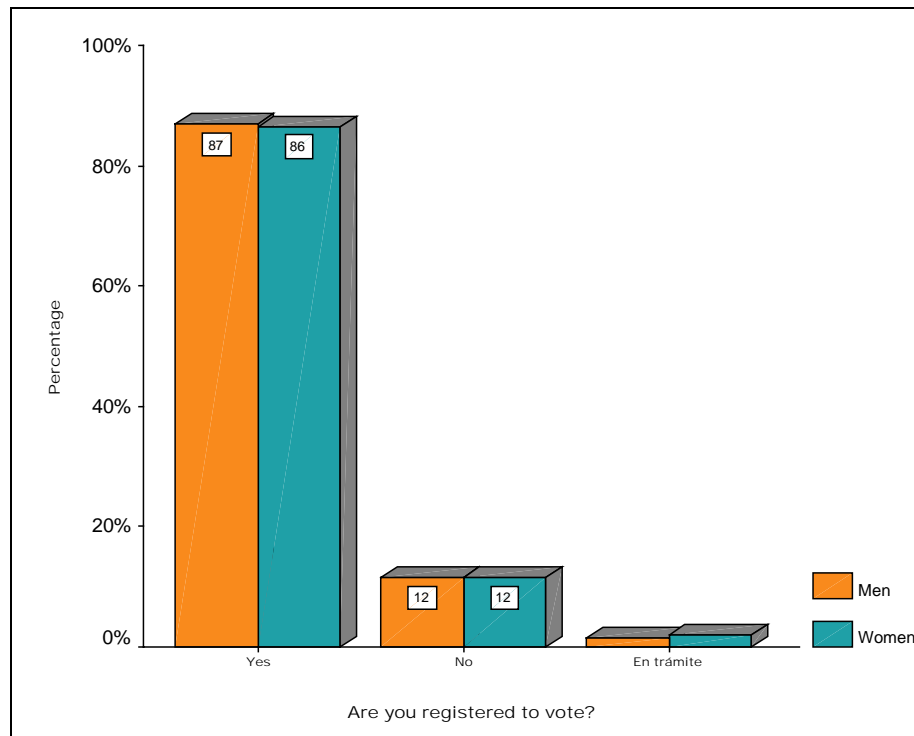
This chapter studies the electoral behavior of Nicaraguans based on the results of our 2004 survey. In the first place, we look at citizens’ attitudes toward voter registration and their behavior in electoral processes. The second section deals with attitudes about voting, electoral institutions and perceptions about freedom of suffrage and the effectiveness of voting. Later, we analyze citizen assessments of the proposed reforms to the electoral system that have been discussed publicly in recent years, and perceptions about different forms of political participation in Nicaragua.

7.1 Voter Registration and Voting

One indicator of citizen participation in electoral processes is the decision to legally register to vote. The responses of those surveyed indicate that a high number of citizens (87%) of both sexes have obtained their Identity Cards and have registered to vote, despite many obstacles and

the time and cost of registering at one of the few offices of the Supreme Electoral Council⁷² (Graphic VII.1). This document—the Identity Card—is essential not only for exercising the right to vote, but also for legal and other procedures such as banking or dealing with state institutions. Such requisites have generated more citizen interest in obtaining Identity Cards.

Graphic VII.1 Voter Registration Declared in March 2004



7.1.1 Freedom to Participate

The freedom to vote for those who govern us is the foundation of democracy. In other words, it means freedom from pressures or threats that limit civic volition, whether in the act of voting itself, or in running for election to public office. To determine the degree of freedom or fear that citizens feel regarding participating in elections, we asked them:

If you were to decide to take part in some of the activities I am about to mention, would you do so without fear, with a little bit of fear, or with a lot of fear?

Vote in a national election?

Run for elected office?

Most people who responded to these questions (77%) indicated that they felt no fear when voting in a national election. Only 4% indicated having felt “a lot of fear,” which would indicate extensive voter freedom in recent elections (Table VII.1).

⁷² Official data for 2000 (May): 79% of the voting age population had an Identity Card. This is slightly lower than the results of this survey, which would appear to indicate an increase in citizen registration over the past three years.

However, more than half of those surveyed admit feeling some fear or a lot of fear with respect to running for public office (55%), which could be due to various reasons other than constraints on their freedom (such as the economic implications, self-esteem and educational level, or mistrust of political parties). In any event, running for public office is an unlikely option, as demonstrated by the fact that 29% of those surveyed responded “don’t know” or simply did not respond to the question.

Table VII.1 Fear of Electoral Participation

	No fear	Some fear	A lot of fear	Don’t know/ No response	Total
To vote in a national election	77%	14%	4%	5%	100%
To run for elected office	32%	20%	19%	29%	100%

7.1.2 Participation in Elections

The extent to which Nicaraguan citizens take part in electoral processes has been noteworthy, especially in the election of national authorities (Table VII.2). According to those surveyed, 75% voted in the last national election (2001), which is slightly higher than official data (72% of registered voters, according to the CSE). A higher percentage of those indicating having voted for the PLC was also found, which could reflect a desire to demonstrate that they were on the side of the winning party.

However, participation in the 2000 municipal elections—conducted separately from national elections for the first time⁷³—was lower (58% in the survey, 66% in official data). One factor that may have influenced this voter absenteeism was elimination of the participation of other political parties and independent candidates inscribed by Popular Voter Associations in 2000, an outcome of the FLSN-PLC pact.

Table VII.2 Participation and Results in National Elections, 1984-2001

National Elections	1984	1990	1996	2001
Eligible population	1,700,000*	1,934,962	2,553,614,	3,128,224
Registered	1,551,597	1,752,088	2,421,067	2,997,228
Voters	1170,142	1,510,838	1,849,362	1,070,438
Percentage of absenteeism	31%	22%	28%	28%
Percentage of votes for President:				
1st ranking	FSLN 63%	UNO 51%	AL 51%	PLC 56 %
2nd ranking	PCDN 13%	FSLN 38%	FSLN 38%	FLSN 42 %
3rd ranking	PC	MUR 1%	PCN 4%	PC 1 %

Abbreviations: FSLN, Sandinista National Liberation Front, PC Conservative Party, PCDN Conservative-Democratic Party of Nicaragua, PLI Independent Liberal Party, UNO National Opposition Union, AL Liberal Alliance, PLC Constitutionalist Liberal Party, MUR Revolutionary Unity Movement.

* Cifra estimada

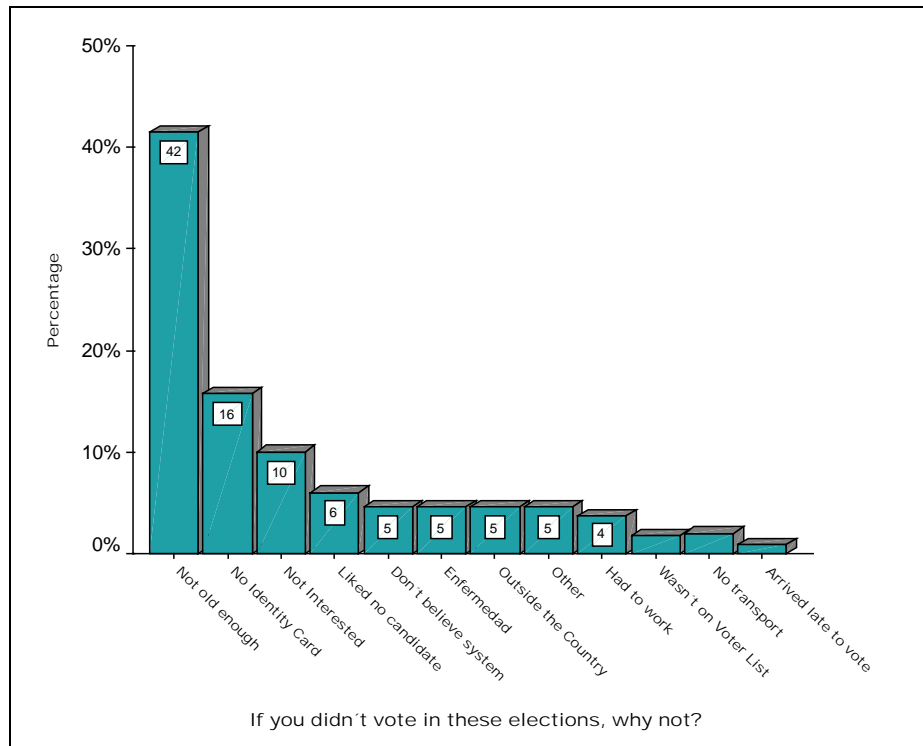
7.1.3 Voter Absenteeism

Among those surveyed who did not participate in the last national election of 2001 (24.7% of the sample), the following reasons were offered for their failure to participate: they were not of legal

1. UCA, "Elecciones 2001," *envío*, No. 236, Nov.-Dec.2001, Managua.

age (16 years), they did not have an Identity Card, and to a lesser extent they either lacked interest or lacked sufficient alternatives (Graphic VII.2). The regions with the highest rate of voter absenteeism were the two Atlantic Autonomous Regions (45%), where there is a weaker sense of national identification and less support for the national political system, as analyzed in Chapter III.

Graphic VII.2 Reasons for Failing to Vote in the 2001 National Elections

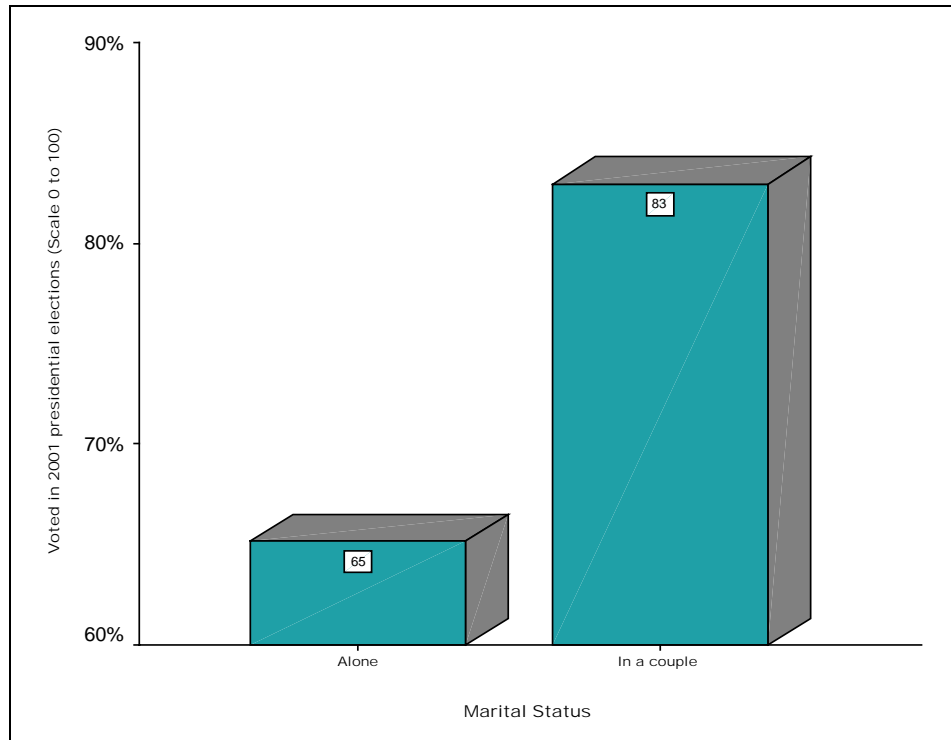


7.1.4 Predictors of Electoral Participation

To further examine the variables that influence electoral behavior, we conducted a multiple regression analysis (Appendix D, Table VII.3) that highlights socio-demographic variables such as age, marital status and education level. In other words, the highest levels of participation in the 2001 national elections was found among people with high education levels, who are either married or in an ongoing relationship, and are adults.

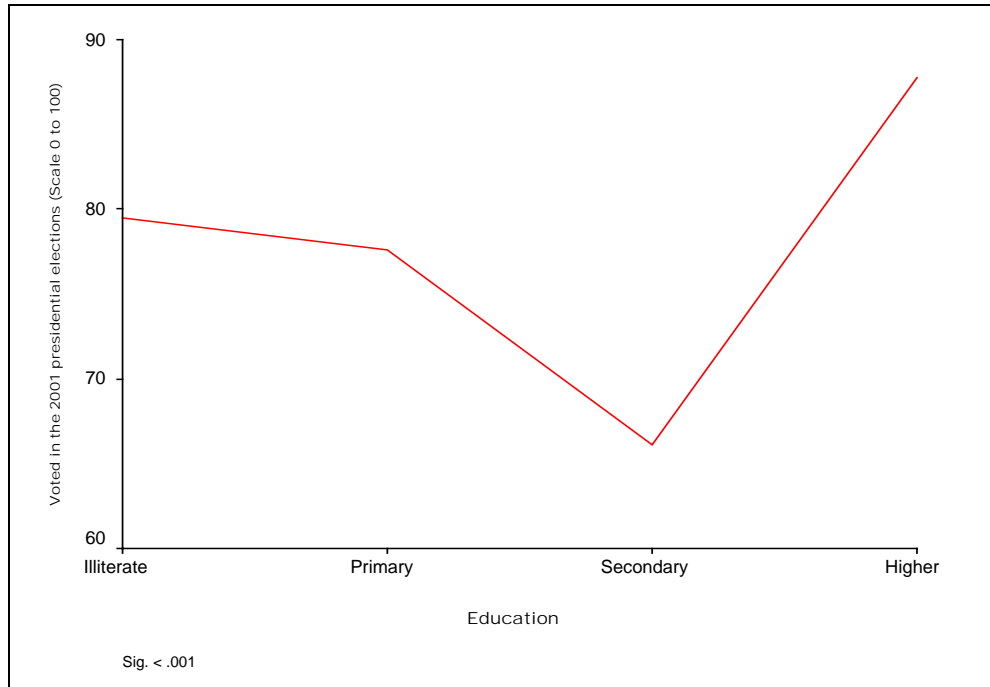
Graphic VII.3 shows a direct correlation between marital status and electoral participation, with participation higher among citizens who are married or in an ongoing relationship.

Graphic VII.3 Electoral Participation and Marital Status



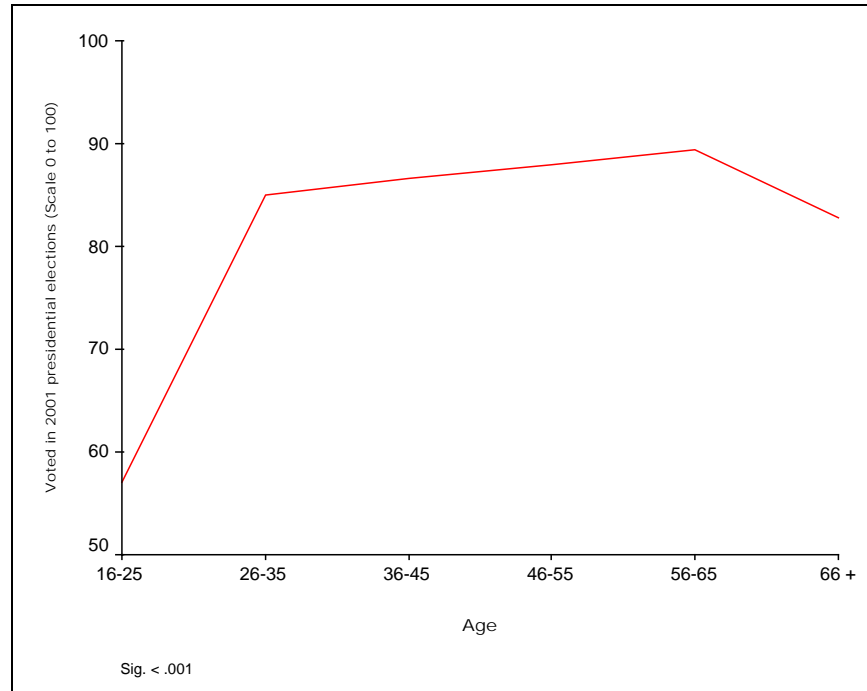
Graphic VII.4 highlights the bivariate relationship between education levels and the likelihood of having taken part in previous elections. A reduction in voter participation as educational levels rise—from primary through secondary education—is observed, at which point the process inverts and voter participation increases among those who have completed secondary education and gone on to university. When other factors are controlled, as in a multiple regression, educational level has a significant positive effect on voting probability. In other words, the most highly educated citizens are most likely to take part in elections.

Graphic VII.4 Electoral Participation and Educational Level



The results of this analysis show the significant positive impact of age on voting probability. Electoral participation increases with age, beginning at 25 years, until topping off at 65 years of age (Graphic VII.5). We must remember that the limited participation in the 2001 election by the youngest people surveyed is because many were not eligible to vote (16 is the minimum voting age), while those older than 65 often face health conditions that limit their ability to go to the voting polls and wait in line for many hours.

Graphic VII.5 Electoral Participation and Age

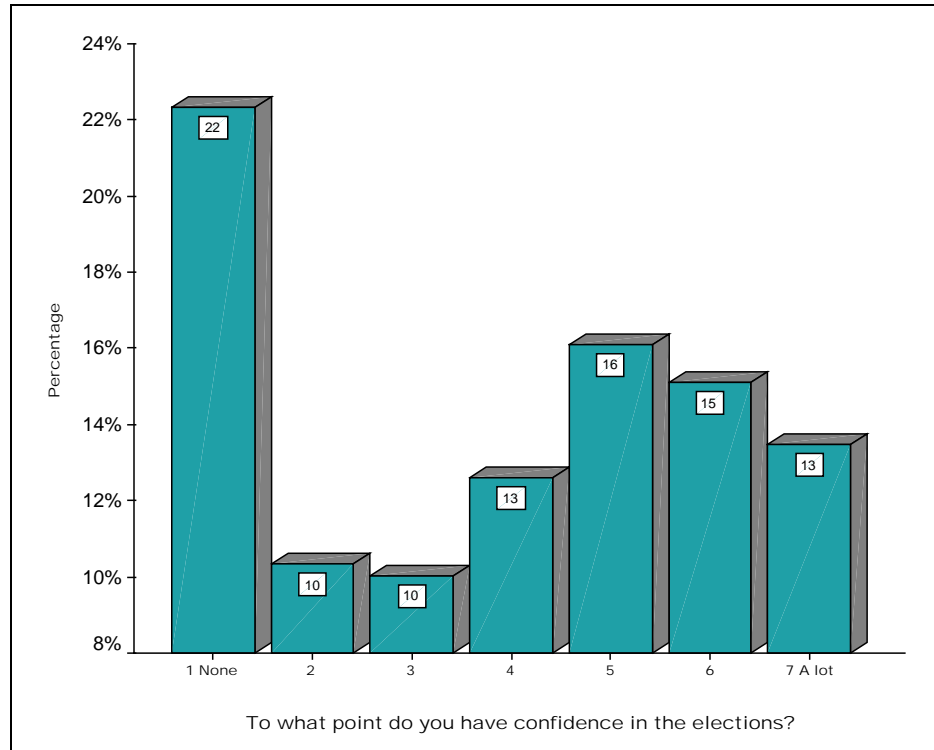


7.2 Confidence in Electoral Processes

Free and voluntary citizen participation assumes confidence in the electoral process and the institutions that direct it. To understand this aspect of the Nicaraguan political culture, we asked those surveyed: “To what extent do you trust elections?” Respondents were asked to choose a number on a scale from 1 (no trust) to 7 (great trust). When this variable was situated on a scale of 0-100, we found an average 48% level of trust with respect to elections.

Graphic VII.6 illustrates the wide distribution of results, in which a majority (32%) is situated among the two highest levels of mistrust in the electoral process, while 29% were in an intermediary position, and only 28% of the citizenry indicated high levels of trust.

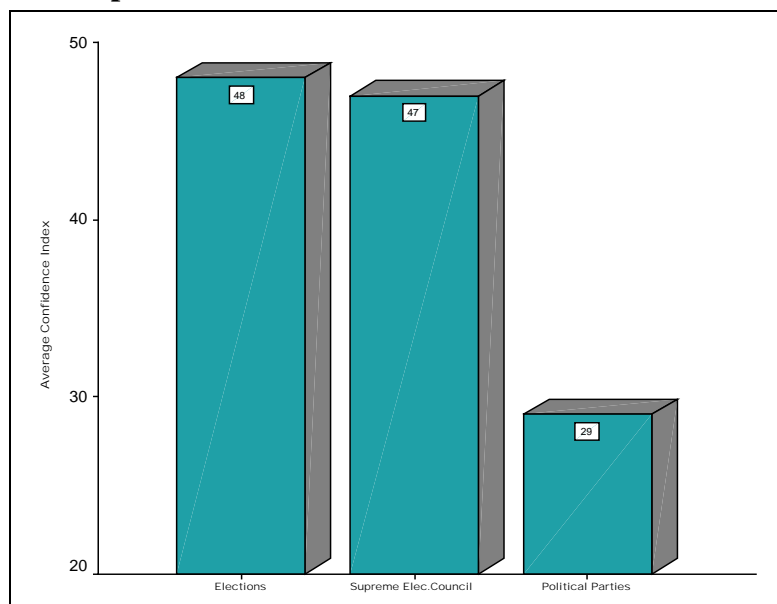
Graphic VII.6 Confidence in the Elections



7.2.1 Confidence in Electoral Institutions

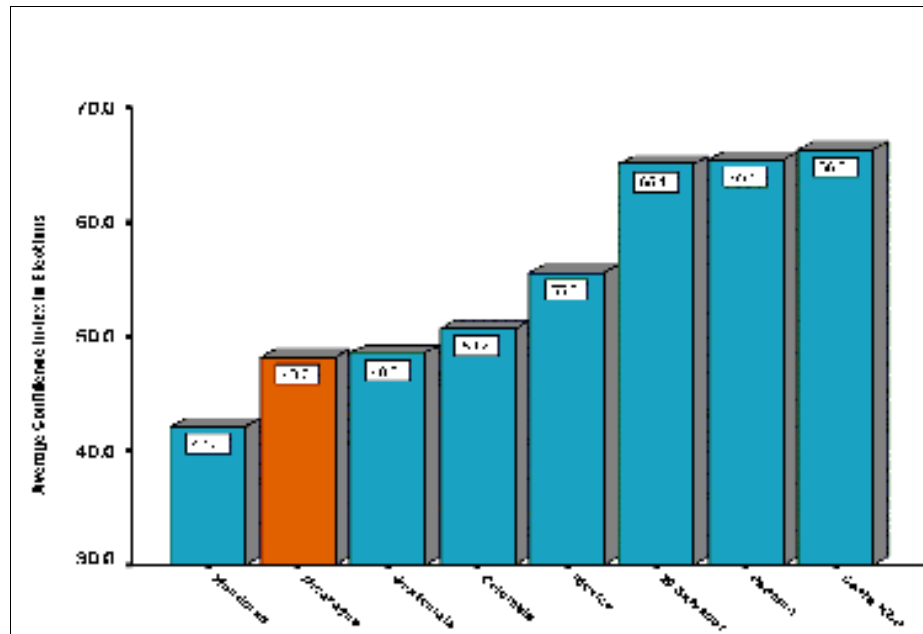
With respect to levels of trust in the basic institutions that direct and oversee electoral processes in Nicaragua—the Supreme Electoral Council (CSE) and political parties—we see an average level of trust in the CSE and low levels of trust in the political parties in the next graphic. This is surprising, given the high level of citizen participation in voting.

Graphic VII.7 Confidence in Electoral Institutions



In the region, Nicaragua is situated among the countries with the lowest levels of trust in electoral processes, at the same level as Guatemala, higher than Honduras, but lower than the other countries involved with this study (Graphic VII.8).

Graphic VII.8 Confidence in Elections: Nicaragua Compared to Regional Perspectives



7.3 Assessment of the Popular Vote

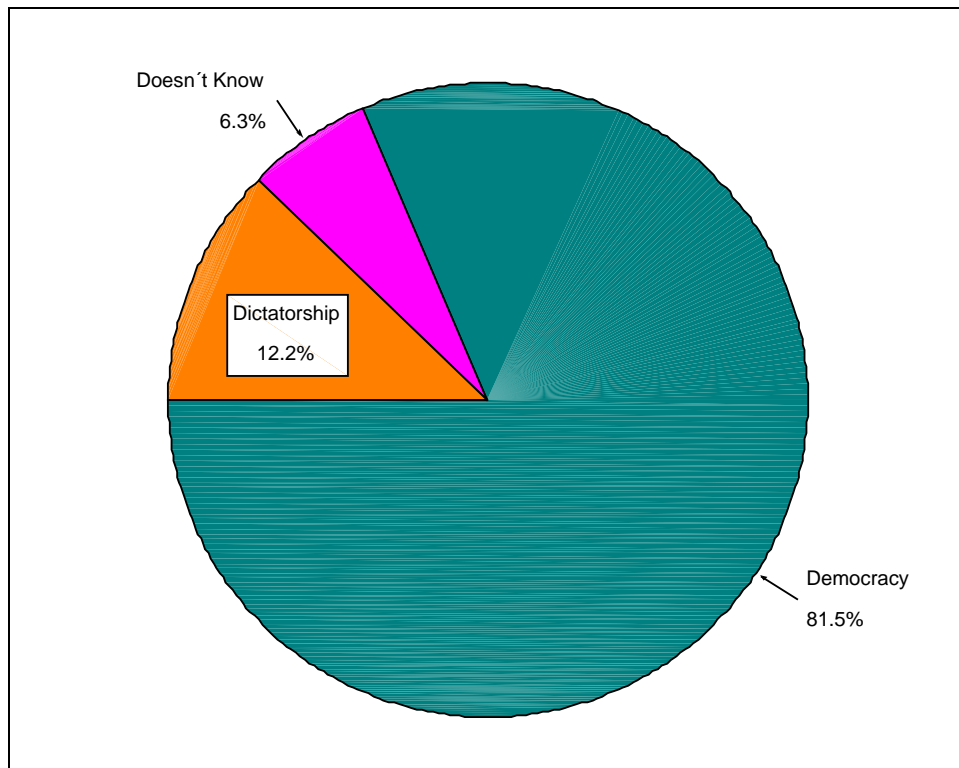
To understand the citizen preference for the vote as a mechanism for electing governmental authorities, we asked those surveyed:

There are people who say we need a strong leader who does not need to be elected by vote. Others say that although things do not function well, electoral democracy—in other words the popular vote—is always best. What do you think?

- (1) *We need a strong leader who does not need to be elected.*
- (2) *Electoral democracy is better*
- (8) *Don't know/No response*

The results indicate a resounding rejection of the possibility of being governed by a strong leader who hasn't been elected, since the majority of those surveyed (87%) believe that the popular vote is preferable “even if things don't function well,” as illustrated in Graphic VII.9.

Graphic VII.9 Preference for The Popular Vote vs. a Non-Elected Strong Leader



7.3.1 Expectations From the Vote

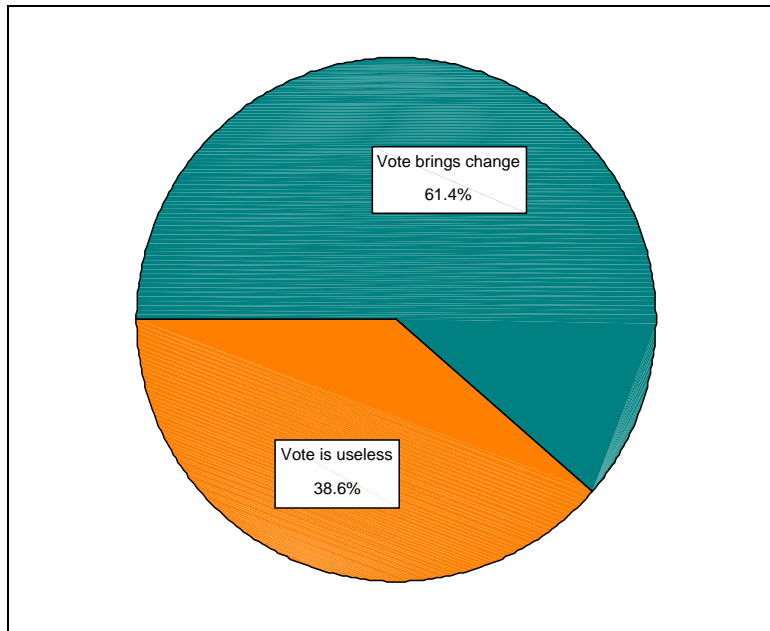
One element of the citizenry's political culture that conditions its electoral behavior is its assessment of the vote as an instrument for influencing the government. A perception of the vote as ineffective or useless would tend to diminish electoral participation. To know citizen perceptions about the effectiveness of their vote, the following question was asked:

Do you think that voting can improve things in the future, or do you think that however you vote things will not improve?

