

Latin American Public Opinion Project

LAPOP

The logo for the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) features the acronym 'LAPOP' in large, bold, green capital letters with a black outline. The letter 'O' is stylized to contain a map of Latin America, showing the continents of North, Central, and South America in a light green color against the yellow background of the letter.

Proyecto de Opinión Pública de América Latina

Report to USAID Paraguay: 1996 Baseline Study of Democracy Strategic Objective

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Methodology

This report presents the results of the 1996 USAID/Paraguay baseline study of democracy. Its principle objective is to enable USAID to establish a basis on which to judge if Paraguayan democracy moving toward or away from greater consolidation and institutionalization. Specifically, the report presents data on the Democracy Strategic Objective (SO), as well as on three intermediate results (IR1,2 and 3). The SO and IRs based on the May 1996, USAID/Paraguay Strategic Plan, are summarized in the following table along with their respective indicators. It should be noted that this report deals exclusively with those indicators that relate to the perceptions of Paraguayan citizens. Other indicators have been designed by USAID to measure other aspects of the IRs.

Democracy Strategic Objective: Improved Responsiveness and Accountability of Key Democratic Institutions		
INDICATOR: % of citizens (M/F) who express confidence in government's ability to address their needs		
Intermediate Result 1.1 More efficient, transparent and participatory elections	Intermediate Result 1.2 Participatory and better functioning selected sub-national governments	Intermediate Result 1.3 Improved access to strengthened judicial system
INDICATOR: Electoral system deemed fair by citizens ¹	INDICATOR: % of citizens (M/F) who perceive their subnational governments to be functioning effectively	INDICATOR: % of citizens (M/F) satisfied with the impartiality of the justice system

¹The original measure focused on political leaders, NGOs and representative citizen groups. The mass public survey includes each of these elements as part of the broader citizenry. Attitudes of members vs. non-members of civil society organizations are easily distinguished in the survey.

In order to obtain the information for the indicators in the above table, USAID/Paraguay commissioned a survey to be conducted by CIRD (El Centro de Información para el Desarrollo del Comité Paraguay-Kansas). In addition, USAID contracted with Professor Mitchell A. Seligson of the Department of Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh to provide overall technical supervision for the effort, and to prepare this report on the results of the survey.

In the fourth quarter of 1996 a national probability sample of 1,450 Paraguayans was conducted by CIRD.² The sample frame was based on the 1992 population and housing census of Paraguay.³ The census bureau of Paraguay has a set of maps that are used to locate the dwelling units of the country. It is these maps that we utilized to draw the sample reported on here. A detailed description of the sample is contained in Appendix A of this report. **[JOSE CARLOS: PLEASE SEND A DISK WITH THE SAMPLE INFORMATION SO THAT I CAN INCLUDE IT IN THE NEXT VERSION]** Suffice it to say that the sample represents virtually the entire population, Spanish speaking, Guaraní speaking and bilingual. The only component of the citizens excluded from the survey were those monolinguals who spoke neither of those languages; we estimate this segment to be less than 1% of the population of the country. The interviews were conducted in all of the country's 15 departments (grouping the three departments of the Chaco, Presidente Hayes, Boquerón and Alto Paraguay into a single "department" we call "The Chaco"). A total of 56 municipalities were visited for the study, where as few as 8 and as many as 48 people were interviewed in each, with the exception of Asunción, where 190 interviews were conducted. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the sample by the seven zones that are traditionally used in Paraguay. It should be noted that the sample size for the Chaco, population of Paraguay, is very small. For that reason, when data are presented in this report that refer to the Chaco, it should be realized that the small sample size produces very wide confidence intervals, and therefore limits the reliability any given statistic (such as the mean score) for this region.

²The sample design called for an N of 1,500, but 50 interviews were not conducted. Of these, 14 interviews in Eulogio Estigarribia were not done because of the refusal of the Mennonite community to cooperate with the survey, 17 interviews were not conducted in regions affected by flooding, and, finally, 19 interviews were not conducted for various reasons related to flaws in the maps used to locate respondents.

³Secretaría Técnica de Planificación, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos, *Censo nacional de población y viviendas, 1992*. Diskette copy of tables.

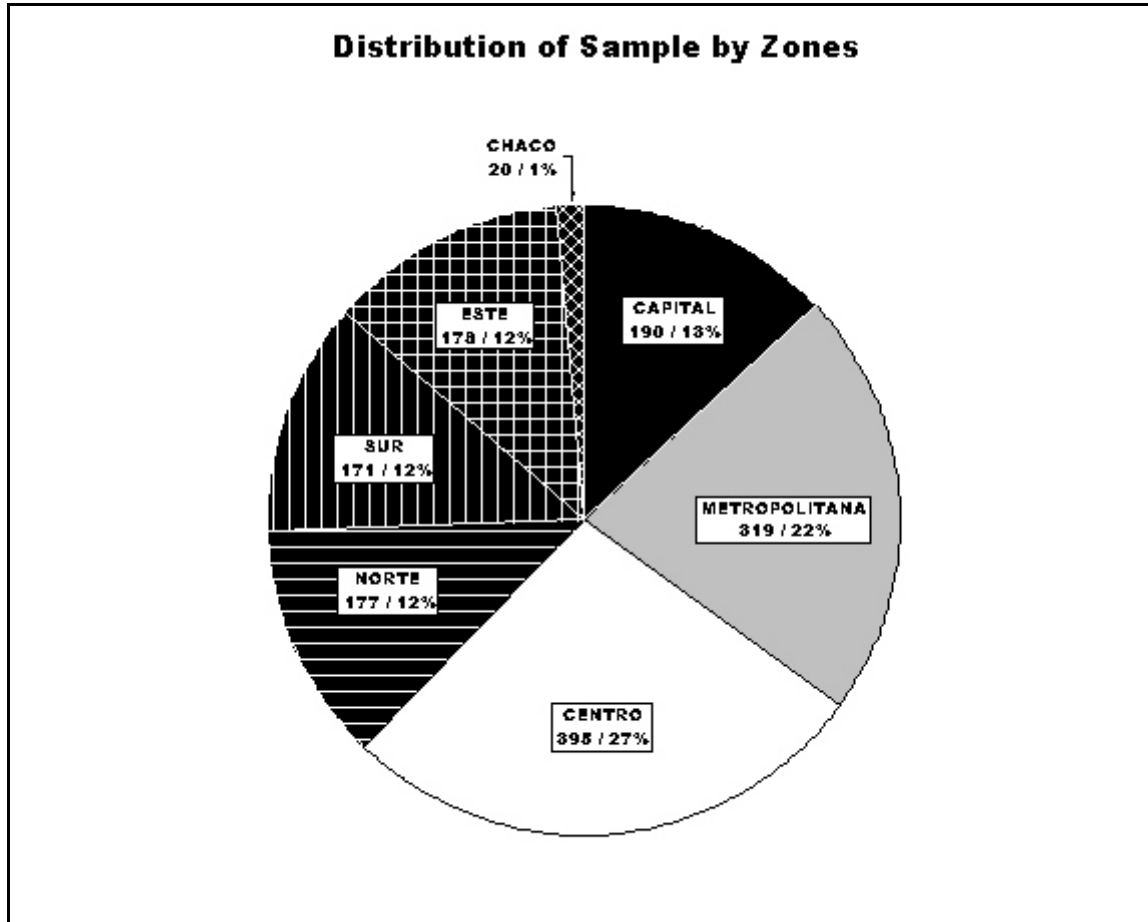


Figure 1

Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample into the 15 departments. The sample was not designed to be precisely proportional to the population of each department, but rather was based on stratification criteria to produce the statistically most efficient sample possible. What this means is that districts with similar socio-economic characteristics were grouped together to form ten relatively homogenous strata, and the sample was then drawn from those strata. Nonetheless, for most of the departments, the sample represents their population in close proportion to their actual population. Asunción, for example contains 12.1% of the population and 13.1% of the sample. Concepción represents 4.0% of the population and 3.4% of the sample. The Chaco, however, represents 2.6% of the population but only 1.4% in our sample. In that case the decision not to interview in the rural areas of the Chaco, where populations are dispersed over vast geographic areas, is responsible for the slight under sampling.

Table 1. Distribution of Sample by Department

	Interviews	%
0 Asunción	190	13.1%
1 Concepción	49	3.4%
2 San Pedro	99	6.8%
3 Cordillera	26	1.8%
4 Guairá	78	5.4%
5 Caaguazú	111	7.7%
6 Caazapá	62	4.3%
7 Itapúa	110	7.6%
8 Misiones	37	2.6%
9 Paragurari	117	8.1%
10 Alto Paraná	125	8.6%
11 Central	319	22.0%
12 Ñeembucú	23	1.6%
13 Amambay	31	2.1%
14 Canendiyú	53	3.7%
15 Chaco	20	1.4%
Total	1450	100.0%

As a baseline, this study can tell USAID a great deal about political attitudes in Paraguay. But since there is no prior study of Paraguay with which it can be directly compared, the baseline would have its greatest utility in years to come. In order to increase the immediate utility of this first exercise, it was decided that the data would be compared to identical questions used in other Latin American countries. Comparisons with those cases would help to inform USAID if Paraguay is particularly advanced or far behind in any given aspect covered in the survey.

To be able to make these comparisons, this report draws on surveys in three other Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua. While these countries are all from Central America, they have the immediate advantage of being similar in population size to Paraguay and also range widely in terms of their histories of democracy.

Paraguay in 1992 had 4.1 million people, while Costa Rica had 3.2 million, El Salvador 5.4 million and Nicaragua 3.9 million.⁴ In terms of democracy, however, the inclusion of Costa Rica allows comparison with a country with a far deeper democratic tradition than Paraguay. According to a recent ranking by academic specialists on Latin America, in 1995 Costa Rica ranked first in Latin America, Nicaragua 11th, Paraguay 15th and El Salvador 17th.⁵ Perhaps more important than these rankings is that these countries have experienced very different political histories. For much of this century, Costa Rica has been democratic, and has enjoyed uninterrupted democratic rule since 1950. El Salvador, in contrast, has been ruled by a succession of military dictatorships, which only gave way to civilian elected rule in the mid-1980s. Nicaragua's political history had similarities with that of Paraguay in that it, too, was ruled for many years by a dictatorship, and Stroessner had much in common with Somoza. But then Nicaragua experienced a violent revolution that brought a left-wing regime to power in 1979, which itself was defeated in an election ten years later.

The surveys of Nicaragua's and El Salvador were both national probability samples and were conducted in 1995. The Nicaragua study of 1,200 respondents, was a collaborative effort of the University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, and the Instituto de Estudios Nicaragüenses (IEN).⁶ The El Salvador survey, of 1409 respondents,⁷ was conducted as a collaborative effort of the University of Pittsburgh and the Fundación Guillermo Ungo, and was funded by USAID.⁸

⁴ World Bank, *World Development Report, 1994* (Washington, D. C.: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 162-63.

⁵The Fitzgibbon-Johnson ranking of democracy in Latin America has been conducted every five years since 1945. The 1995 survey, in which 96 experts participated, was coordinated by Professor Phil Kelly, Emporia States University.

⁶Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, "Nicaragua, 1991-1995: Una cultura política en transición," in Córdova Macías Ricardo and Günther Maihold (eds.), *Cultura política y transición democrática en Nicaragua* (Managua: Fundación Ebert, Fundación Guillermo Ungo, Instituto de Estudios Nicaragüenses y Centro de Análisis Socio-Cultura, 1995).

⁷The full sample contained 200 additional interviews in regions in which the leftist party won the mayoral race. These additional interviews were not included in the analysis presented in this report since doing so would have no longer made it a nationally representative sample.

⁸Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova M., *El Salvador: De la guerra a la paz, una cultura política en transición* (San Salvador: IDELA y FUNDAUNGO, 1995).

In 1995 a survey was conducted in Costa Rica under the auspices of the University of Pittsburgh and the University of North Texas with funding from the Howard Heinz Endowment. That sample, however, was focused on the metropolitan area of the capital city, San José, and therefore was not directly comparable to the Paraguay national sample. As a result, we drew on a prior University of Pittsburgh national survey of Costa Rica of 927 respondents, this from 1987.⁹ Comparison of the 1987 and 1995 Costa Rica surveys revealed only minor differences on the variables utilized in this report, and other published research has demonstrated that democratic values in Costa Rica are very stable and do not change much even under crisis conditions.¹⁰ Since the idea here is to report on national samples rather than urban samples alone, the earlier Costa Rica data base is utilized.

⁹That study was funded by the National Science Foundation, and involved the collaboration of the Universidad de Costa Rica.

¹⁰Mitchell A. Seligson and Edward N. Muller, "Democratic Stability and Economic Crisis: Costa Rica 1978-1983," September, *International Studies Quarterly*, 1987, pp. 301-326.

SO: Improved Responsiveness and Accountability of Key Democratic Institutions (and IR3: Satisfaction with Justice System)

Political systems that are not responsive to their constituents must, eventually, fail. This is true for both dictatorships and democracies. Some dictatorships have been successful in improving the lives of significant proportions of their populations, at least for a time. Somoza's Nicaragua enjoyed the highest levels of GNP per capita in that nation's history.¹¹ In the Southern Cone of Latin America, Brazil's military rulers were, for a time, associated with the so-called "Brazilian Miracle," and Pinochet takes credit for the economic transformation of Chile. Yet, each of these dictatorial regimes was eventually brought down, either through violent revolution or the ballot box, not because of their economic success but because of their failure to respond to the wishes of the citizens they served. But democracies can also fail, as they have so often done in Latin America.¹² Indeed, some have argued that Latin America is caught in a "pendular pattern" oscillating between dictatorship and democracy.¹³

For both dictatorships and democracy, system stability has long been thought to be directly linked to popular perceptions of the legitimacy of the system. Illegitimate systems, ones that do not have the support of the populace, can only endure over the long haul through the use of repression. When repression no longer can be used effectively, or if opposition elements are willing to risk even extremely grave sanctions, illegitimate regimes will eventually fall. Hence, the failure of the Tienanmen Square protestors to bring about changes in the Chinese system can be attributed to either of two causes: (1) the level of

¹¹See Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, "Nicaragua 1991-1995: Una cultura política en transición," in Ricardo Córdova Macías and Gunther Maihold (eds.), *Cultura política y transición democrática en Nicaragua* (Managua, Nicaragua: Fundación Ebert, Fundación Guillermo Ungo, Instituto de Estudios Nicaragüenses y Centro de Análisis Socio-Cultura, 1996); and Mitchell A. Seligson, *Political Culture in Nicaragua: Transitions, 1991-1995*. (Managua, Nicaragua: United States Agency for International Development, 1996).

¹²The classic work in the field is Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan (editors), *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes* (Baltimore, MD., 1978).

¹³See the contributions to James M. Malloy and Mitchell Seligson, *Authoritarians and Democrats: Regime Transition in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987).

coercion that the state was willing to apply exceeded the willingness of the protestors and their supporters to bear it; or (2) system legitimacy was greater among the mass public than it appeared from observing the protestors alone. In contrast, the rapid demise of the communist governments of Eastern Europe suggests rather strongly that once repressive forces are weakened (in this case by the removal of the threat of Soviet intervention on behalf of those governments), illegitimate regimes quickly crumble.¹⁴

But what of democratic systems? Since almost all of Latin America today is democratic (in structure at least), we want to know what forces have, in the past, been responsible for their downfall, and, more importantly, what factors will help maintain the current crop of democracies.¹⁵ In most cases, military coups have been the main actors responsible for the breakdown of democratic regimes in Latin America. The most recent threat to democracy in Paraguay came from the military. For that reason, it is important to keep a careful watch on the role of the military in democratizing Latin America. There are, however, some instances in which popular sentiment seems to have been at least partly responsible for democratic breakdowns. The best known case is the demise of the Weimar Republic, where the voters made their choice. In Latin America, the Fujimori "auto-golpe," which extinguished democratic rule in Peru in 1992, emerged out of popular revulsion over the inability of the extant democratic system to deal effectively with Sendero Luminoso terrorism. Despite the use of undemocratic means, President Alberto K. Fujimori for some time was among the most popular heads of state in all of Latin America, and was easily reelected when he ran for office after his coup.¹⁶ Similarly, the repeated attempts to overthrow the elected government of Venezuela have been supported, according to the polls, by many of its citizens. In the main, however, while authoritarian regimes survive based on some combination of legitimacy and repression, democracies tend to rely primarily on legitimacy.¹⁷

¹⁴This discussion draws on Mitchell A. Seligson, *Political Culture in Nicaragua: Transitions, 1991-1995*. (Managua, Nicaragua: United States Agency for International Development, 1996).

¹⁵For the most recent discussion of this subject see Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

¹⁶James Brooke, "Fujimori Sees a Peaceful, and a Prosperous, Peru," *New York Times*, April 6, 1993, A3. According to the article, Fujimori's approval ratings are between 62 and 67 percent.

¹⁷This is not to say that democracies do not use coercion, but that its use is limited.

According to Lipset's classical work, systems that are legitimate survive even in the face of difficult times.¹⁸ The survival of Latin American democracies, most of which are facing very difficult economic times, depends upon continued popular support. How, then, do we know if a Latin American democracy is becoming more or less legitimized? How can we tell how responsive it is to its citizens, *as perceived by those very citizens*. It is clear that objective measures based on indicators such as GNP tell us nothing about citizen perception. Again, the case of Somoza's Nicaragua comes to mind, a country that was growing economically, but one in which the great mass of the citizens became increasingly alienated from the system. Thus, we need to know how citizens view their system.

Until recently, efforts to measure legitimacy have been hampered by reliance on the Trust in Government scale devised by the University of Michigan.¹⁹ That scale, it has turned out, relied too heavily on a measurement of dissatisfaction with the performance of incumbents rather than of generalized dissatisfaction with the system of government. The development of the Political-Support Alienation Scale, now tested in studies of Germany, Israel, the United States, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and elsewhere, has provided a much more powerful analytical tool for measuring legitimacy.²⁰ The scale has been shown to be reliable and valid. It is based upon a distinction made by David Easton, relying upon Parsons, of defining legitimacy in terms of system support (i.e., diffuse support) vs. specific support (i.e., support for incumbents)²¹. In the 1996 Paraguay survey we rely upon the system support scale, which is interchangeably referred to as "political support," and "system support."

Five items comprise the core set of questions in the administrations of the survey used elsewhere. For the Paraguay study, the scale was expanded to include a range of

¹⁸Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited," *American Sociological Review*, 59, February, 1994, pp. 1-22.

¹⁹Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government," *American Political Science Review* 68 (September 1974):951-972

²⁰For a review of this evidence see Mitchell A. Seligson, "On the Measurement of Diffuse Support: Some Evidence from Mexico," *Social Indicators Research* 12 (January 1983):1-24, and Edward N. Muller, Thomas O. Jukam and Mitchell A. Seligson "Diffuse Political Support and Antisystem Political Behavior: A Comparative Analysis," *American Journal of Political Science* 26 (May 1982): 240-264. The present discussion draws on that evidence.

²¹David Easton, "A Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support," *British Journal of Political Science* 5 (October 1975):435-457; Talcott Parsons, "Some Highlights of the General Theory of Action," in Roland A. Young, ed. *Approaches to the Study of Politics*, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1958).

additional items, but those will be reported on only after the core set is presented so that comparisons can be made between Paraguay and the other countries being considered in this report. Each item utilized a seven-point response format, ranging from “not at all” to “a great deal.” The questions were as follows (with the item numbers referring to the questionnaire contained in Appendix B of this report):

- B1. To what degree do you believe that the courts in Paraguay guarantee a fair trial?
- B2. To what degree do you have respect for the political institutions of Paraguay?
- B3. To what degree do you think that the basic rights of citizens are well protected by the Paraguayan political system?
- B4. To what degree do you feel proud to live under the political system of Paraguay?
- B6. To what degree do you feel that one ought to support the political system of Paraguay?

In order to make the presentation of the findings more readily understandable, all scales in this report have been converted to a 0-100 format, with zero indicating the lowest level of support for an item, and 100 the highest.²² In prior analyses, it has been found that item B4, pride in the political system of a given country, has been the most indicative of system support, and a clear measure of perceived responsiveness of the system. Figure 2 shows the results, ones that will be shown to represent a familiar pattern.

Four points need to be made about these results. First, Costa Rica clearly stands out as the country with far more citizen pride in their system than any of the other countries in the study.²³ This was to be expected, given the highly democratic political history of that country. Second, Nicaragua is significantly lower in pride than any other country, also a reflection of circumstances. Even though by the time the survey was taken in 1995, democratic institutions had been functioning for about five years, the economy was in shambles, with GNP per capita having fallen to levels equivalent to those last experienced in 1920. Third, in 1996 Paraguayans, the focus of this study, expressed levels of support for their political system virtually identical to those expressed in El Salvador. Fourth, the absolute average level of pride, on the 0-100 scale, was right around the mid-point of 52. When compared to Nicaragua's 36, this level certainly looked very good, but when compared to Costa Rica's 89, it is clear that there is still a long way to go in Paraguay

²²The recodes for this variable were performed as follows: (1=0) (2=16.6) (3=33.2) (4=50) (5=66.6) (6=83.2) (7=100). In other words, a score of 1 was set to zero, a score of 4, the mid-point, was set to 50, and a score of 7, the highest value, was set to 100.

²³In these comparative analyses, statistical significance is established by the LSD post-hoc test. This test allows the researcher to determine which of the countries being studied here is significantly higher or lower than each of the others.

before it can expect to achieve the levels of popular support found in that stable Latin American democracy.

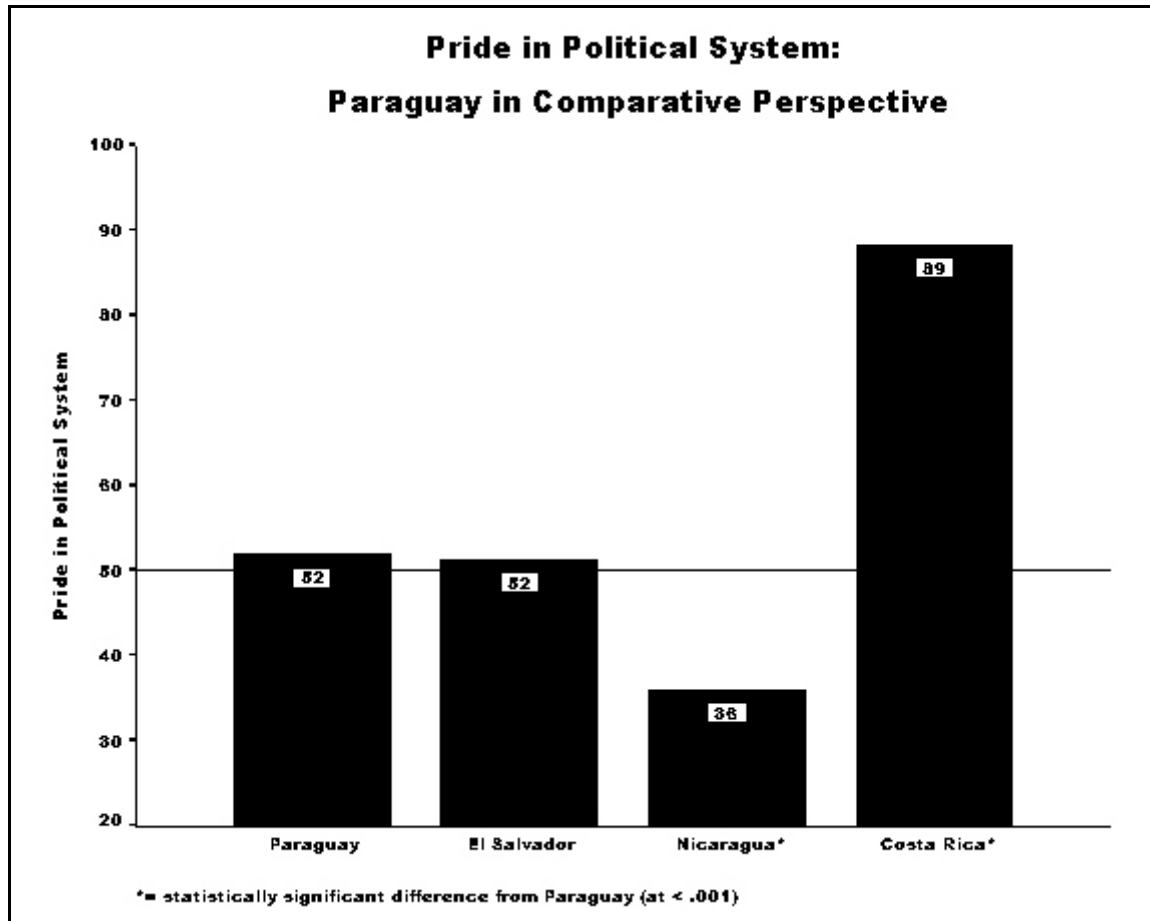


Figure 2

In the social sciences we resist drawing firm conclusions on the basis of a single variable, and prefer to look at broader patterns. The five items in the system support series utilized here in fact form a reliable overall scale.²⁴ A second general item from this scale measuring support is item B6, measuring perceived citizen obligation to support the political system. The results are presented in Figure 3, and show a pattern very similar to what was shown with variable B4, pride. Once again Costa Rica is markedly different from the others in the analysis and once again, Paraguay and El Salvador have statistically indistinguishable scores. Finally, Nicaragua again remains at the bottom. The mean score for Paraguay, is somewhat higher than it was for the pride item.

²⁴The Alpha reliability coefficient is .70

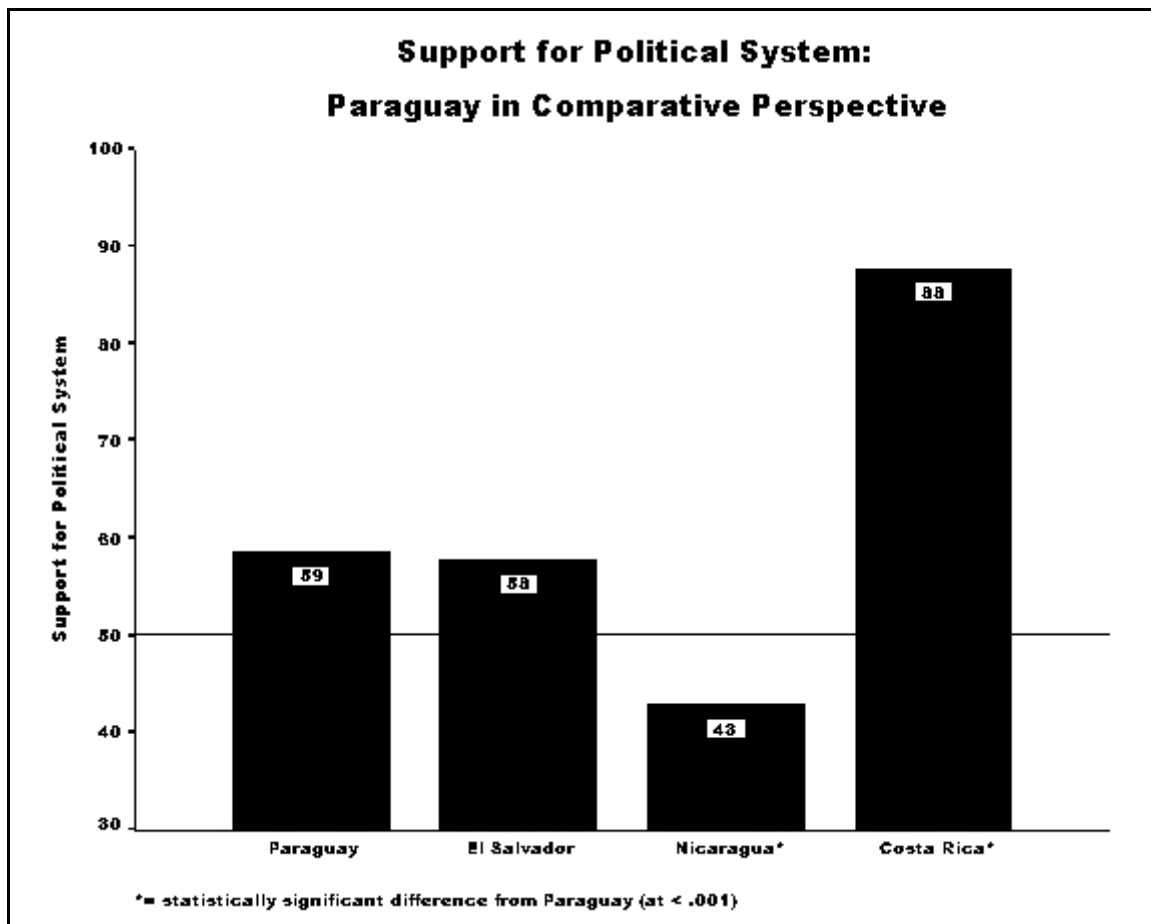


Figure 3

The next item (B2) measures respect for the political institutions of Paraguay. Figure 4 shows the results in comparative perspective. This item again shows Costa Rica far ahead of the other countries, and all are on the positive end of the continuum, averaging above 50. In this case, however, there is no statistically significant difference among the three other countries, with Paraguay having no higher or lower level of respect than El Salvador or Nicaragua.

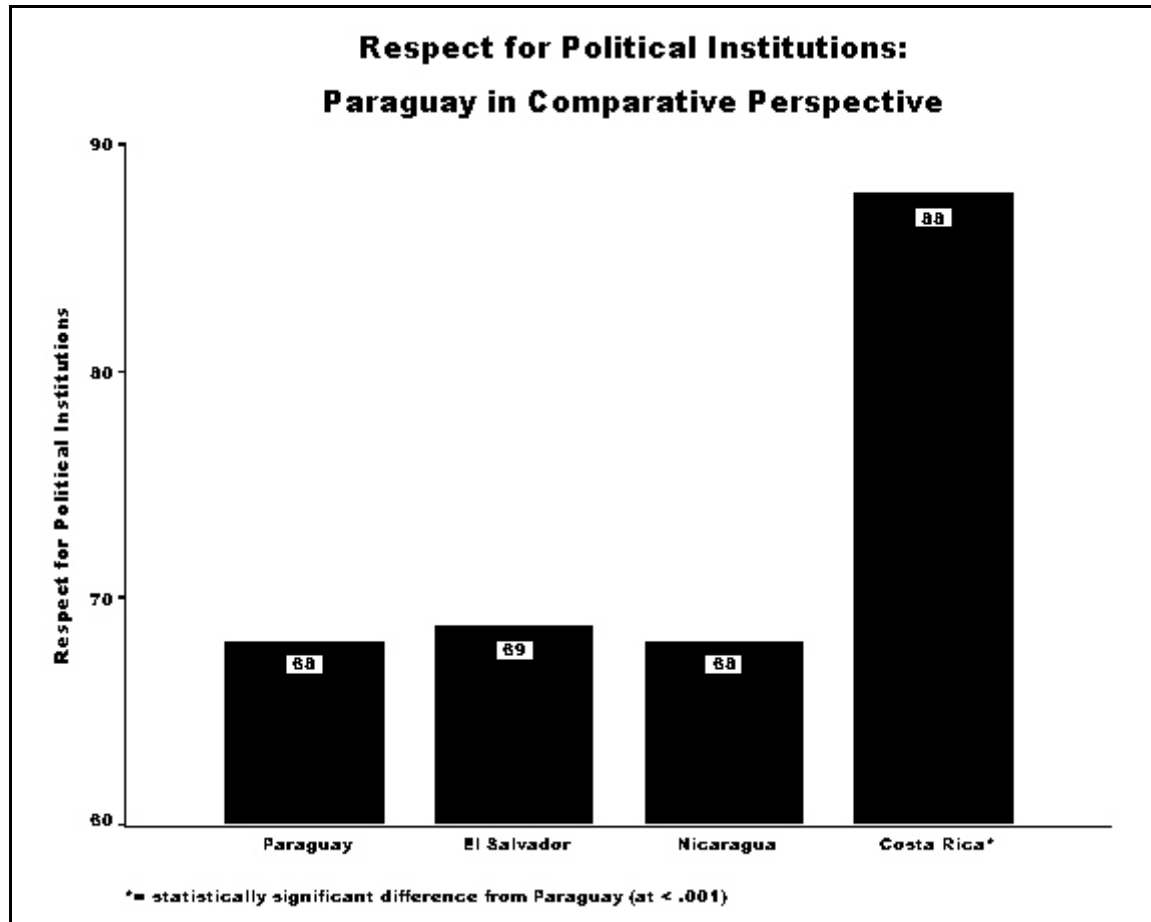


Figure 4

The final two items in the core series focus on the legal system. These items not only relate to the USAID SO, but are direct measures of IR3. For that reason, this discussion of the SO also relates to IR3. The first of these (B3) is the more general, asking if the political system protects the rights of its citizens. The results are shown in Figure 5. Here the pattern is once again familiar, with Costa Rica higher than the others, and Paraguay and El Salvador virtually identical, significantly higher than Nicaragua. But, in this case, only Costa Rica is in the positive end of the 0-100 continuum, although its score on this variable is far lower than it was on the variables already examined. This suggests that there is a concern for protection of rights in each of these countries, even Costa Rica.

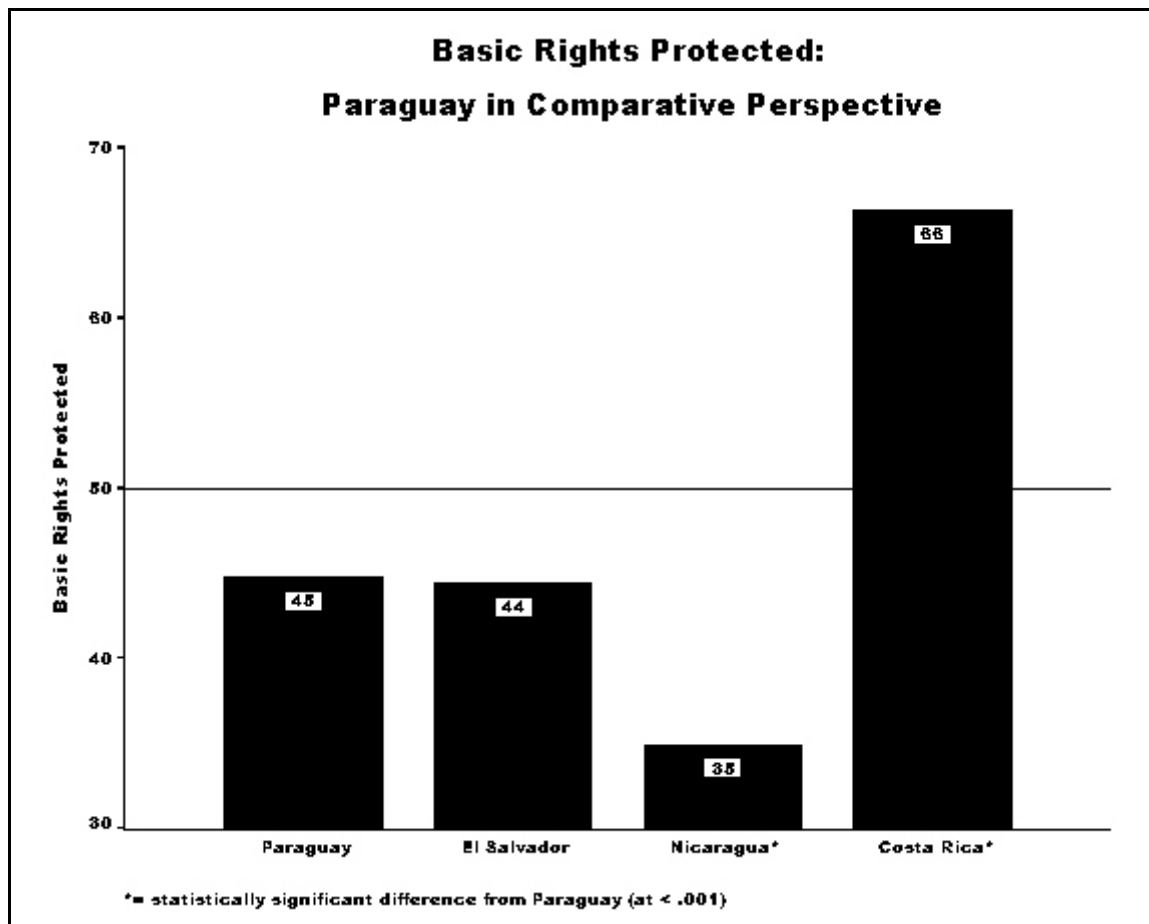


Figure 5

Additional clarification with respect to citizen perception of the legal system appears in Figure 6, where variable B1 is displayed. In this figure citizen views of guarantees of a fair trial are shown. This result helps confirm the broad-scale concern with justice in the countries under study. Once again, only Costa Rica scores higher than 50, but not much more than 50. Once again, El Salvador and Paraguay have nearly identical scores, and Nicaragua is at the bottom. In terms of IR3, one can conclude that this should be an area of serious concern for USAID in Paraguay.

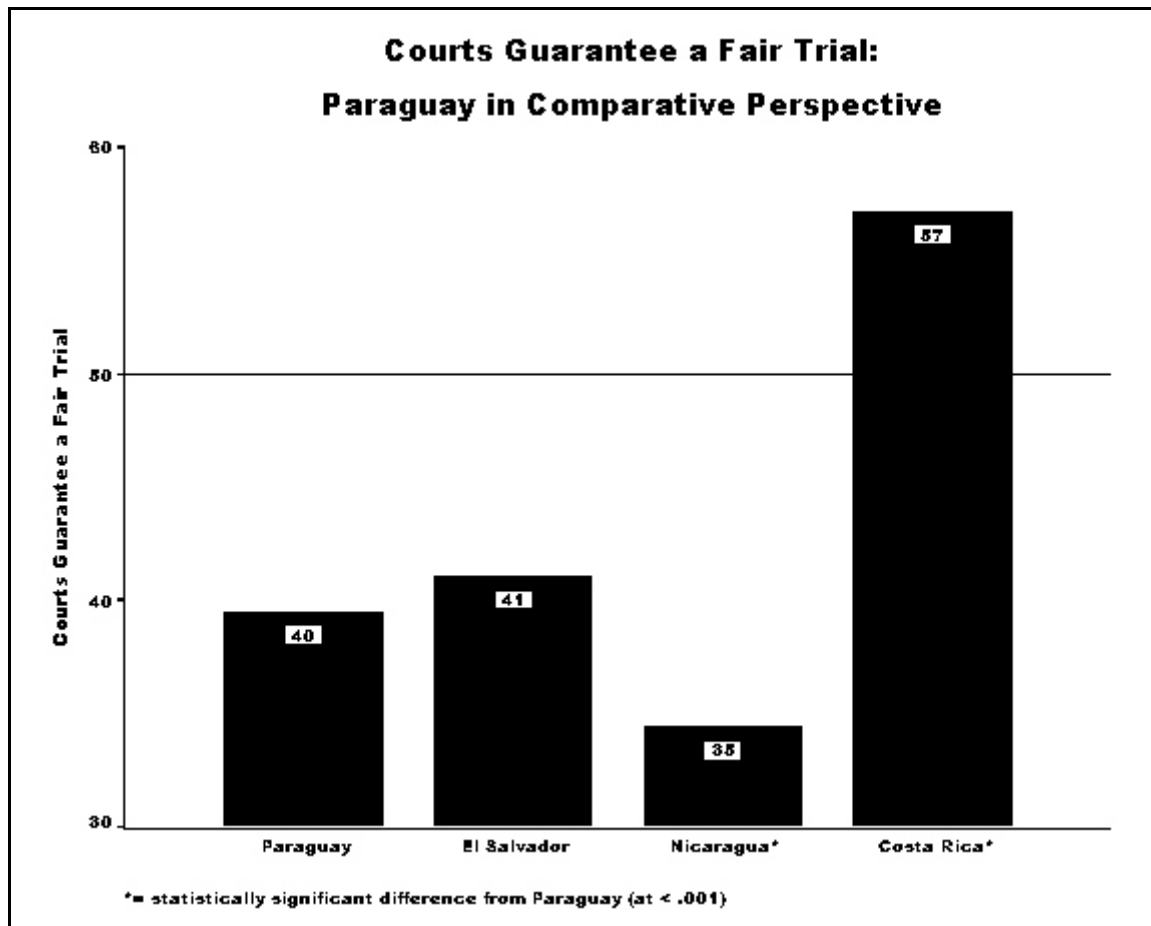


Figure 6

The overall conclusions to be drawn from this analysis are clear. First, system support in Paraguay is almost identical with that of El Salvador, another country emerging from decades of dictatorial rule. Second, Paraguayans believe their system is more responsive than do Nicaraguans, but are far below Costa Ricans. Third, it is in the area of rights and justice that the greatest concern seems to be expressed.

It is important to examine these data on responsiveness in greater detail, exploring patterns by gender, region, education, etc. But, before that is done, as noted above, there are a number of other questions that have been included in the survey that give a more complete and nuanced look at the way Paraguayans view their political system. Those items are presented here as a block, so that overall comparisons can be made among them.

Several conclusions stand out. First, not all Paraguayan institutions are perceived as having the same degree of legitimacy; clear distinctions are made. Second, The Catholic Church is by far the most trusted institution measured in the survey. This is a frequent finding in Latin American surveys. Third, the press stands out as the group that

is more highly trusted than any of the political institutions. Fourth, municipal government is more highly trusted than national level institutions, except that elections are also seen in a comparatively positive light. Fifth, at the low end of confidence are political parties and the perception of the prospects for a fair trial. Sixth, and perhaps most disturbing is that the very lowest score was measured on the USAID Mission definition of its SO, government responsiveness. This item, however, is new to the surveys that the University of Pittsburgh has been conducting in Latin America, so it is difficult to make any strong statements about its low score in Paraguay. There is simply no comparative referent.

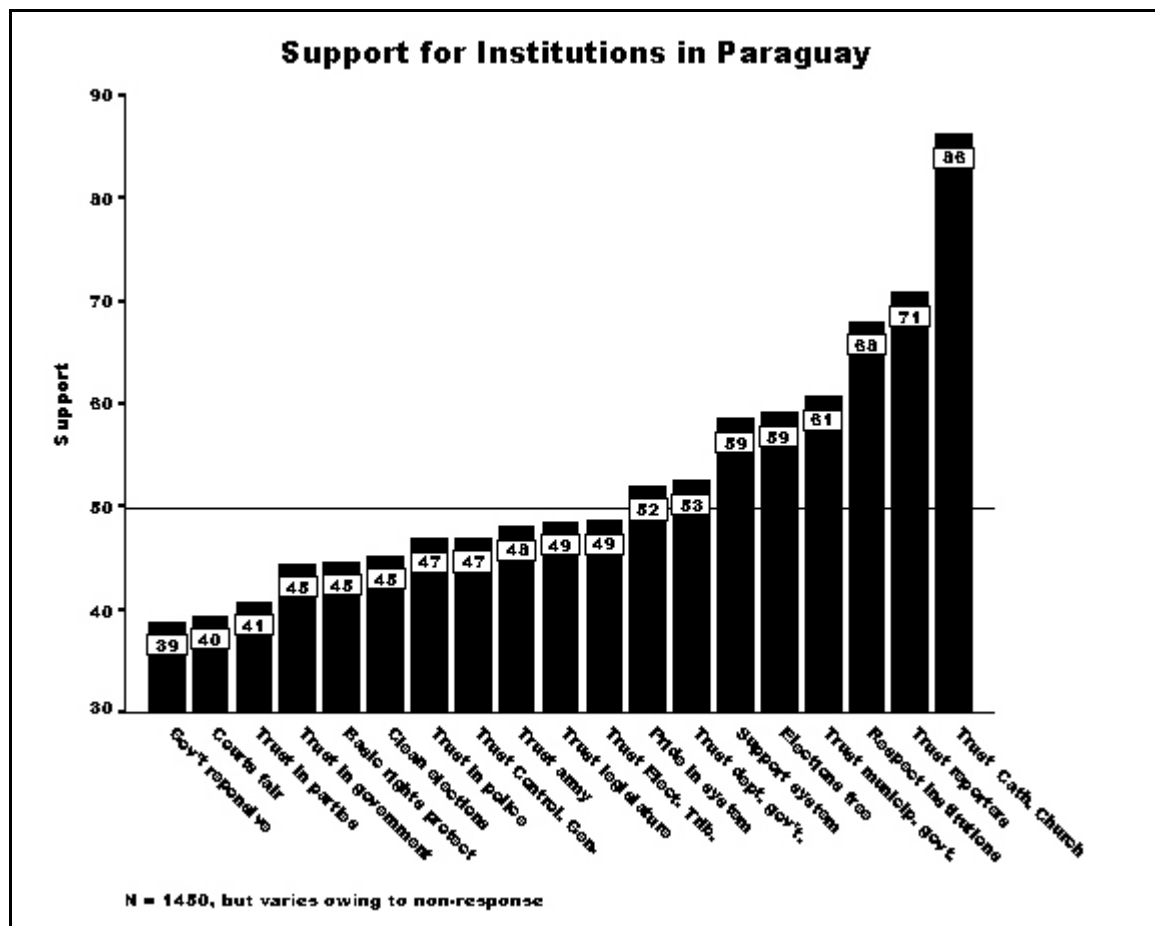


Figure 7

Now that the basic data on citizen perception of the SO indicators have been presented, it is important to examine variation among Paraguayans. The analysis of

gender, however, shows no important differences between men and women, as is shown in the following figure. The only significant differences are that men are somewhat more trusting than women in the electoral tribunal and the armed services, whereas women are more trusting of the Catholic church than men.