- (1) Voting can change things;*
- (2) Things won't improve;*
- (8) Don't know/No response*

The belief in representative democracy is reflected in the majority perception (61.4%) that "voting can improve things in the future." Nonetheless, a significant group (38.6%) had doubts about the effectiveness of voting, believing that "things won't improve" (Graphic VII.10).

Graphic VII.10 Perceptions About the Impact of Voting



7.4 Alternatives to Electoral Participation

The Electoral Law establishes two forms of direct popular participation in affairs related to public order. These are included in the Constitution, but have not been applied to date in this country:

- The plebiscite is a direct consultation with the population over decisions made by the Executive whose transcendence affects the fundamental interests of the nation.
- The referendum is submitting laws or reforms of an ordinary or constitutional character for ratification by the citizenry.

The Constitution also stipulates the right of citizens to petition, denounce or constructively criticize the government, converting state officials into true public servants (Article 52) who are obligated to resolve the citizenry's petitions and demands (D.P. 124-99). According to the principle that government acts should take place in public view, citizens have the right to request and receive complete and truthful information from any institution pertaining to central or municipal level administration. Different legal initiatives and public policies have been proposed by civil society organizations, for example the Child and Adolescent Code, the Family Violence Law, the Citizen Participation Law, proposals for a national population policy and plan the Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the policies on Decentralization and Migration.

According to the results of our survey, the right to petition national authorities has only been minimally exercised (9%), but has been higher in relation to local authorities (25%) given better communication channels and higher levels of trust among citizens.

In addition to voting, an electoral process includes a range of activities that citizens may take part in, such as trying to persuade fellow citizens to vote in favor of a particular political party or

candidate. To study this theme, two questions aimed at determining the electoral activities people take part in were included:

During elections, some people try to convince other people to vote for a specific party or candidate. How often have you tried to convince others to vote for a specific party or candidate?

- (1) *Frequently*
- (2) *Sometimes*
- (3) *Rarely*
- (4) *Never*
- (8) *Don't know/No response (DK/NR)*

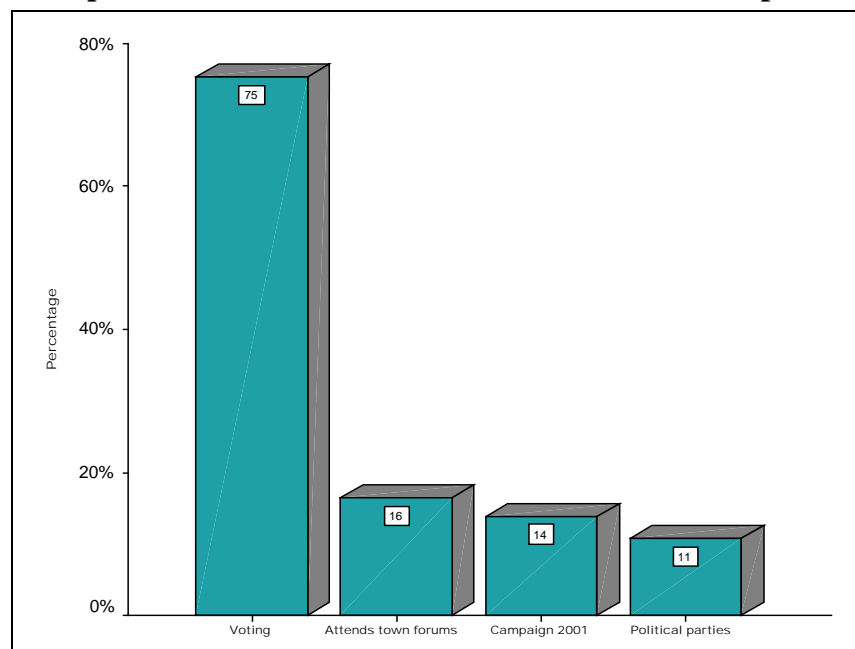
Some people work for political parties or candidates during electoral campaigns. Did you work for any candidate or party in the 2001 presidential elections?

- (1) *Yes I did work*
- (2) *No I didn't work*
- (8) *DK/NR*

In general terms, most of those surveyed (81%) had never tried to persuade others to vote for a party or candidate, and only a small group (14%) had collaborated actively with the political campaign of one party during the previous elections.

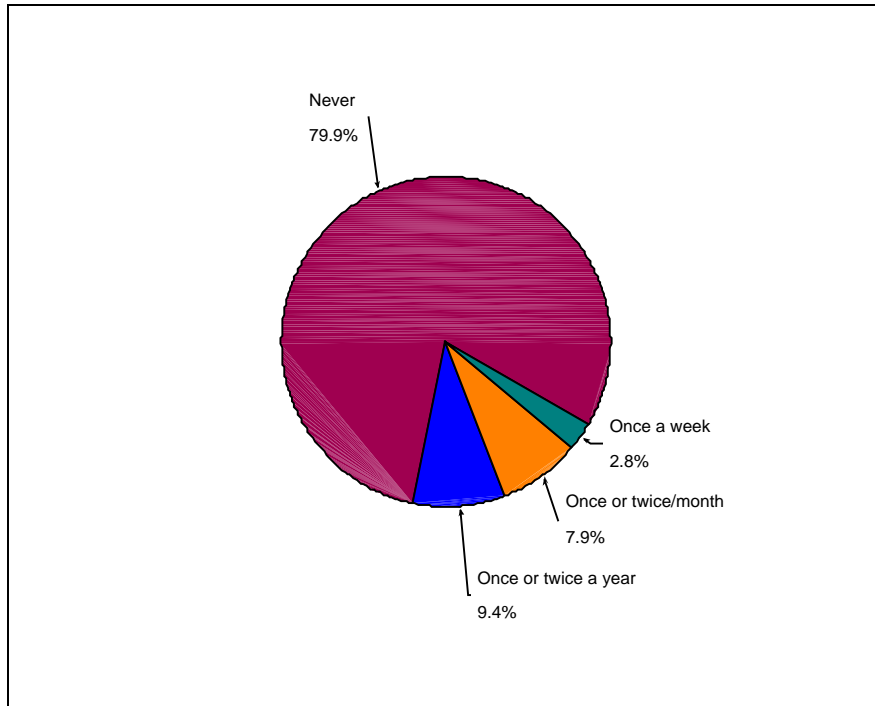
The results of this study show that the predominant political participation is voting in elections (75%), and only minimal direct participation in political parties (11%), lobbying (16%) or public demonstrations (14%).

Graphic VII.11 Forms and Levels of Electoral Participation



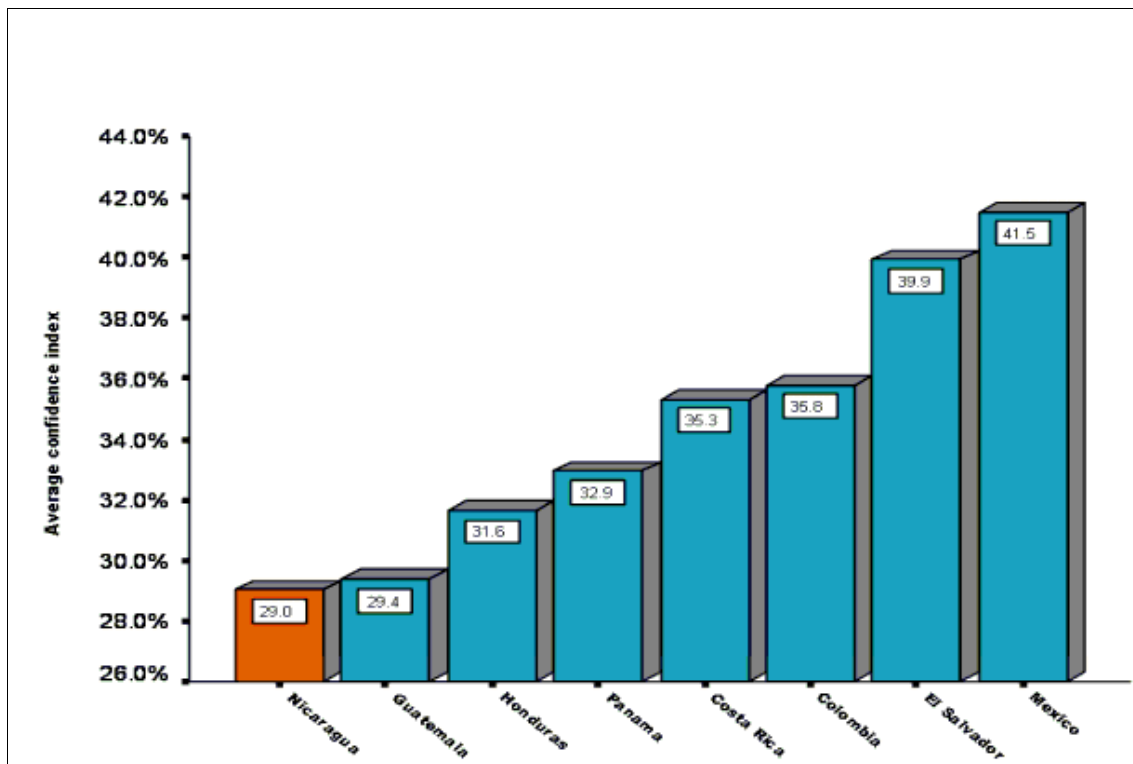
We find that there is minimal active participation in today's political parties in Nicaragua, as indicated in Graphic VII.12. This coincides with the low level of trust and perceived corruption of these institutions, analyzed in previous chapters, and also coincides with other countries in the region.

Graphic VII.12 Participation in Meetings of Political Parties



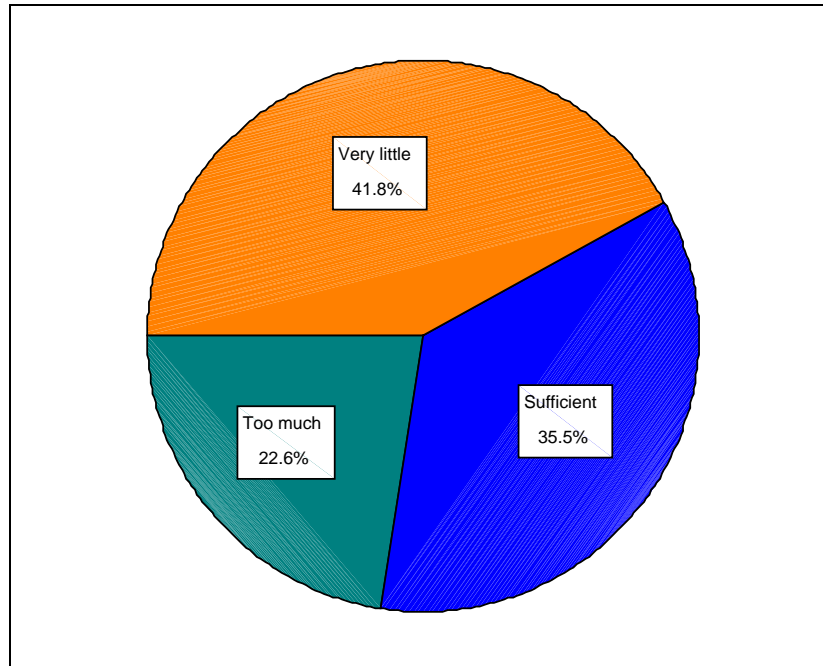
Within the region, Nicaragua joins Guatemala as the two countries with the lowest citizen trust in political parties. In contrast, the results of this survey found the highest levels of trust in Mexico and Costa Rica, but all with levels below the median (50), as indicated in Graphic VII.13.

Graphic VII.13 Confidence in Political Parties Nicaragua Compared to the Region



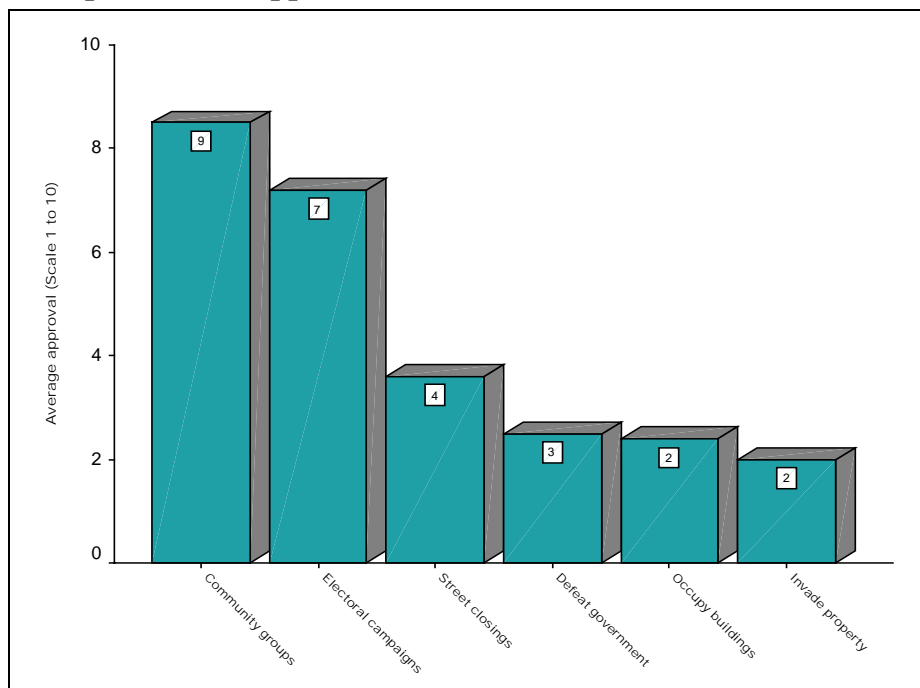
The perceptions of Nicaraguans about the degree of political participation in their country is clearly differentiated between those who believe it is very little (40%), others who think it is sufficient (32%), and a significant group (28%) who indicated that “there is too much” participation. This last group is apparently reacting to the frequent protests and demonstrations of social groups demanding government responses to economic and social problems (Graphic VII.14).

Graphic VII.14 Perceptions About Levels of Political Participation by Citizens



When selecting among different forms of political participation, those surveyed expressed a clear preference for peaceful and legal actions such as elections and participation in civic organizations, as illustrated in Graphic VII.15.

Graphic VII.15 Approval of Peaceful or Violent Political Actions



7.5 Electoral Reforms

The theme of reforming the electoral system has been high on the public agenda in recent years, following the Liberal-Sandinista pact (2000) that consecrated an exclusive bipartisanism. Different actors—including the political formations excluded from the 2001 elections as well as civil society organizations and international agencies—have proposed ways to foster greater political pluralism and strengthen the neutrality and accountability of electoral institutions.

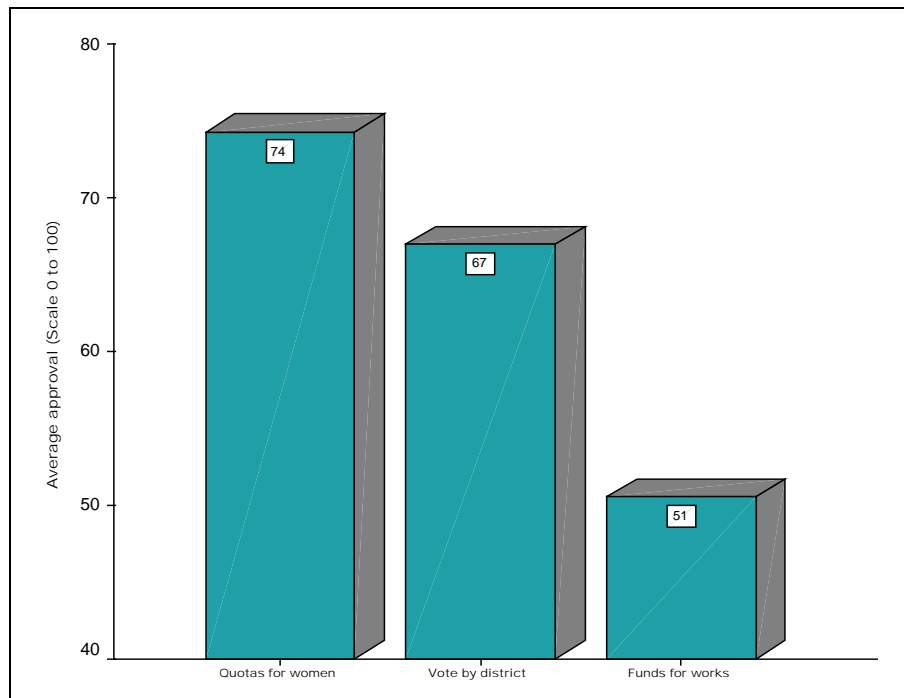
In this survey, we selected four key proposals that have been the object of national and regional public debates as indicators of citizen appraisals of electoral reforms, all of which are easy to understand: increasing the number of female legislators, linking candidacies to each district, allowing elected legislators to manage funds for public works, and non-partisan candidacies for mayor and Council members (already mentioned in Chapter IV).

“Today, there is a lot of talk of electoral reforms. I’m interested in knowing your opinions about the following reforms. We will use the “C” card again.

(01)	(02)	(03)	(04)	(05)	(06)	(07)	(08)	(09)	(10)	(88)
Firmly disapprove									Firmly approve	Don’t know
To what degree do you approve or disapprove of setting a minimum quota for the number of women who can be elected as legislators [Read me the number]										
To what degree do you approve or disapprove of reapportioning electoral districts in order to vote for legislators by district rather than voting for a list of legislators by party?										
Should the financing for public works and public services in each electoral district be put in the hands of legislators? To what degree would you approve or disapprove?										
Would you permit candidates for mayor and Council members in your municipality who are independent of any political party? To what degree do you approve or disapprove?										

The results of the survey contained in the following graphics demonstrate a high level of approval for increasing the number of women in the National Assembly, for locally nominating candidates for the office of legislative representative, and for allowing civic organizations to propose candidates for mayor and Council members. In contrast, there was only minimal approval of allowing legislators to manage funds (Graphic VII.16).

Graphic VII.16 Assessment of Electoral Reforms



7.5.1 Gender Equity

The National Assembly (2001-2005) currently has 20 female legislators (22%), which is double the 10 (11%) in the previous Assembly (1997-2003). A key democratic value is equal rights and duties for all citizens, without discrimination. In this sense, the high approval for “setting a minimum quota for increasing the number of women who can be elected legislators” by those surveyed (57% selected the 3 highest values on the scale) was noteworthy. Both women and men responded favorably to this question, but there were more favorable responses from the younger generations.

7.5.2 Locally Representative Legislators

In contrast to the current process of running closed lists of candidates for legislative posts, developed by the leadership of political parties, the citizens support a reform that would imply district nominations for candidates, allowing them to better represent local interests and providing citizens with more awareness of their performance.

7.5.3 Funds for Legislators

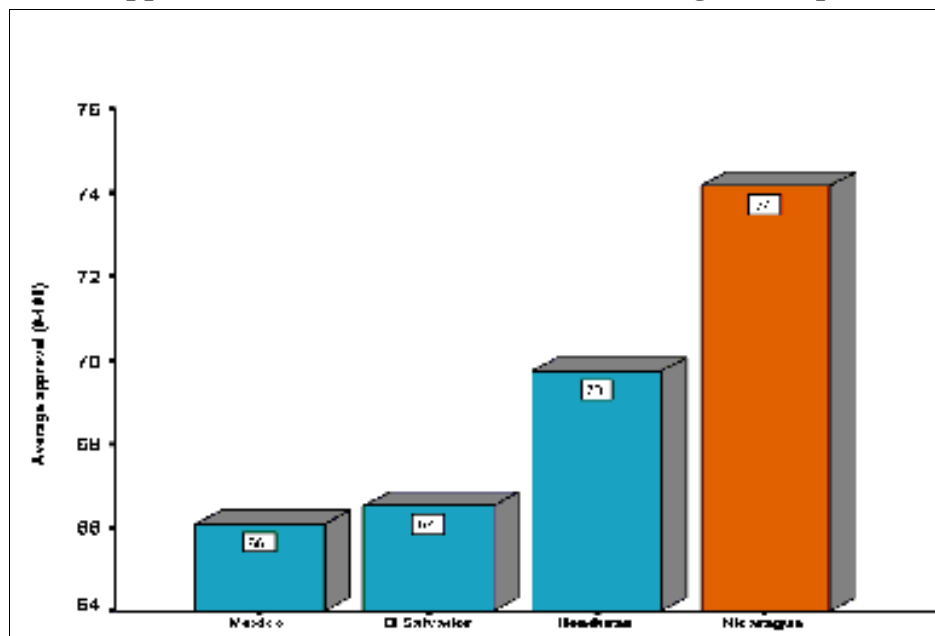
Most of the population rejects the proposal of putting control over financing public works in their electoral districts into the hands of legislators (39% were situated in the three highest disapproval brackets). Only one quarter of the sample accepted such a proposal. Currently, Legislators receive national budget funds for this type of expenditure. However, questions have arisen regarding the discretionary and partisan use of these funds, while municipal governments lack the minimal resources for their operations. This situation, covered in the media, has undoubtedly influenced public opinion. In this survey, such opinion is expressed as an only

minimal acceptance of the current prerogatives of legislators, who receive some of the lowest levels of citizen trust (Chapter III).

7.5.4 Regional Views on Women's Participation in Government

Within the regional context, Nicaraguans highly value gender equity in political representation in the National Assembly (Graphic VII.17). Nonetheless, a legislative project that would strengthen gender equity and that is currently being debated publicly in Nicaragua is being questioned by the Catholic hierarchy and conservative sectors, which promote a traditional patriarchal ideology. They have successfully blocked its approval, and have drastically modified its content. Despite this, many social organizations continue their tenacious educational efforts throughout all regions of the country, to strengthen women's self-esteem and capacities and to promote equitable distribution of resources and decisions.

Graphic VII.17 Support Political Quotas for Women Nicaragua Compared to the Region



Undoubtedly, gender equity implies radical changes in the “very entrenched” mental structures and power relations of the traditional patriarchal systems that have been constructed (and which can be deconstructed), as indicated by F. Braudel. However, we also observe changes in this trend, due to the efforts of broad-based movements of Nicaraguan women during the past two decades. This is reflected in our 2005 survey, and is manifested in the growing presence of women in government and business leadership positions, their predominance in schools at all levels and among university graduates, the approval of laws that protect women's rights, the creation of structures like the Women's Police Divisions (*Comisarías de la Mujer*) and a Special Human Rights Defense Attorney's Office, and the recent formation of a lobbying group that has taken up the 19th century liberal struggle to enforce a secular state, a battle still not concluded in the 21st century.

7.6 Conclusions

The electoral behavior of citizens shows a high level of voter registration and voting in the past three national elections, with greater absenteeism in municipal elections and in the autonomous regions. A high level of participation in the 2001 national elections was observed among married adults with university education, who trust elections and believe that voting can improve things.

The results of this study show that Nicaraguans approve of governments elected via popular vote, and reject violent forms of citizen participation. The predominant form of political participation is voting in the electoral processes of a representative and democratic system. There is much less direct involvement with political parties, which are generally not trusted, or with electoral proselytism, and even less in running as a candidate.

It is interesting to confirm citizen respect for proposals to reform the current electoral system, such as those promoting gender equity in public office, territorial representation by legislators, and opportunities for civic organizations to take part in municipal elections. These results are indicative of the democratic values and attitudes that predominate in the political culture of citizens, contrary to the exclusive and vertical attitudes that prevail in the political culture of Nicaragua's partisan elite, who have systematically opposed these measures.

8.0 Social Capital and Democracy

8.1 Introduction

In recent decades, we have seen a growing interest in the theme of social capital and the role of civil society in different countries undergoing transitions from authoritarian regimes to democratic systems. This is as true in Eastern Europe as it is in Latin America, where labor, religious and civic organizations have played a critical role in the fall of dictatorships.

Borrowing a concept from economics, “social capital” has been considered an “asset” whose value is found in social interrelationships, and it has been emphasized as a key element in development and democracy. Nonetheless, there are different definitions of social capital, and different approaches to its study. In J. Coleman’s research about the link between social capital and education, social capital was defined as the relationships between people that allow them to cooperate and thereby achieve common objectives.⁷⁴ In the view of R. Putnam, social capital includes all “aspects of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve society’s efficiency through facilitating coordinated actions.”⁷⁵

In the classic study *Making Democracy Work*, Putnam underlined the important role played by local associations in promoting cooperative habits and values, trust, and public participation, all of which contribute to the construction of democratic political systems. A recent study about social capital in Honduras concluded that “societies where citizens trust each other and cooperate provide more responsible and efficient governments, which increases the capacity to offer better quality public goods. In this way, better conditions for inclusive democracy are created, along with more accelerated development of society.”⁷⁶

The central argument for all of these authors is that democratic institutions operate better in societies with high levels of social capital, in other words where citizens trust each other and participate actively in civil society organizations. It is known that authoritarian political regimes try to control or suppress participation in civic organizations, while democratic systems facilitate the free expression and organization of civil society. This view has been taken up by many international organizations such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the United Nations in their cooperation programs, in order to strengthen social capital in poor countries as a basic component of sustainable development.⁷⁷

In this chapter, we will explore social capital in Nicaragua in light of the results from two surveys related to interpersonal trust, the freedom to participate politically and involvement with community and labor organizations. These will be considered as elements of political culture that

⁷⁴ Coleman, J. “Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital.” In: P. Disgupta and I. Serageldin (eds.). *Social Capital: A Multifaceted Perspective*. Washington, World Bank. 2000.

⁷⁵ Putnam, R.D. *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton University Press, 1993. p. 167.

⁷⁶ Lundwall, J. María. *El capital social y su relación con el desempeño de la democracia local y la descentralización exitosa: el caso de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: UNDP. 2003.

⁷⁷ Kliksberg, B. “Capital social y cultura, claves esenciales del desarrollo.” In *La Revista de CEPAL* 69, 1999, Pp. 85- 102.

lead to strengthening the participatory and representative democratic system formally established in the nation's Political Constitution.