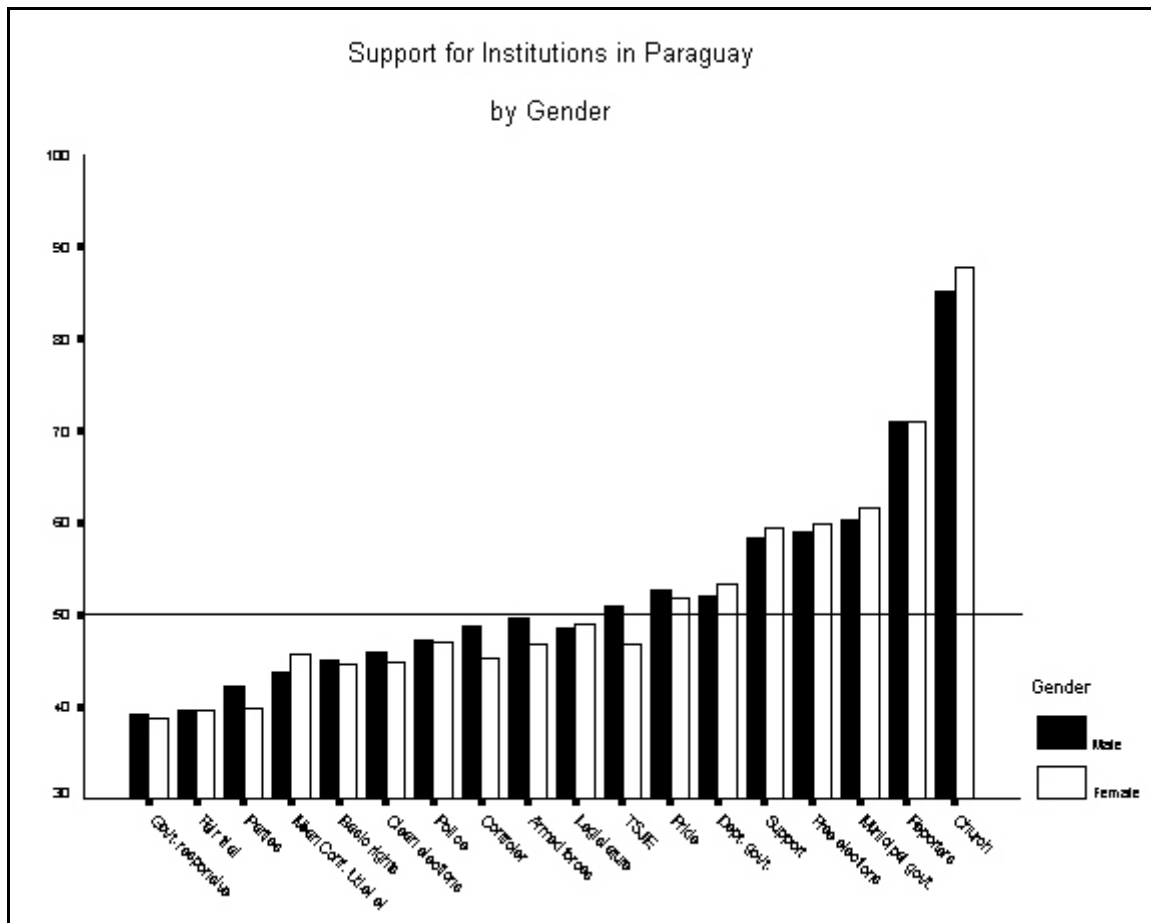


Figure 8

In contrast to gender, urban rural differences are very notable. As shown in Figure 9, support is higher in rural areas than in urban.

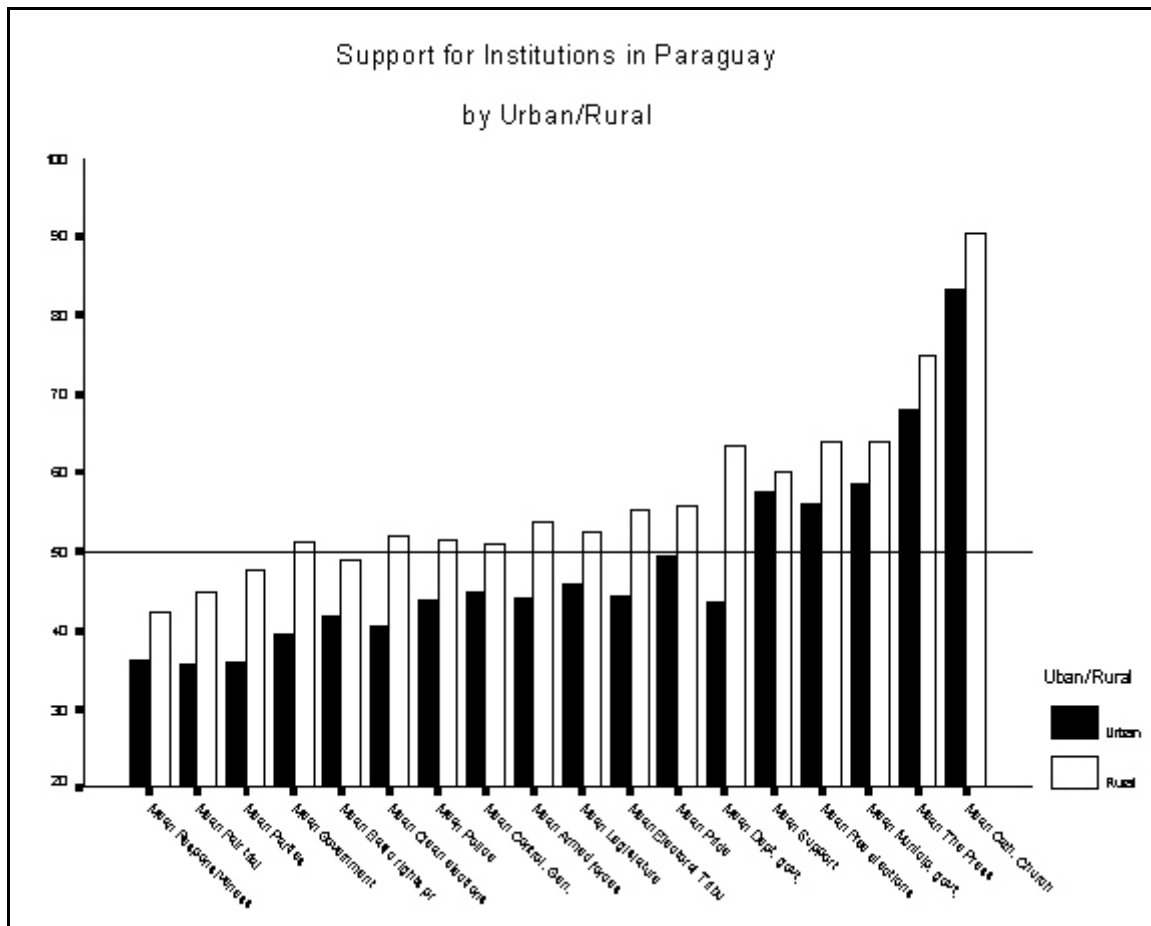
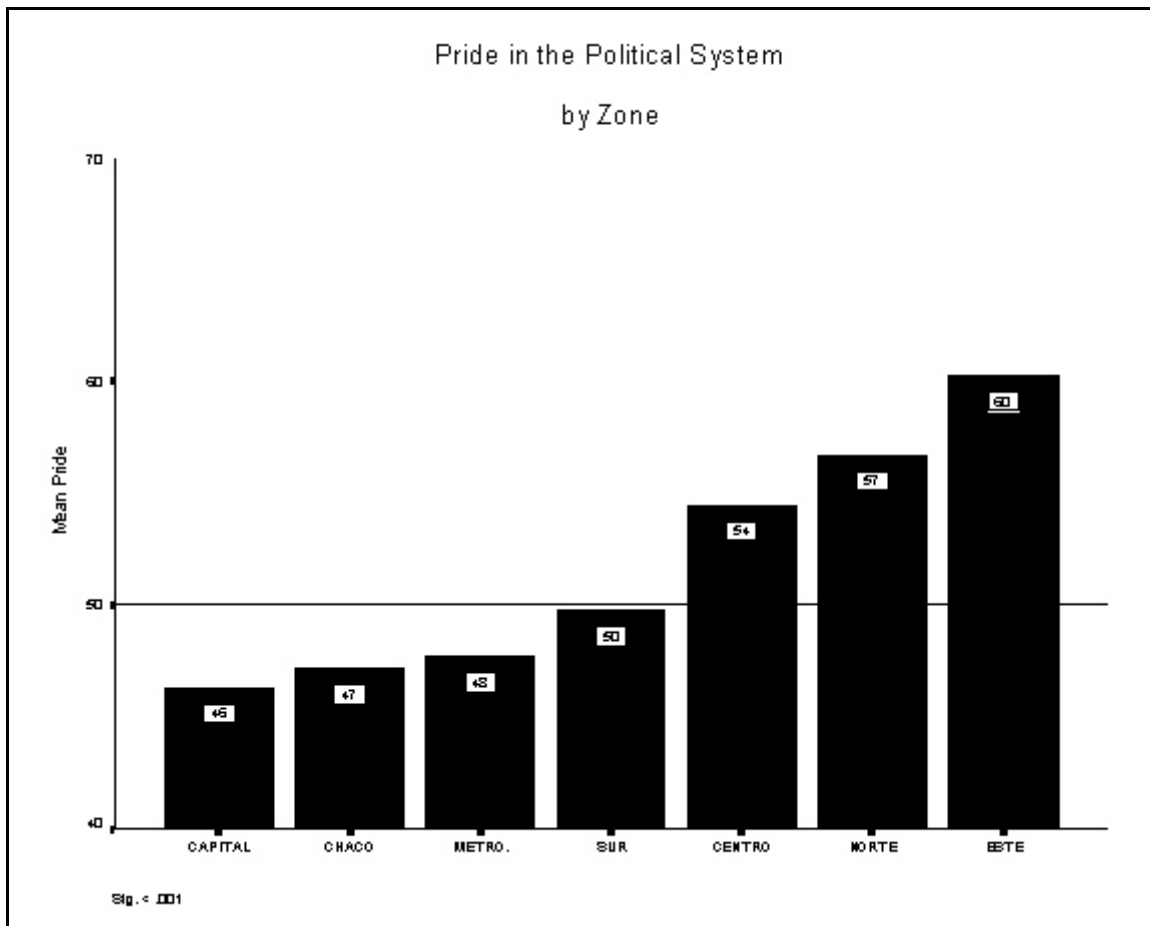
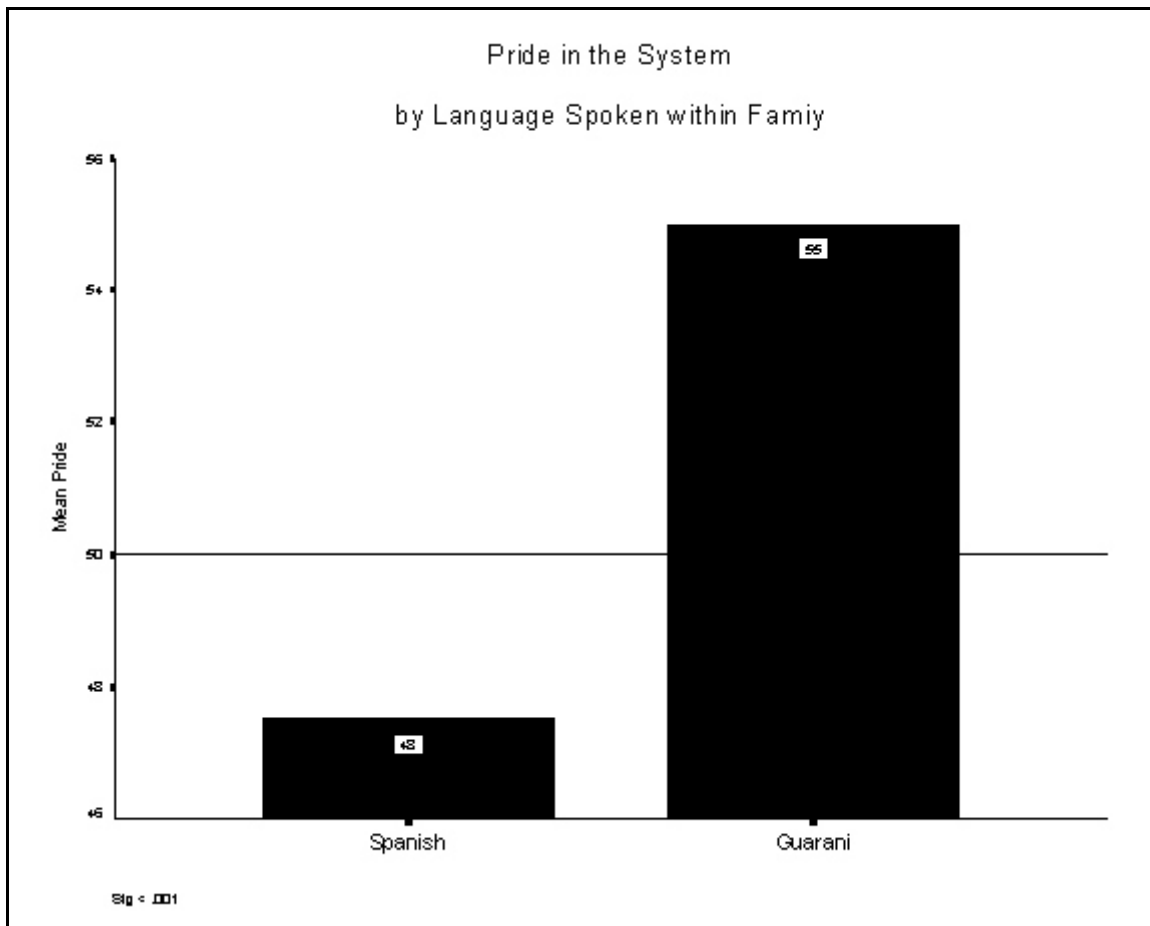


Figure 9

On the responsiveness variable alone (B26) in terms of the geographic zone, no significant difference emerged among the seven zones, even though Asunción was lower than the other areas. On the other hand, other measures of system support do show significant trends by region. For example, consider the key variable, “pride in the political system.” Figure 10 shows that Asunción and the Metropolitan area are considerably lower in pride than are the Northern and Eastern regions. The Chaco, too, is quite low, but the very small sample for that region (because of its small population size) suggests that the mean scores may not be completely reliable.

**Figure 10**

Language in Paraguay is an important social factor. As is well known, many Paraguayans are bi-lingual, speaking Spanish in the workplace and Guaraní at home. An examination of the relationship of language spoken and pride in the political system is shown in Figure 11. Those who are accustomed to speaking Guaraní in the home are significantly higher in their level of pride in the system than are those who speak Spanish at home.

**Figure 11**

Of course, these differences in zone and language also largely correspond to the urban/rural distinctions already noted. This leads one to suspect that some underlying factor associated with the rural/urban split might be accounting for system support in urban areas than in rural. Those factors are explored below.

Education levels vary a great deal from city to countryside in Paraguay. Urban education averages 9 years, whereas rural education averages 5 years. Education is also directly linked to language spoken in the home. Those who speak Spanish in the home average 10 years of education, whereas those who speak Guaraní average 6 years. One suspects, therefore, that the differences in urban/rural, zone and language use are all connected to the underlying variable of education, and it is education, in turn, that is having its impact on system support.

It is possible to test this assertion through the technique called “multiple regression.” This statistical technique allows the researcher to compare the impact of one variable, such as education, on another, such as pride in the system, while holding constant all others. The results of such an analysis found that when language, rural/urban residence and education are all included in a regression equation, only education had a significant impact on pride in the system. Thus, it is fair to conclude that the correlation of language and residence with system support are spurious, and it is education that really counts.

Figure 12 highlights the connection between education and support for the system, measured on the key “pride” item. The higher the level of education in Paraguay, the *lower* the support for the system. This, of course, is a troubling finding, one that has emerged before in countries such as Guatemala, but not in Costa Rica. An identical and also statistically significant difference emerged on the variable directly measuring government responsiveness (B26). Indeed, the same pattern emerges on nearly all of the system support measures, except for the Controller General, in which there are no differences by education and the police, in which the same pattern is found in the data, but the differences are not statistically significant. Later in this analysis political tolerance and education will be examined, and different patterns will be shown to emerge.

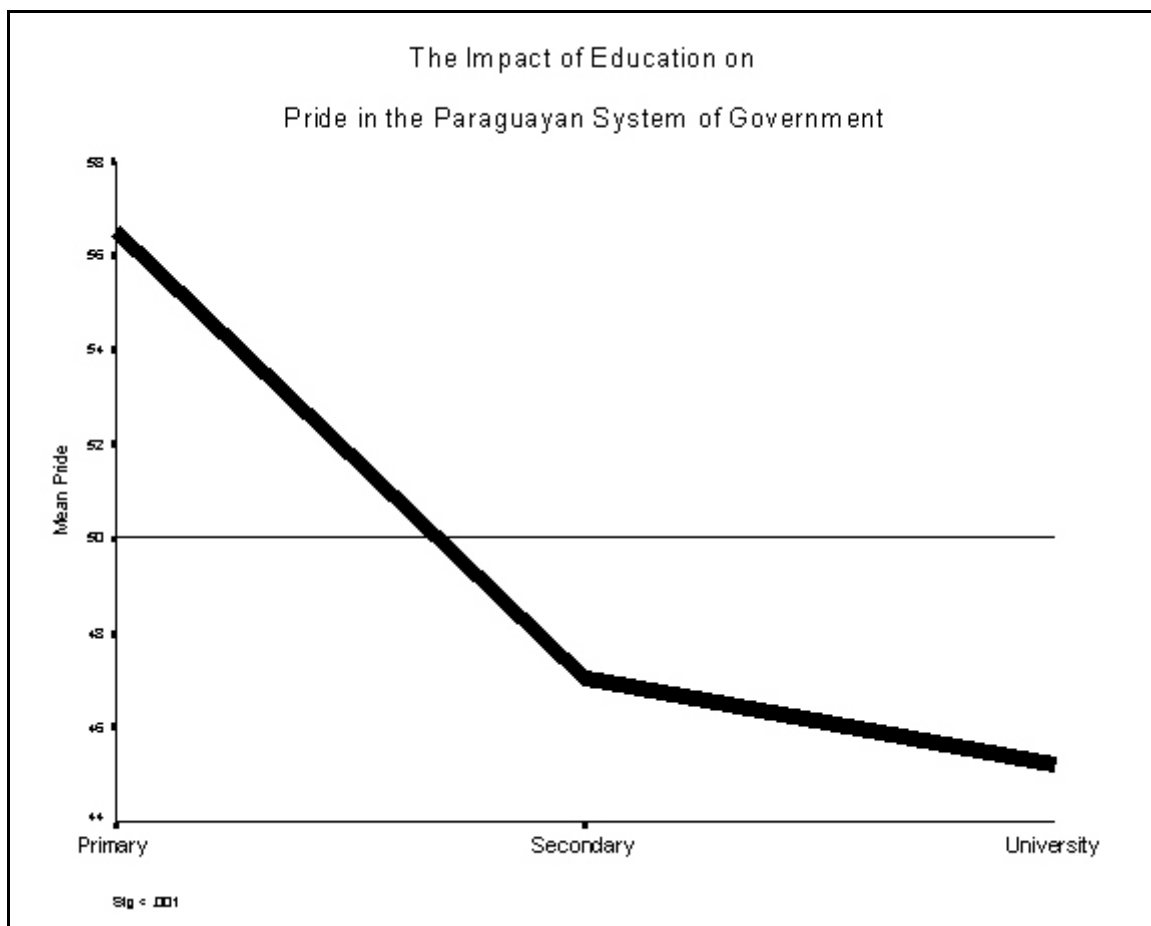


Figure 12

Education and income tend to go together, and therefore it is not surprising that system support in Paraguay declines with higher levels of income. Figure 13 shows that while the relationship is not completely linear, as income increases, pride in the system tends to decline. Yet, when wealth is entered into the multiple regression equation, it, too, become spurious, leaving only education to explain the linkage to low pride in the system. This means that once again, education turns out to be the primary determinant of system support in Paraguay.