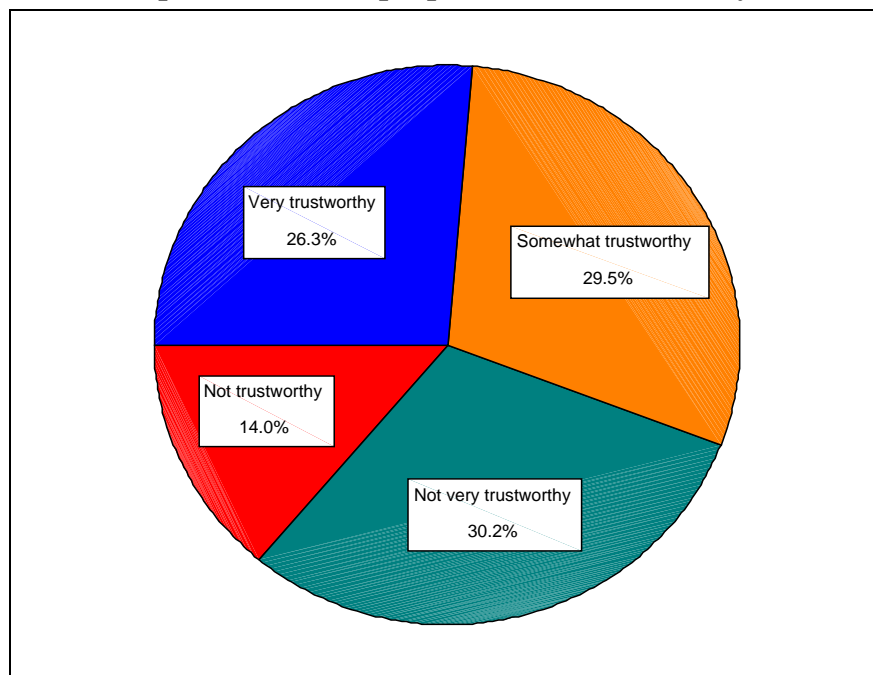
8.2 Interpersonal Trust

The theme of trust between people was examined through three questions:

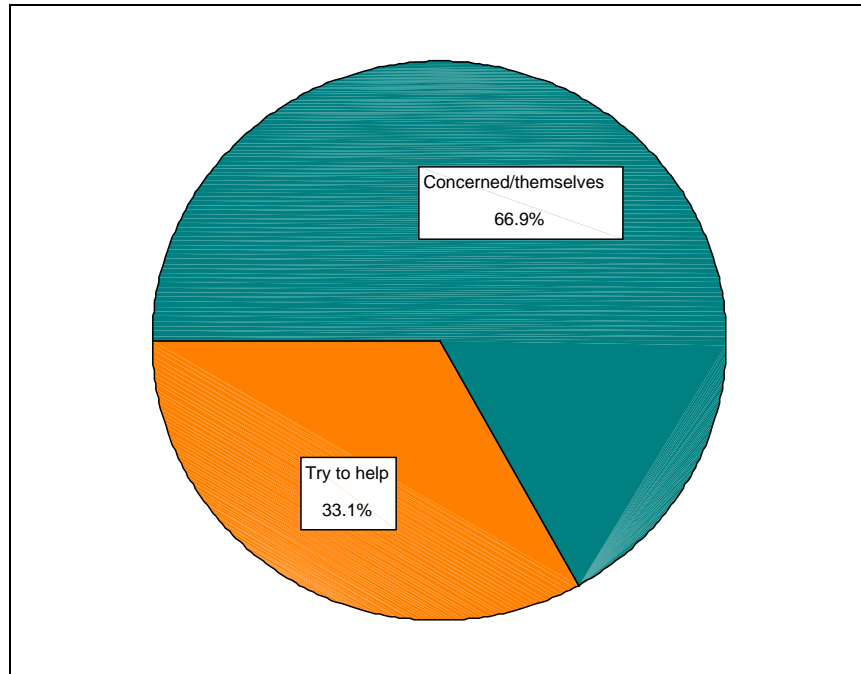
IT1: Now, speaking of people here, would you say that the people in your community are: (1) Very trustworthy (2) Somewhat trustworthy (3) Not very trustworthy (4) Untrustworthy (8) DK
IT2: Do you think that people are mostly just concerned about themselves, or do you think that people usually try to help each other? (1) They're concerned about themselves (2) They try to help each other (8) DK
IT3: Do you think most people, when given the opportunity, will try to take advantage of you, or do you think that they won't try to take advantage of you? (1) Yes, they'll take advantage (2) No, they won't take advantage (8) DK

It is interesting to note that most of those surveyed positively assess other citizens, viewing them as trustworthy and reliable. However, one third of those interviewed expressed active solidarity, in other words, "being concerned about others," while a slightly smaller percentage "would not take advantage" of another person if the opportunity to do so presented itself. These responses are summarized in the following graphics:

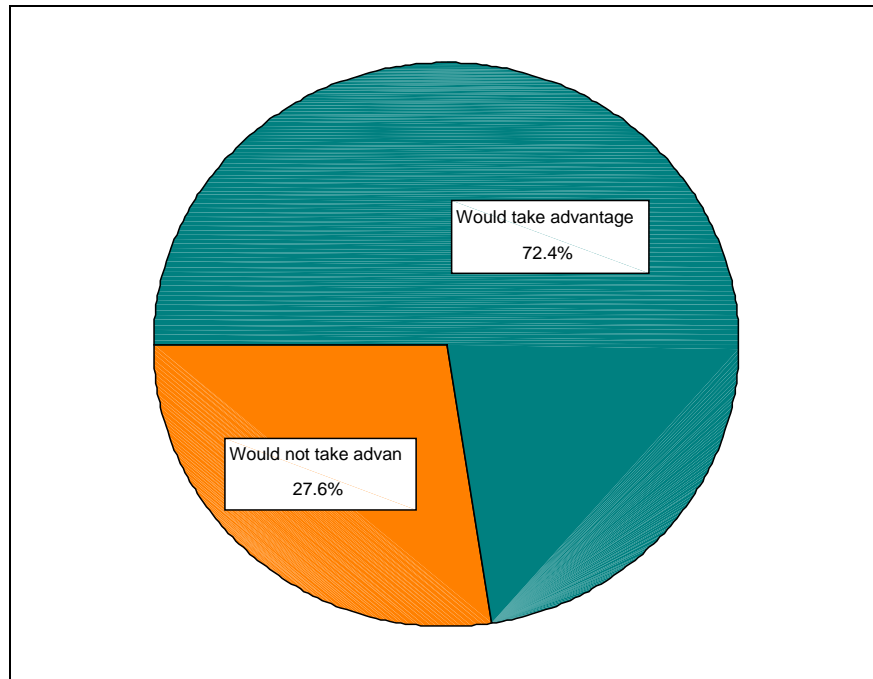
Graphic VIII.1 The people in Your Community...?



Graphic VIII.2 The People in Your Community...?

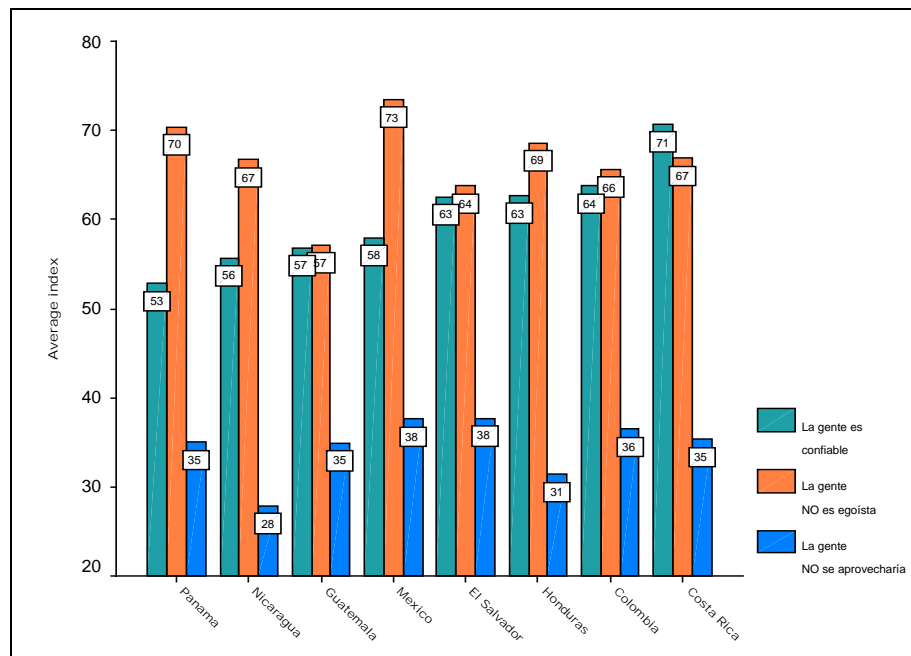


Graphic VIII.3 If the Opportunity Presented Itself, the People of Your Community...?



Regionally, Nicaragua's interpersonal trust indicators are situated among the lowest comparatively, as indicated in Graphic VIII.4.

Graphic VIII.4 Indicators of Interpersonal Trust: Nicaragua Compared to the Region



To determine the factors that affect people's trust in other citizens, we developed a multiple regression model for the ITI question:

Would you say that people from your community are...

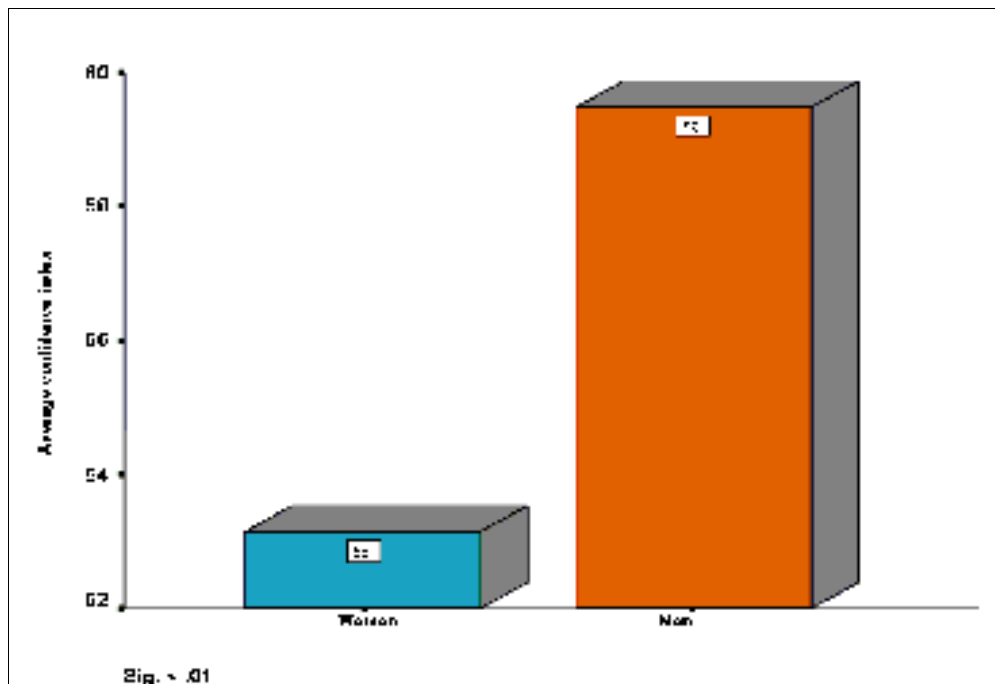
- (1) *Very trustworthy;*
- (2) *Somewhat trustworthy;*
- (3) *Not very trustworthy;*
- (4) *Untrustworthy),*

once it had been recoded on a 0 (untrustworthy) to 100 (very trustworthy) scale.⁷⁸ We include the socio-demographic variables that we have used throughout this report as predictors (Appendix D, Table VIII.1).

We find that the gender of the person interviewed is a statistically significant factor in relation to trusting the community. Men express greater trust than women, as detailed in Graphic VIII.5.

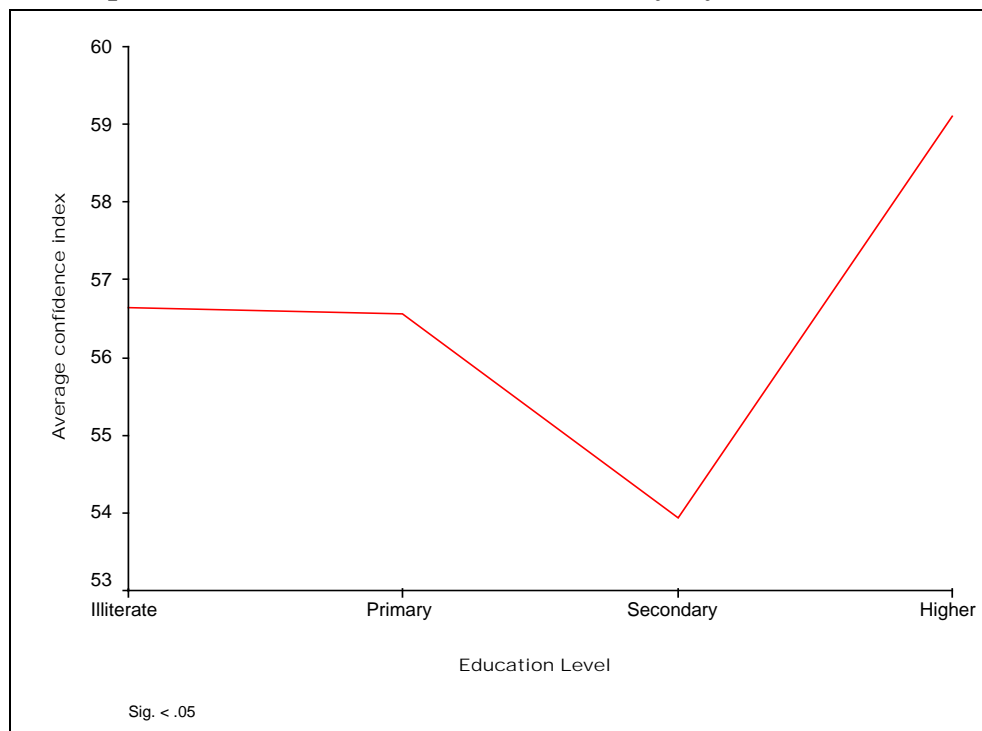
⁷⁸ It is not possible to construct a reliable scale for interpersonal trust based on the three questions mentioned, since Cronbach's Alpha for than scale is way below our threshold of seven.

Graphic VIII.5 Confidence in the Community, by Gender



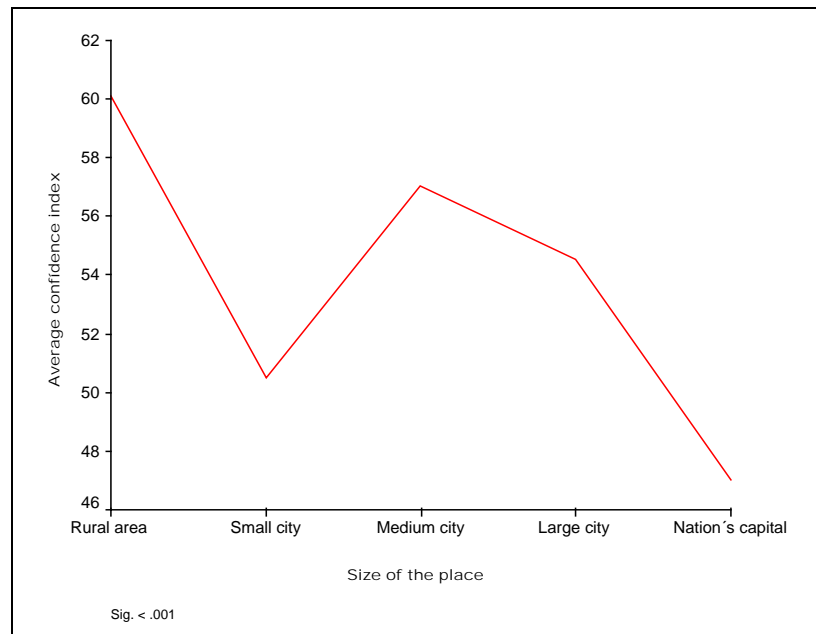
In our multiple regression model, education level is a significant predictor of community trust. More educated people tend to trust their co-citizens more, when other factors are controlled. In a bivariate relationship (where other constant predictors are not maintained), this positive impact is mainly found between the high school and university levels, as illustrated in Graphic VIII.6.

Graphic VIII.6 Confidence in the Community, by Education Level



Finally, those who live in smaller cities express greater confidence in the people of their community. In other words, higher levels of urbanization undermine people's trust in each other, as we observe in Graphic VIII.7.

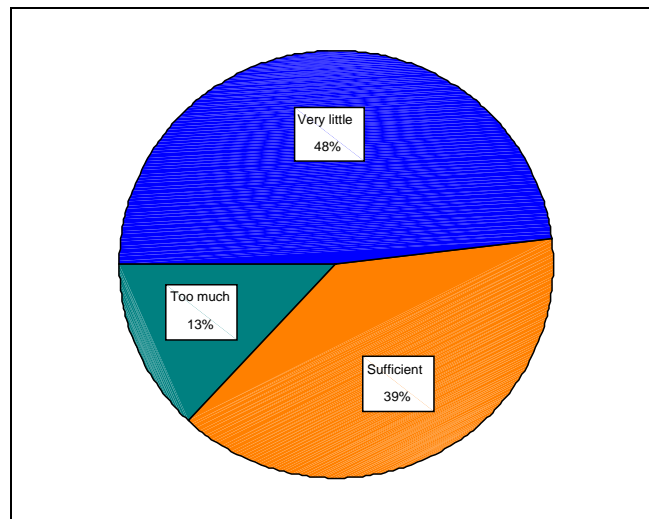
Graphic VIII.7 Confidence in the Community, by Size of a Place



8.3 Fear or Freedom to Participate

Citizen participation assumes the existence of an atmosphere of freedom that allows people to express their concerns and organize themselves to achieve different social ends. It would appear that Nicaraguans have divided perceptions: on the one hand, just over half of those surveyed (52%) find that there is sufficient or even too much freedom of opinion, while the rest (48%) feel that there is too little (Graphic VIII.8). We obtained the same responses when asking about freedom of the press in Nicaragua.

Graphic VIII.8 Perceptions About Freedom of Opinion in Nicaragua



To further explore people's sense of freedom or fear to participate as citizens in specific political actions, we posed the following questions:

If you were to decide to take part in some of the activities I am about to mention, would you do so without fear, with a little bit of fear, or with a lot of fear?

DER1: Take part in an activity to resolve problems in your community?

DER2: Vote in a national election?

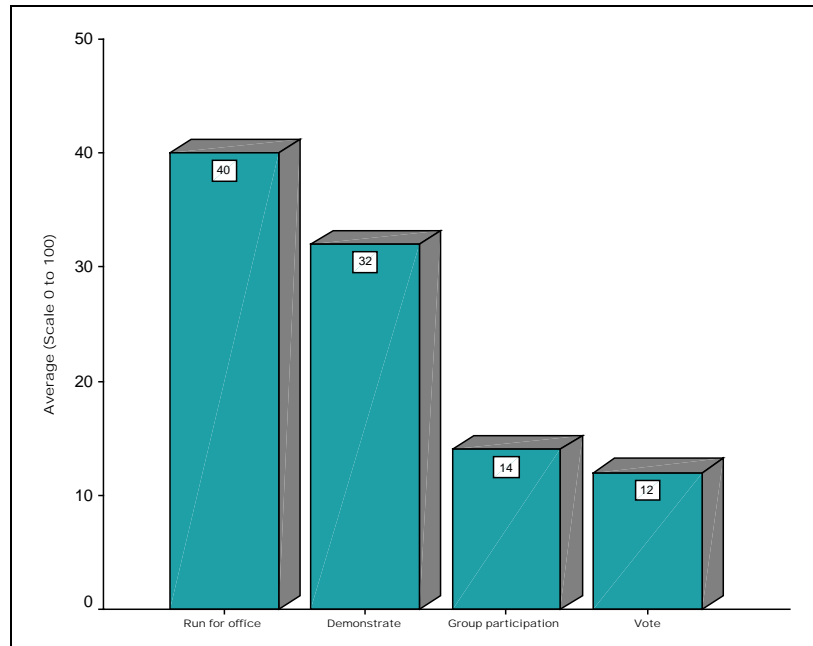
DER3: Take part in a peaceful demonstration?

DER4: Run for public office?

Those surveyed indicate that a free atmosphere for citizen participation exists in general, especially with respect to voting in elections and participating in community organizations. On the other hand, we find fears in relation to taking part in political activities such as public protests or running for public office, which could be based on the risk of violence (in the first case) or could imply the need to possess certain capacities, resources or motivations that most people lack (in the second case).

Graphic VIII.9 details levels of fear on a scale from 1-100 with respect to the previous questions. If we were to invert this conception, we could also refer to a scale of freedom; for example, a low level of fear related to voting (12%) could be interpreted as a high level of freedom (88%).

Graphic VIII.9 Perception of Fear to Participate

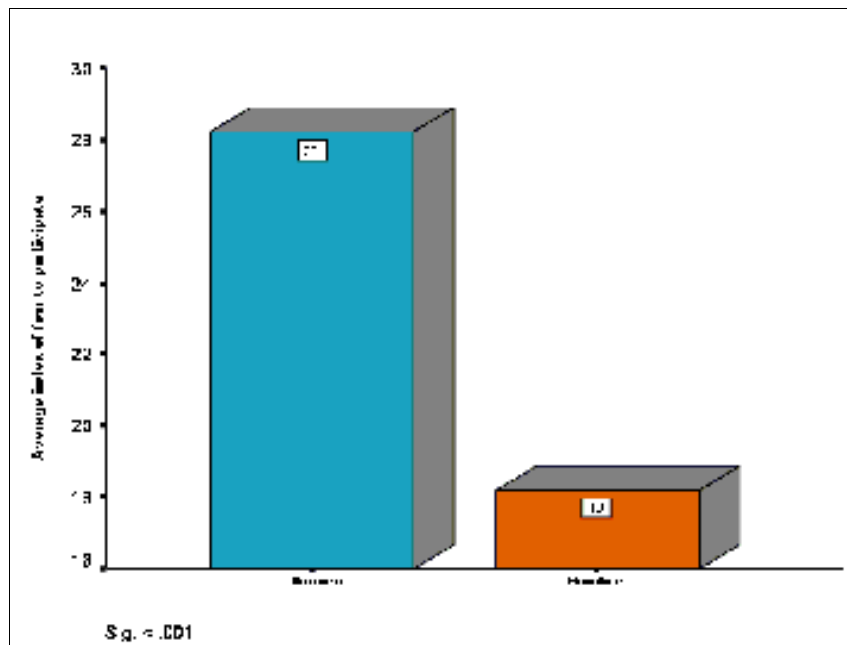


Through a regression analysis, we detect the variables that exert greatest influence on perceptions of fear to participate.⁷⁹ We find that the factors that have a statistically significant impact on fear to participate are gender, educational level and marital status (Appendix D, Table VIII.2).

Graphic VIII.10 shows a significant difference between female and male perceptions about fears related to citizen participation. The greater perception of freedom among men reflects the gender divisions of traditional work in Nicaragua, which limits women to the domestic and reproductive arenas. This restricts their participation in public spheres, which are the domain of men, except in the case of religious organizations and activities.

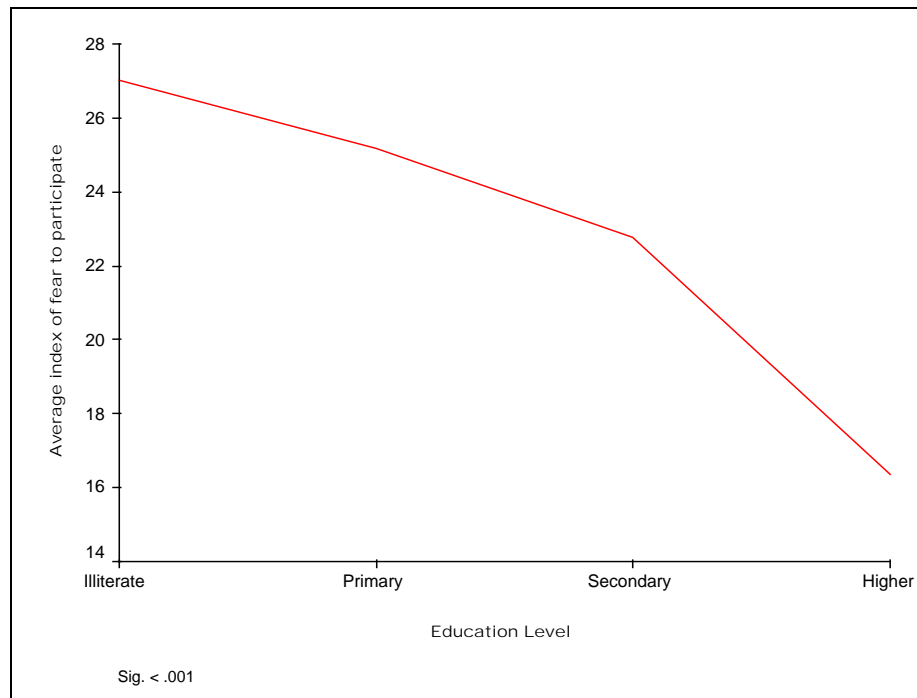
⁷⁹ Based on an index that averages the 4 items mentioned and is recoded on a scale from 0-100.

Graphic VIII.10 Fear to Participate, by Gender



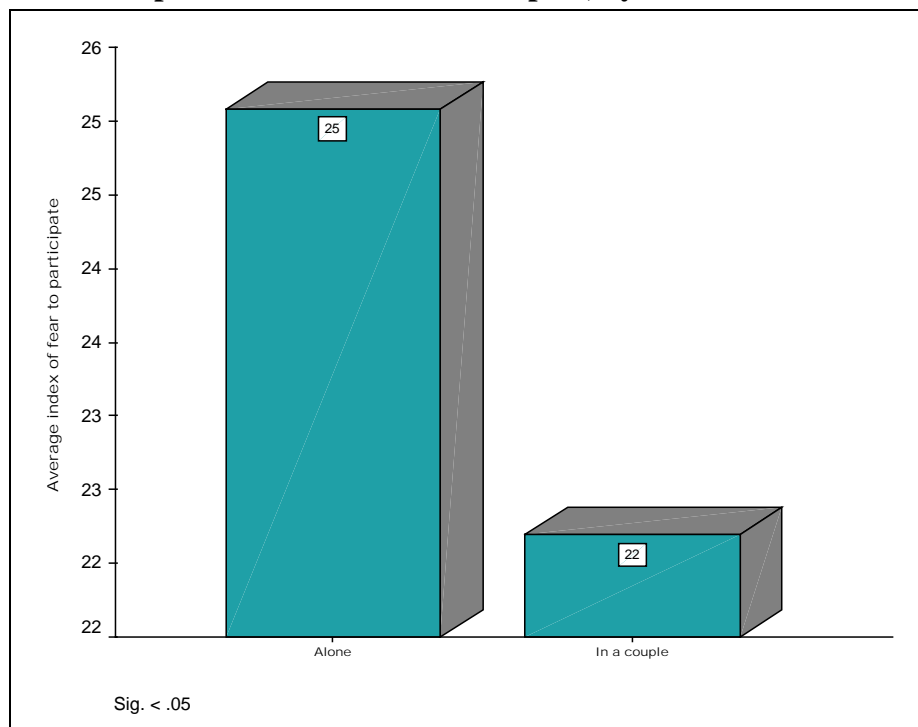
The survey results indicate that people with lower levels of formal education have more fear about exercising their citizen rights, which is obvious if we consider the fact that illiterate people (15% of the sample) have no access whatsoever to written information. Their knowledge about their rights, the nation's institutional framework and electoral options is limited, along with their ability to vote and exercise other citizen activities. In contrast, those with high school and university education express a great sense of freedom, and have much greater access to information, capacities, and opportunities to participate politically (Graphic VIII.11).

GraphicVIII.11 Fear to Participate, by Education Level



A citizen's marital status also has a significant influence on fear of participating. Those living as a couple—either married or in a less formal ongoing relationship—express significantly less fear than those who are not living in this type of family situation (Graphic VIII.12).

Graphic VIII.12 Fear to Participate, by Marital Status



8.4 Participation in Social Organizations

The survey includes a bloc of questions to measure participation in six types of civil society organizations. Those interviewed were asked if they participated on a weekly basis, once or twice per month, once or twice per year, or never.

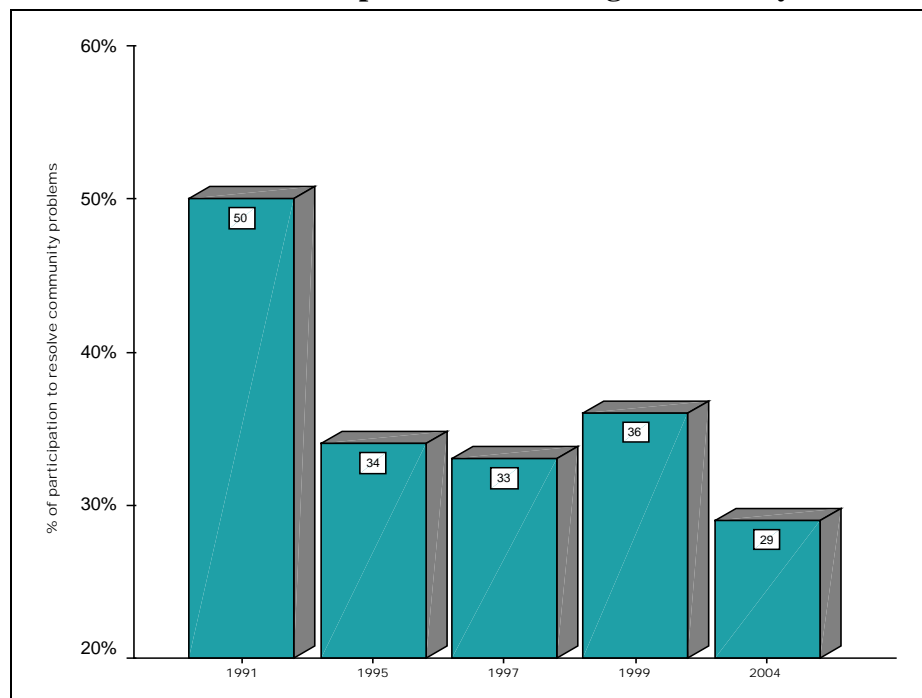
Please, tell me if you attend meetings of these at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never

	Once per week	Once or twice per month	Once or twice per year	Never	DK
CP6: Meetings of a committee or group from a church or temple?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)
CP7: Meetings of a school-parent association?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)
CP8: Meetings of a committee or group to improve the community?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)
CP9: Meetings of a professional, commercial or other trade association?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)
CP12: Meetings of a civic association?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)
CP13: Meetings of a political party?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)

Almost one third of the population (29.2%) was involved in civic efforts to solve community problems, which was a reduction from 1999 (a period marked by reconstruction following Hurricane Mitch), but closer to average levels found in previous surveys in 1991 and 1995,⁸⁰ as illustrated in Graphic VIII.13.