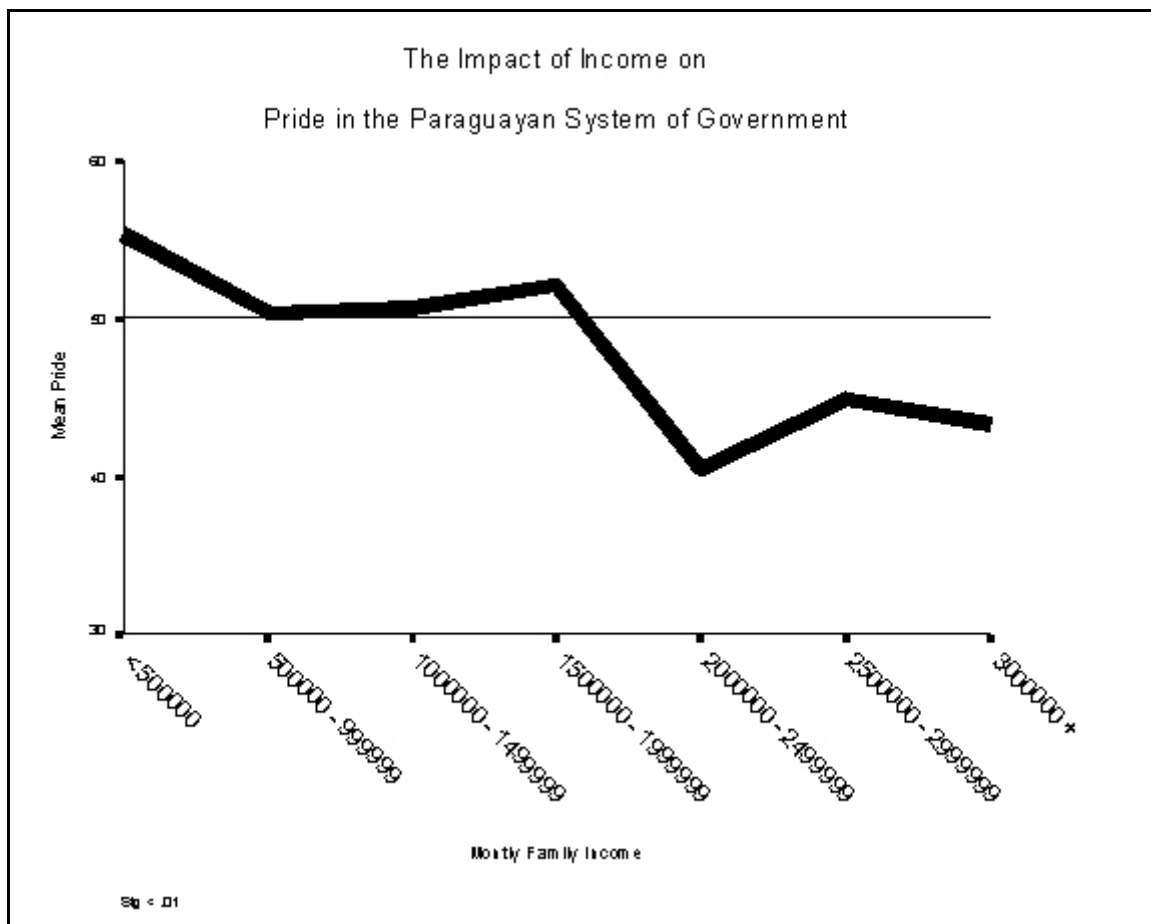


Figure 13

Further light can be shed on this important relationship between education and system support by showing that it is far more important than party identification. One might assume that those who voted for the party that won the most recent presidential election (the ANR, or Colorados) would believe that their political system is more responsive than those whose candidate lost the election. But as shown in Figure 14, only minor and statistically insignificant differences emerge. Indeed, those who supported the major minority party are slightly more likely to believe that the political system is responsive. The

conclusion, then, is that it is not partisan factors that are producing differences in the perception of the system but education.

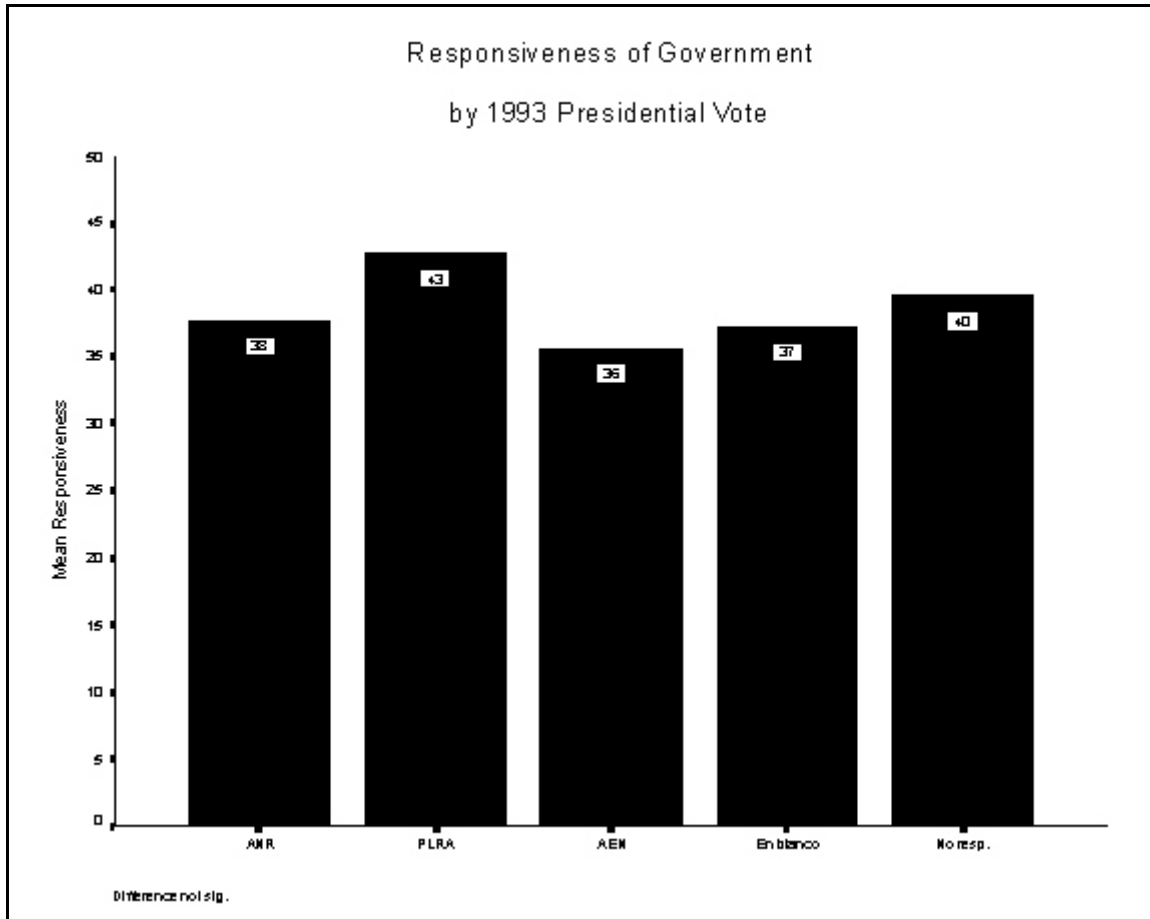


Figure 14

IR1: Electoral System Deemed Fair

The first intermediate result established by USAID is for the “electoral system to be deemed fair by political leaders, NGOs and representative citizen groups.” As noted in the August 5, 1996 memorandum by the author of this report to Barbara Kennedy, the national survey allows us to look at citizen perception of politics, including the electoral system, but the survey does not focus specifically on the various groups listed by AID (i.e., political leaders, NGOs and representatives of citizen groups). In order to obtain the views of those groups it would be necessary to conduct interviews with them, and to compare the results to those reported in this study of the Paraguayan citizenry. Nonetheless, the mass sample does allow us to examine important differences among the population.

The two basic items in this area have already been presented, and comparisons based on gender have already been made. These are items B24, “To what degree do you think the last elections were free, that is, the people could vote for the candidates of their choice?”, and B25, “To what degree do you think the last elections were clean, that is, without fraud (“sin trampas”)?”. There were no statistically significant differences by gender. In this analysis, therefore, we look first at the relationship of these variables to education, already shown to be the primary predictor of system support in Paraguay. But in addition, the questionnaire contains an entire series of items on voting behavior that are examined here.

The relationship between education and the perception of the degree to which the most recent elections in Paraguay were free and clean is shown in Figure 15. A number of important conclusions emerge. First, irrespective of level of education, Paraguayans believe that the most recent election was a free one, that is, that the election allowed people to vote for the candidate of their choice. Second, also irrespective of the level of education of the respondents, Paraguayans are far less sanguine about the extent to which the elections were clean and free of fraud. For all levels of education, on our scale of 0 to 100, Paraguayans averaged in the negative end of the continuum. Third, the relationship between the perception of the elections and education is the same that has been uncovered in the prior analyses of system support; higher levels of education are related to a reduced sense of the freedom and fairness of the elections, although even at the highest level of education, the elections were considered free. The differences in levels of education produce statistically significant ($< .001$) differences in perception of the elections.

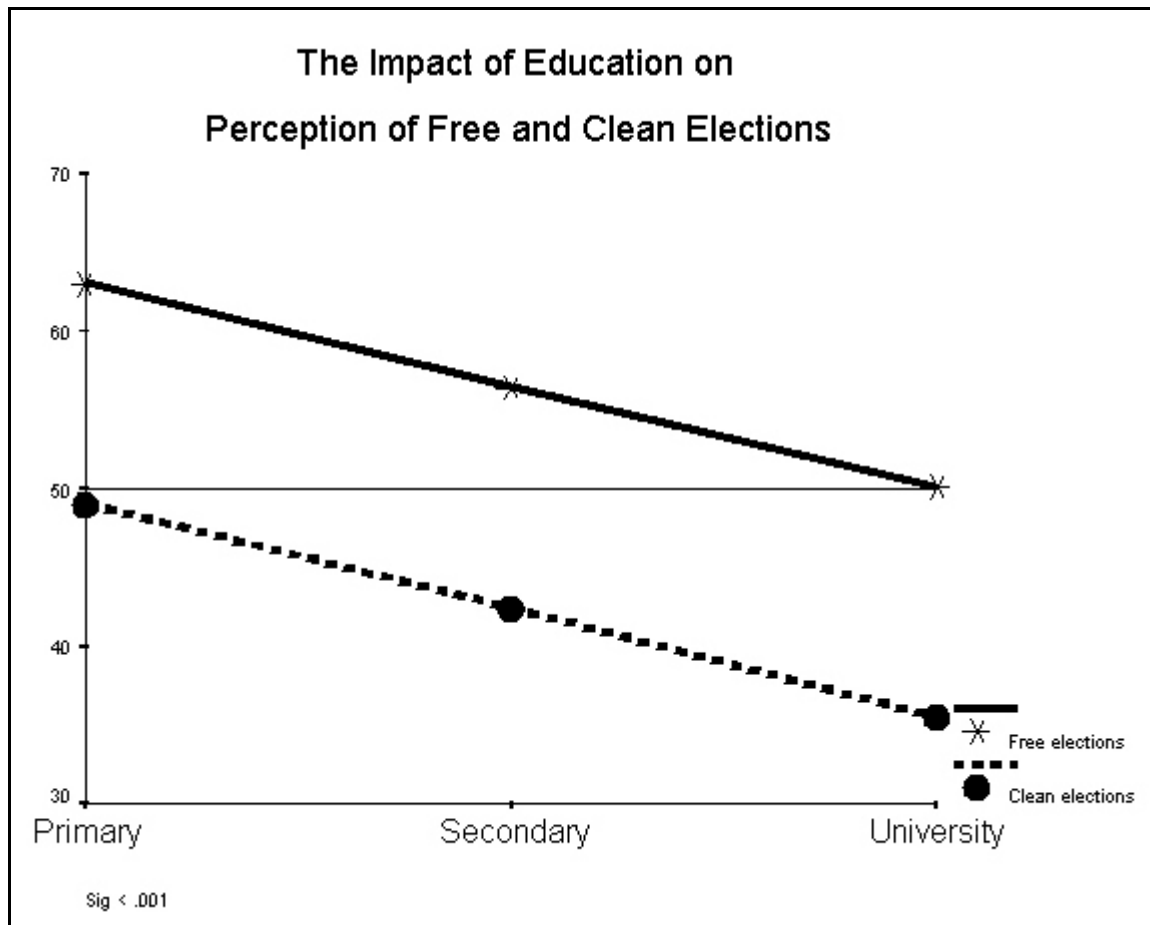


Figure 15

Perceptions of the extent to which the elections were free and clean also varied significantly by the party preferences of the voters. As shown in Figure 16, statistically significant differences emerge among those who voted for the ANR and PRLA versus those who voted for the AEN. It is also important to observe that those who voted “en blanco” or who did not answer this question (many of whom were probable non-voters), were less likely to believe that the elections were free than those who vote for the ANR or the PRLA. That is, those who voted a null ballot or who would not say for whom they voted, were less likely to agree with the statement that the people were able to vote for the candidate of their choice. On the other hand, these same individuals were not less likely to believe in that the elections were clean.

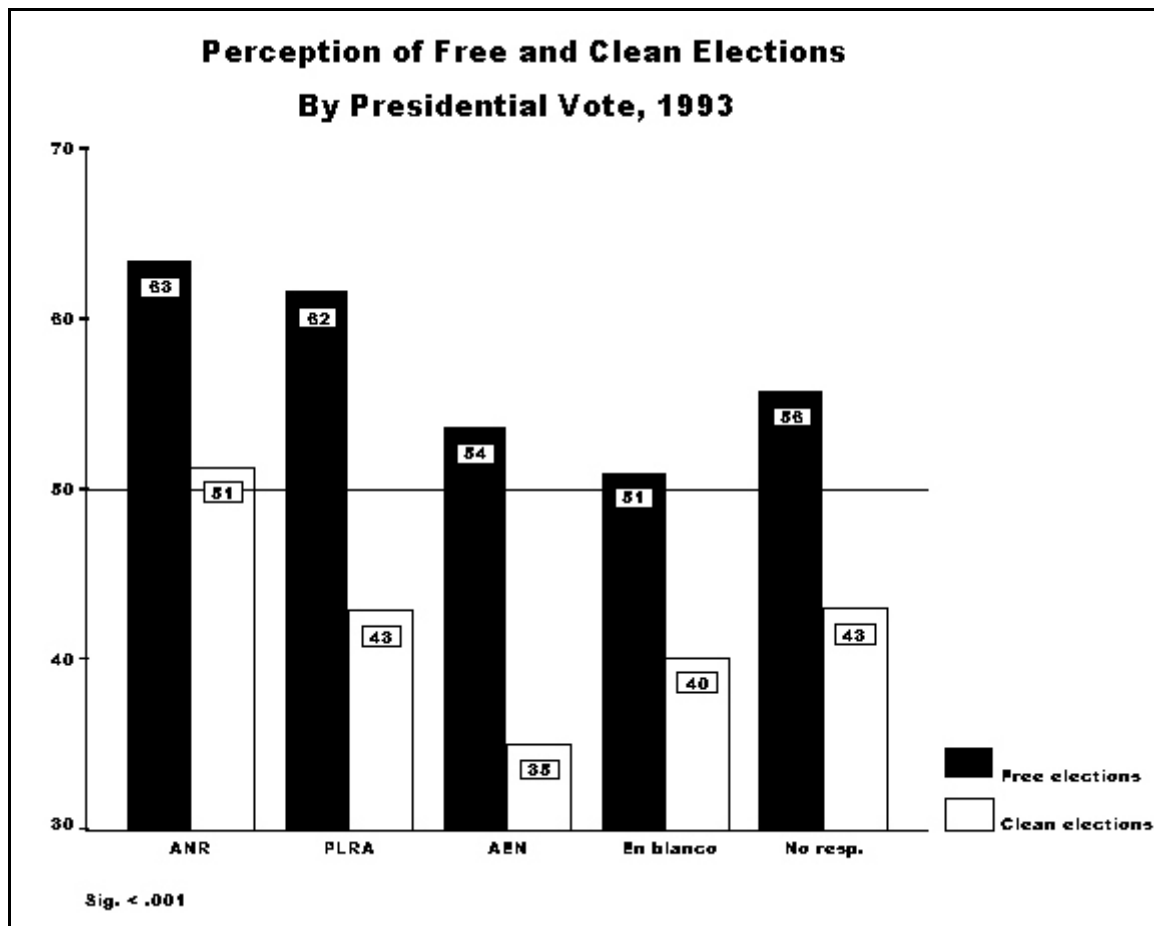


Figure 16

zone, much the way that system support varied by zone, largely influenced by the impact of education. Figure 17 shows that the capital city and metropolitan zones have the most negative perceptions of the electoral process, whereas the most positive perceptions were in the North and East. Perceptions of “free” and “clean” generally coincided, except in the Chaco, but, as noted before, the small sample in this zone makes the mean score unreliable.²⁵

²⁵The simple correlation (Pearson's r) between B24 and B25 is .61, sig. <.001.

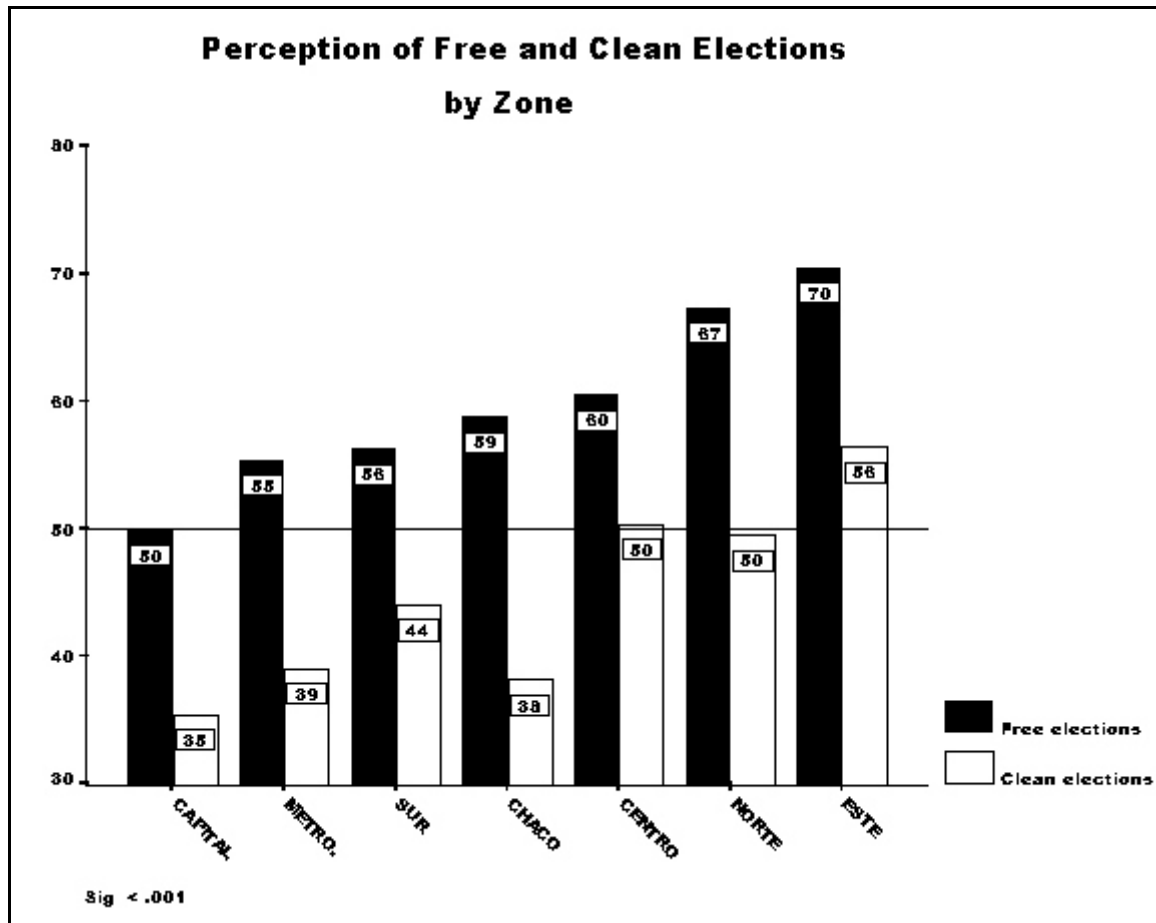
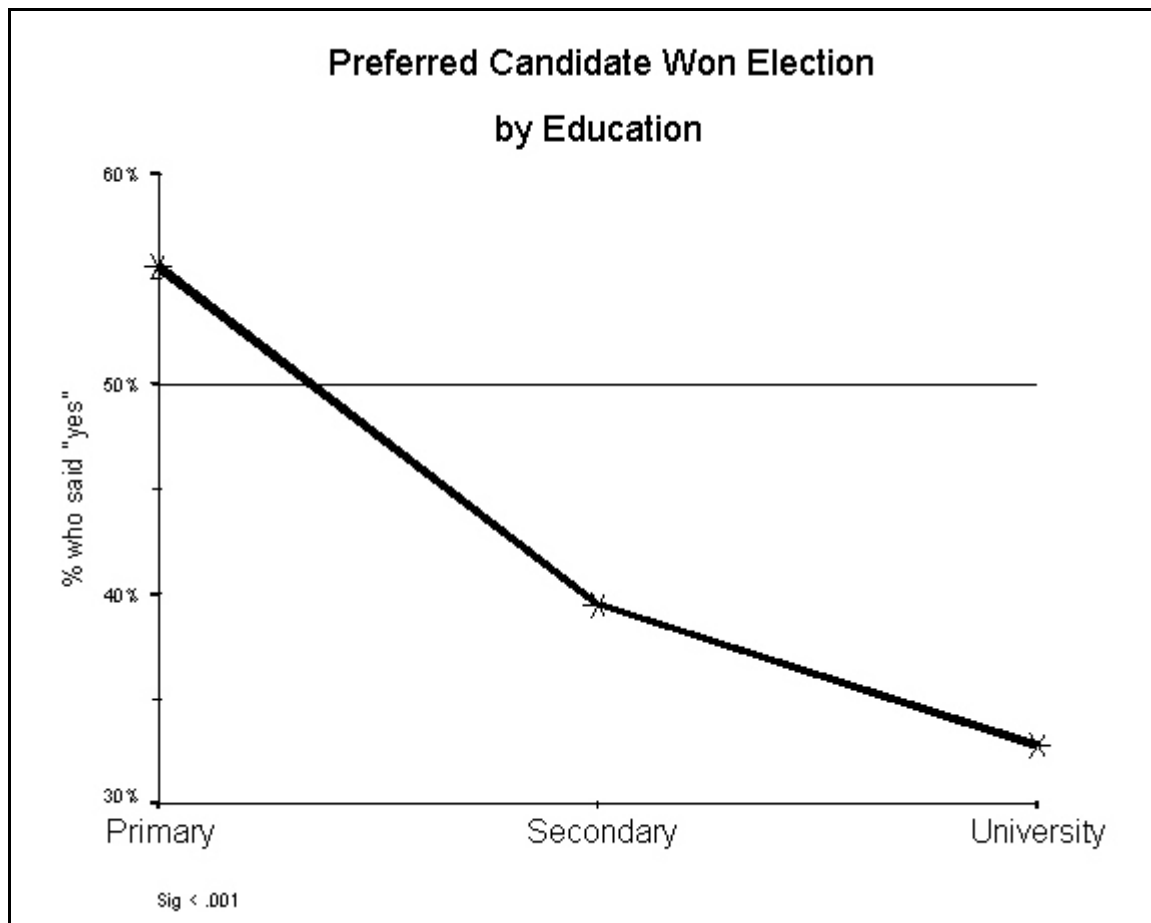


Figure 17

As noted, the questionnaire included another set of items directly examining voting behavior and perceptions of the election. This is the “VB” series, and contains an item (VB11) that directly measures IR1: “Do you think that the candidates who won the last elections in 1993 were the ones who were really preferred by the people?” This item was scored as a “yes/no” response, so the reporting of this item is in terms of the percent who agreed with it, i.e., those who think that the elections were fair. Figure 18 shows the familiar pattern, with those with very little education expressing far more confidence in the outcome of the election than those who have higher education. Among secondary and university educated Paraguayans, only a minority believe that the election produced victory for the candidate preferred by the people; for those with university education, only about 1/3 of the population trusted the outcome of the election to reflect popular will.