⁸⁰ Seligson M., *Auditoria de la Democracia* 1999, University of Pittsburg, 2000, Pg. 127.

Graphic VIII.13 Evolution of Participation in Resolving Community Problems, 1991-2004

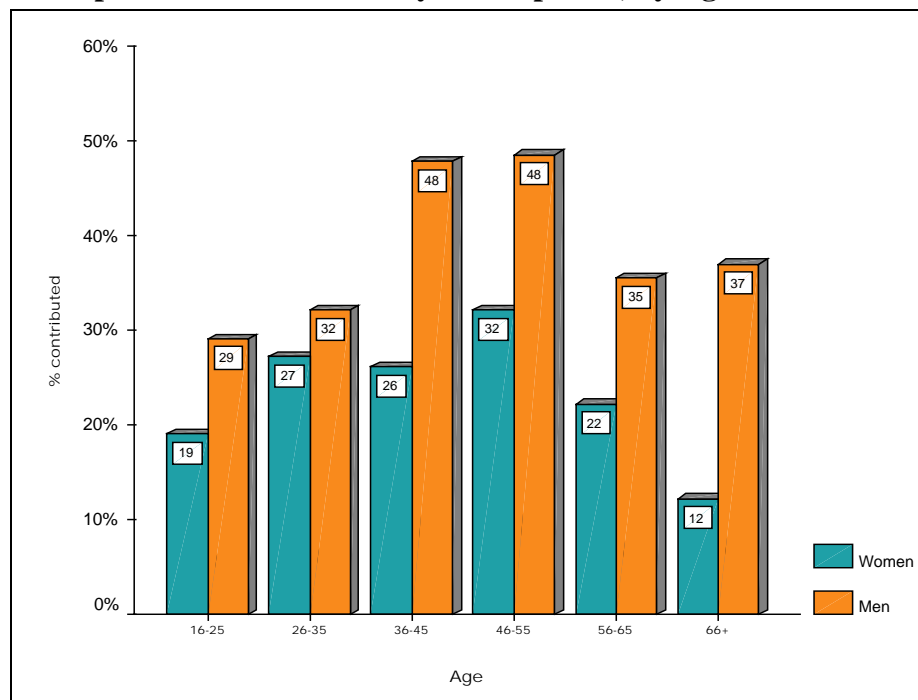


8.4.1 Community Participation, by Age and Sex

Young people's high level of participation in communities—both among females and males—is noteworthy, and would appear to contradict the hypothesis that individualism and consumer-oriented values predominate among the generation that came of age during the 1990s and 2000s in the context of neo-Liberalism and globalization. The following Graphic demonstrates a decreasing trend in community participation as the population's age increases.

With respect to gender, women generally participate less frequently than men of all age groups, as detailed in Graphic VIII.14. The highest levels of community participation are found among middle-age individuals (36-55 years of age).

Graphic VIII.14 Community Participation, by Age and Gender



8.4.2 Different Forms of Community Involvement

Among the almost one-third of those surveyed who have participated in solving community problems, we asked about the way they had helped to solve such problems through the following questions:

CP5A. Have you donated money or materials to help solve some problem in the community or your neighborhood?	(1) Yes	(2) No	(8) DK
CP5B. Have you contributed your work or labor?	(1) Yes	(2) No	(8) DK
CP5C. Have you been attending community meetings about a problem or about improving something?	(1) Yes	(2) No	(8) DK
CP5D. Have you tried to organize a new group to resolve a neighborhood problem, or to improve something?	(1) Yes	(2) No	(8) DK

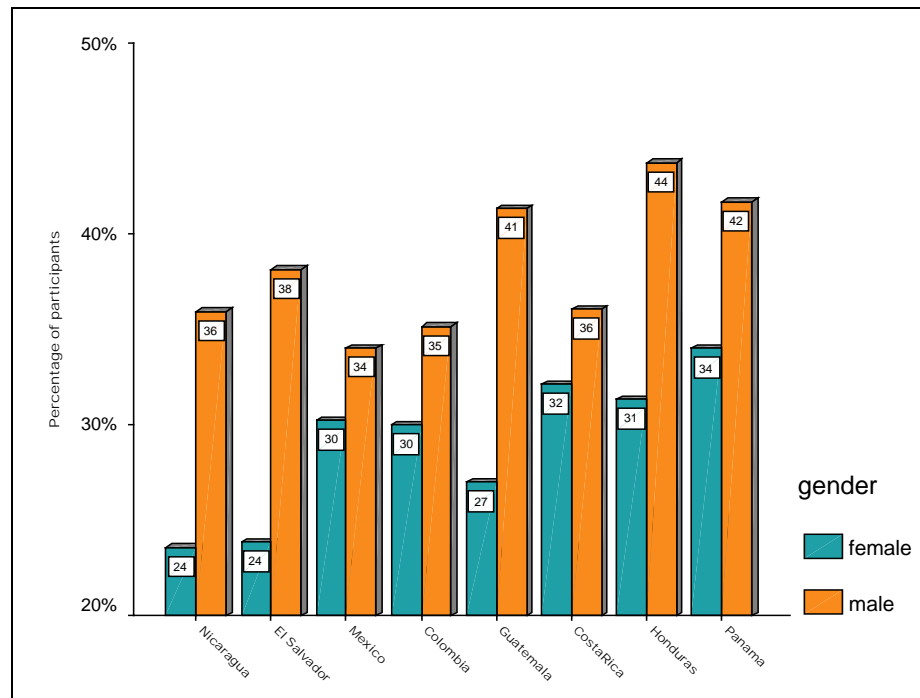
We find that the main forms of participation have been voluntary work (77%), attending meetings (59%), and finally donating materials or money (49%) or making an effort to organize a neighborhood group (39%).⁸¹

Those surveyed perceive a free atmosphere for community participation, since the majority (76.2%) are not afraid to take part, as opposed to those who feel “a little afraid” to participate (19%) and only 4.3% who expressed feeling “a lot of fear.” In other words, other factors cause reductions in community participation, probably more linked to the time and effort absorbed by the survival strategies of Nicaragua’s poor.

⁸¹ The percentage corresponds to the 29% who indicated having contributed in some way to resolving community problems.

Graphic VIII.15 breaks down community participation in the region by gender and compares it with the other countries included in this series, ordered according to increasing overall participation by country. We see that Nicaragua appears as the country with the lowest percentage of participation. Moreover, the gender difference is pronounced with respect to participation in activities aimed at solving community problems.

Graphic VIII.15 Community Participation by Gender: Nicaragua Compared to the Region

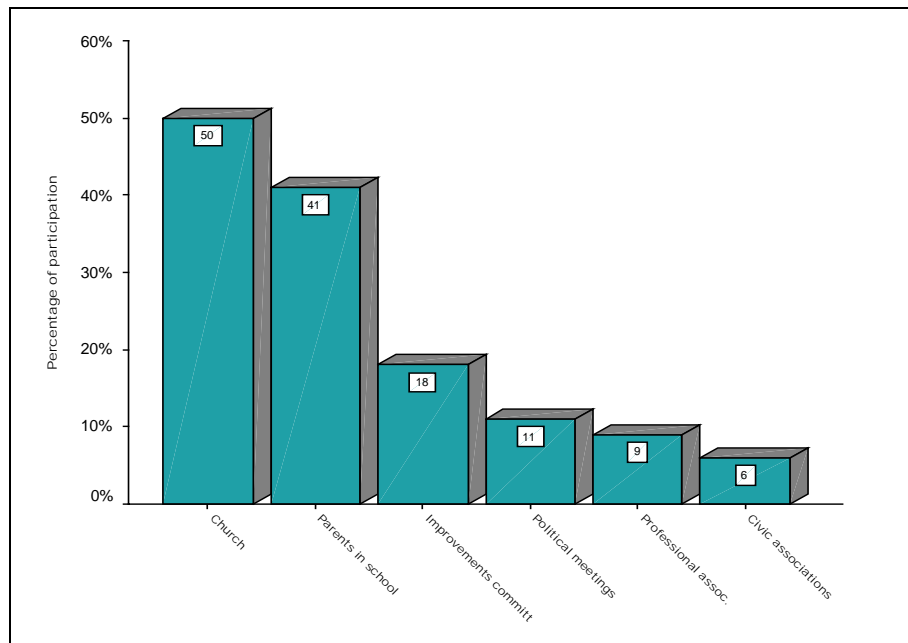


8.4.3 Participation in Organizations

With respect to participation in organizations, churches rank first. Half of the surveyed population (50%) participates frequently (on a weekly or monthly basis).⁸² School Parent Associations rank second place (41%), followed by community participation in Improvement Committees (18%), political meetings (11%), professional associations (9%) and civic associations (6%) (Graphic VIII.16).

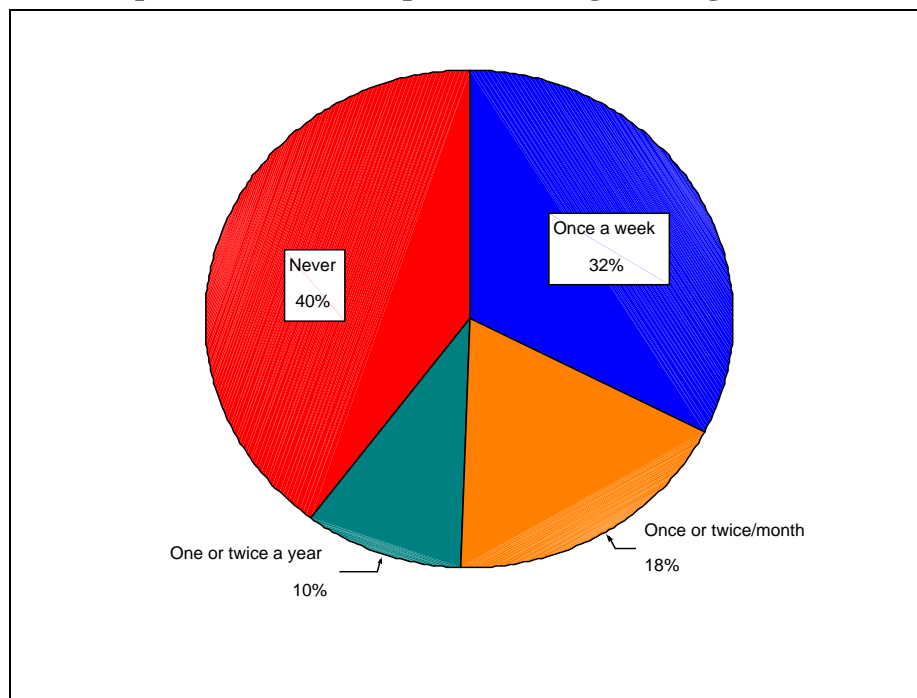
⁸² However, the proportion that identifies itself as “religious” is higher (62.1%), indicating the difference between religious discourse and practice observed in Latin American culture.

Graphic VIII.16 Levels of Participation, by Organization



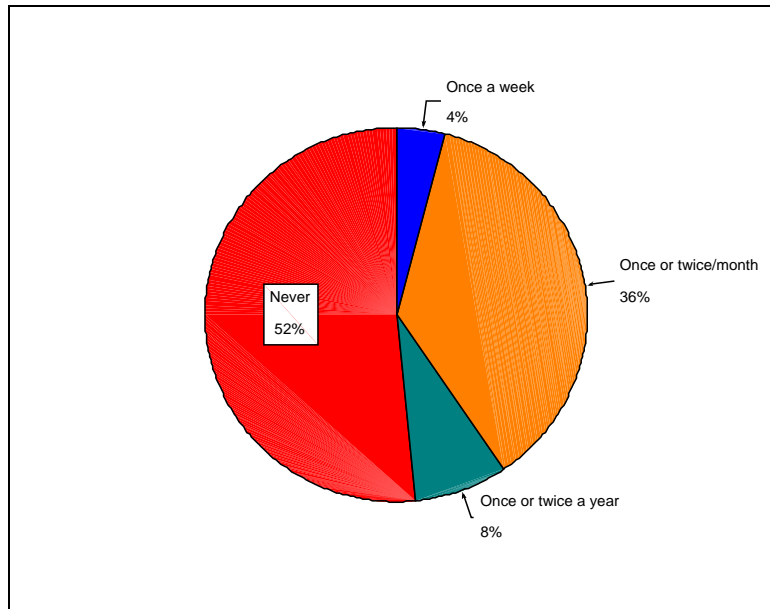
Historically, there has been a high level of participation in religious organizations. One third of the population attends such organizations on a weekly basis (Graphic VIII.17), which reflects the broad range of religious beliefs held by Nicaraguans and the presence of churches and pastors from different denominations throughout the national territory.

Graphic VIII.17 Participation in Religious Organizations



The Parent Associations of primary and secondary schools hold the second place for community participation. Parents play an important role together with teachers and students, given the state's move toward greater school autonomy in the 1990s, transferring a series of responsibilities to schools, including managing the funds for school operations (Graphic VIII.18).

Graphic VIII.18 Participation in Meetings of School-Parent Associations

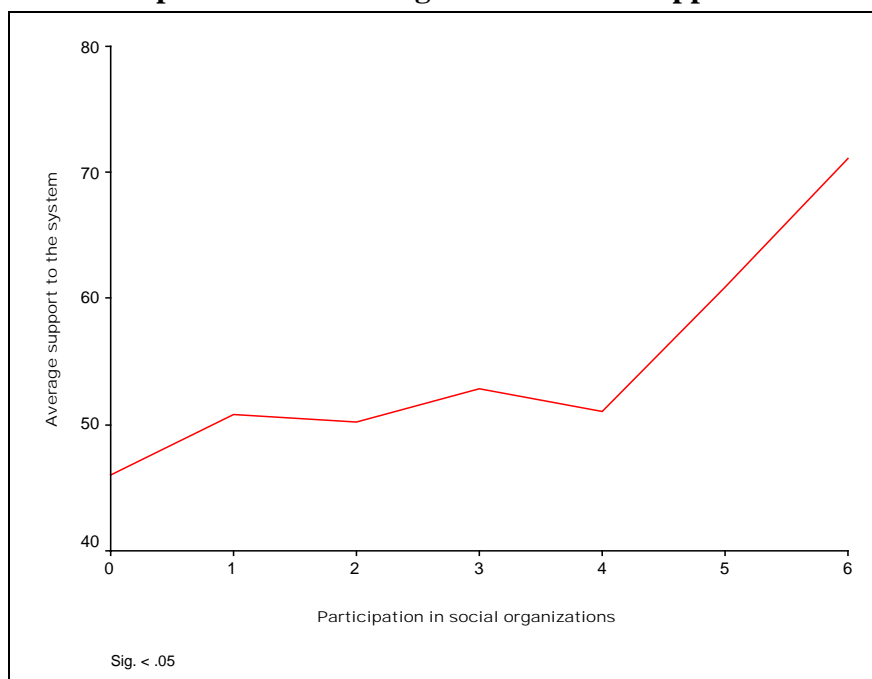


8.4.4 Social Participation and Support to the Political System

At the beginning of this chapter, we introduced a series of studies that underline the important role that participation in civic organizations plays in promoting trust, cooperation and the active involvement of citizens in the operation of democratic political systems, and reaffirming their legitimacy. The results of this survey confirm the hypothesis that more participation in civic organizations has a significant relationship to support for a political system (Graphic VIII.19).⁸³

⁸³ To demonstrate this relationship, we take each of the variables mentioned above, and recode them as: (1) participation at least one time per month; (0) the rest. Later, we add these recoded variables. As a result, the scale has a range from 0-6. Thus, a value of 5, for example, indicates that an individual participates in five of the six organizations included in the survey, at least one time per month.

Graphic VIII.19 Participation in Social Organizations and Support to the Political System



8.5 Conclusions

We find a citizenry in Nicaragua with low levels of interpersonal trust, and civic participation limited to community or trade organizations, especially those of a religious nature. Those interviewed, however, recognize that an atmosphere of freedom that would allow such participation actually does exist.

We are concerned that Nicaraguans barely take advantage of the rights in effect and existing opportunities for civic participation, except in the case of voting in sporadic elections.

The results of this study show a low level of social capital, which limits active and ongoing civic participation both locally and nationally. This affects the legitimacy of the political system, and development of the participatory component of Nicaragua's democratic system established in the Constitution, which is characterized by the predominance of a representative dimension within the constraints of the current political parties' performance in Nicaragua.

9.0 Democratic Values

9.1 Introduction

One key aspect of political culture is the values, or the attractive and appreciable qualities, that we assign to the different elements of a political system, as opposed to “anti-values” that refer to its undesirable qualities. The values sustained and respected by citizens constitute the fundamental basis for their attitudes and political behavior, as argued by J. Valles. “Values have been presented as something that generate coherence in a subject’s system of attitudes, and consequently as the ultimate factors that explain his or her behavior.”⁸⁴

It is evident that for a democratic system to function effectively, its citizens must share political values that favor participation, tolerance, equality before the law, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, honesty and responsibility in the exercise of public office, and respect for citizen rights and for public institutions. On the other hand, certain anti-values are an obstacle to democracy, such as a preference for authoritarianism, intolerance, discrimination, violence and corruption.

In the case of Central America, Torres Rivas asserts that “to consolidate democratic life, a democratic culture must emerge, with both the decadence that allows for the authoritarian traditions of the past, and inertia, and the dynamism that, as an incentive, must transmit the moral force of values—respect for human rights, tolerance, dialogue—that recent historical experience values in its results.”⁸⁵

In the case of Nicaragua, with its history of violence, exclusion and authoritarianism, we must analyze to what extent these “anti-values” that affect the democratic process are still being reproduced. If they are not, we will find that progress is being made in generating a democratic culture. In this chapter, we present citizen views on democracy and authoritarianism, political changes that are either legal or could take place via an eventual coup d’état, and finally an evaluation of the democratic process in Nicaragua.

9.2 Preference for Democracy or Authoritarianism

This study posed a series of questions to determine predominant values in the political sphere. These were:

With which of the three following phrases are you most in agreement:

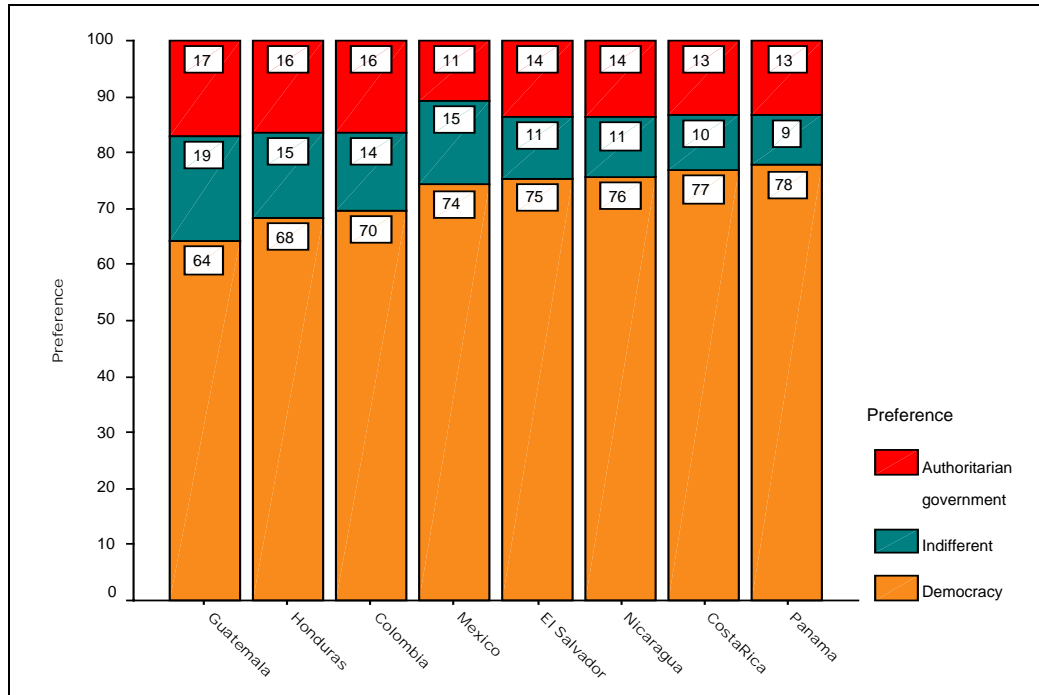
- (1) It doesn’t make any difference to live under a democratic or undemocratic regime.*
- (2) Democracy is preferable to any other form of government.*
- (3) An authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one under some circumstances.*

⁸⁴ Valles Joseph M., *Ciencia Política*, Madrid, Ariel, 2002, 2nd edition, p. 263.

⁸⁵ Torres Rivas E., “Los desafíos del desarrollo democrático en Centroamérica,” *Anuario de Estudios Centroamericanos* Vol.22, No. 1, Univ. Costa Rica, 1996. p. 28.

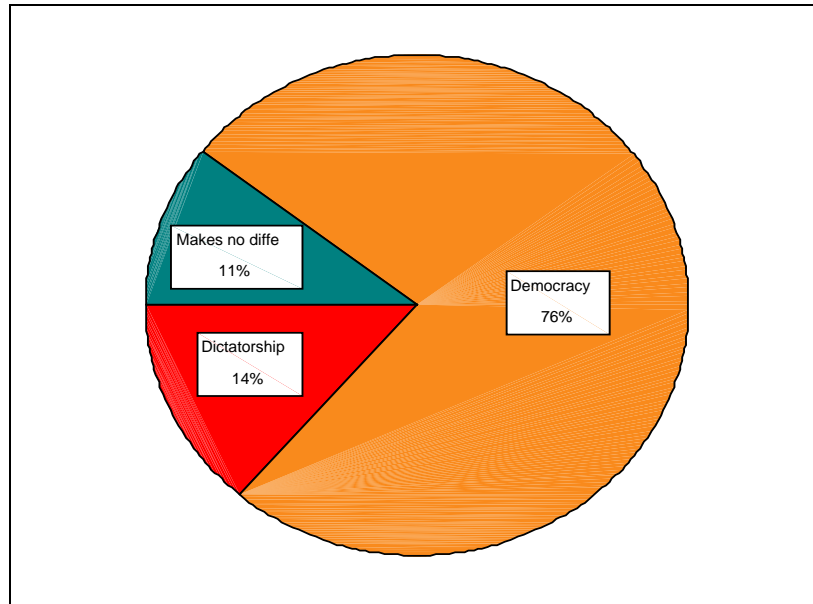
Compared with other countries in the region, we find that Nicaraguan citizens hold strong views that democracy is the preferable form of government, similar to nations such as El Salvador, Costa Rica and Panama (Graphic IX.1).

Graphic IX.1 Preference for Democracy: Nicaragua Compared to the Region



The results of this study indicate that citizens in Nicaragua strongly value democracy, with 76% expressing that “democracy is preferable to any other form of government.” Only a small group approved of an authoritarian government under certain circumstances, which demonstrates how much Nicaraguans—who have lived under authoritarian regimes in the past—have learned from history (Graphic IX.2).

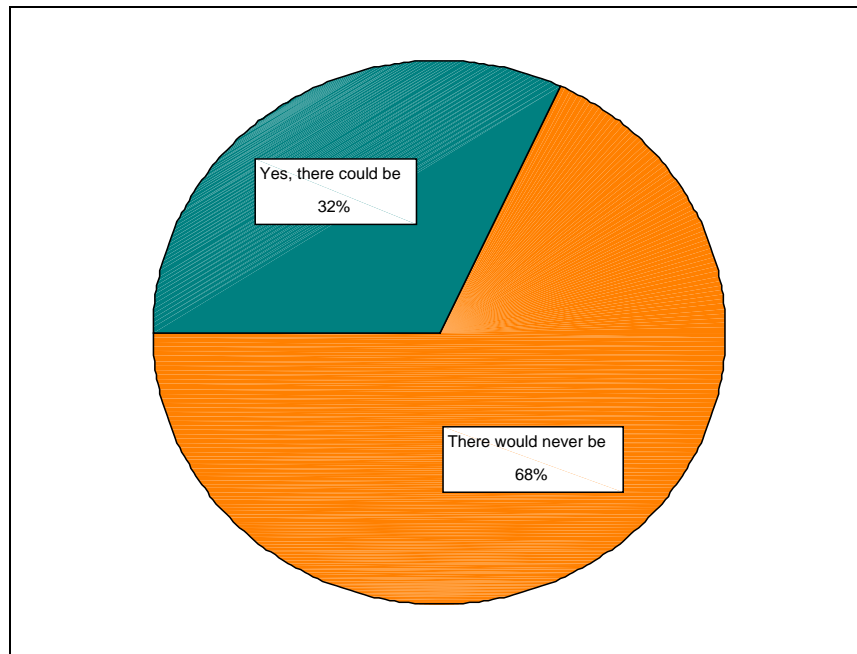
Graphic IX.2 Preference for Democracy or an Authoritarian Government



9.3 Views on an Eventual Coup D'État

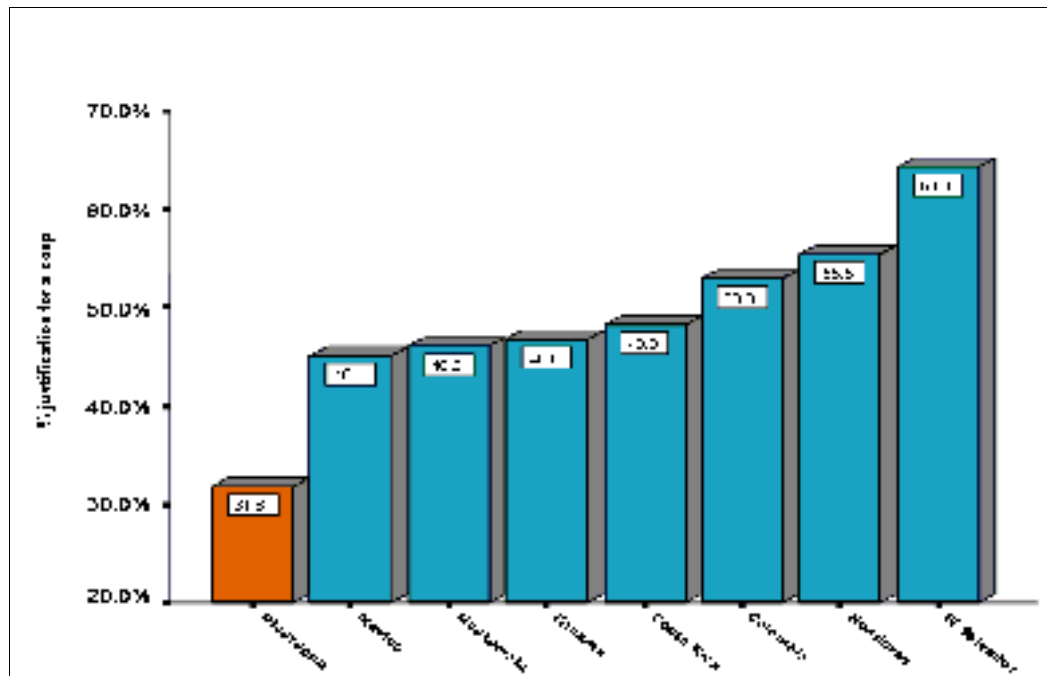
A third of the sample (32%) responded positively to the question, “Do you think there could ever be sufficient reason for a coup d’état?” (Item JC13A), which indicates acceptance by a significant segment of the citizenry of breaking with the rule of law under certain circumstances. Meanwhile, most citizens (68%) reject the option of a coup under any circumstance, indicating a clear option for democracy. This is reaffirmed with two other indicators that we will examine later.

Graphic IX.3 Could There Ever Be a Reason for a Coup D'État?



It is interesting that Nicaragua has the lowest acceptance level of an eventual coup d'état, compared to other countries in the region taking part in this study (Graphic IX.4).