**Figure 18**

While these figures are disturbing, one must recall that free and fair elections are not a well established tradition in Paraguay. Indeed, for many, many years, under the Stroessner dictatorship, elections were manipulated in the extreme. The 1993 election was only the second election in memory (the first being in 1989) in which anything resembling a free and fair election had been held. The 1989 election was considered by many to be "free but not fair," whereas the 1993 election was better on both counts, but still suffered from many defects.²⁶

²⁶ For a detailed discussion of the 1993 elections see Marcial A. Riquelme, *Negotiating Democratic Corridors in Paraguay: Report of the Latin American Studies Association Delegation to Observe the 1993 Paraguayan National Elections* (Pittsburgh, PA.: Latin American Studies Association, 1994).

The survey data provide us with a remarkably accurate picture of the election results, increasing our confidence in the overall validity of the survey. Often, after an election, citizen recall of their voting behavior is distorted. In many surveys, a substantially higher or lower proportion of respondents report their voting behavior than the official statistics reveal. Figure 19 shows that among those in the survey who were eligible to vote in 1993,²⁷ 70.2% cast their ballots, whereas according to the official returns, 69.0% did so.²⁸ The survey was less accurate, however, in reporting partisan preferences, as many more of those in the survey report having voted for the victorious candidate than actually did so.

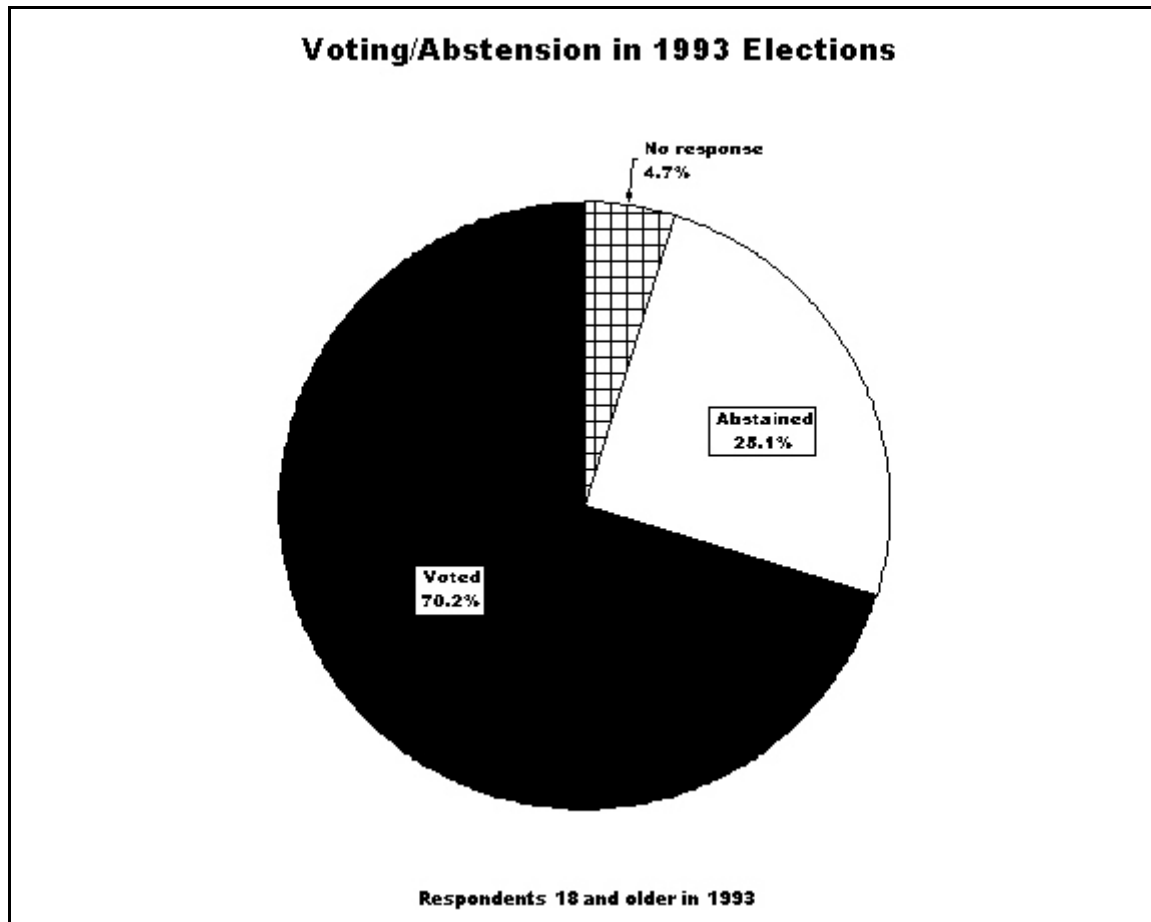


Figure 19

The overwhelming reason given by Paraguayans for not voting in the 1993 election was their failure to be properly registered. Figure

uayans for not voting in the 1993 election was their failure to be properly registered. Figure

²⁷According to Article 120 of the 1992 Paraguayan Constitution, the voting age was set at 18. See Víctor Jacinto Flecha, Carlos Martini and Jorge Silvero Salgueiro, *Autoritarismo, transición y Constitución en el Paraguay*. Asunción: Base ECTA, 1993, Apéndice II, p. 169.

²⁸See Riquelme, 1994, p. 51.

20 shows that various reasons related to registration (not having a *cédula* [a requirement for registration], not being on the electoral role (*padrón electoral*, and simply not being registered) is the reason given by 72.5 percent of those interviewed who were eligible to register for the 1993 elections. One important factor in 1993 turnout was the comparatively low registration. In 1989, for example, 2.2 million Paraguayans were registered to vote, whereas in 1993, this figure dropped to 1.7 million. The data in the survey suggest that the level of abstention is largely a matter of technical problems related to the registration process. Only 11.4% of those who did not vote, did so because they say that they did not believe in the election process. But this represents only 35 cases in the sample of 1,450 respondents. Overall, abstention had little systematic relationship to the system support variables. Of those who said that they did not believe in the elections, they were somewhat less likely to believe that the Paraguayan government responds to the needs of the people (B26). Less than 1% of the respondents attributed non-voting to the fear of violence and/or a lack of personal security.

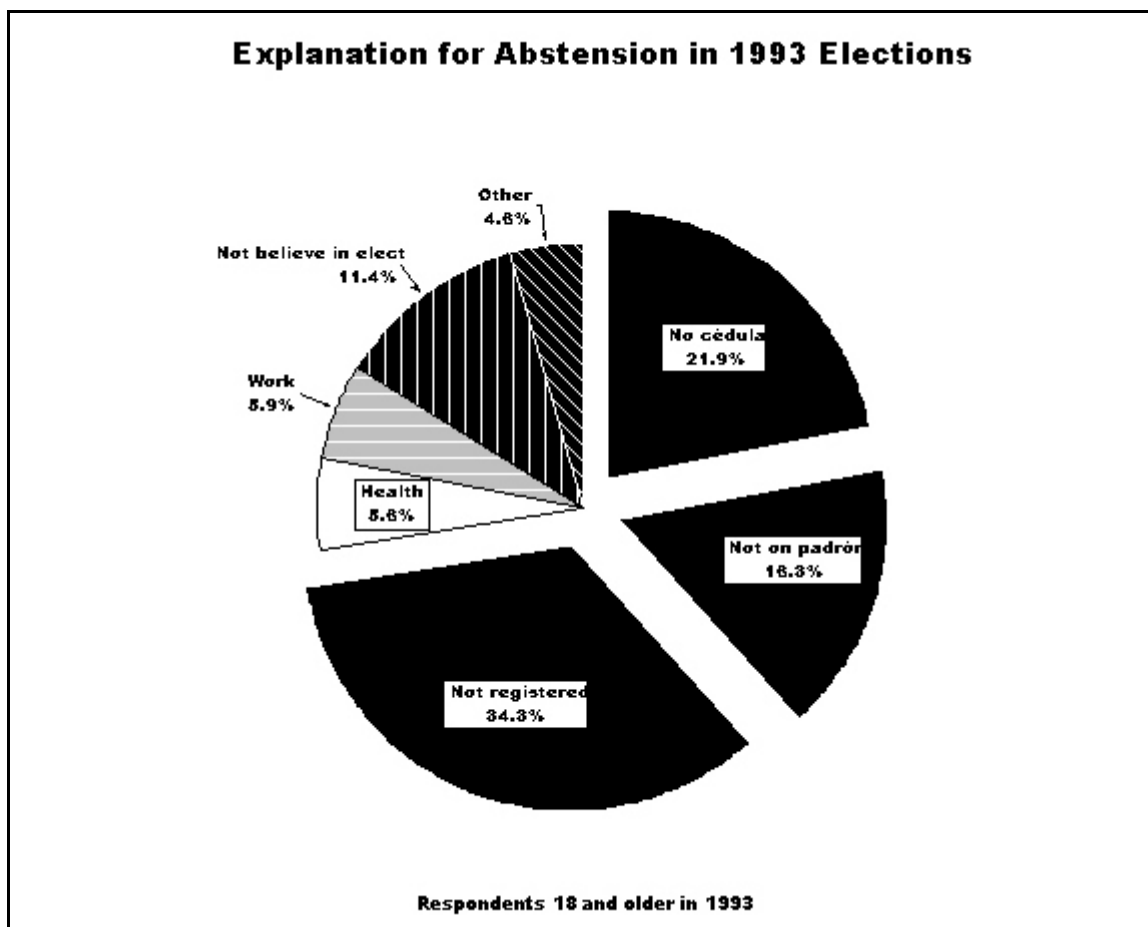


Figure 20

Registration and voting were influenced by education, rural/urban residence and gender. But when these three variable are considered simultaneously (in a multiple regression analysis) only gender had any significant impact. Figure 21 shows that males were significantly more likely than females to register and to vote.

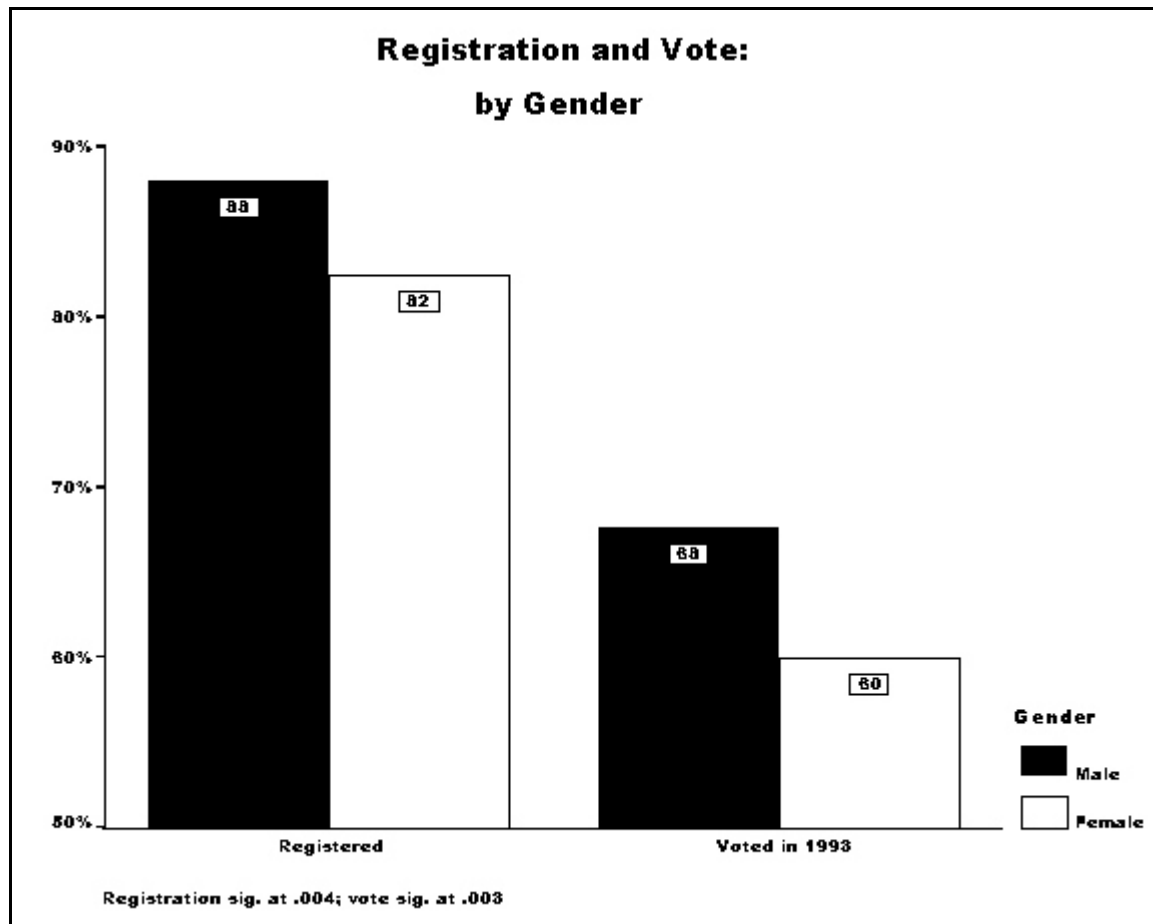


Figure 21

In addition to the act of voting itself, in a democracy citizens often attempt to persuade others how to vote. We refer to this form of behavior as "political communication." It signals active involvement in a campaign beyond the act of voting itself. Figure 22 shows that four-fifths of Paraguayans do not engage in this form of political activism, an apparent indication of low levels of political participation. In comparative perspective, however, Paraguayans are actually significantly ($< .001$) more active in political communication than Salvadorans or Nicaraguans, as is shown in Figure 23. It is appropriate to revise the view obtained from looking at Paraguay alone to conclude that actually Paraguayans are relatively active in political communication.

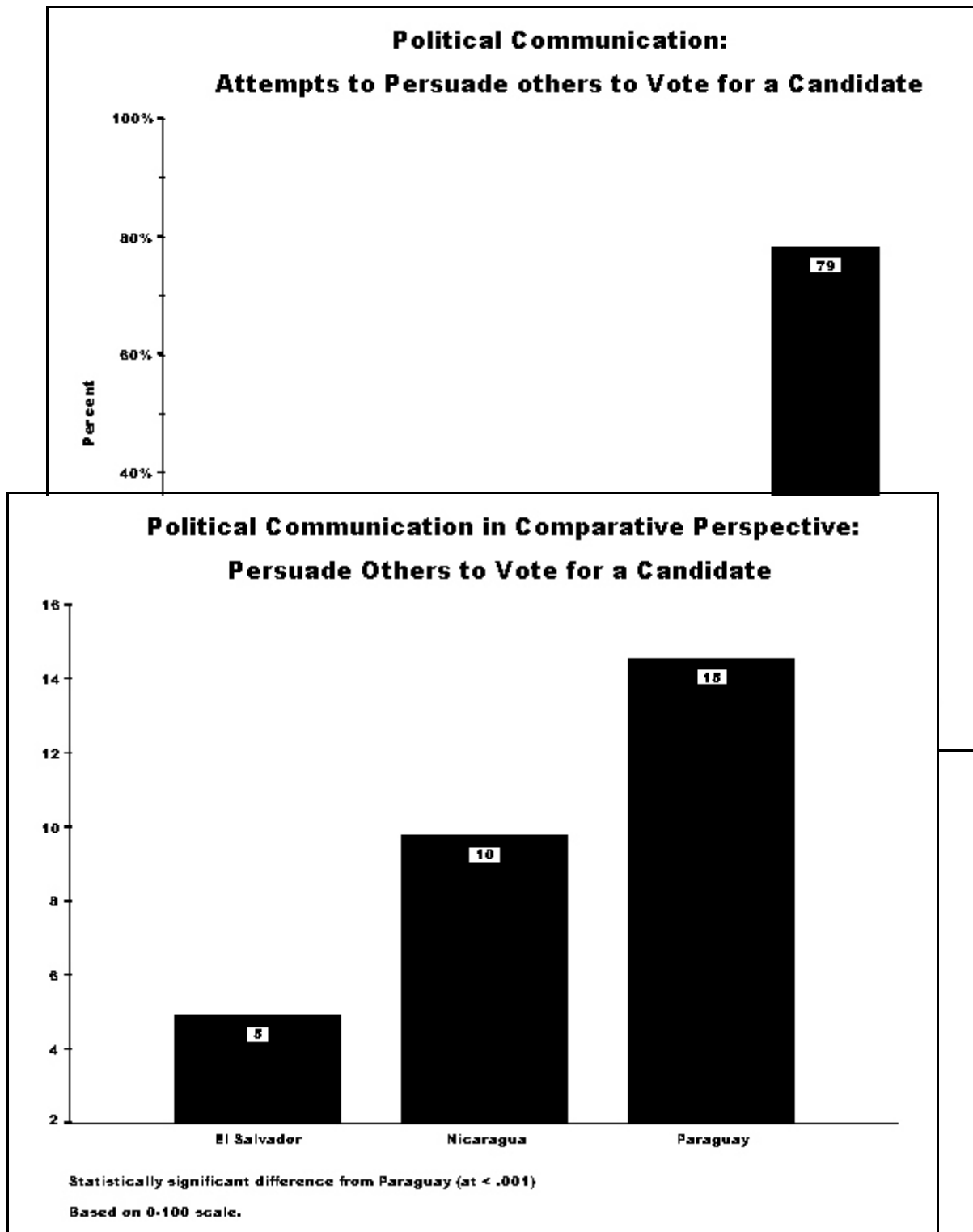


Figure 24

G

ender also plays an important role in political communication. As is shown in Figure 25, males are more likely than females to try to persuade others to vote for a particular candidate.

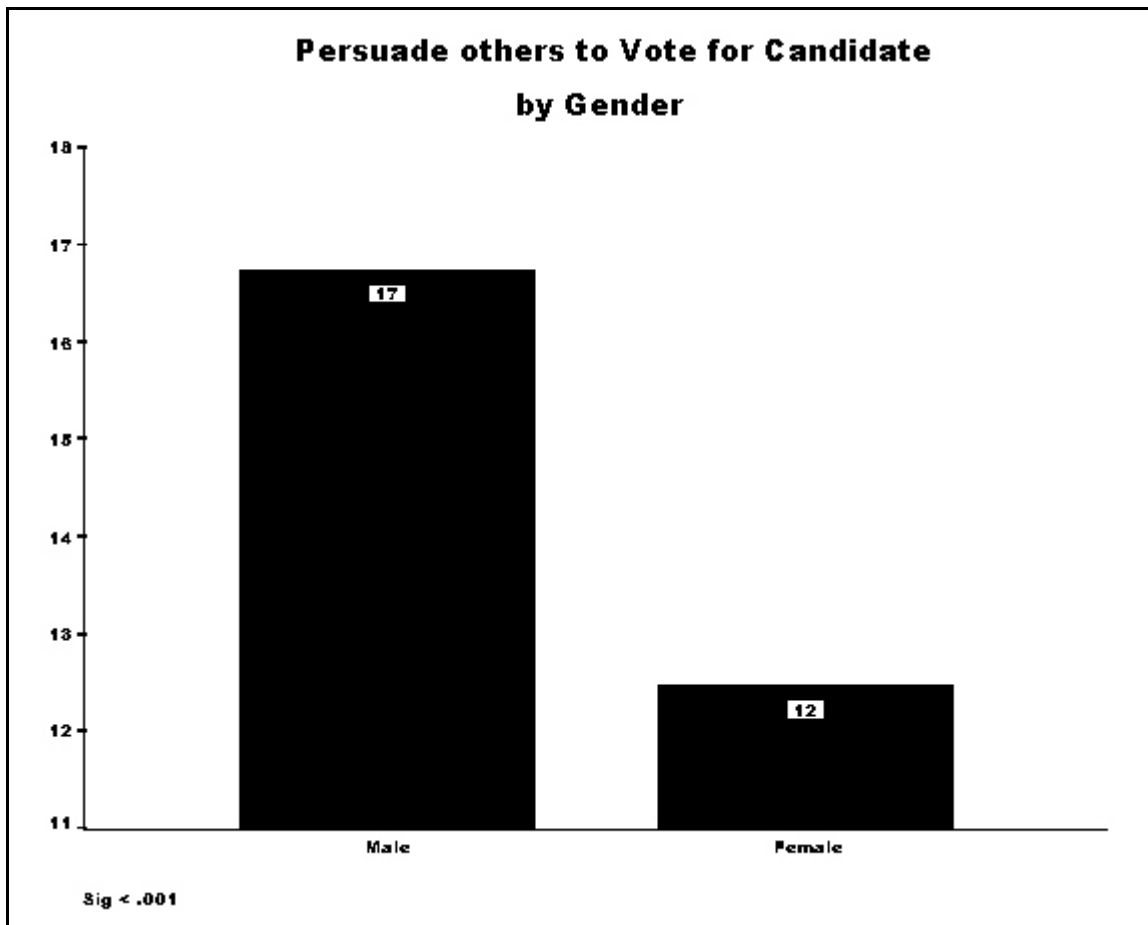


Figure 25

IR2: Citizen Perception of Effectively Functioning Subnational Governments

Decentralization of central governments has become a goal of many nations throughout the world. In Latin America in particular, extensive efforts are underway to bring government closer to the people they are supposed to serve.²⁹ The survey asked a number of questions regarding citizen perception of local government. These questions attempt to deal with three aspects of local government: a) participation, b) satisfaction, and c) legitimacy.

In Paraguay there are two levels of subnational government: local and departmental. While these levels have existed for most of the twentieth century, local control has been practically non-existent. Then, in the early 1990s, constitutional reforms changed all of this. At the level of the department, the governorship became an elected position for the first time, and a new departmental legislatures (Juntas Departamentales) were established as locally elected bodies. At the level of the municipality, where locally elected Juntas Municipales already existed, the “intendente” (mayor) became an elected office for the first time. Under the new Constitution, Departmental government has representation in the national Cámara de Diputados.³⁰ In the analysis presented here, the focus is first on municipal government, since it is at that level that comparable data exist for El Salvador, Nicaragua, countries used earlier in this report for reference points. Since none of those countries has elected departmental governments, comparable data at that level are not available.