Graphic IX.4 Rationale for a Coup D'État: Nicaragua Compared to the Region

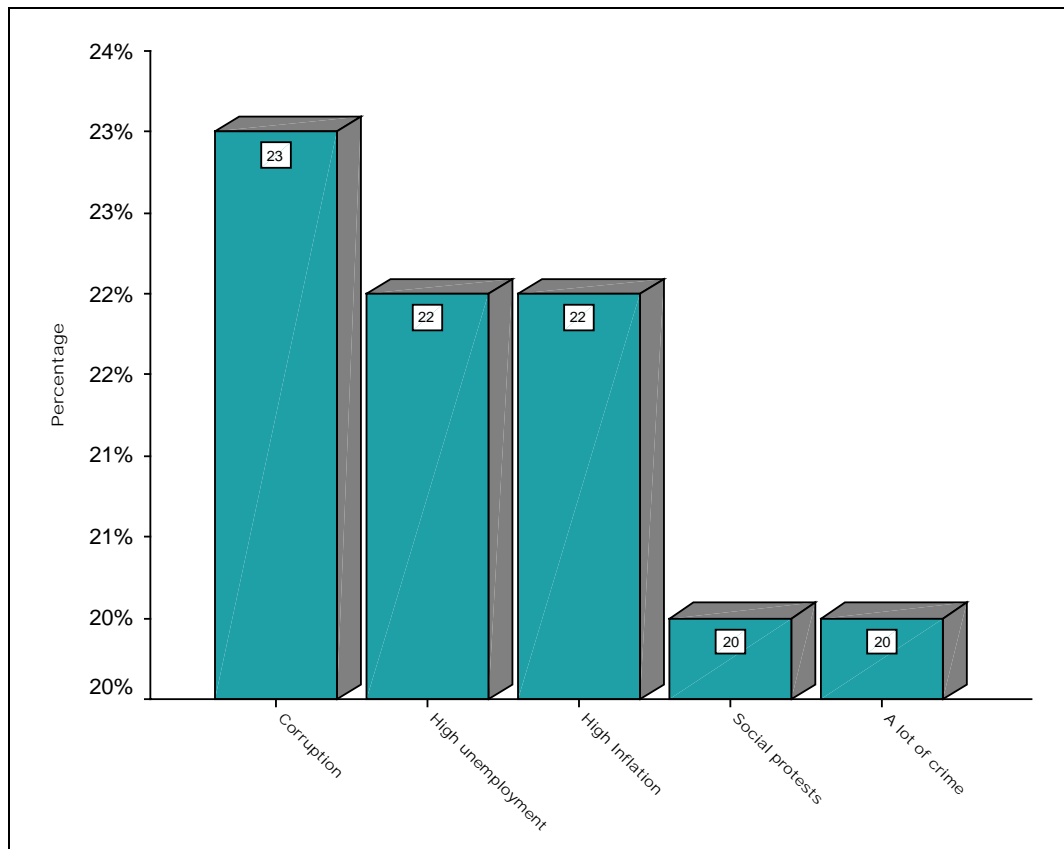


9.3.1 Rationale for an Eventual Coup D'État

The social sector that would accept the possibility of a coup d'état in Nicaragua (32%) believes that certain serious situations can justify such an act, such as economic problems (unemployment, inflation) or problems related to security and good governance (corruption, protests, delinquency), as detailed in the following graphic. We should point out that we found no significant differences in responses based on the educational levels of those who believed that certain circumstances would justify a violent break with the political order (Graphic IX.5).

Finding this attitude among one third of Nicaraguans is worrisome when we consider the fact that these problematic situations exist today in this country. The government's legitimacy among this segment of the population is clearly reduced, justifying a break with the democratic process despite their agreement with the analysis in the last chapter about indicators of tolerance and support for the political system.

Graphic IX.5 Situations That Justify a Coup D'État



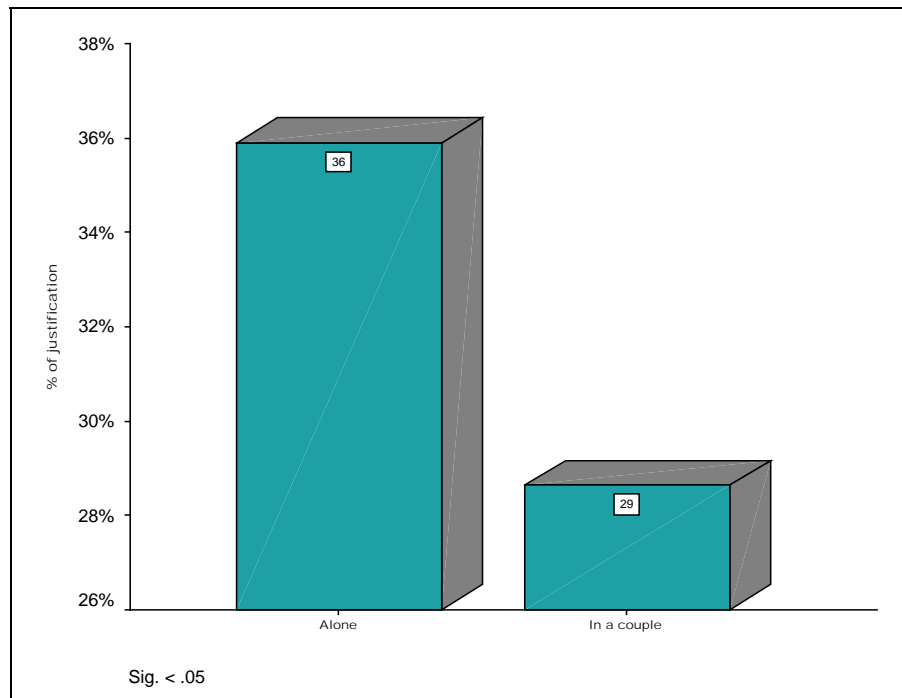
9.3.2 Predictors of Justification of a Coup D'État

To determine the factors that influence a citizen's acceptance of a coup d'état, we applied a logistical regression model to the previously mentioned JC13A variable (*Do you think there has could ever be sufficient reason for a coup d'état?*)⁸⁶. In the model, we include socio-demographic variables, a measurement of the surveyed person's ideology, the person's assessment of the nation's economy today and twelve months from now, perceptions about the probability of being a victim of crime or delinquency, and the person's experience as a victim of corruption (Appendix D, Table IX.1). A regression analysis revealed that the variables that were significant in the justification of a coup d'état were marital status and perceptions of insecurity.

People who live in a union, whether married or not, are less likely to justify a coup d'état (Graphic IX.6).

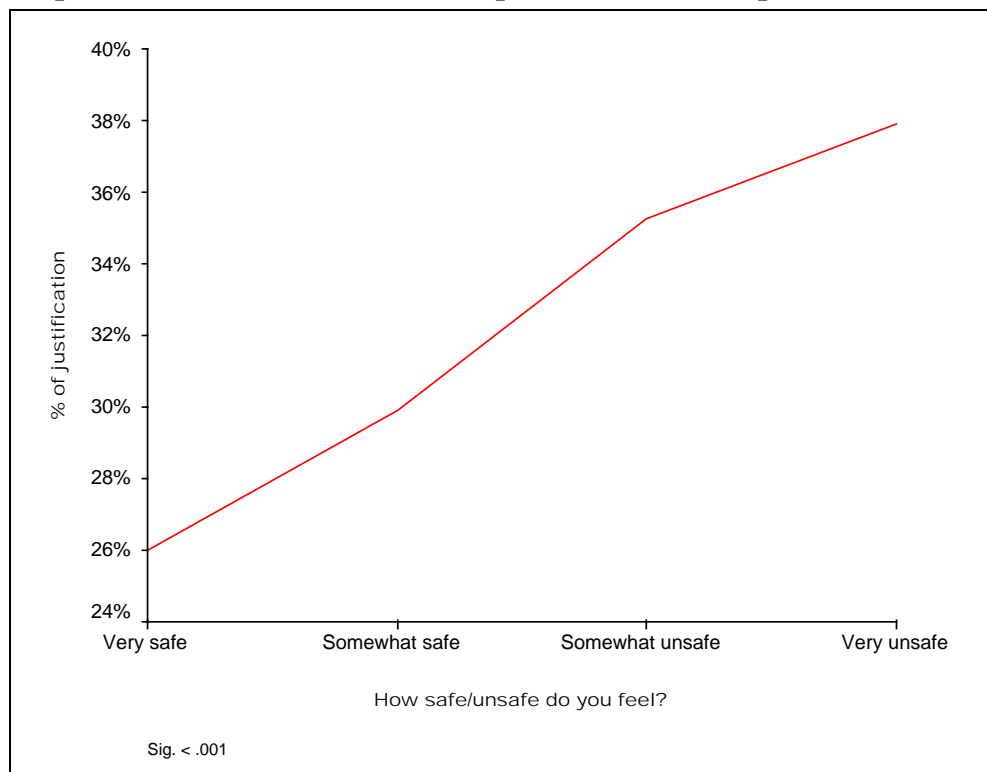
⁸⁶ It is not possible to construct a reliable scale with the different rationales mentioned for a coup d'état; the Cronbach Alpha is only .6.

Graphic IX.6 Justification for a Coup D'État, by Marital Status



Meanwhile, people who feel at greater risk of being victims of crime are more likely to justify a break in democratic institutionalism through a coup d'état (Graphic IX.7).

Graphic IX.7 Justification for a Coup D'État and Perception of Insecurity



9.4 Gradual or Revolutionary Changes

Interestingly, most of those in the sample favor improving society through gradual and peaceful reforms, as we determined from the following question (item ACR1):

“Which of the following three phrases best describes your opinion?”

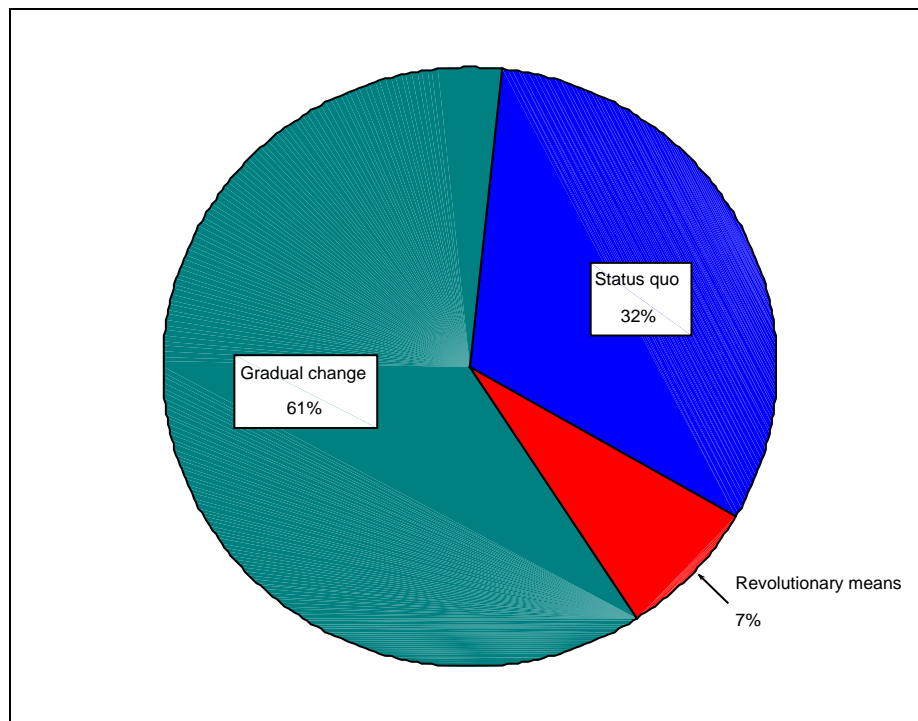
1= The form in which our society is organized should be completely and radically changed through revolutionary means, or...

2= Our society should be gradually improved or perfected through reforms, or...

3= Our society should be valiently defended against revolutionary movements.

Most citizens prefer gradual changes to revolutionary ones, or to fiercely maintaining the status quo, as we see in Graphic IX.8.

Graphic IX.8 Preference for Gradual or Revolutionary Changes

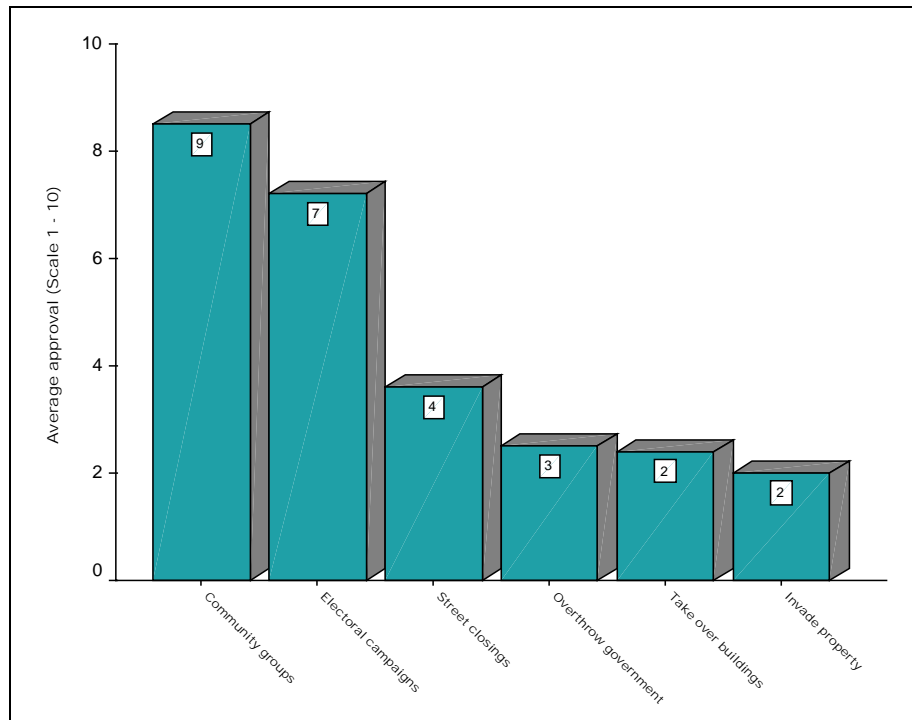


9.4.1 Approval of Peaceful Political Actions

Citizen rejection of violent actions is evident in this survey. When asked about their degree of approval (on a scale of 1-100) of a series of political actions, the citizenry clearly rejects actions such as property invasions, buildings takeovers, blocking streets or activities to overthrow the government by force. On the other hand, the citizenry firmly approves civic actions such as participating in community groups or in electoral processes (Graphic IX.9). The tragic experience of war that affected the country in the 70s and 80s undoubtedly influences this

position. One third of those surveyed indicated that they lost a family member and many had to leave their homes and even the country during the war years.

Graphic IX.9 Levels of Approval of Political Actions

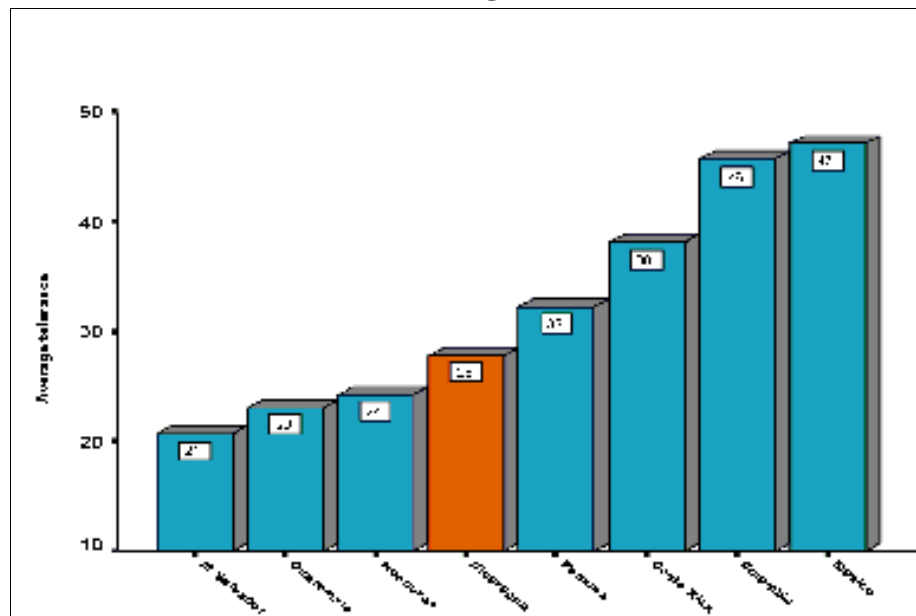


9.4.2 Political Tolerance

We have addressed this theme in Chapter III, to understand the citizenry's support for a stable democracy. The results of this survey indicate a high level of political tolerance for the peaceful demonstrations and votes of other citizens, while there is less tolerance for the right to free expression and running for public office.

In the latter case, we find strong citizen rejection among those surveyed (64%) of the possibility that homosexuals might exercise their right to participate as candidates in elections for public office. In fact, the index of tolerance of such rights is comparatively low in relation to the region (Graphic IX.10), which reflects prejudices in Nicaragua toward this social group, and an attitude of political intolerance that limits democratic processes in the country in general.

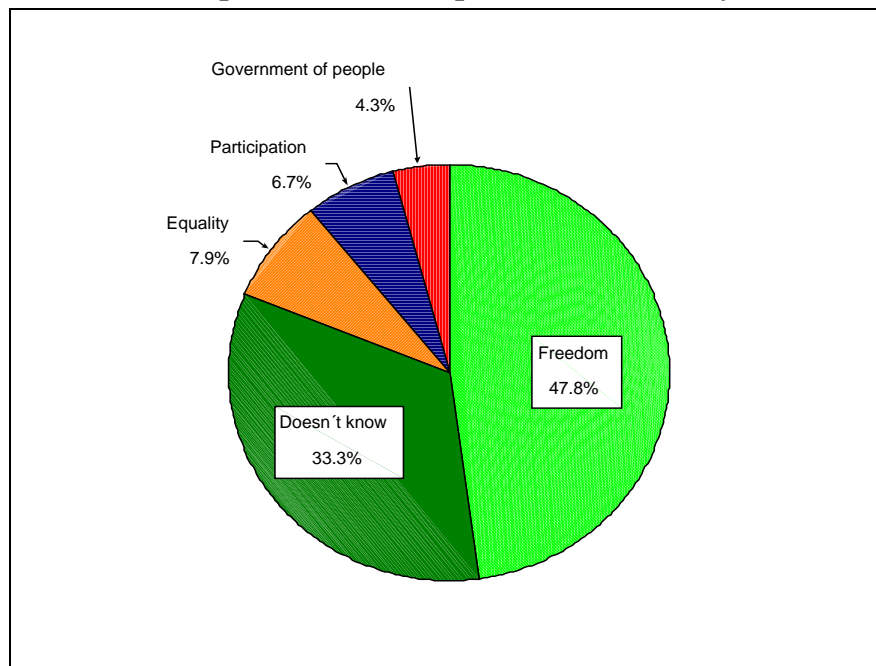
Graphic IX.10 Tolerance for the Political Rights of Homosexuals: Nicaragua Compared to the Region



9.5 Conceptions of Democracy

Democracy is essentially defined by those surveyed in terms of freedom, equality, well-being, economic progress, and participation. However, one third of those surveyed did not have a clear or well-defined conception of democracy, as illustrated in Graphic IX.11.

Graphic IX.11 Conceptions of Democracy



9.5.1 Conceptions of Democracy and Political Parties

When comparing conceptions of democracy with the party identification of those surveyed (in the national elections of 2001), we find that the two main parties (which accounted for 90% of the vote) largely share the following ideological conceptions: both identify democracy with civil liberties, and in second place with equality (+3 points FSLN) and economic well-being (+3 points PLC). Nonetheless, the theme of civic participation holds more importance among FSLN sympathizers than among those of the PLC (Table IX.2).

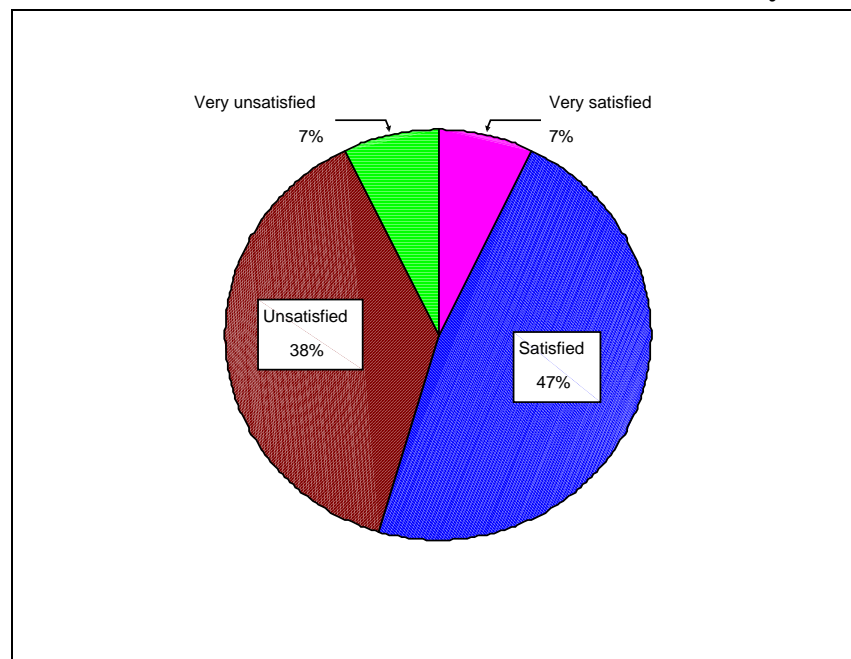
Table IX.2 Conceptions of Democracy, According to Party Identification

<i>What does Democracy mean to you?</i>	<i>Which party did you vote for in the previous presidential election?</i>			Total
	PLC	FSLN	Other	
-Freedom	56.3%	54.9%	57.7%	55.9%
-Equality	7.3%	9.4%	11.5%	8.2%
-Economic well being	9.0%	6.0%	7.7%	7.9%
-Participation	5.9%	10.7%	11.5%	7.8%
-Other	21.5%	18.9%	11.5%	20.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

9.6 Satisfaction with Democracy in Nicaragua

In our study, we find a clear division with respect to citizen satisfaction with “the way democracy works in Nicaragua.” Just over half (54%) of the populations feels “satisfied” or “very satisfied,” while just under half is “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with the democratic performance of governments, as detailed in Graphic IX.12.

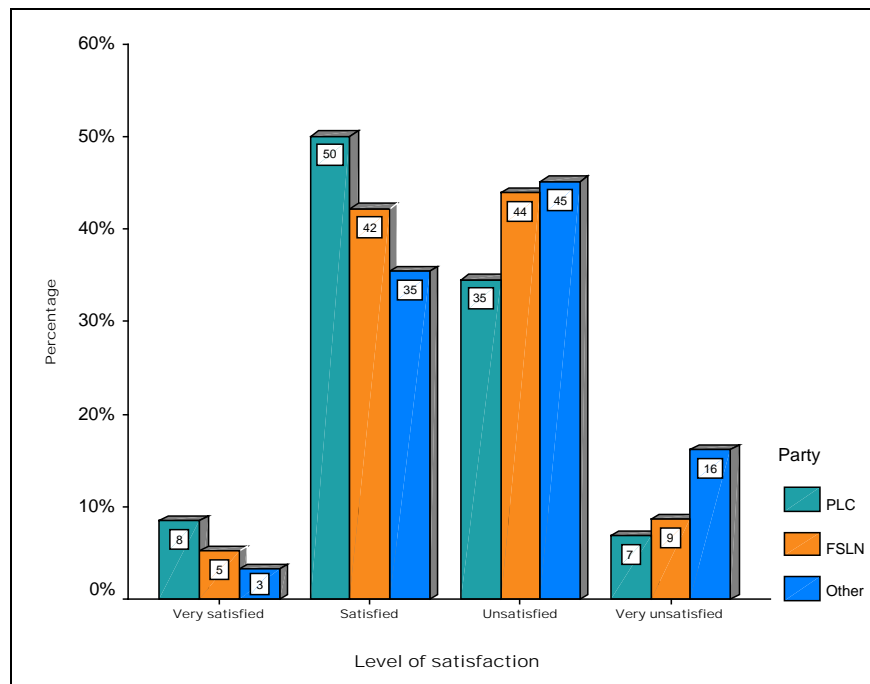
Graphic IX.12 Satisfaction With the Performance of Democracy in Nicaragua



9.6.1 Satisfaction with Nicaraguan Democracy and Political Parties

It is logical to think that sympathizers of the political party in power would feel more satisfied with the functioning of democracy in Nicaragua than those who sympathize with other parties, as illustrated in Graphic IX.13.

Graphic IX.13 Satisfaction with Democracy and Voting by Political Party

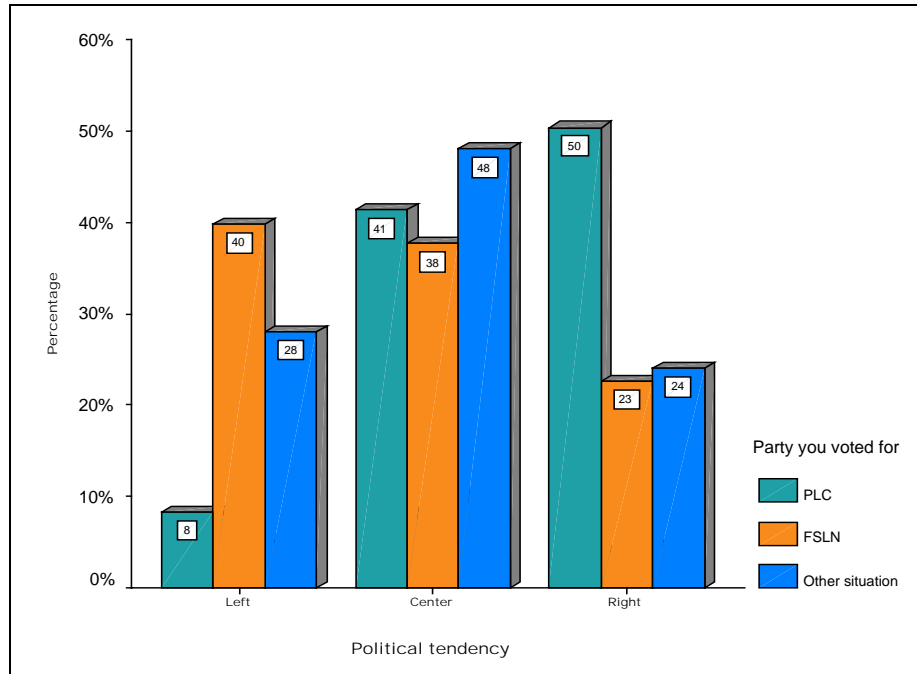


9.6.2 Ideology and Voting

We also found a correlation between citizens' ideological self-definition as either "left" or "right,"⁸⁷ and the party they voted for in the last national elections. Those who voted for the Liberal Party are mostly situated to the "right" and "center," while voters for the FSLN are situated to the "left" and "center" of the political-ideological spectrum. In Graphic IX.14, one group of those interviewed is identified as "other situation" because they did not vote in 2001.

⁸⁷ We asked those surveyed to situate themselves on a scale of 1 (=left) to 10 (=right) (Question L1). Obviously these terms have lost their validity and are not used by a significant group that did not respond to the question (28%).

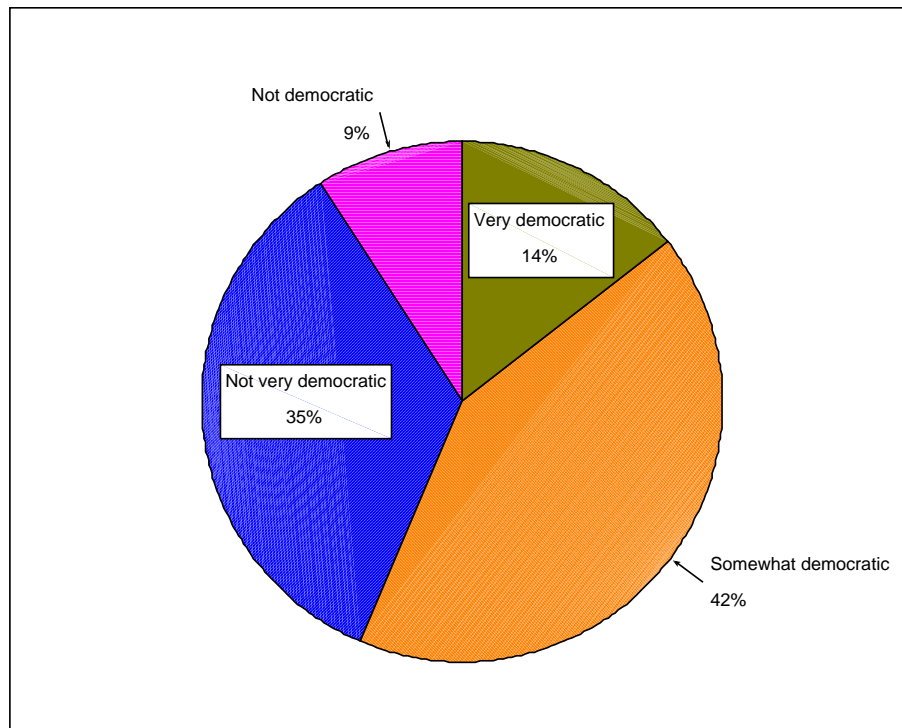
Graphic IX.14 Party Option and Ideological Orientation



9.6.3 Assessment of Democracy in Nicaragua

In evaluating the degree to which the Nicaraguan political system has “democratized,” most citizens (77%) believe there is a partial democracy (“somewhat” and “little”), which reflects the slow progress toward building a truly democratic political system over the last decades. The “anti-values” that persist in the nation’s political culture still need to be overcome, and the state of law needs to be further strengthened (Graphic IX.15).

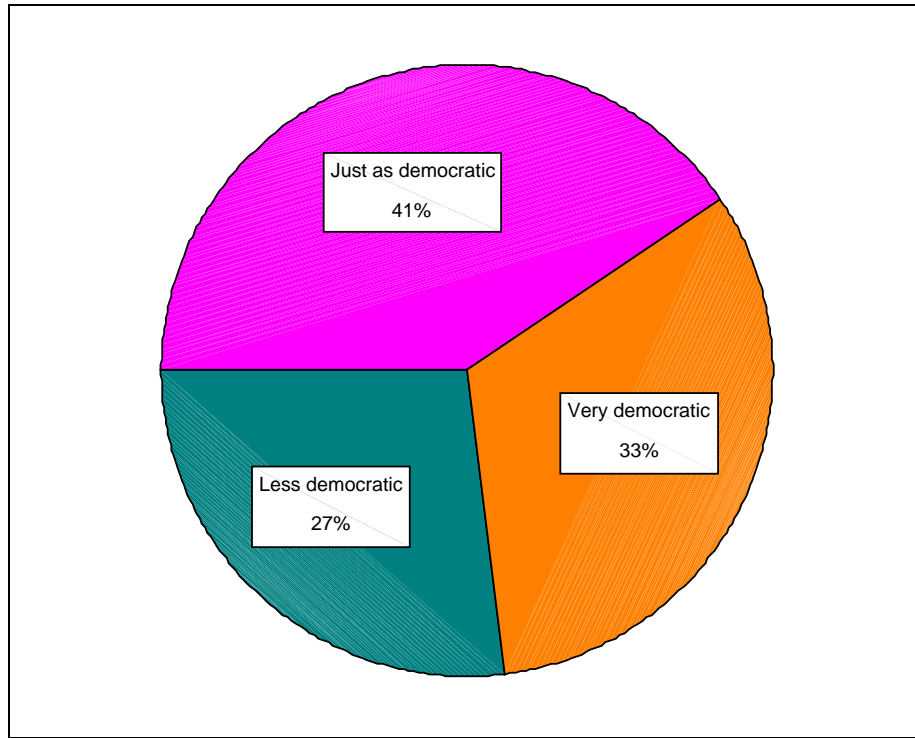
Graphic IX.15 Assessment of Democracy in Nicaragua



9.6.4 Assessment of Democratic Trends

The political trends of recent years are perceived in different manners. One third of those interviewed (33%) perceive progress toward greater democracy, while a similar number (27%) believes just the opposite, as illustrated in Graphic IX.16.

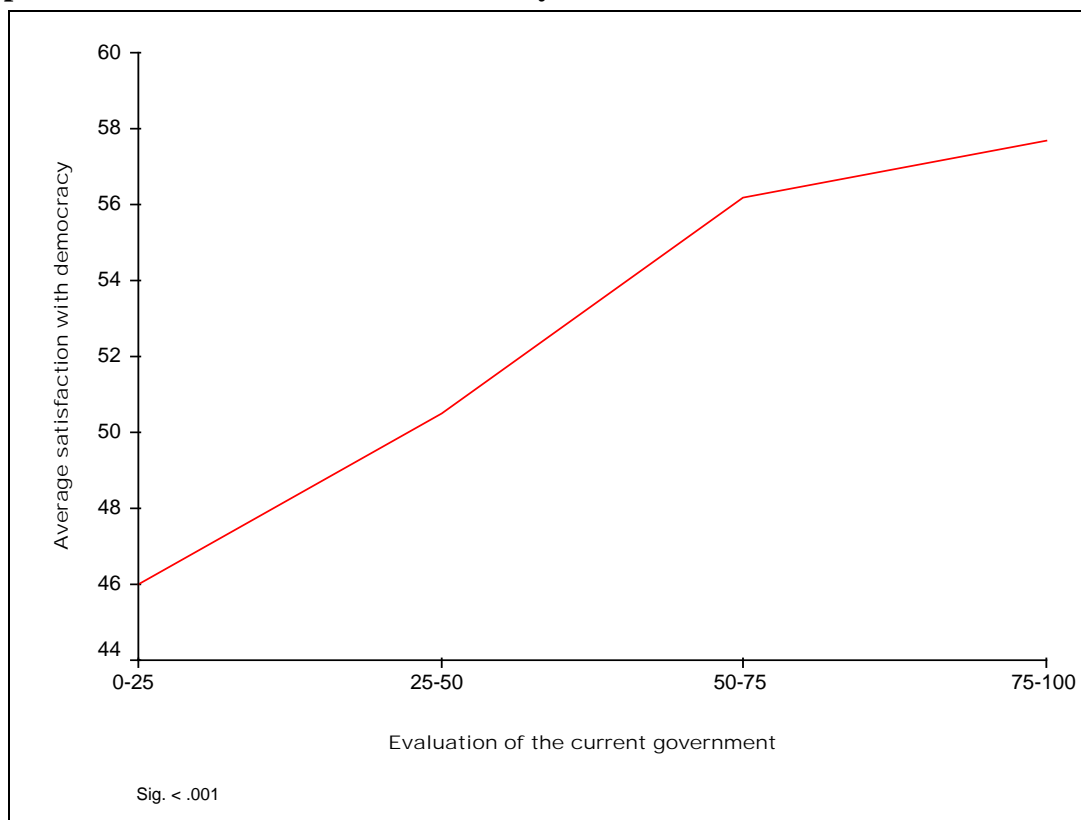
Graphic IX.16 Assessment of the Democratic Process: Do You Think Nicaragua Today is ...?



9.6.5 Predictors of Satisfaction With Democracy in Nicaragua

We find that the only independent variable that has any significance in predicting the degree of citizen satisfaction with democracy—according to the multiple regression analysis—is an individual’s appraisal of the Bolaños government (Appendix D, Table IX.3). When controlled by approval of the government’s performance, no socio-democratic factor has a statistically significant impact among those interviewed on the degree of satisfaction with democracy. As we see in Graphic IX.17, those who rate the performance of the Bolaños government better are also more satisfied with democracy in this country.

Graphic IX.17 Satisfaction With Democracy and Evaluation of the Bolaños Government



9.7 Conclusions

The results presented in this chapter indicate that most Nicaraguans claim an allegiance to key democratic values such as rejecting non-elected authoritarian governments and other political actions of a violent or illegal nature. Nonetheless, a portion of the citizenry would approve an eventual coup d'état to overcome serious economic or public security problems, which coincides with a recent United Nations study about democracy in Latin America⁸⁸ and warns us about the fragility of democratic systems when the population's basic needs are not being satisfied.

In Nicaragua, a history of war and the use of force in political life during the 20th century would appear to have left the citizenry imbued with important lessons for the 21st century, since the majority now values legal and pacific means of political participation and conflict resolution. Nonetheless, there were numerous demonstrations, closures of highways and confrontations with the police during the first half of 2004 by social sectors that have apparently exhausted a legal and peaceful means of petitioning the government⁸⁹ and are still awaiting satisfactory responses.

⁸⁸ PNUD, *Democracia en América Latina: hacia una democracia de ciudadanas/os*, 2004.

⁸⁹ For example, the demands of universities for 6% of the national budget, of former coffee workers, of those affected by the pesticide Nemagon and of transport workers for lower fuel prices.

Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Appendix B: Sample Design

Appendix C: Technical Note and Regression Tables

Appendix D: IRB Approval

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Marzo de 2004 - Universidad Centroamericana – Nicaragua

CULTURA POLITICA DE LA DEMOCRACIA EN: CENTROAMÉRICA, MÉXICO Y COLOMBIA 2004

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País: 1. México 2. Guatemala 3. El Salvador 4. Honduras 5. Nicaragua 6. Costa Rica 7. Panamá 8. Colombia	PAIS	
Número de entrevista [asignado en la oficina]: _____	IDNUM	
Departamento: _____	NPROV	
Municipio: _____	NCANT	
Barrio / Comunidad: _____	NPAROQ	
Segmento _____	NSEC	
Manzana (urbana) _____	NMANZ	
Estrato: 1. Norte-Centro 2 Pacífico 3 Costa Atlántica	NESTRAT	
Subestrato: 1 Urbano 2 Rural	NUR	
Tamaño del lugar: 1. Capital nacional (área metropolitana) 2. Ciudad grande 3. Ciudad mediana 4. Ciudad pequeña 5. Área rural	TAMANO	
Idioma del cuestionario (1) Español	IDIOMAQ	

Hora de inicio: _____ : _____

Q1. ANOTE: Sexo: (1) Hombre (2) Mujer						Q1	
NA4. Para empezar, en su opinión ¿Cuál es el problema más grave que está enfrentando el país? [No Leer Alternativas, Colocar Solo Una Opción] (01) Problemas económicos (02) Inflación, altos precios (03) Desempleo (04) Pobreza (05) Delincuencia, crimen, violencia (06) Protestas populares (huelgas, cierre de carreteras, paros, etc.) (07) Falta de tierra para cultivar (08) Falta de crédito (09) Problemas del medio ambiente (10) Drogadicción (11) Narcotráfico (12) Corrupción (13) Pandillas (14) Mal gobierno (15) Migración (16) La guerra contra terrorismo (88) No sabe Anotar si no existe código: _____						NA4	
Con qué frecuencia ...	Todos los días	Una o dos veces por semana	Rara vez	Nunca	NS		
A1. Escucha noticias por la radio	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)	A1	
A2. Mira noticias en la TV.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)	A2	
A3. Lee noticias en los periódicos	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)	A3	
SOCT1. ¿Cómo calificaría la situación económica del país? ¿Diría que es muy buena, buena, ni buena ni mala, mala o muy mala? (1) Muy buena (2) Buena (3) Ni buena, ni mala (4) Mala (5) Muy mala (8) No sabe						SOCT1	

SOCT3. ¿Cree Ud. que en los próximos doce meses la situación económica del país será mejor, igual o peor que la de ahora? (1) Mejor (2) Igual (3) Peor (8) No sabe						SOCT3	
Ahora le voy a hacer algunas preguntas sobre su comunidad y los problemas que afronta... CP5. ¿En el último año usted ha contribuido o ha tratado de contribuir para la solución de algún problema de su comunidad o de los vecinos de su barrio? (1) Sí [Seguir con CP5A] (2) No [Pasar a CP6] (8) NS [Pasar a CP6]						CP5	
CP5A. ¿Ha donado Dinero o materiales para ayudar a solucionar algún problema de la comunidad o de su barrio?			(1) Sí	(2) No	(8) NS	CP5A	
CP5B. ¿Ha contribuido con su propio trabajo o mano de obra?			(1) Sí	(2) No	(8) NS	CP5B	
CP5C. ¿Ha estado asistiendo a reuniones comunitarias sobre algún problema o sobre alguna mejora?			(1) Sí	(2) No	(8) NS	CP5C	
CP5D. ¿Ha tratado de ayudar a organizar algún grupo nuevo para resolver algún problema del barrio, o para buscar alguna mejora?			(1) Sí	(2) No	(8) NS	CP5D	
Ahora le voy a leer una lista de grupos y organizaciones . Por favor, dígame si asiste a reuniones de ellos por lo menos una vez a la semana, una o dos veces al mes, una o dos veces al año, o nunca							
	Una vez a la semana	Una o dos veces al mes	Una o dos veces al año	Nunca	NS		
CP6. ¿Reuniones de alguna organización religiosa? ¿Asiste...			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8)
CP7. ¿Reuniones de una asociación de padres de familia de la escuela o colegio? ¿Asiste...			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8) CP7
CP8. ¿Reuniones de un comité o junta de mejoras para la comunidad? ¿Asiste...			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8) CP8
CP9. ¿Reuniones de una asociación de profesionales, comerciantes o productores?			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8) CP9
CP12. ¿Reuniones de alguna asociación cívica?			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8) CP12
CP13. ¿Reuniones de un partido político?			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(8) CP13
PROT1. ¿Ha participado Ud. en una manifestación o protesta pública? Lo ha hecho algunas veces, casi nunca o nunca?			(1) algunas veces	(2) casi nunca	(3) nunca	(8) NS	PROT1
Ahora, para hablar de otra cosa, a veces la gente y las comunidades tienen problemas que no pueden resolver por sí mismos y para poder resolverlos piden ayuda a algún funcionario u oficina del gobierno.							
¿Para poder resolver sus problemas alguna vez ha pedido Ud. ayuda o cooperación ... ?			Sí	No	NS/NR		
CP2. A algún diputado de la Asamblea Legislativa			(1)	(2)	(8)		CP2
CP4. A algún ministerio, institución pública u oficina del gobierno nacional			(1)	(2)	(8)		CP4
CP4A. A alguna autoridad local (Alcalde, Concejal)			(1)	(2)	(8)		CP4A
LS3. Hablando de otras cosas. En general ¿hasta qué punto se encuentra satisfecho con su vida? ¿Diría que se encuentra ..? (1) Muy satisfecho (2) Algo satisfecho (3) Algo insatisfecho (4) Muy insatisfecho (8) NS						LS3	
IT1. Ahora, hablando de la gente de aquí, ¿diría que la gente de su comunidad es ..? (1) Muy confiable (2) Algo confiable (3) Poco confiable (4) Nada confiable (8) NS						IT1	
IT2. ¿Cree que la mayoría de las veces la gente se preocupa sólo de sí misma, o cree que la mayoría de las veces la gente trata de ayudar al prójimo? (1) Se preocupa de sí misma (2) Trata de ayudar al prójimo (8) NS						IT2	
IT3. ¿Cree que la mayoría de la gente, si se les presentara la oportunidad, trataría de aprovecharse de usted, o cree que no se aprovecharía de usted? (1) Sí, se aprovecharía (2) No se aprovecharía (8) NS						IT3	

Ahora vamos a hablar de su **Alcaldía...**

NP1. ¿Ha asistido a un cabildo abierto u otra reunion convocada por el alcalde durante los últimos 12 meses? (1) Sí (2) No (8) No sabe/ no recuerda	NP1	
NP1B. ¿Hasta que punto cree Ud. que los funcionarios de la Alcaldía hagan caso a lo que pide la gente en estas reuniones? Le hacen caso (1) mucho (2) algo (3) poco (4) nada (8) NS	NP1B	
NP1C. Si Ud. tuviera una queja sobre algún problema local, y lo llevara a algún miembro del Consejo Municipal, ¿Que tanto cree Ud. que le haría caso? (1) mucho (2) algo(3) poco o (4) nada?(8) NS	NP1C	
NP2. ¿Ha solicitado ayuda o ha presentado una petición a alguna oficina, funcionario, concejal o síndico de la Alcaldía durante los últimos 12 meses? (1) Sí (2) No (8) No sabe/ no recuerda	NP2	
SGL1. ¿Diría usted que los servicios que la Alcaldía está dando a la gente son...? (1) Muy Buenos (2) Buenos (3) Ni buenos, ni malos (4) Malos (5) Muy Malos (8) No sabe	SGL1	

Ahora hablemos de otros temas. Alguna gente dice que en ciertas circunstancias se justificaría que los militares tomen el poder por un golpe de estado.

JC13A. ¿Cree Ud. que alguna vez puede haber razón suficiente para un golpe de estado o cree que nunca hay suficiente razón para eso?	(1) Si podría haber	(2) Nunca habría razón	(8)NS	JC13A	
En caso que SI, en su opinión bajo qué situaciones se justificaría que hubiera un golpe de estado por los militares. (En caso negativo o NS: pasar a VIC1)					
JC1. Frente al Desempleo muy alto	(1) Se justificaría	(2) No se justificaría	(8) NS	JC1	
JC4. Frente a muchas protestas sociales	(1) Se justificaría	(2) No se justificaría	(8) NS	JC4	
JC10. Frente a mucha delincuencia	(1) Se justificaría	(2) No se justificaría	(8) NS	JC10	
JC12. Frente a la alta inflación, con aumento excesivo de precios	(1) Se justificaría	(2) No se justificaría	(8) NS	JC12	
JC13. Frente a mucha corrupción	(1) Se justificaría	(2) No se justificaría	(8) NS	JC13	

VIC1. ¿Ha sido víctima de algún acto de delincuencia en los últimos 12 meses? (1) Sí [siga] (2) No [Pasar a ST1] (8) NS	VIC1	
VIC2. ¿Qué tipo de acto delictual sufrió? [No lea las alternativas] (1) Robo sin agresión o amenaza física (2) Robo con agresión o amenaza física (3) Agresión física sin robo (4) Violación o asalto sexual (5) Secuestro (6) Daño a la propiedad (7) Robo de la casa Otro (especifique) _____ (99) Inap (no vic.)	VIC2	
AOJ1. (En caso respondió SI a VIC1) ¿Denunció el hecho a alguna institución? (1) Sí [siga] (2) No lo denunció [Pasar a AOJ1B] (8) NS/NR (9) Inap (no víctima)	AOJ1	
AOJ1A. ¿A quién o a qué institución denunció el hecho? [marcar una sola alternativa y pase a ST1] (1) Fiscalía (2) Policía (3) Juzgados (6) Prensa Otro: _____ (8)NS (9) Inap (no víctima) (8) NS	AOJ1A	
AOJ1B. ¿Por qué no denunció el hecho? [no leer alternativas] (1) No sirve de nada (2) Es peligroso y por miedo de represalias (3) No tenía pruebas (4) No fue grave (5) No sabe adónde denunciar (6) Otra razón..... (8) NS (9) No víctima	AOJ1B	

De los trámites que Ud. ha hecho con las siguientes entidades. ¿Se siente muy satisfecho, algo satisfecho, algo insatisfecho, o muy insatisfecho? (Repetir Las Opciones De Respuesta En Cada Pregunta)

	MUY SATISFECHO	ALGO SATISFECHO	ALGO INSATISFECHO	MUY INSATISFECHO	NO HIZO TRAMITES	NS/NR		
ST1. La policía nacional	1	2	3	4	9	8	ST1	
ST2. Los juzgados o tribunales de justicia	1	2	3	4	9	8	ST2	
ST3. La fiscalía	1	2	3	4	9	8	ST3	
ST4. La Alcaldía	1	2	3	4	9	8	ST4	

AOJ8. Para poder capturar delincuentes, ¿Cree usted que: las autoridades siempre deben respetar las leyes o en ocasiones pueden actuar al margen de la ley? (1) Deben respetar las leyes siempre (2) En ocasiones pueden actuar al margen (8) NS	AOJ8	
AOJ11. Hablando del lugar o barrio donde vive, y pensando en la posibilidad de ser víctima de un asalto o robo, ¿Se siente muy seguro, algo seguro, algo inseguro o muy inseguro? (1) Muy seguro (2) algo seguro (3) Algo inseguro (4) Muy Inseguro (8) NS	AOJ11	
AOJ11A. Y hablando del país en general, ¿Qué tanto cree Ud. que el nivel de delincuencia que tenemos ahora representa una amenaza para el bienestar de nuestro futuro? (1) Mucho (2) Algo (3) Poco (4) Nada (8) NS/NR	AOJ11A	
AOJ12. Si fuera víctima de un robo o asalto, ¿Cuánto confiaría en que el sistema judicial castigaría al culpable? (1) Mucho (2) Algo (3) Poco (4) Nada (8) NS/NR	AOJ12	
AOJ16. ¿Hasta qué punto teme Ud. violencia por parte de miembros de su propia familia? ¿Diría que tiene mucho, algo, poco o nada de miedo? (1) mucho (2) Algo (3) poco (4) nada (8) NS	AOJ16	
AOJ16A. En su barrio, ¿ha visto a alguien vendiendo drogas en el último año? (1) Si [Seguir con AOJ16B] (2) No [Pasar a AOJ 17] 8 (NS)	AOJ16A	
AOJ16B. ¿Esto pasa con mucha frecuencia, de vez en cuando o casi nunca? (1) Con mucha frecuencia (2) De vez en cuando (3) Casi nunca? (8) NS	AOJ16B	
AOJ17. ¿Hasta qué punto diría que su barrio esta afectado por las pandillas? ¿Diría mucho, algo, poco o nada? (1) Mucho (2) Algo (3) Poco (4) Nada (8) NS	AOJ17	
WC1. ¿Ud. ha perdido algún miembro de su familia o pariente cercano, a consecuencia del conflicto armado que sufrió el país? (incluir desaparecidos) 1. Sí 2. No 8.NS	WC1	
WC2. ¿Y algún miembro de su familia tuvo que refugiarse o abandonar su lugar de vivienda por razones del conflicto que sufrió el país? 1. Sí 2. No 8.NS	WC2	
WC3. ¿Por razones de conflicto algún miembro de su familia tuvo que irse del país? 1. Sí 2. No 8.NS	WC3	

[Déle la tarjeta "A" al entrevistado] Ahora vamos a usar una tarjeta... Esta tarjeta contiene una escala de 7 puntos; cada uno indica un puntaje que va de 1- que significa NADA hasta 7- que significa MUCHO. Por ejemplo, si yo le preguntara hasta qué punto confía en las noticias que da a conocer la televisión, si usted no confía nada escogería el puntaje 1, y si, por el contrario, confía mucho, escogería el puntaje 7. Si su opinión está entre nada y mucho elija un puntaje intermedio. ¿Entonces, hasta qué punto confía en las noticias que da a conocer la televisión? Léame el número. **[Asegúrese que el entrevistado entienda correctamente].**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nada				Mucho			(8) No sabe

Ahora, usando la tarjeta "A", por favor conteste estas preguntas.

	Anotar 1-7 8 = NS		
B1. ¿Hasta qué punto cree que los tribunales de justicia de Nicaragua garantizan un juicio justo? <i>Si cree que los tribunales no garantizan en <u>nada</u> la justicia, escoja el número 1; si cree que los tribunales garantizan <u>mucho</u> la justicia escoja el número 7 o escoja un puntaje intermedio.</i>		B1	
B2. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene respeto por las instituciones políticas de Nicaragua?		B2	
B3. ¿Hasta qué punto cree que los derechos básicos del ciudadano están bien protegidos por el sistema político nicaragüense?		B3	

	Anotar 1-7 8 = NS		
B4. ¿Hasta qué punto se siente orgulloso de vivir bajo el sistema político nicaragüense?		B4	
B6. ¿Hasta qué punto piensa que se debe apoyar el sistema político nicaragüense?		B6	
B10A. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en el sistema de justicia?		B10A	
B11. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en el Consejo Supremo Electoral?		B11	
B12. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en las Fuerzas Armadas?		B12	
B13. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en Asamblea Nacional?		B13	
B14. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en el Gobierno Nacional?		B14	
B15. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en la Fiscalía General de la Nación?		B15	
B16. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en la Procuraduría General ?		B16	
B18. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en la Policía?		B18	
B19. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en la Contraloría?		B19	
B20. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en la Iglesia Católica?		B20	
B21. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en los partidos políticos?		B21	
B31. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en la Corte Suprema de Justicia?		B31	
B32. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en su Alcaldía?		B32	
B37. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en los medios de comunicación?		B37	
B43. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted orgullo de ser nicaragüense?		B43	
B44. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en los defensores públicos?		B44	
B45. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en la Procuraduría de Derechos Humanos?		B45	
B47. ¿Hasta que punto tiene usted confianza en las elecciones?		B47	
B48. ¿Hasta que punto cree usted que los tratados de libre comercio ayudarán a mejorar la economía?		B48	

[No Recoja La Tarjeta "A"]

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Nada				Mucho			(8) No sabe

Ahora, en esta misma escala, hasta que punto diría que el Gobierno actual, o sea el gobierno del Presidente Bolaños.....(seguir con tarjeta A: escala de 1 a 7 puntos) N1. Combate la pobreza. NADA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 MUCHO	Anotar 1-7 8 = NS	N1	
N3. Promueve y protege los principios democráticos.		N3	
N9. Combate la corrupción en el Gobierno.		N9	

[Recoja tarjeta "A"] y [Entregue la tarjeta "B"]

Ahora, vamos a usar una tarjeta similar, pero el punto 1 representa “muy en desacuerdo” y el punto 7 representa “muy de acuerdo.” Yo le voy a leer varias afirmaciones y quisiera que me diga hasta que punto esta de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esas afirmaciones.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Muy en desacuerdo			Muy de acuerdo			(8) No sabe	

ING4. Puede que la democracia tenga problemas pero es mejor que cualquier forma de Gobierno. ¿Hasta qué punto esta de acuerdo o en desacuerdo?		ING4	
PN2. A pesar de nuestras diferencias, los nicaraguenses tenemos muchas cosas y valores que nos unen como país. ¿Hasta que punto esta de acuerdo o en desacuerdo?		PN2	

[RECOJA la TARJETA B] [Entregue al entrevistado tarjeta "C"] Ahora le voy a entregar otra tarjeta. Esta nueva tarjeta tiene una escala de 10 puntos, que van de 1 a 10, con el 1 indicando que **desaprueba firmemente** y el 10 indicando que **aprueba firmemente**. Voy a leerle una lista de algunas acciones o cosas que las personas pueden hacer para llevar a cabo sus metas y objetivos políticos. Quisiera que me dijera con qué firmeza aprobaría o desaprobaría que las personas hagan las siguientes acciones.

(01)	(02)	(03)	(04)	(05)	(06)	(07)	(08)	(09)	(10)	(88)
Desaprueba firmemente					Aprueba firmemente					No sabe

	Anotar 1-10, 88 NS		
E5. Que las personas participen en manifestaciones permitidas por la ley.		E5	
E8. Que las personas participen en un grupo para tratar de resolver los problemas de las comunidades.		E8	
E11. Que las personas trabajen en campañas electorales para un partido político o candidato.		E11	
E15. Que las personas participen en un cierre o bloqueo de calles o carreteras.		E15	
E14. Que las personas invadan propiedades o terrenos privados.		E14	
E2. Que las personas ocupen fábricas, oficinas y otros edificios.		E2	
E3. Que las personas participen en un grupo que quiera derrocar por medios violentos a un gobierno elegido.		E3	
E16. Que las personas hagan justicia por su propia mano cuando el Estado no castiga a los criminales		E16	

[No recoja tarjeta "C"]

Ahora vamos a hablar de algunas **acciones que el Estado puede tomar**. Seguimos usando una escala de uno a diez. Favor de ver la tarjeta C. En esta escala, 1 significa que desaprueba firmemente, y 10 significa que aprueba firmemente.

(01)	(02)	(03)	(04)	(05)	(06)	(07)	(08)	(09)	(10)	(88)
Desaprueba firmemente					Aprueba firmemente					No sabe

	Anotar 1-10 88= NS		
D37. ¿Hasta que punto aprueba o desaprueba que el gobierno censure a los medios de comunicación que lo critican?		D37	
D38. ¿Qué opina Ud. de los tratados de libre comercio entre Centroamérica y EEUU? ¿Hasta que punto aprueba o desaprueba esos tratados?		D38	

Las preguntas que siguen son para saber su opinión sobre las diferentes ideas que tienen las personas que viven en Nicaragua. Use siempre la escala de 10 puntos **[sigue tarjeta C]**.