Municipal Government

The first comparisons are with citizen participation in municipal meetings. As is shown in Figure 26, participation in such meetings, measured by NP1, is far higher in

²⁹For a detailed account of local government in Latin America, including Paraguay, see R. Andrew Nickson, *Local Government in Latin America* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995).

³⁰For a detailed discussion of decentralization in Paraguay see *Descentralización, democracia y modernización municipal*, Víctor Jacinto Flecha (ed.) (Asunción: Ediciones y Arte, 1995).

Paraguay than it is in either El Salvador or Nicaragua. Indeed, it is higher than studies have previously found in any of the six countries in Central America.³¹

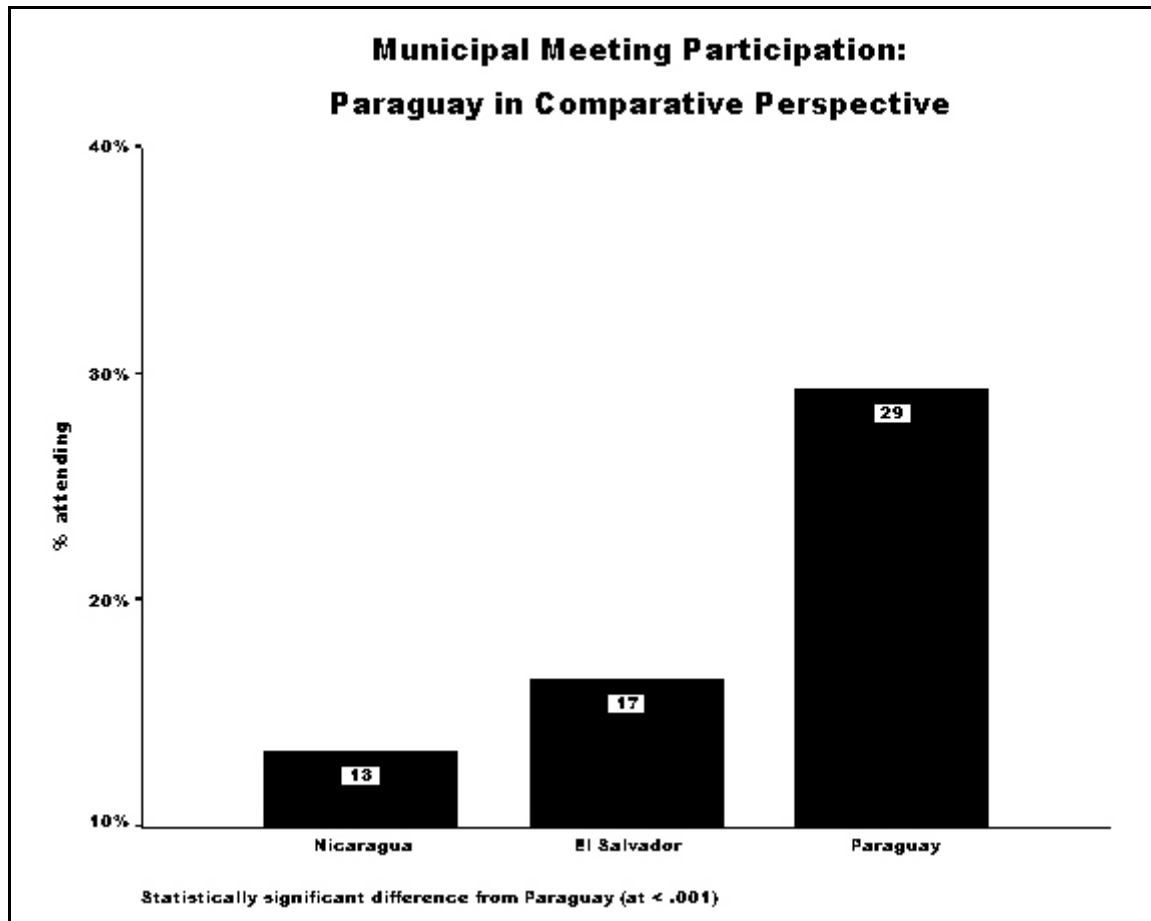


Figure 26

Within Paraguay, substantial differences emerge in the level of participation at municipal meetings. As shown in Figure 27, attendance in Asunción was half that of less urban areas. This is a common pattern, also found in much of Central America. Local

³¹For comparisons see Mitchell A. Seligson, *Central Americans View Their Local Governments*, Report to USAID, Regional Office for Urban Development and Housing (RHUDO) (Guatemala City, Guatemala, 1994).

government is far more salient for those living in smaller towns and villages than in the bustling metropolitan areas of Latin America.

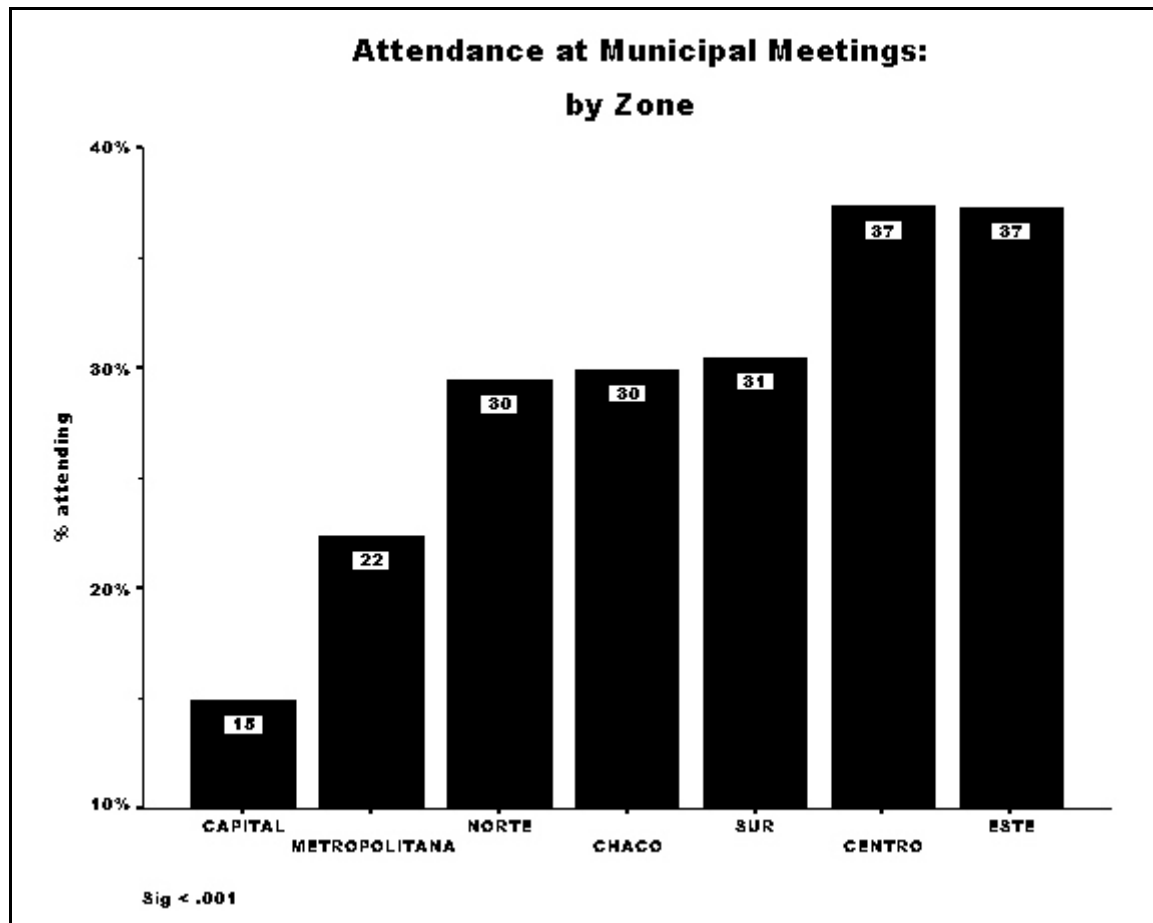


Figure 27

Attendance not only varies by zone, but it also varies by gender. Figure 28 shows that for every region *except* Asunción, females participate less than males.

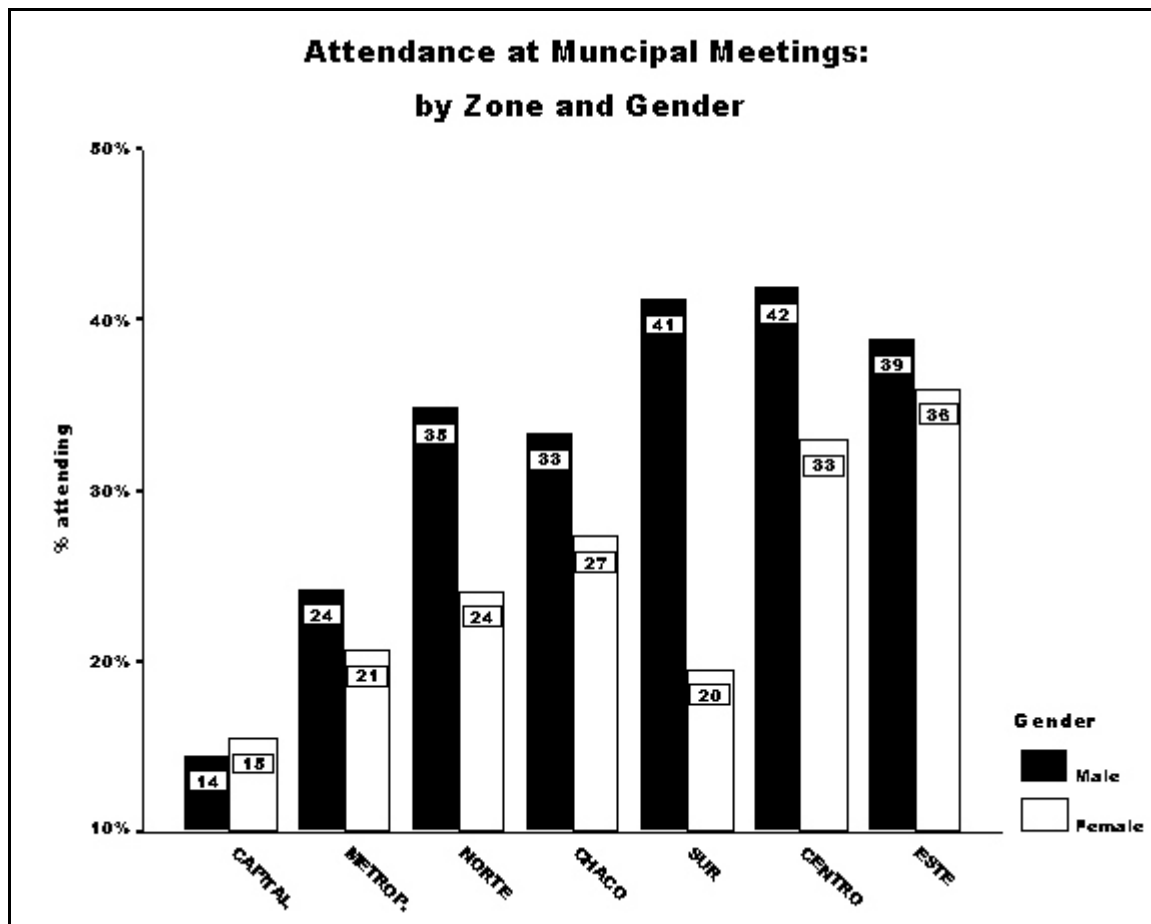


Figure 28

Attendance at municipal government meetings is a limited indicator of political participation since attendance can be completely passive. A more active and politically meaningful form of participation is demand-making of local officials, as measured by NP2. As shown in Figure 29, local demand-making in Paraguay also exceeds levels in El Salvador and Nicaragua (Sig. < .001).

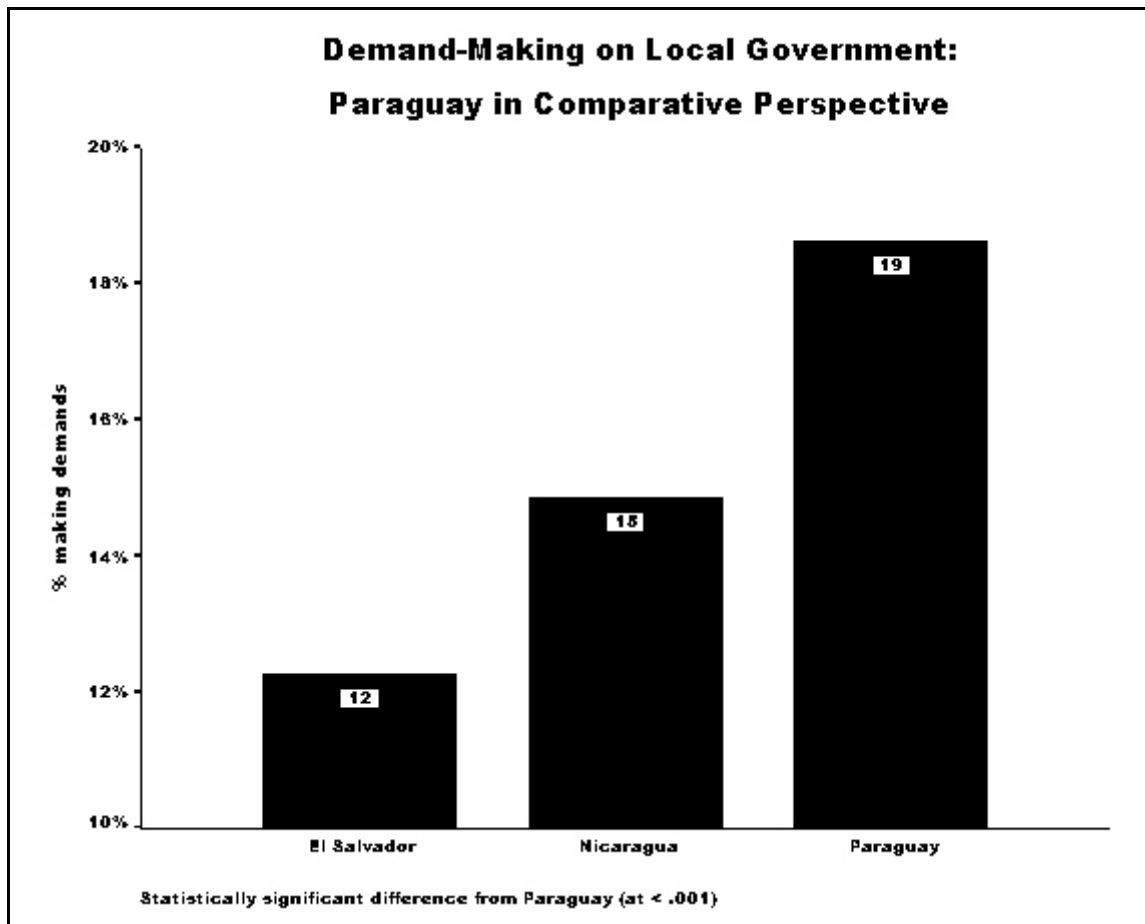


Figure 29

Prior research has shown that satisfaction with

th local government is very important since it has been found to be directly linked to system support at the national level, whereas participation in local government has no direct relationship to such satisfaction.³² In the Paraguay questionnaire, we asked those who had made a demand on local government if they were satisfied with the outcome (NP2A). The results show that 53.% were satisfied, and the remainder dissatisfied. In effect, just about as many Paraguayans who made demands on local government were satisfied as were dissatisfied by the response received. There was no statistically significant difference by gender, and only minor variation by region and education.

A broader item measuring citizen satisfaction with local government is SGL1. In contrast to the prior item, which was only asked of those respondents who had made demands on the municipality, this item asks: "Would you say that the services that the

³²See Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova M., *El Salvador: De la guerra a la paz, una cultura política en transición* (San Salvador: IDELA y FUNDAUNGO, 1995).

municipality are giving are excellent, bodes fair, poor or very bad?” Paraguayans are significantly mor satisfied with their local governments than are Salvadorans or Nicaraguans, although in absolute terms, the differences are not large, as is shown in Figure 30.

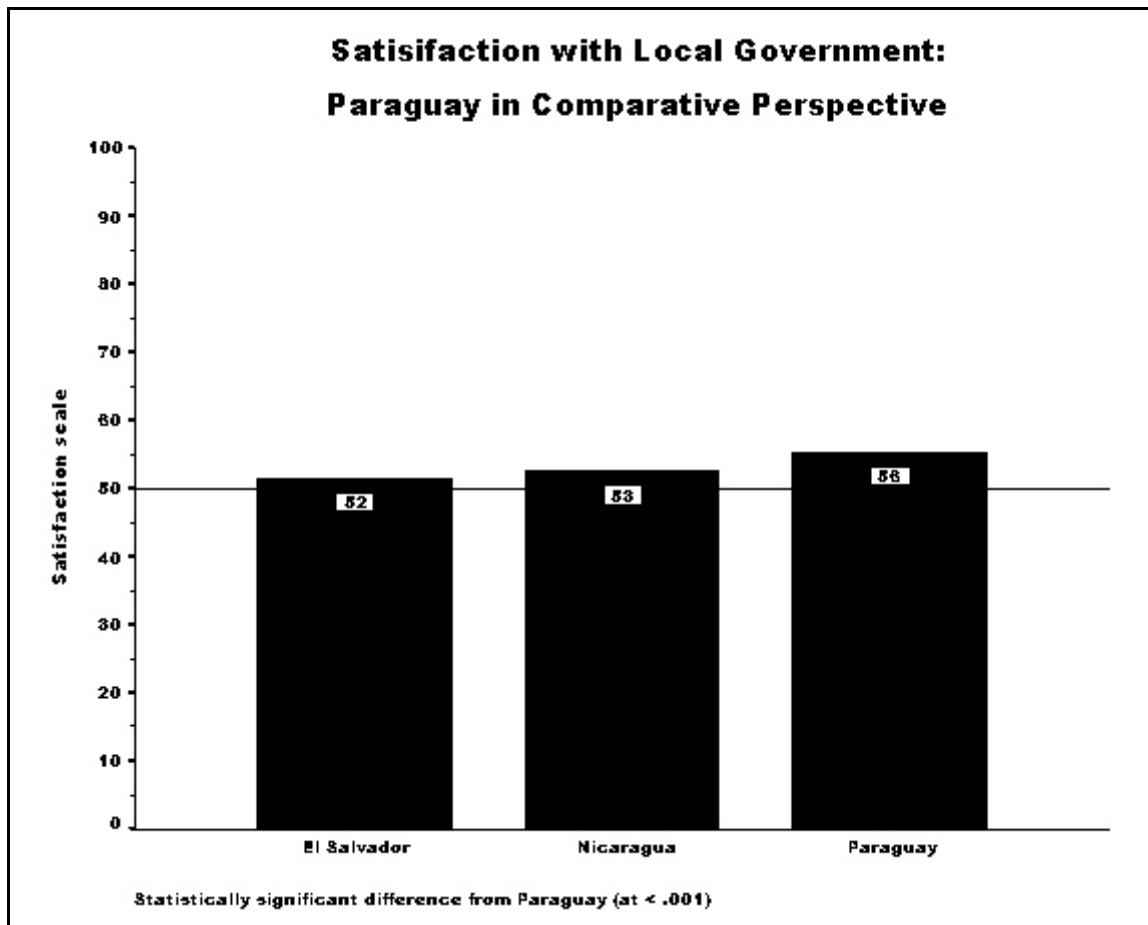


Figure 30

We can examine satisfaction with local government in more detail by looking at the response categories in Paraguay. Figure 31 shows that responses to this item closely follow the normal curve, except that a far higher proportion of respondents selected the “good” response than the “poor” response. The “excellent” and “good” responses far exceed the negative responses.

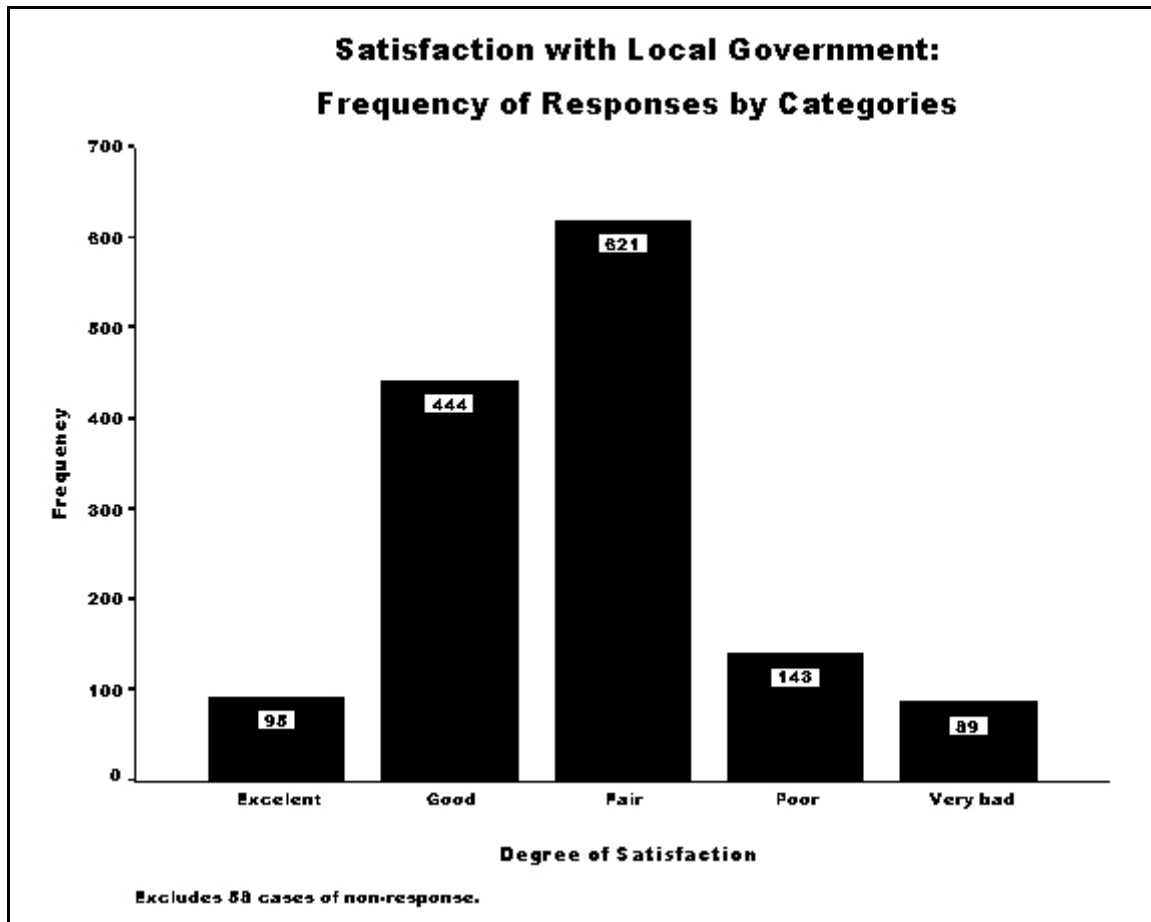


Figure 31

Within Paraguay, no significant differences emerged on satisfaction with local government by gender, education or by geographic zone. There are, however, clear and direct linkages with system support at the national level. Figure 32 shows that as satisfaction with local government increases, support for national level government (B6) also increases, with the difference being statistically significant. This same pattern emerges for the broad array of system support measures used in this study (the “B series”).³³ This certainly is an important finding, and one that is identical findings in prior research in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Apparently, when local officials are

³³The uptick for the category “bueno,” higher than excellent, was also a general pattern, and may be a function of some subtle linguistic phenomenon not apparent in the data analysis.

able to increase satisfaction in local government, satisfaction with national government also increases.³⁴

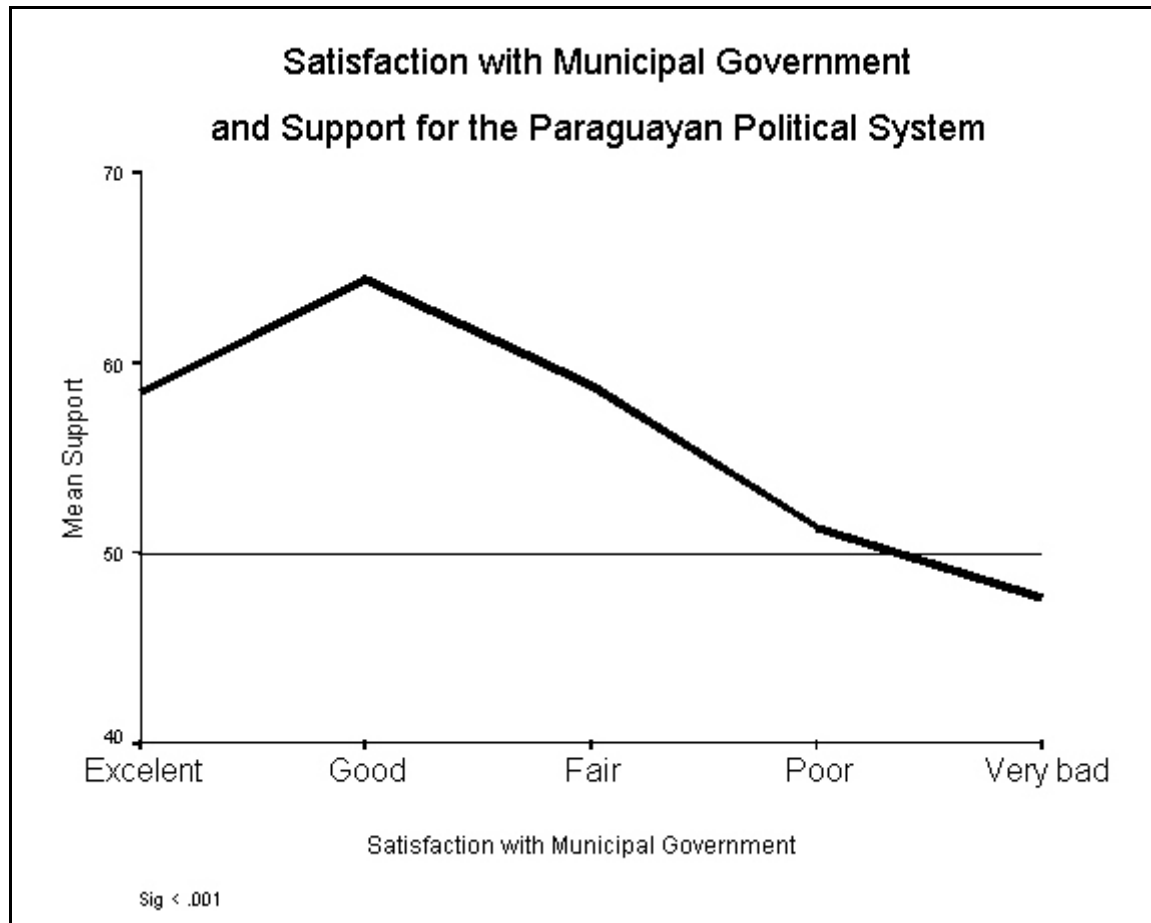
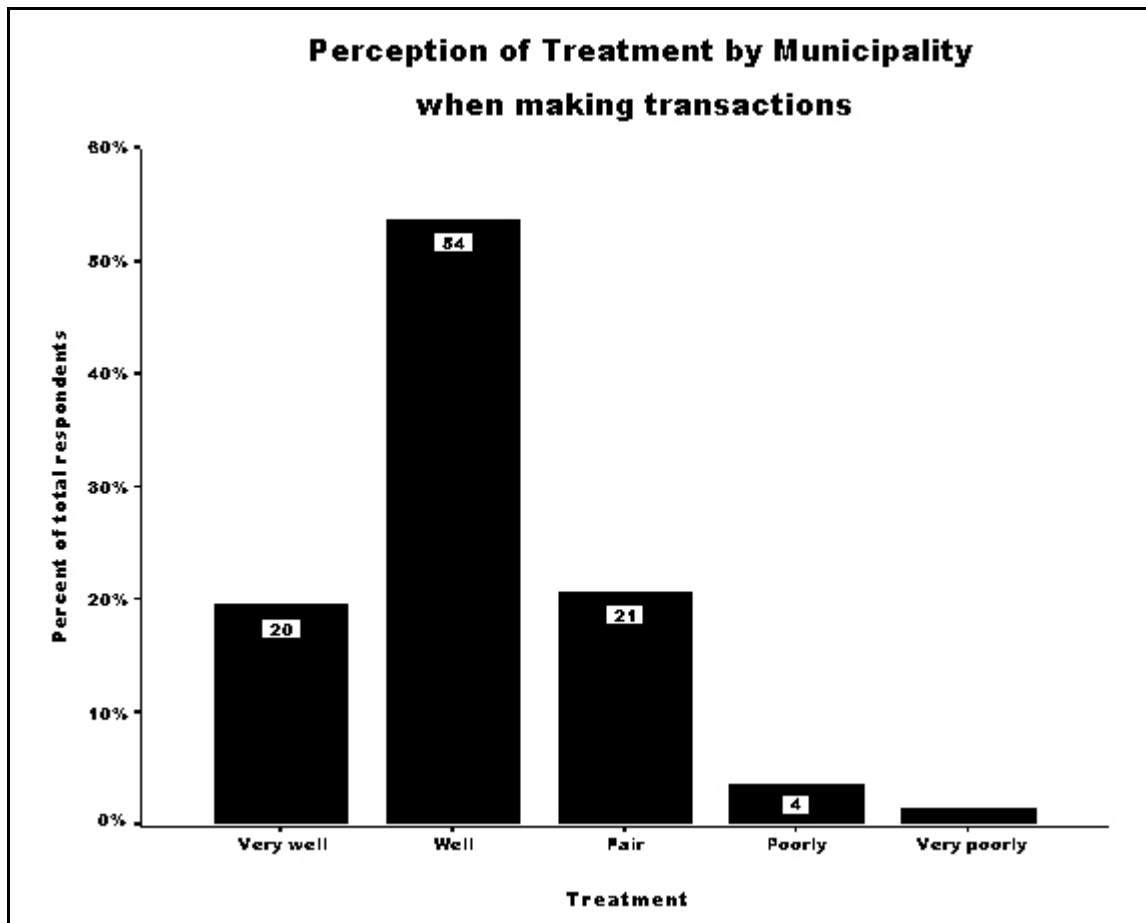


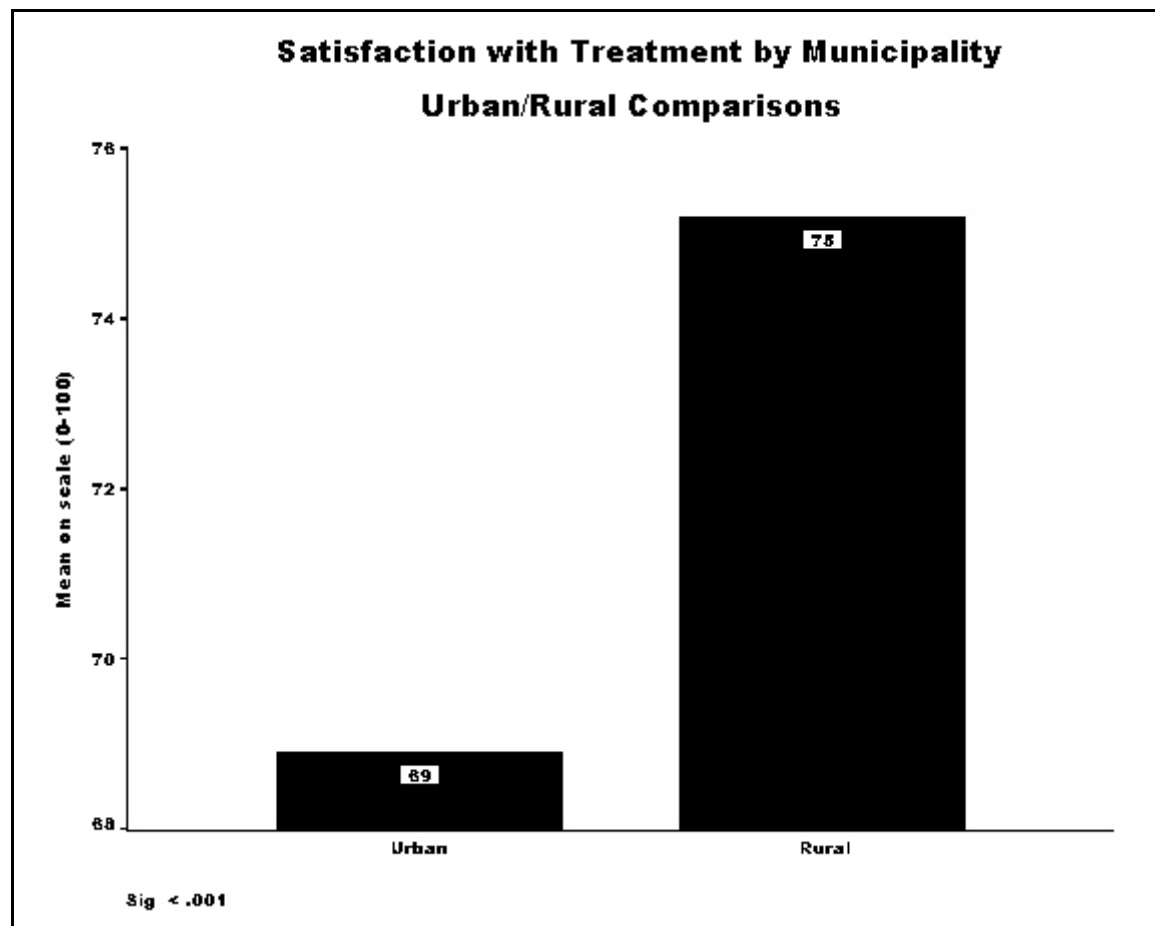
Figure 32

The questionnaire probed satisfaction more deeply in an area that is often frustrating in Latin America: carrying out transactions, such as paying fees, requesting permission, etc. In Paraguay, satisfaction is surprisingly high, as shown in Figure 33. Overwhelmingly, citizens are satisfied with the treatment they receive from local officials and employees.

³⁴Complex statistical analysis (Two-stage least squares) has shown that the direction of causality is largely from local to national.

**Figure 33**

While national levels of satisfaction with treatment by local government is high, it is even higher in rural areas than in urban. Perhaps the slower pace and more personal nature of life in rural Paraguay is responsible for this difference. While the differences are statistically significant, however, in absolute terms they are not very great on the scale of 0-100 used for this item. The results are presented in Figure 34.

**Figure 34**

The final area of analysis of local government is an attempt to measure its comparative legitimacy vis à vis the national government. The survey contains three items in this area (LGL1, LGL2 and LGL3). The first compares the responsiveness of local government versus departmental government, national government, and the national legislature. The second asks if greater responsibilities and funding should be supplied to the local or the national government. Finally, the third item seeks to determine if Paraguayans are willing to contribute more taxes for better services from local government.

It is very clear from Figure 35 that the majority of Paraguayans believe that they have been treated better by their municipal governments than by any other level of government. The least frequently chosen institution was the legislature. Central government and departmental government were only somewhat more popular, but lag far behind municipal government.

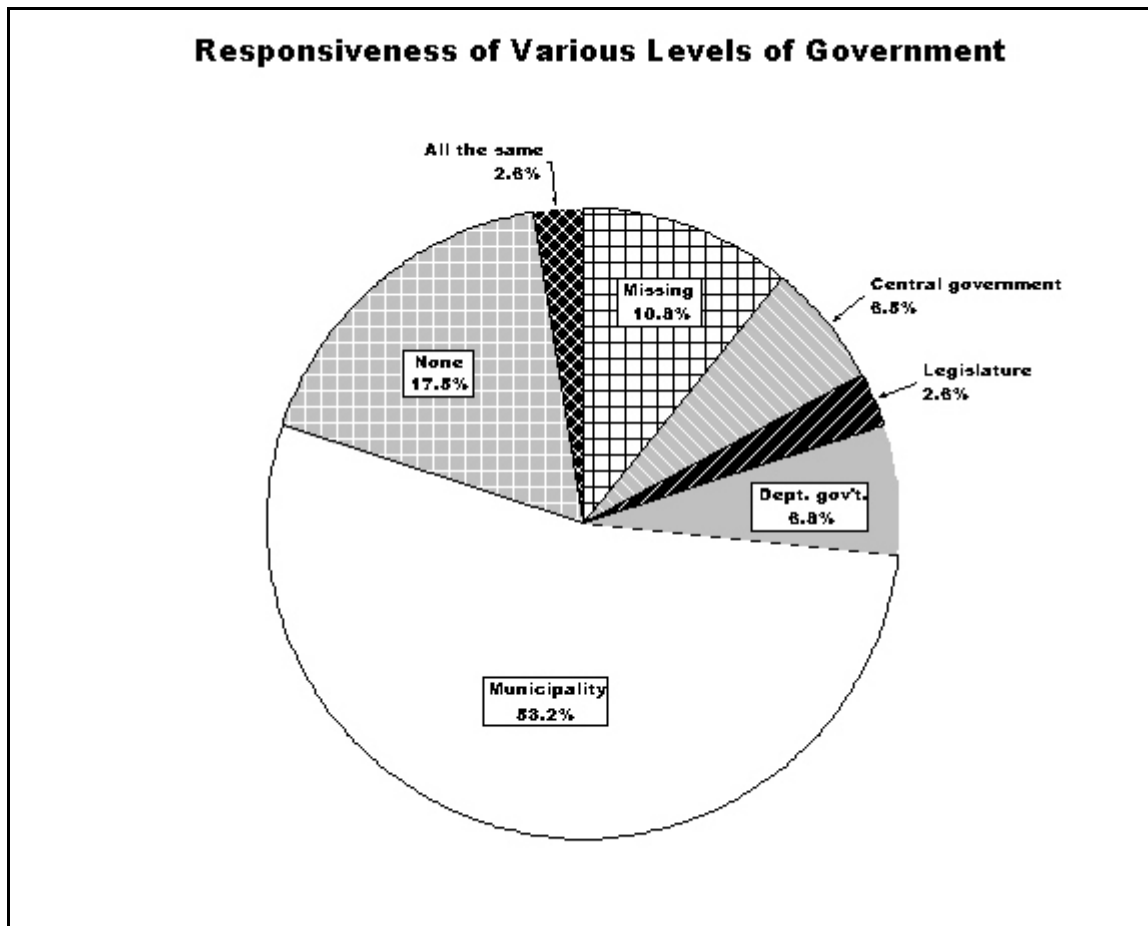


Figure 35

Decentralization efforts imply greater responsibility and resources at the local level. How do Paraguayans feel about such a transfer of power from the center to the periphery? Figure 36 shows a pattern similar to the one just described for the perception of treatment by various levels of government. That is, nearly half (46%) of the population of Paraguay would support an increase in support and funding for municipal government, and an additional 8% would support such an increase if it meant better services. Only one-quarter of the population wishes to see a strengthened central government, and the remainder either do not know or do not wish to see any change. Preferences in this area are not related to gender or to education, except that those with higher levels of education are more likely to have given the sophisticated response: "more to municipality of it were to provide better service." Rural/urban differences are also slight, with only a minor tendency for rural residents to be more strongly in favor of greater municipal power.

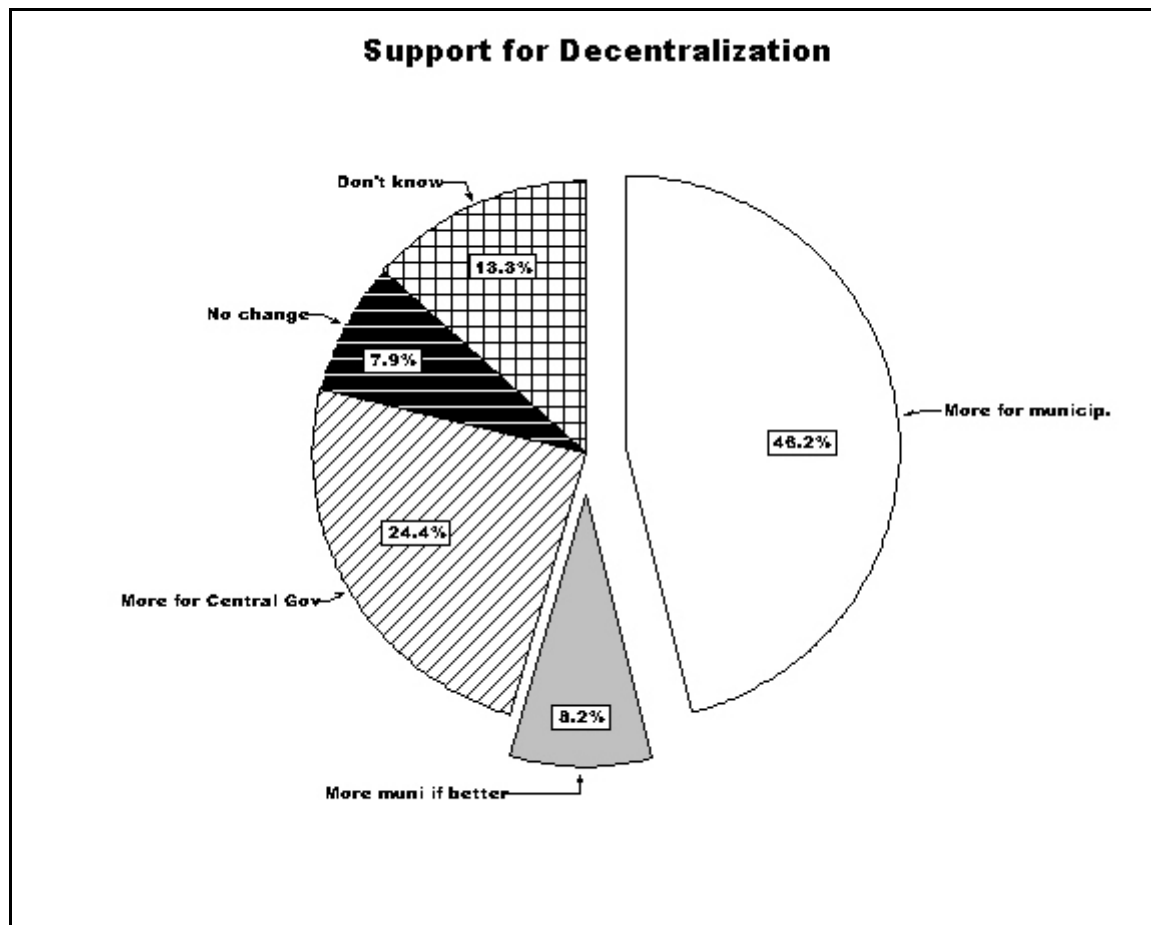


Figure 36

The final item in this series attempts to determine if Paraguayans would be willing to pay more taxes to get better municipal services. Of course, few people anywhere wish to pay more taxes, so one would not expect a highly favorable outcome for this question. Figure 37 shows that only a little more than one-third of Paraguayans are willing to pay increased local taxes, while about half oppose such a measure, the remainder are undecided. This result demonstrates that political officials have their work cut out for them if they hope to increase revenue streams to local governments. Paraguayans have long been used to low taxes and most apparently would prefer to keep it that way.