(01)	(02)	(03)	(04)	(05)	(06)	(07)	(08)	(09)	(10)	(88)
Desaprueba firmemente					Aprueba firmemente					No sabe

	Anota 1-10, NS= 88		
D1. Hay personas que siempre hablan mal de la forma de gobierno de Nicaragua, no solo del gobierno de turno, sino la forma de gobierno, ¿con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba el derecho de votar de esas personas? Por favor léame el número de la escala: [Sondee: ¿Hasta que punto?]		D1	
D2. ¿Con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba el que estas personas puedan llevar a cabo manifestaciones pacíficas con el propósito de expresar sus puntos de vista? Por favor léame el número.		D2	
D3. ¿Con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba que estas personas puedan postularse para cargos públicos?		D3	
D4. ¿Con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba que estas personas salgan en la televisión para dar un discurso?		D4	
D5. Y ahora, cambiando el tema, y pensando en los homosexuales, ¿Con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba que estas personas puedan postularse para cargos públicos?		D5	

[Recoja tarjeta "C"]

Usted cree que ahora en el país tenemos: (Lea las 3 opciones en cada pregunta)		
LIB1. Libertad de prensa (1) Muy poca (2) Suficiente (3) Demasiada (8) NS	LIB1	
LIB2. Libertad de opinión (1) Muy poca (2) Suficiente (3) Demasiada (8) NS	LIB2	
LIB3. Participación política (1) Muy poca (2) Suficiente (3) Demasiada (8) NS	LIB3	
LIB4. Protección a derechos humanos (1) Muy poco (2) Suficiente (3) Demasiado (8) NS	LIB4	

ACR1. Ahora le voy a leer tres frases. Por favor dígame cual de las tres describe mejor su opinión: (1) La forma en que nuestra sociedad está organizada debe ser completa y radicalmente cambiada por medios revolucionarios, o... (2) Nuestra sociedad debe ser gradualmente mejorada o perfeccionada por reformas, o.... (3) Nuestra sociedad debe ser valientemente defendida de los movimientos revolucionarios. (8) NS	ACR1	
PN4. En general, ¿diría que está satisfecho, muy satisfecho, insatisfecho o muy insatisfecho con la forma en que la democracia funciona en Nicaragua? (1) muy satisfecho (2) satisfecho (3) insatisfecho (4) muy insatisfecho (8) NS/NR	PN4	
PN5. En su opinión Nicaragua es ¿muy democrático, algo democrático, poco democrático, o nada democrático? (1) muy democrático (2) algo democrático (3) poco democrático (4) nada democrático (8) NS	PN5	
PN6. Basado en su experiencia en los últimos años, Nicaragua se ha vuelto mas democrático, igual de democrático o menos democrático? (1) muy democrático (2) igual de democrático (3) menos democrático (8) NS/NR	PN6	
DEM13. En pocas palabras, ¿que significa para Ud. la democracia? [No leer alternativas, Anotar solo una respuesta] (1) Libertad (2) Igualdad (3) Bienestar, progreso económico (4) Capitalismo (5) Gobierno no militar (6) Libre comercio, libre negocio (7) Elecciones, voto (10) Derecho de escoger los líderes (11) Corrupción (12) Participación (13) Gobierno de la gente (14) Obedecer la ley Otro (anotar) _____ (88) NS/NR	DEM13	
DEM2. Con cuál de las siguientes tres frases está usted más de acuerdo: (1) A la gente como uno, le da lo mismo un régimen democrático que un régimen no democrático. (2) La democracia es preferible a cualquier otra forma de gobierno. (3) En algunas circunstancias un gobierno autoritario puede ser preferible a uno democrático. (8) NS/NR	DEM2	

AUT1. Hay gente que dice que necesitamos un líder fuerte que no tenga que ser elegido a través del voto. Otros dicen que aunque las cosas no funcionen bien, la democracia electoral, o sea el voto popular, es siempre lo mejor. ¿Qué piensa? (1) Necesitamos un líder fuerte que no tenga que ser elegido (2) La democracia electoral es lo mejor (8) NS/NR	AUT1	
---	-------------	--

PP1. Ahora para cambiar el tema...Durante las elecciones, alguna gente trata de convencer a otras personas para que vote por algún partido o candidato. ¿Con qué frecuencia ha tratado usted de convencer a otros para que vote por un partido o candidato? <i>[lea las alternativas]</i> (1) Frecuentemente (2) De vez en cuando (3) Rara vez (4) Nunca (8) NS/NR	PP1	
PP2. Hay personas que trabajan por algún partido o candidato durante las campañas electorales. ¿Trabajó Ud. para algún candidato o partido en las pasadas elecciones presidenciales de 2001? (1) Sí trabajó (2) No trabajó (8) NS/NR	PP2	
ABS5. ¿Cree que el voto puede mejorar las cosas en el futuro o cree que como quiera que vote, las cosas no van a mejorar? ABS5 (1) El voto puede cambiar las cosas (2) Las cosas no van a mejorar (8) NS/NR	ABS5	
M1. Hablando en general del actual gobierno, diría que el trabajo que está realizando el Presidente Bolaños es: (1) Muy bueno (2) Bueno (3) Ni bueno, ni malo (4) Malo (5) Muy malo (8) NS/NR (8) NS	M1	
NM2 ¿Cree Usted que los funcionarios públicos deben gozar de inmunidad? (1) Si (2) No (8) NS/NR	NM2	

Me gustaría que me indique como Ud. considera las siguientes actuaciones : <i>(Lea las 3 opciones en cada pregunta)</i>						
DC1. Por ejemplo: Un diputado acepta una mordida de diez mil dólares pagada por una empresa. Considera Ud. que el diputado es: 1) corrupto y debe ser castigado 2) corrupto pero justificado 3) no corrupto NS=8	DC1					
DC10. Una madre con varios hijos tiene que sacar una partida de nacimiento para uno de ellos. Para no perder tiempo esperando, ella paga 50 córdobas de más al empleado público municipal. Cree Ud. que lo que hizo la Señora es: 1) corrupto y ella debe ser castigada 2) corrupto pero justificada 3) no corrupto NS=8	DC10					
DC13. Una persona desempleada es cuñado de un político importante, y éste usa su palanca para conseguirle un empleo público. ¿Ud. Cree que el político es: 1) corrupto y debe ser castigado 2) corrupto pero justificado 3) no corrupto NS=8	DC13					
<i>Ahora queremos hablar de su experiencia personal con cosas que pasan en la vida...</i>	No	Sí	NS	INAP		
EXC1. ¿Ha sido acusado durante el último año por un agente de policía por una infracción que no cometió?	(0)	(1)	(8)		EXC1	
EXC2. ¿Algún agente de policía le pidió una mordida (o soborno) en el último año?	(0)	(1)	(8)		EXC2	
EXC4. ¿Ha visto a alguien pagando mordidas (soborno) a un policía en el último año?	(0)	(1)	(8)		EXC4	
EXC5. ¿Ha visto a alguien pagando una mordida a un empleado público por cualquier tipo de favor en el último año?	(0)	(1)	(8)		EXC5	
EXC6. ¿Un empleado público le ha solicitado una mordida en el último año?	(0)	(1)	(8)		EXC6	
EXC11. ¿Ha tramitado algo en la Alcaldía en el último año? <i>[Si dice NO marcar 9, si dice SI preguntar lo siguiente]</i> Para tramitar algo en la Alcaldía (Por Ej. un permiso) durante el último año. ¿Ha tenido que pagar alguna suma además de lo exigido por la ley?	(0)	(1)	(8)	(9)	EXC11	
EXC13. ¿UD. trabaja? <i>[Si dice NO marcar 9, si dice SI preguntar lo siguiente]</i> En su trabajo, ¿le han solicitado algún pago no correcto en el último año?	(0)	(1)	(8)	(9)	EXC13	
EXC14. ¿En el último año, tuvo algún trato con los juzgados? <i>[Si dice NO marcar 9, si dice SI preguntar lo siguiente]</i> ¿Ha tenido que pagar una mordida (soborno) en los juzgados en el último año?	(0)	(1)	(8)	(9)	EXC14	

EXC15. ¿Usó servicios médicos públicos en el último año? <i>[Si dice NO marcar 9, si dice SI preguntar lo siguiente]</i> Para ser atendido en un hospital o en un puesto de salud durante el último año. ¿Ha tenido que pagar alguna mordida?	(0)	(1)	(8)	(9)	EXC15	
EXC16. ¿Tuvo algún hijo en la escuela o colegio en el último año? <i>[Si dice NO marcar 9 si dice SI preguntar lo siguiente]</i> En la escuela o colegio durante el último año. ¿Tuvo que pagar alguna mordida ?	(0)	(1)	(8)	(9)	EXC16	
EXC17. ¿Alguna gente le pidió una mordida para evitar el pago de la luz eléctrica?	(0)	(1)	(8)		EXC17	
EXC19. ¿Cree que en nuestra sociedad, el pagar mordidas es justificable debido a los malos servicios públicos, o no es justificable?	(0)	(1)	(8)		EXC18	
EXC7. Teniendo en cuenta su experiencia, ¿la corrupción de los funcionarios públicos esta...? (1) Muy generalizada (2) Algo generalizada (3) Poco generalizada (4) Nada generalizada (8) NS/NR					EXC7	

[Ahora vamos a usar tarjeta "D". Entregue la tarjeta "D")

Ahora le voy a nombrar varias instituciones públicas y privadas. Me interesa saber qué tan **honrados o corruptos** cree que son los representantes de esas instituciones. Le voy a pedir que califique a cada uno de ellos con una nota de 1 a 10 donde 1 sería muy corrupto y 10 muy honrado.

INSTITUCIONES	Grado de corrupción												
	Muy corruptos					Muy honrados					NS		
PC1. Los diputados	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC1	
PC2. Los ministros	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC2	
PC3. Los alcaldes	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC3	
PC4. Los concejales	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC4	
PC5. Los policías	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC5	
PC8. Los profesores universitarios	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC8	
PC9. Los sacerdotes, clérigos y pastores	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC9	
PC12. Los jueces	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC12	
PC13. Los militares	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC14	
PC14. Los líderes de los partidos políticos	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC14	
PC15. Los líderes de las ONG's	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC15	
PC19. Los medios de comunicación	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC19	
PC21. Los Presidentes de la República	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(88)	PC21	

Recoja Tarjeta D

Ahora me puede decir... GI1. ¿Recuerda usted cómo se llama el actual presidente de los Estados Unidos? <i>[No leer, George W. Bush; acepta "Bush" o "George Bush"]</i> (1) Correcto (2) Incorrecto (8) NS	GI1	
GI3. ¿Recuerda usted cuantos departamentos tiene Nicaragua? <i>[No leer, 17]</i> (1) Correcto (2) Incorrecto o no sabe	GI3	
GI4. ¿Cuánto tiempo dura el período presidencial en Nicaragua? <i>[No leer, cinco años]</i> (1) Correcto (2) Incorrecto o no sabe	GI4	
GI5. ¿Recuerda usted cómo se llama el presidente de México? <i>[No leer, Vicente Fox]</i> (1) Correcto (2) Incorrecto o no sabe	GI5	

L1. MOSTRAR TARJETA “E”: Ahora para cambiar de tema.... En esta hoja hay una escala de 1 a 10 que va de izquierda a derecha. Hoy en día mucha gente, cuando conversa de tendencias políticas, habla de izquierdistas y derechistas, o sea, de gente que simpatiza más con la izquierda y de gente que simpatiza más con la derecha. Según el sentido que tengan para usted los términos "izquierda" y "derecha" cuando piensa sobre su punto de vista político, ¿dónde se colocaría en esta escala?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	L1 (NS=88)	
Izquierda					Derecha						

(RECOJA LA TARJETA E)

Si usted decidiera participar en algunas de las actividades que le voy a mencionar, ¿lo haría usted sin temor , con un poco de temor , o con mucho temor ? [Vaya Leyendo La Lista, Repitiendo La Pregunta Si Es Necesario]	SIN TEMOR	UN POCO DE TEMOR	MUCHO TEMOR	NS		
DER1. ¿Participar para resolver problemas de su comunidad?	1	2	3	8	DER 1	
DER2. ¿Votar en una elección nacional?	1	2	3	8	DER 2	
DER3. ¿Participar en una manifestación pacífica?	1	2	3	8	DER 3	
DER4. ¿Postularse para un cargo de elección popular?	1	2	3	8	DER 4	

VB1. ¿Esta Ud. empadronado? (1) Sí (2) No (3) En trámite (8) NS	VB1	
VB2. ¿Votó en las pasadas elecciones presidenciales de 2001? (1) Sí votó [siga] (2) No votó [pasar a N VB4] (8) NS	VB2	
NVB3. ¿Por cuál partido votó para Presidente de las elecciones pasadas de 2001? [Si no votó, seguir con NVB4. Si votó, pasar a NVB5] Partido Liberal Constitucionalista (PLC) (2) Frente Sandinista (FSLN) (3) Partido Conservador (PC) (4) Voto Nulo/ Voto en Blanco 88. NS/NR 99. No votó	NVB3	
NVB4. Si no votó, ¿Por qué no votó en las pasadas elecciones presidenciales? [anotar una sola respuesta] (01) Falta de transporte (02) Enfermedad (03) Falta de interés (04) No le gustó ningún candidato/partido (05) No cree en el sistema (06) Falta de cédula de identidad (07) No se encontró en el padrón electoral (10) No tenía edad (11) Llegó tarde a votar / estaba cerrado (12) Tener que trabajar Otro (88) NS/NR	NVB4	
NVB5. Ahora dígame ¿Votó usted en las últimas elecciones para Alcalde y Concejales en el 2000? (1) Sí [siga] (2) No [PASE a NVB7] (8) NS/NR	NVB5	
NVB6. ¿Por cuál partido votó para Alcalde en las elecciones pasadas del 2000? Partido Liberal Constitucionalista (PLC) (2) Frente Sandinista (FSLN) (3) Partido Conservador (PC) (4) Otro.....(5) Voto Nulo/ Voto en Blanco 88. NS/NR 99. No votó	NVB6	
NVB7. ¿Por cuál partido votó para diputado para la Asamblea Nacional en las elecciones pasadas del 2001? Partido Liberal Constitucionalista (PLC) (2) Frente Sandinista (FSLN) (3) Partido Conservador (PC) (4) Otro.....(5) Voto Nulo/ Voto en Blanco 88. NS/NR 99. No votó	NVB7	

Hoy en día se habla mucho sobre **reformas electorales**. Me interesa conocer sus opiniones sobre las siguientes reformas. Vamos a usar otra vez la tarjeta “C”. **[ENTREGUE LA TARJETA “C”]**.

(01)	(02)	(03)	(04)	(05)	(06)	(07)	(08)	(09)	(10)	(88)
Desaprueba firmemente					Aprueba firmemente					No sabe

EREF1. ¿Hasta que punto aprueba o desaprueba el fijar una cuota mínima para aumentar el número de mujeres que puedan ser electas diputadas?[Léame el numero]	EREF1	
EREF2. ¿Hasta que punto aprueba o desaprueba reconfigurar los distritos electorales para poder votar	EREF2	

por un diputado por distrito en lugar de una lista de diputados por partido?			
EREF3. ¿Poner en manos de los diputados el derecho de financiar obras públicas y servicios públicos en sus distritos electorales? ¿Hasta que punto aprobaría o desaprobaría?	EREF3		
NEREF4 ¿Permitir que se postulen en su municipio candidatos a Alcalde y Concejales que son independientes de cualquier partido político? ¿Hasta que punto aprueba o desaprueba? (Recoja la Tarjeta "C")	NERF4		

Ahora para terminar, le voy hacer algunas preguntas para fines estadísticos...

ED. ¿Cuál fue el último año de enseñanza que aprobó?

[Encuestador: llenar:] _____ Año de _____ (primaria, secundaria, universitaria) = _____ años total

[Usar tabla abajo para código y poner un círculo alrededor del número que corresponde]

Ninguno = 00	Primer año de..	Segundo año de..	Tercer año de...	Cuarto año de..	Quinto año de...	Sexto año de...	ED	_ _
Primaria	(01)	(02)	(03)	(04)	(05)	(06)		
Secundaria	(07)	(08)	(09)	(10)	(11)	(12)		
Universitaria	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18) o mas		
No sabe / no responde	(88)							

Q2. ¿Cuál es su edad en años cumplidos? _____ años	Q2	_ _
Q3. ¿Cuál es su religión? (1) Católica (2) Cristiana no católica (3) Otra no cristiana (4) Ninguna (8) No sabe o no quiere responder	Q3	
Q4. ¿Cuántas veces ha asistido Ud. a la iglesia (culto, templo) durante el mes pasado)? (1) Todas las semanas (2) De vez en cuando (3) Rara vez (4) Nunca	Q4	
Q10. ¿En cuál de los siguientes rangos se encuentran los ingresos familiares mensuales de esta casa, incluyendo las remesas del exterior y el ingreso de todos los adultos e hijos que trabajan? [Mostrar lista de rangos: Tarjeta F] (00) Ningún ingreso (01) Menos de C\$500 (02) Entre C\$501-C\$1000 (03) C\$1001-C\$1500 (04) C\$1501-C\$2000 (05) C\$2001-C\$2500 (06) C\$2501-C\$3000 (07) C\$3001-C\$4000 (08) C\$4001-C\$5000 (09) C\$5001-C\$6000 (10) Mas de C\$6000 (88) NS	Q10	
Q10A. ¿Recibe su familia remesas del exterior? (1) Si [siga] (2) No [saltar a Q11] (8) NS/NR	Q10 A	
Q10B. ¿Hasta que punto dependen los ingresos familiares de esta casa de las remesas del exterior? (1) mucho (2) algo (3) poco (4) nada (8) NS/NR	Q10 B	
Q11. ¿Cuál es su estado civil? [no leer alternativas] Soltero (2) Casado (3) Unión libre (acompañado) (4) Divorciado (5) Separado (6) Viudo (8) NS/NR	Q11	
Q12. ¿Cuántos hijos(as) tiene? _____ (0 = ninguno)	Q12	
Q14. ¿Tiene usted intenciones de irse a vivir o a trabajar a otro país en los próximos tres años? (1) Sí (2) No (8) NS	Q14	
NETID. ¿Se considera blanco, mestizo, indígena o negro? (1) Blanco/a (2) Mestizo/a (3) Indígena (4) Negra/o (5) Otra _____ (8) NS/NR .	NETID	
NLENG1. ¿Qué idioma ha hablado desde pequeño en su casa? (puede aceptar más de una alternativa) (1) Español (2) Miskito. (3) Inglés Creole (4) Otro _____ (8) NS/NR	NLENG1	

Para finalizar, podría decirme si en su casa tienen: **[leer todos]**

R1. Televisor	(0) No	(1) Uno	(2) Dos	(3) Tres o más	R1	
R3. Refrigeradora	(0) No			(1) Sí	R3	
R4. Teléfono convencional no celular	(0) No			(1) Sí	R4	
R4A. Teléfono celular	(0) No			(1) Sí	R4A	
R5. Vehículo	(0) No	(1) Uno	(2) Dos	(3) Tres o más	R5	
R6. Lavadora de ropa	(0) No			(1) Sí	R6	
R7. Microondas	(0) No			(1) Sí	R7	
R12. Agua potable dentro de la casa	(0) No		(1) Sí		R12	
R14. Cuarto de baño dentro de la casa	(0) No		(1) Sí		R14	
R15. Computadora	(0) No		(1) Sí		R15	
OCUP1. Cuál es su oficio o profesion principal? 1. Profesional, directivo 2. Oficinista 3. Vendedor 4. Campesino 5. Peon agricola 6. Servicio Domestico 7. Otros servicios 10. Obrero especializados 11. Obrero no especializados 12. Estudiante 13. Ama de casa 14. Pensionado rentista 88. NS					OCUP1	
OCUP1A En su ocupacion Usted es: 1. Asalariado del gobierno 2. Asalariado sector privado 3. Patrono o socio empresa menos de 5 empleados 4. Patrono o socio empresa 5 o más empleados 5. Trabajador por cuenta propia 6. Trabajador no remunerado 8. NS					OCUP1A	
DESOC1. ¿Ha estado desocupado (desempleado) durante el último año? (1)Sí (2) No (3) Actualmente desocupado/pensionado/rentista					DESOC1	
Visita 1: Día..... Hora..... Visita 2: Día..... Hora..... Visita 3: Día..... Hora..... Hora terminada la entrevista _____ : _____ TI. Duración de la entrevista [minutos, ver página # 1]					TI	

**Estas son todas las preguntas que tengo.
Muchísimas gracias por su colaboración.**

Yo juro que esta entrevista fue llevada a cabo con la persona indicada.

Firma del entrevistador_____ **Fecha** ____ / ____ /04 **Firma del supervisor de campo** _____

Firma del codificador _____

Observaciones:

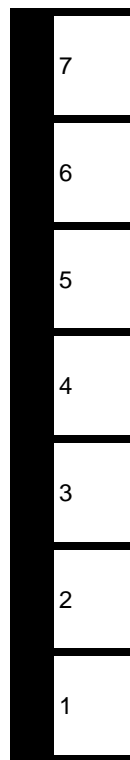
Firma de la persona que digitó los datos _____
Fecha y hora:.....

Firma de la persona que verificó los datos _____
Fecha y hora:.....

Tarjetas Utilizadas

Tarjeta “A”

Mucho



Nada

Tarjeta “B”

Muy de Acuerdo

7

6

5

4

3

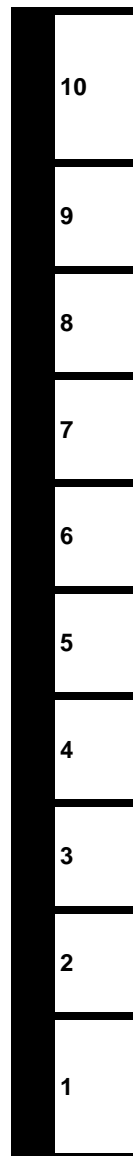
2

1

Muy en Desacuerdo

Tarjeta “C”

Aprueba
Firmemente



Desaprueba
Firmemente

Tarjeta “D”

Muy honrados



Muy corruptos

Tarjeta “E”

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Izquierda					Derecha				

Tarjeta “F”

Los ingresos familiares *mensuales* de esta casa:

[Mostrar lista de rangos: Tarjeta F]

- (00) Ningún ingreso
- (01) Menos de C\$500
- (02) Entre C\$501-C\$1000
- (03) C\$1001-C\$1500
- (04) C\$1501-C\$2000
- (05) C\$2001-C\$2500
- (06) C\$2501-C\$3000
- (07) C\$3001-C\$4000
- (08) C\$4001-C\$5000
- (09) C\$5001-C\$6000
- (10) Mas de C\$6000

Appendix B: Sample Design

Universe

The universe of the sample involves national coverage with three regions: North-Central, Pacific and the Atlantic Coast and both urban and rural with respect to areas of residence. The country is divided into 17 departments, which are in turn made up of 151 municipalities. The majority of the estimated 2004 population is in the Pacific, with 3,241,871 inhabitants (58%), followed by the North-Central region with 1,738,941 (31%). The Atlantic Coast is the region with the smallest population, with 645,680 (11%). The country's total estimated population for 2004 is distributed into 3,295,743 inhabitants in the urban area (59%) and 2,330,749 in the rural area (41%).⁹⁰

NICARAGUA: TOTAL POPULATION PROJECTED FOR 2004				
	Total Republic	Atlantic	Pacific	North-Central
Total	5,626,492	645,680	3,241,871	1,738,941
Urban	3,295,743	241,195	2,361,296	693,252
Rural	2,330,749	404,485	880,575	1,045,689
Percentage Distribution (%)				
	Total Republic	Atlantic	Pacific	North-Central
Total	100%	11.5%	57.6%	30.9%
Urban	100%	7.3%	71.6%	21.0%
	58.6%	37.4%	72.8%	39.9%
Rural	100%	17.4%	37.8%	44.9%
	41.4%	62.6%	27.2%	60.1%

Population

The units that are the object of study are made up of the non-institutional civilian population over 16 years of age. People who were interned in hospitals, orphanages, jails, barracks, etc., at the time of applying the survey were excluded from it.

Unit of Observation—Final Unit of Selection

As the study includes topics not only referring to people old enough to vote (over 16), but also to the head of household and its member, the **statistical unit of observation** used is the household, as long as each person belongs to a single household.

⁹⁰ Source: Municipal estimates prepared by the Department of Socio-demographic Statistics of the Instituto de Estadísticas y Censos (INEC). May 2001 based on the population censuses of 1971 and 1995.

All members of a single household live in a home that can be shared with members of other households. The home is an easy unit to identify on the ground, with relative permanence in time, a characteristics that allows it to be considered the **final unit of selection**, identified in the census segments of both the urban and rural area.

Sample Selection Method

To define the sample method to be used, the following points were considered:

- 1) Obtain representative samples for the following levels, strata and dominions of study.
 - Total country
 - First stage strata
 - ✓ North-Central
 - ✓ Pacific
 - ✓ Atlantic Coast
 - Second stage strata
 - ✓ Urban area
 - ✓ Rural area
 - Dominions of Study
 - Municipalities with over 100,000 inhabitants, forced inclusion
 - Municipalities with 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants
 - Municipalities with under 25,000 inhabitants
- 2) Calculate the sample errors that correspond to these estimates.
- 3) Facilitate the operativeness of the survey.
- 4) Optimum affixation that permits a balance between the cost and the precision level of the results.
- 5) Use the best and most up-to-date sample framework for each municipality (updated censuses and cartography).

The method to be used will be a multi-stage stratified probabilistic sample by clusters, with random selection in all stages, including the final selection of the person over 16 years old to be interviewed within the sample household.

The sample is stratified by regions (North-Central, Pacific and Atlantic) and into urban and rural areas. It is multi-stage because it will begin with the selection of Primary Sample Units (UPM, municipalities), continue with Secondary Sample Units (USM) in each UPM made up of census segments, which are sectors of homes with well defined and identifiable limits in both the urban and rural area, and Final Sample Units (UFM) made up of clusters of 6 to 8 houses in the urban area and 10 to 12 houses in the rural areas. A single household will be selected in each house of the sample as an Observation Unit, and finally a single person over 16 will be selected through a random process and interviewed. As a probabilistic selection norm, no substitution or replacement of the houses is permitted.

The assignment of sample sizes ensures the sample's consistency, sufficiency and efficiency for each strata and level of the aggregate total. The selection of municipalities in each of the strata will be done with probability proportional to the size of each dominion according to the 2004 population estimates.

The results of the study will permit valid results to be obtained at a national level by urban and rural areas and by the three regions (North-Central, Pacific and Atlantic). The considered socio-demographic characteristics will be taken into account. The results will not be valid at the level of department or by municipality.

Sample Framework

The Sample Framework is created by the cartographic inventory of the National Institute of Census and Statistics. For selection of the sample, the division of 12,070 census segments of the 151 municipalities of the whole country will be used, broken down by urban and rural area of residence. The population data of the 1995 Population Census updated to 2004⁹¹ will also be used.

Formula to Determine the Sample Size

The formula used for the sample size is:

$$E = Z \sqrt{\frac{PQ}{n-1}} \quad (1)$$

$$n = \frac{Z^2 PQ}{E^2} \quad (2)$$

in which:

E= Margin of error

P= Population percentage with a given attribute of 50 %.

Q= (1-P) Population percentage with the considered attribute, Q=50 %.

Z= Normal distribution value. For a confidence level of 95 %, this value is 1.965.

n= Sample size

Sample size, Confidence Levels and Margins of Error

The desired confidence level for the national sample is 95%, thus $Z_{0.95}=1.965$. The margin of error is $\pm 2.5\%$. A proportion of 50/50 ($P=0.50$ and $Q=1-P=0.50$) is assumed for dichotomous variables in the worst case. Under these conditions and using formula 1, an overall sample size of 1,500 homes is obtained. This sample size was proportionally assigned to strata and dominions of study. The distribution of the sample's houses and segments can be seen in the following chart.

⁹¹ Source: El Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INEC).

North-Central

Urban

Municipalities of inhabitants and over	100,000	Population			
		Urban	Weight	Houses	Segments
Estelí		99,116	0.519	39	6
Matagalpa		91,729	0.481	36	5
			1.000		
Subtotal		190,845	0.275	75	11
Municipalities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants		353,999	0.511	139	23
Municipalities of under 25,000 inhabitants		148,408	0.214	58	9
Subtotal		693,252	1.000	272	43

Rural

Municipalities of inhabitants and over	100,000	Population			
		Rural	Weight	Houses	Segments
Estelí		26,737	0.320	10	1
Matagalpa		56,733	0.680	10	1
			1.000		
		83,470	0.080	20	2
Municipalities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants		577,188	0.552	100	10
Municipalities of under 25,000 inhabitants		385,031	0.368	72	7
Subtotal		1,045,689	1.000	192	19

Pacific

Urban

Municipalities of inhabitants and over	Population 100,000	Urban	Weight	Houses	Segments
Granada		93,253	0.056	20	3
Tipitapa		122,758	0.074	26	4
Chinandega		130,323	0.078	28	4
Masaya		125,449	0.075	28	4
León		152,278	0.092	33	5
Managua		1,039,488	0.625	222	32
			1.000		
Subtotal		1,663,549	0.705	357	52
Municipalities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants		527,955	0.224	113	17
Municipalities of under 25,000 inhabitants		169,792	0.072	36	6
Subtotal		2,361,296		506	75

Rural

Municipalities of inhabitants and over	Population 100,000	Rural	Weight	Houses	Segments
Granada		29,605	0.191	11	1
Tipitapa		1,843	0.012	0	0
Chinandega		26,294	0.170	11	1
Masaya		32,480	0.210	11	1
León		46,036	0.297	20	2
Managua		18,690	0.121	10	1
			1.000		
Subtotal		154,949	0.176	63	6
Municipalities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants		443,582	0.504	180	18
Municipalities of under 25,000 inhabitants		282,043	0.320	115	11
Subtotal		880,574		358	35

Atlantic

Urban

Municipalities of inhabitants and over	100,000	Population		Houses	Segments
		Urban	Weight		
Nueva Guinea		57,243	0.237	22	3
Municipalities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants		140,626	0.583	61	9
Municipalities of under 25,000 inhabitants		43,326	0.180	18	3
Subtotal		241,195		101	15

Rural

Municipalities of inhabitants and over	100,000	Population		Houses	Segments
		Rural	Weight		
Nueva Guinea		64,681	0.160	11	1
Municipalities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants		271,983	0.672	50	5
Municipalities of under 25,000		67,822	0.168	10	1
Subtotal		404,485		71	7
Subtotal urban		3,295,743		879	133
Subtotal rural		2,330,749		621	61
Total		5,626,492		1500	194

The margins of error by strata assuming a confidence level of 95 % are detailed in the following chart:

Sample Sizes and Margins of Error by Stratum

Strata	Sample size	Margin of error (%)
Regions:		
North-Central	464	4.5
Pacific	864	3.3
Atlantic	172	7.4
Areas:		
Urban	879	3.3
Rural	621	3.9
Total country	1500	2.5

The margin of error for the Atlantic Region is a bit higher than that of the other two regions because it has the highest operation cost.

Sizes and Distribution of the Sample by Strata. General Summary

Size of Sample and Distribution by Strata

STRATA	URBAN	RURAL	TOTAL
NORTH-CENTRAL			
Over 100,000 inhabitants	75	20	95
25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants.	139	100	239
Under 25,000 inhabitants.	58	72	130
Subtotal	272	192	464
PACIFIC			
Over 100,000 inhabitants	357	63	420
25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants	113	180	293
Under 25,000 inhabitants	36	115	151
Subtotal	506	358	864
ATLANTIC			
Over 100,000 inhabitants	22	11	33
25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants	61	50	111
Under 25,000 inhabitants	18	10	28
Subtotal	101	71	172
TOTAL	879	621	1,500

General Summary

BY REGIONS	SAMPLE	SEGMENTS
NORTH-CENTRAL	464	62
PACIFIC	864	110
ATLANTIC	172	22
TOTAL	1,500	194
BY AREAS	SAMPLE	SEGMENTS
URBAN	879	133
RURAL	621	61
TOTAL	1,500	194

Sample Municipalities and Assignment by Strata

The total number of municipalities was 46, which is enough to achieve representation of the whole country, given the homogeneity among municipalities that belong to the same stratum or dominion. For the distribution of municipalities, the information on the number of houses and detailed segments was used before and the assignment of the optimum number of municipalities necessary was made by stratum and by dominion. Once the sample size of municipalities was set, their selection was made. Those with a population of over 100,000 inhabitants were automatically included in the sample (forced selection or probability 1). The municipalities of forced selection were Estelí and Matagalpa in the North-Central region; Granada, Tipitapa, Chinandega, Masaya, León, Chinandega, Masaya and Managua in the Pacific region and Nueva Guinea in the Atlantic region. The other municipalities of the sample in each stratum and dominion of study were selected with probability proportional to the size according to the estimated 2004 population from the list of remaining municipalities ordered from smaller to greater population.

Adjustment for Non-Coverage

To guarantee the sample's desired precision, the sample system with "adjustment for non-coverage" will be used. This will guarantee that the margin of error not exceed the desired 2.5%. In different surveys that the Institute of Surveys and Opinion Polls (IDESO-UCA) has conducted, it has been observed that the non-coverage rate in the different municipalities of the country ranges between 15% and 25% of cases in which the interview could not be held for different reasons. The average non-coverage rates by region are: 17% for the North-Central, 18% for the Pacific and 19% for the Atlantic region. There are no significant differences in the non-coverage rates by urban and rural area. The most frequent motives for non-interview are: not found at home, there are only people under 16, only employees who do not reside habitually in the selected home were found, the person interviewed got tired before concluding the interview and total rejection of the survey.

The process of adjusting the sample for non-coverage will consist of applying the corresponding non-coverage factor to the strata and dominions in each region, thus obtaining the final operational sample size. The final sample (n_f) is calculated through the formula $N_f = (1+t)n$, in which t is the non-coverage factor. Thus, the final sample for the whole country will be $n_f = 1,762$ houses, distributed by stratum as indicated in the following chart.

Expected and Adjusted Sample Sizes

Stratum	Expected sample size	Adjusted sample size
Regions:		
North-Central	464	542
Pacific (without Managua)	864	1,016
Atlantic	172	204
Areas:		
Urban	879	1,032
Rural	621	730
Total country	1,500	1,762

Distribution of the Sample of Houses by Municipalities and Areas of Residence

North-Central

Municipalities with under 25,000 inhabitants

Municipality	Population		Segments		Sample size			Selection size		
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Ciudad Antigua	1,738	2,383	1	1	6	10	16	7	11	18
San José de los Remates	2,060	7,028	1	1	6	10	16	7	11	18
San Lucas	886	11,563	1	1	6	10	16	8	12	20
Esquipulas	7,180	10,621	2	1	12	10	22	14	12	26
Wiwilí de abajo	6,171	13,731	1	1	7	11	18	8	12	20
Santo Tomás	14,281	7,224	2	1	14	10	24	16	12	28
San Sebastián de Yalí	4,422	18,285	1	1	7	11	18	8	12	20
Subtotal			9	7	58	72	130	68	82	150

Municipalities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants

El Jicaró	10,040	17,846	2	1	12	10	22	14	12	26
Ocotlán	32,829	1,300	3	1	18	10	28	20	12	32
Somoto	19,639	17,310	2	1	12	10	22	14	12	26
Ciudad Darío	11,414	27,280	2	1	12	10	22	14	12	26
Rio Blanco	16,264	22,666	2	1	12	10	22	14	12	26
Wiwilí	5,299	45,308	2	1	12	10	22	14	12	26
Jalapa	36,119	22,304	3	1	18	10	28	20	12	32
Boaco	24,753	33,731	2	1	12	10	22	14	12	26
El Tuma -La Dalia	6,705	58,080	2	1	12	10	22	14	12	26
Jinotega	39,343	54,026	3	1	19	10	29	22	12	34
Subtotal			23	10	139	100	239	160	120	280

Municipalities with over 100,000 inhabitants

Estelí	99,116	26,737	6	1	39	10	49	48	12	60
Matagalpa	91,729	56,733	5	1	36	10	46	40	12	52
Subtotal			11	2	75	20	95	88	24	112
Subtotal			43	19	272	192	464	316	226	542

Pacific

Municipalities with under 25,000 inhabitants

Municipality	Population		Segments		Sample size			Selection size		
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Dolores	6,850	667	1	1	6	10	16	8	12	20
Quezalguaque	1,913	8,156	1	2	6	21	27	7	24	31
El Realejo	6,018	5,226	1	2	6	21	27	8	24	32
Achuapa	3,257	10,812	1	2	6	21	27	7	24	31
El Almendro	2,750	13,460	1	2	6	21	27	7	24	31
Santa Teresa	5,658	15,244	1	2	6	21	27	7	24	31
Subtotal			6	11	36	115	151	44	132	176

Municipalities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants

Municipality	Population		Segments		Sample size			Selection size		
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Tola	2,559	22,454	1	2	6	20	26	8	24	32
Villanueva	5,376	24,524	1	2	6	20	26	8	24	32
Somotillo	14,915	16,207	2	2	14	20	34	16	24	40
Larreynaga	7,604	24,188	2	2	13	20	33	16	24	40
El Sauce	11,592	21,206	2	2	14	20	34	16	24	40
Nagarote	25,674	8,969	2	2	14	20	34	16	24	40
Rivas	26,823	19,361	2	2	14	20	34	16	24	40
Diriamba	38,092	21,519	2	2	14	20	34	16	24	40
El Viejo	55,264	39,365	3	2	18	20	38	24	24	48
Subtotal			17	18	113	180	293	136	216	352

Municipalities with over 100,000 inhabitants

Municipality	Population		Segments		Sample size			Selection size		
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Granada	93,253	29,605	3	1	20	11	31	24	12	36
Tipitapa	122,758	1,843	4	0	26	0	26	32	0	32
Chinandega	130,323	26,294	4	1	28	11	39	32	12	44
Masaya	125,449	32,480	4	1	28	11	39	32	12	44
León	152,278	46,036	5	2	33	20	53	40	24	64
Managua	1,039,488	18,690	32	1	222	10	232	256	12	268
			52	6	357	63	420	416	72	488

Subtotal			75	35	506	358	864	596	420	1,016
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Atlantic

Municipalities with under 25,000 inhabitants

Municipality	Population		Segments		Sample size			Selection size		
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Corn Island	7,733	0	2	0	12	0	12	16	0	16
El Tortuguero	1,257	9,753	1	1	6	10	16	8	12	20
Subtotal			3	1	18	10	28	24	12	36

Municipalities of 25,000 to 100,000 inhabitants

Muelle de los Bueyes	4,037	24,022	2	2	12	20	32	16	24	40
Bluefields	47,886	2,969	4	1	28	10	38	32	12	44
Siuna	13,785	64,384	3	2	21	20	41	24	24	48
Subtotal			9	5	61	50	111	72	60	132

Municipalities with over 100,000 inhabitants.

Nueva Guinea	57,243	64,681	3	1	22	11	33	24	12	36
Subtotal			15	7	101	71	172	120	84	204
Total			133	61	879	621	1,500	1,032	730	1,762

Appendix C: Technical Note and Regression Tables

Technical Note

We embarked on the 2004 series in the hope that the results would be of interest and of policy relevance to citizens, NGOs, academics, governments and the international donor community. Our belief is that the results can not only be used to help advance the democratization agenda, they can also serve the academic community that has been engaged in a quest to determine which citizen values are the ones most likely to promote stable democracy, and which ones are most likely to undermine it. For that reason, the researchers engaged in this project agreed on a common core of questions to include in our survey. We agreed on that core in a meeting held in Panama City, in January 2004, hosted by our Panamanian colleague Marco Gandásegui, Jr.. All of the country teams were represented, as was the donor organization, USAID. It was not easy for us to agree on a common core, since almost everyone present had their favorite questions, and we knew from the outset that we did not want the interviews to take longer than an average of 45 minutes each, since to go on much longer than that risked respondent fatigue and reduced reliability of the data. As it turns out, the mean interview time for all 12,401 interviews was 42 minutes, a near-perfect “bulls-eye.” The common core of questions allows us to examine, for each nation and across nations, such fundamental democratization themes as political legitimacy, political tolerance, support for stable democracy, civil society participation and social capital, the rule of law, participation in and evaluations of local government, crime victimization, corruption victimization, and voting behavior. Each study contains an analysis of these important areas of democratic values and behaviors. In some cases we find striking and sometimes surprising similarities from country-to-country, whereas in other cases we find sharp contrasts.

To help insure comparability, a common sample design was crucial for the success of the effort. Prior to flying to Panama for the start-up meeting, the author of this chapter prepared for each team the guidelines for the construction of a multi-stage, stratified area probability sample with a target N of 1,500. In the Panama meeting each team met with Dr. Polibio Córdova, President of CEDATOS/Gallup, Ecuador, and region-wide expert in sample design, trained under Leslie Kish, the founder of modern survey sampling, at the University of Michigan. Refinements in the sample designs were made at that meeting and later reviewed by Dr. Córdova. Detailed descriptions of the sample are contained in annexes in each country report.

The Panama meeting was also a time for the teams to agree on a common framework for analysis. We did not want to impose rigidities on each team, since we recognized from the outset that each country had its own unique circumstances, and what was very important for one country (e.g., crime, voting abstention) might be largely irrelevant for another. But, we did want each of the teams to be able to make direct comparisons to the results in the other countries. For that reason, we agreed on a common method for index construction. We used the standard of an Alpha reliability coefficient of greater than .6, with a preference for .7 or higher, as the minimum level needed for a set of items to be called a scale. The only variation in that rule was when we were using “count variables,” to construct an index (as opposed to a scale) in which we merely wanted to know, for example, how many times an individual participated in a certain form of activity. In fact, most of our reliabilities were above .7, many reaching above .8. We also encouraged all teams to use factor analysis to establish the dimensionality of their scales. Another common rule, applied to all of the data sets, was in the treatment of missing data. In

order to maximize sample N without unreasonably distorting the response patterns, we substituted the mean score of the individual respondent's choice for any scale or index in which there were missing data, but only when the missing data comprised less than half of all the responses for that individual. For a five-item scale, for example, if the respondent answered three or more of the items, we assigned the mean of those three to that person for that scale. If fewer than three of the five were responded to, the entire case was treated as missing.

Another agreement we struck in Panama was that each major section of the studies would be made accessible to the layman reader, meaning that there would be heavy use of bivariate and tri-variate graphs. But we also agreed that those graphs would always follow a multivariate analysis (either OLS or logistic regression), so that the technically informed reader could be assured that the individual variables in the graphs were indeed significant predictors of the dependent variable being studied. We also agreed on a common graphical format (using chart templates prepared for SPSS 11.5). Finally, a common "informed consent" form was prepared, and approval for research on human subjects was granted by the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board (IRB). The approval document is contained in each country report.

A common concern from the outset was minimization of data entry error and maximization of the quality of the database. We did this in several ways. First, we agreed on a common coding scheme for all of the closed-ended questions. Second, we prepared a common set of data entry formats, including careful range checks, using the U.S. Census Bureau's CSPro2.4 software. Third, all data files were entered in their respective countries, and verified, after which the files were sent to a central location for and audit review. At that point, a random list of 100 questionnaire identification numbers was sent back to each team, who were then asked to ship those 100 surveys via express courier to that central location for auditing. This audit consisted of two steps, the first involved comparing the responses written on the questionnaire during the interview with the responses as entered by the coding teams. The second step involved comparing the coded responses to the data base itself. If a significant number of errors was encountered through this process, the entire data base had to be reentered and the process of auditing was repeated on the new data base. Finally, the data sets were merged into one uniform eight-nation file, and copies were sent to all teams so that they could carry out comparative analysis on the entire file.

The next step in our effort to maximize quality was for the teams, once they had written their draft reports, to meet again in plenary session, this time in Santo Domingo de Heredia, Costa Rica, graciously hosted by our Costa Rica colleagues Luis Rosero-Bixby and Jorge Vargas-Cullell. In preparation for that meeting, held in mid-June 2004, pairs of researchers were assigned to present themes emerging from the studies. For example, one team made a presentation on corruption and democracy, whereas another discussed the rule of law results. These presentations, delivered in PowerPoint, were then critiqued by a small team of our most highly qualified methodologists, and then the entire group of researchers and the USAID democracy staffers discussed the results. That process was repeated over an intense two-day period. It was an exciting time, seeing our findings up there "in black and white," but it was also a time for us to learn more about the close ties between data, theory and method. For example, we spent a lot of time discussing the appropriate modalities of comparing across countries when we wanted to control for macro-economic factors such as GDP or GDP growth.

After the Costa Rica meeting ended, the author of this chapter, in his role of scientific coordinator of the project, read and critiqued each draft study, which was then returned to the country teams for correction and editing. In addition, the description of the sample designs was refined by including for each study a chart prepared by Luis Rosero of our Costa Rica team showing the impact of stratification and clustering on confidence intervals (i.e., the “design effect”). Those revised reports were then reviewed a second time, appropriate adjustments made, and then passed along to USAID for its comments. Those comments were taken into consideration by the teams and the final published version was produced. A version was translated into English for the broader international audience. That version is available on the web site, as is the data base itself (www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/dsd/).

Table III.1 Predictors of the Pride of Living Under the Nicaraguan Political System

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Typ. error	Beta		
(Constant)	40.346	3.896		10.356	.000
MAN Gender	-.508	1.890	-.008	-.269	.788
Q2 What is your age in full years?	.008	.081	.004	.098	.922
ED What was the last year of school you passed?	-.839	.266	-.119	-3.151	.002
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	-.687	.572	-.042	-1.202	.230
UNION Married or with partner	-3.044	2.001	-.045	-1.521	.128
Q12 How many children do you have?	-.604	.420	-.055	-1.439	.150
M1R Evaluation of the current government (0-100)	.285	.040	.199	7.109	.000

a Dependent variable: B4R pride in political system (0-100)

Table III.2 Predictors of Support for the Political System

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Typ. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	31.021	2.948		10.522	.000
MAN Gender	-2.565	1.274	-.058	-2.013	.044
Q2 What is your age in full years?	-.091	.057	-.061	-1.601	.110
ED What was the last year of school you passed?	-.372	.171	-.080	-2.171	.030
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	-.100	.372	-.009	-.269	.788
UNION Married or with partner	-.680	1.323	-.015	-.514	.607
Q12 How many children do you have?	-.105	.290	-.014	-.363	.716
PC2 Perception of honesty of ministers	1.151	.285	.131	4.038	.000
PC12 Perception of the honesty of judges	1.364	.276	.171	4.941	.000
PC14 Perception of the honesty of political party leaders	.997	.283	.121	3.519	.000
N1R The government fight against poverty	.025	.026	.036	.967	.334
N3R The government protects democratic principles	.129	.028	.180	4.614	.000
N9R the government fights corruption	.030	.022	.048	1.342	.180
SOCT1R Evaluation of the country's current economic situation (0-100)	-.011	.029	-.011	-.383	.702
SOCT3R Evaluation of the country's economic situation in 12 months (0-100)	.058	.018	.101	3.288	.001
CP13R Participation in political party meetings (0-100)	.070	.024	.083	2.902	.004
EXCTOT Index of victimization by corruption	-1.600	1.055	-.043	-1.516	.130

a Dependent variables: PSA5 Support to the system

Table III.3 Predictors of Political Tolerance

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Typ. Error	Beta		
(Constante)	45.010	3.469		12.975	.000
MAN Gender	4.909	1.638	.093	2.997	.003
Q2 What is your age in full years?	.017	.071	.010	.243	.808
ED What was the last year of school you passed?	.137	.229	.025	.601	.548
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	.804	.543	.063	1.481	.139
UNION Married or with partner	.360	1.710	.007	.210	.833
Q12 How many children do you have?	.012	.369	.001	.033	.973
PROT1R Participation in demonstration or protest (0-100)	.062	.022	.086	2.767	.006
A1R Listens to news on the radio (0-100)	-.006	.022	-.009	-.272	.785
A2R Watches news on TV (0-100)	.065	.024	.101	2.759	.006
A3R Reads newspaper (0-100)	.004	.028	.005	.127	.899
SOCT1R Evaluation of the country's current economic situation (0-100)	-.103	.038	-.087	-2.723	.007
SOCT3R Evaluation of the country's economic situation in 12 months (0-100)	.045	.021	.066	2.078	.038

Dependent variable: TOL Tolerance

Table III.7 Predictors of Support for Stable Democracy

	B	E.T.	Wald	gl	Sig.	Exp(B)
MAN Gender	.185	.145	1.628	1	.202	1.204
Q2 What is your age in full years?	-.016	.007	5.522	1	.019	.984
ED What was the last year of school you passed?	-.018	.020	.783	1	.376	.982
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	.044	.043	1.013	1	.314	1.045
UNION Married or with partner	-.187	.154	1.474	1	.225	.829
Q12 How many children do you have?	.035	.034	1.049	1	.306	1.035
SOCT1R Evaluation of the country's current economic situation (0-100)	-.007	.003	4.171	1	.041	.993
SOCT3R Evaluation of the country's economic situation in 12 months (0-100)	.004	.002	3.353	1	.067	1.004
EXCTOT Index of victimization by corruption	-.217	.135	2.604	1	.107	.805
ADMEVAL1 Index of approval of the current government	.019	.003	45.963	1	.000	1.019
Constant	-1.362	.306	19.832	1	.000	.256

Table IV.1 Predictors of Victimization by Corruption

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	SIG.
	B	Typ. error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.260	.115		-2.267	.024
MAN Gender	.070	.030	.061	2.293	.022
Q2 What is your age in full years?	.002	.001	.044	1.243	.214
ED What was the last year of school you passed?	.016	.004	.133	3.638	.000
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	.021	.011	.075	1.913	.056
UNION Married or with partner	.040	.032	.035	1.261	.208
Q12 How many children do you have?	.011	.007	.061	1.686	.092
SIZE Size of the place	-.039	.020	-.103	-1.903	.057
URBAN Urban	.059	.061	.051	.964	.335

a Dependent variable: EXCTOT Index of victimization by corruption

Tabla VI.1 Predictors of Participation in Town Assemblies

	B	E.T.	Wald	gl	Sig.	Exp(B)
MAN Gender	.436	.171	6.514	1	.011	1.547
Q2 What is your age in full years?	.010	.007	1.678	1	.195	1.010
ED What was the last year of school you passed?	.007	.024	.078	1	.781	1.007
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	-.163	.056	8.411	1	.004	.850
UNION Married or with partner	-.051	.181	.080	1	.777	.950
Q12 How many children do you have?	-.039	.044	.801	1	.371	.961
NP1BR Confidence in the response of municipal officials	.008	.004	5.181	1	.023	1.008
NP1CR Confidence in the response of Municipal Council members	.006	.003	3.048	1	.081	1.006
NP2R Has presented a petition to the local government	1.554	.178	76.216	1	.000	4.731
SGL1R Evaluation of municipal services	.002	.004	.265	1	.606	1.002
Constant	-2.609	.358	52.985	1	.000	.074

Table VII.3 Predictors of Electoral Participation

	B	E.T.	Wald	gl	Sig.	Exp(B)
MAN Gender	.146	.137	1.132	1	.287	1.157
Q2 What is your age in full years?	.052	.008	48.422	1	.000	1.054
ED What was the last school year you passed?	.091	.020	20.090	1	.000	1.095
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	.013	.050	.066	1	.797	1.013
UNION Married or with partner	.811	.145	31.345	1	.000	2.249
Q12 How many children do you have?	.052	.042	1.561	1	.212	1.053
SIZE Size of the place	-.009	.091	.009	1	.922	1.009
URBAN Urban area	-.133	.273	.236	1	.627	.876
Constant	-1.712	.522	10.767	1	.001	.181

Table VIII.1 Predictors of Confidence in the Community

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Typ. error	Beta		
(Constant)	29.260	4.867		6.012	.000
MAN Gender	5.536	1.842	.082	3.006	.003
Q2 What is your age in full years?	.143	.078	.066	1.842	.066
ED What was the last year of school you passed?	.596	.259	.085	2.303	.021
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	.593	.656	.036	.904	.366
UNION Married or with partner	1.275	1.943	.019	.656	.512
Q12 How many children do you have?	.056	.417	.005	.134	.893
SIZE Size of place	-3.810	.792	-.171	-4.809	.000

Dependent variable: ITIR Confidence in the community (0-100)

Table VIII.2 Predictors of Fear to Participate

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Typ. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	38.319	3.605		10.630	.000
MAN Gender	-10.002	1.390	-.205	-7.194	.000
Q2 What is your age in full years?	-.088	.062	-.056	-1.415	.157
ED What was the last school year you passed?	-.812	.195	-.161	-4.170	.000
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	.051	.489	.004	.104	.917
UNION Married or with partner	-3.406	1.461	-.069	-2.331	.020
Q12 How many children do you have?	-.434	.359	-.051	-1.206	.228
SIZE Size of place	-.399	.592	-.025	-.674	.500

Dependent variable: TEMPART Index of fear to participate

Table IX.1 Predictors of the Justification for a Coup D'État

	B	E.T.	Wald	gl	Sig.	Exp(B)
MAN Gender	-.111	.142	.616	1	.433	.895
Q2 What is your age in full years?	-.012	.006	3.394	1	.065	.988
ED What was the last year of school you passed?	-.006	.020	.085	1	.770	.994
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	-.013	.050	.064	1	.800	.987
UNION Married or with partner	-.327	.148	4.884	1	.027	.721
Q12 How many children do you have?	.000	.034	.000	1	.995	1.000
Size Size of place	.050	.061	.676	1	.411	1.051
L1 Ideology	-.001	.002	.120	1	.729	.999
SOCT1R Assessment of the country's current economic situation	-.006	.003	3.380	1	.066	.994
SOCT3R Assessment of the country's economy after a year	-.001	.002	.237	1	.626	.999
AOJ11R Probability of being a victim of crime	.007	.002	11.974	1	.001	1.007
EXCTOT Index of victimization by corruption	-.037	.120	.095	1	.757	.964
Constant	-.322	.430	.560	1	.454	.725

Table IX.3 Predictors of Satisfaction with Democracy

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Typ. error	Beta		
(Constant)	41.158	3.682		11.177	.000
MAN Gender	1.045	1.362	.021	.767	.443
Q2 What is your age in full years?	.060	.059	.038	1.026	.305
ED What was the last year of school you passed?	-.299	.191	-.059	-1.567	.117
WEALTH Wealth measured as possession of capital goods	-.587	.476	-.050	-1.232	.218
UNION Married or with partner	-.571	1.442	-.012	-.396	.692
Q12 How many children do you have?	-.002	.307	.000	-.006	.995
SIZE Size of place	.926	.575	.058	1.610	.108
ADMEVAL1 Index of evaluation of the current government (0-100)	.200	.024	.232	8.284	.000

Dependent variable: PN4R Satisfaction with democracy (0-100)

Appendix D: IRB Approval



University of Pittsburgh *Institutional Review Board*

Exempt and Expedited Reviews
Christopher M. Ryan, Ph.D., Vice Chair

Multiple Project Assurance: M-1259

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TO: Mitchell Seligson, Ph.D.

FROM: Christopher M. Ryan, Ph.D., Vice Chair *Chris*

DATE: January 14, 2004

PROTOCOL: Democratic Values in Mexico, Central America and Colombia

IRB Number: 0401036

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed by the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board. Based on the information provided in the IRB protocol, this project meets all the necessary criteria for an exemption, and is hereby designated as "exempt" under section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).

The regulations of the University of Pittsburgh IRB require that exempt protocols be re-reviewed every three years. If you wish to continue the research after that time, a new application must be submitted.

- If any modifications are made to this project, please submit an 'exempt modification' form to the IRB.
- Please advise the IRB when your project has been completed so that it may be officially terminated in the IRB database.
- This research study may be audited by the University of Pittsburgh Research Conduct and Compliance Office.

Approval Date: 01/12/2004

Renewal Date: 01/12/2007

CR:ky

The Political Culture of Democracy in Mexico, Central America and Colombia, 2004

The publication you have before you forms part of growing number of studies produced by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) of Vanderbilt University in the United States. The current study, by incorporating eight countries (Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia) represents the largest effort undertaken to date by LAPOP. The sample and questionnaire designs were uniform for all eight countries, permitting direct comparisons among them, as well as detailed analyses within each country. The study is the product of the intensive effort of 15 highly motivated social scientists, several experts in sample design, dozens of field supervisors, hundreds of interviewers, data entry clerks and more than 12,000 respondents. The 2004 cycle includes a total of nine publications, one for each of the eight countries, authored by teams from the countries, and a global study, written by Professor Mitchell A. Seligson of Vanderbilt University, who directs the LAPOP. The study was made possible by the generous support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented under contract with ARD, Inc. Our efforts will not have been in vain if the results presented here are used by policymakers, citizens and academics to help strengthen democracy in Latin America.

**A Study of the Latin American Public
Opinion Project (LAPOP)**