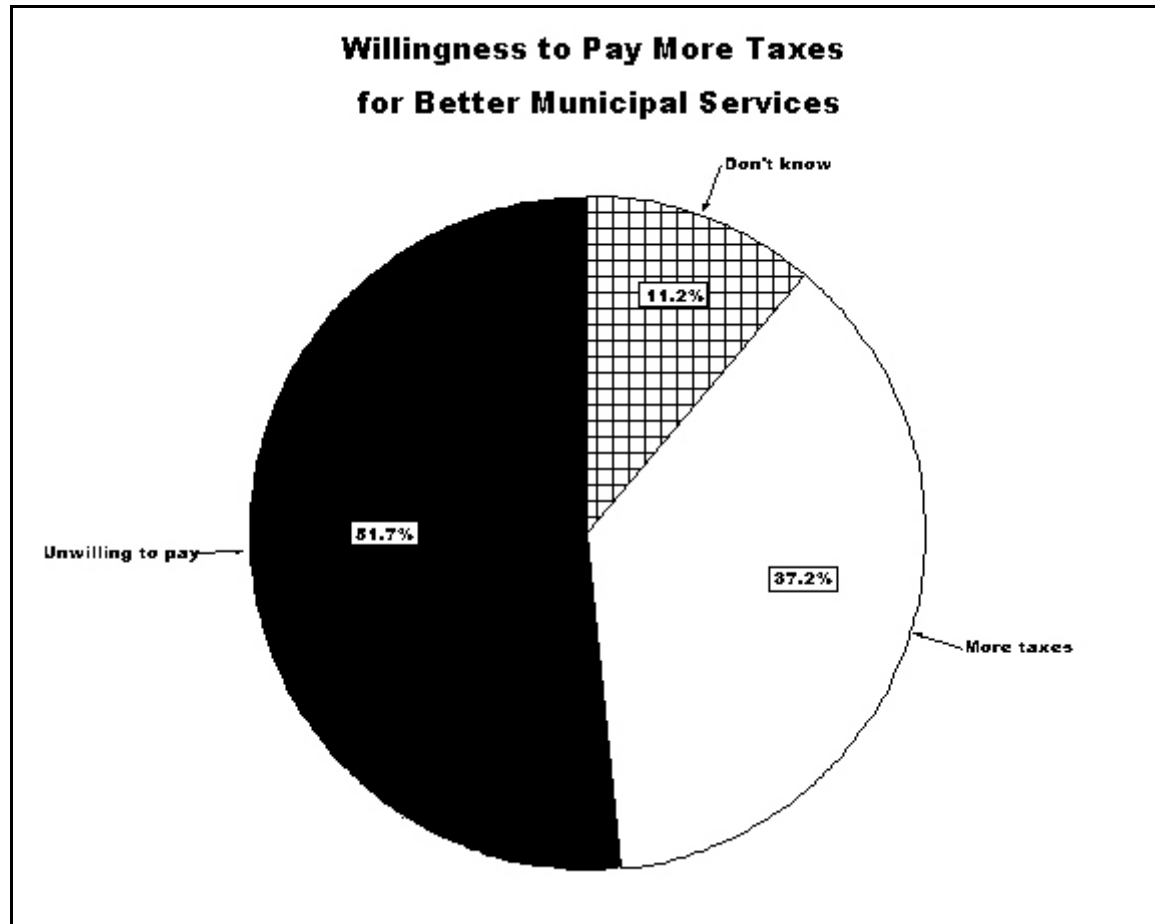


Figure 37

Departmental Government

Although Departmental government is not a new phenomenon in Paraguay, elected Departmental government is. Therefore, before we asked our respondents about this level of government, we first asked them if they had heard of the Governor and the Junta Departmental. Figure 38 shows that about half of the population had heard of this level of government.

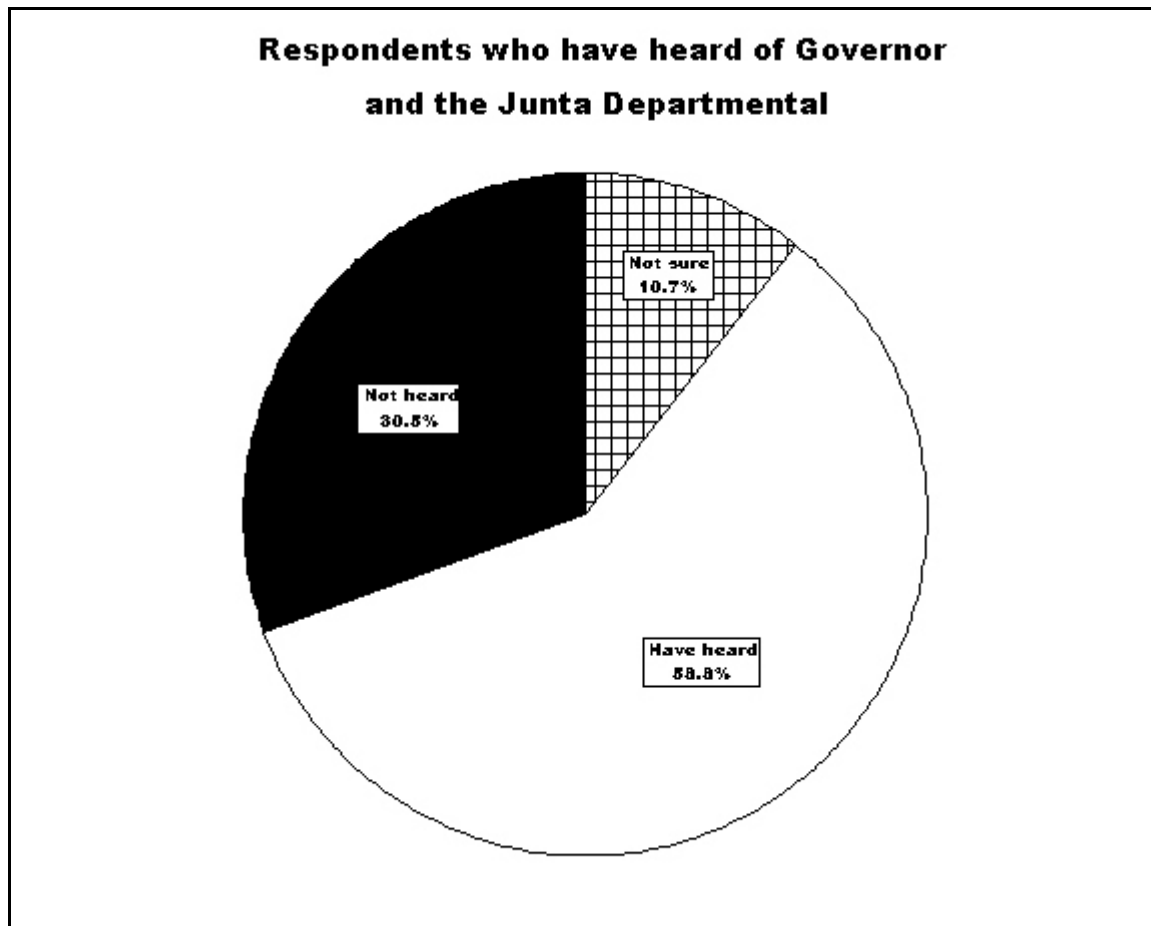


Figure 38

Even though this level of government is more remote from the respondents, a surprisingly large percentage of them had attended at least one meeting in the 12 months prior to the study in which the Departmental Governor was present. Figure 39 shows that there is little variation among the departments except in the capital city. JOSE CARLOS: PLEASE CLARIFY. IS ASUNCION A DEPARTMENT WITHOUT A GOVERNOR OR DID YOU NOT ASK THIS QUESTION THERE. Females were significantly less likely than males to have attended such a meeting.

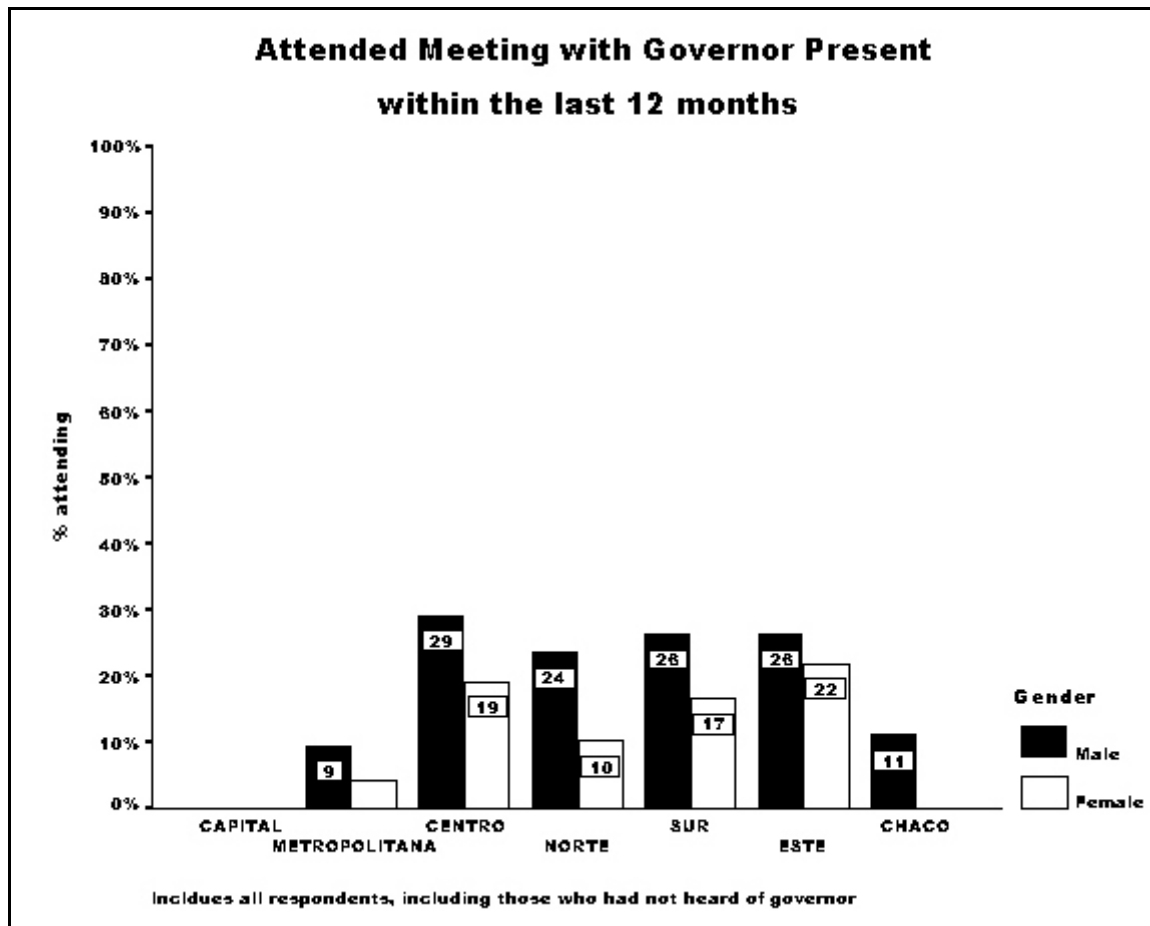


Figure 39

the municipal level in all zones of Paraguay, as is shown in Figure 40.

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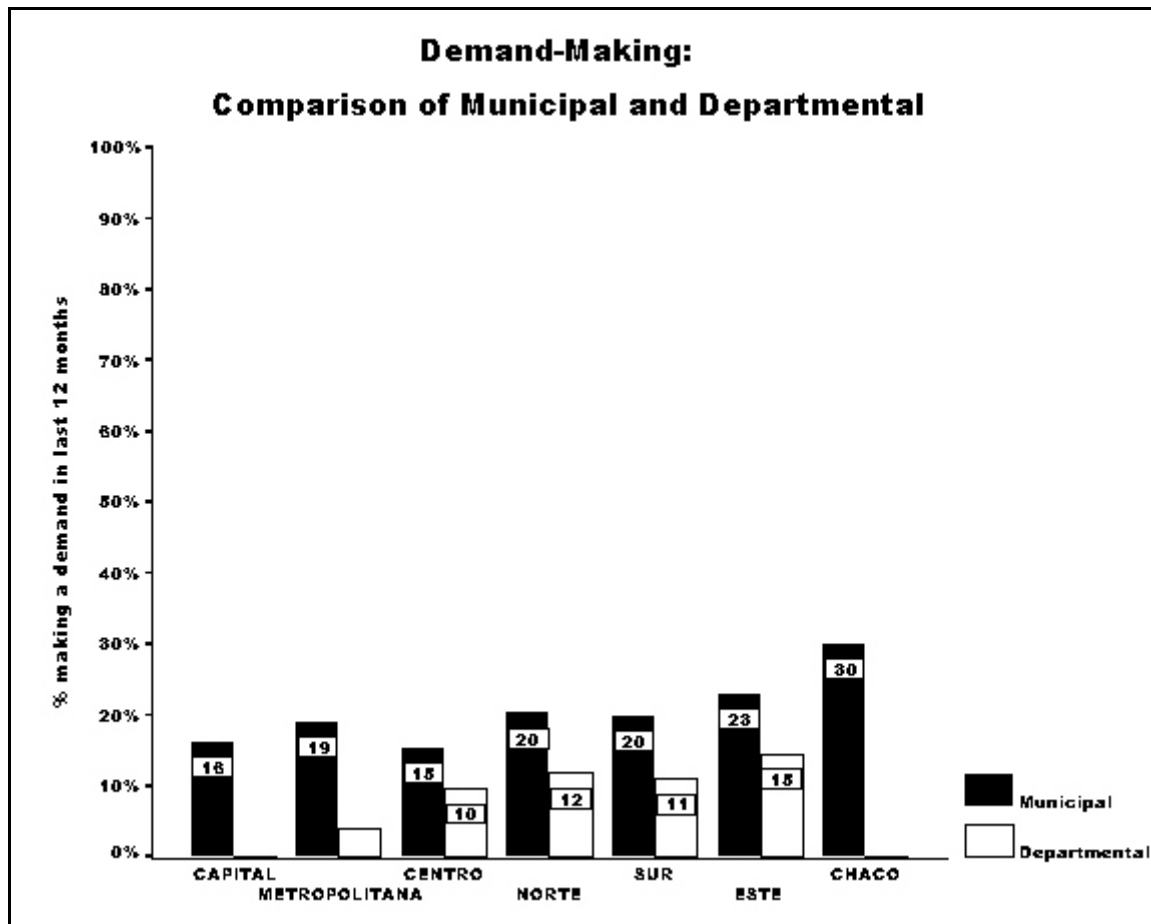
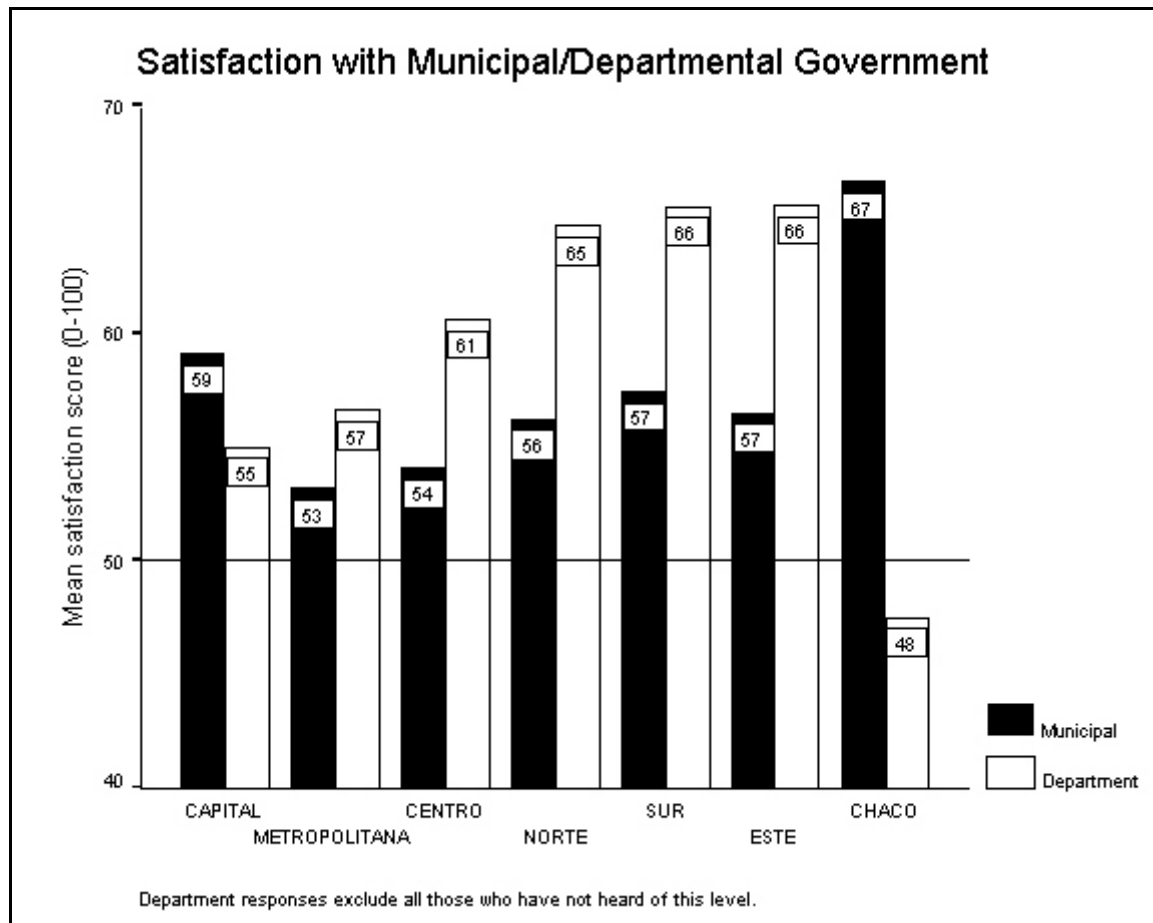


Figure 40

Satisfaction with departmental government is similar to levels found at the municipal level, as is shown in Figure 41. While Departmental satisfaction appears to be higher in many zones, it is very important to keep in mind that the survey did not ask this question to all respondents, but only to the approximately 50% of the sample who said that they had heard of Departmental government. Therefore, the comparisons of the two levels are not completely appropriate. All we can say is that for those Paraguayans who have heard of Departmental government, satisfaction levels is comparatively high.

**Figure 41**

Among those Paraguayans who had heard of Departmental government, more were interested in giving more obligations and more funding to that level of government than to the central government. The results are shown in Figure 42. Comparing these results with the similar question asked earlier about local government makes it clear that Paraguayans are much more likely to favor decentralization (at the municipal or departmental levels) than increasing centralization.

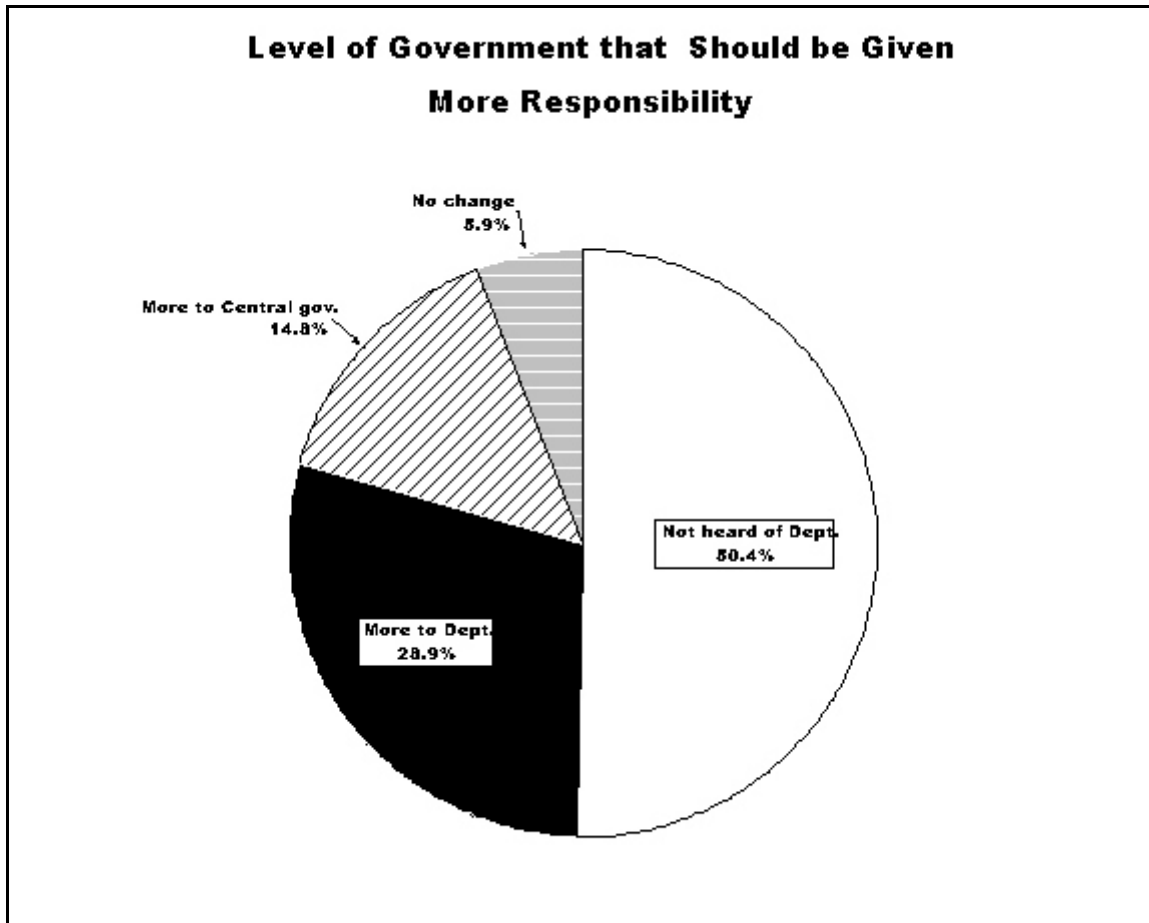


Figure 42

Conclusions

In this report the baseline information for the USAID democratic indicators have been presented. In general, Paraguayans have been to be moderately supportive of their system of government, but that support is lower for those with higher levels of education. The electoral system is also reasonably well supported by the populace. The study has also shown that there is considerable concern over the justice system. Local government, especially at the municipal level, seems to be highly supported by Paraguayans. While not many would be willing to pay increased taxes to their local government, there is far more support for strengthening local as opposed to central government.

The results presented here only scratches the surface of the data set. Many more important areas remain to be investigated, but these can only be determined by programmatic considerations within the USAID Mission. If, for example, USAID wishes to embark upon a program in the area of civil society, the data would need to be explored for the information it contains on civil society participation. Where is it higher, where lower? Are males more active than females? How does civil society participation connect to local and national government participation, satisfaction and legitimacy? As USAID refines its programs, such questions can be asked of this data set.

New material on tolerance and 2 x 2:

Political Tolerance

Democratic regimes have sometimes been defined as those political systems that are characterized by uncertainty. What this means is that citizens (elites included) can not be certain in the outcome of elections or political decisions made by elected officials. If political minorities have no hope of becoming political majorities there can be no uncertainty and, by this restricted definition, cannot be democratic polities.

A fundamental condition favoring political uncertainty, and hence democracy, is for citizens to be tolerant of the civil liberties of others. We have recently seen the horrifying effects of intolerance, expressed in ethnic terms, in Bosnia. When one group denies the *right* of others to participate politically, minorities are in deep trouble. Measuring political tolerance is a complex problem, since individuals can be tolerant of some groups (e.g., in the U.S. Democrats generally tolerate the rights of Republicans), while not of others (e.g., in the U.S., many would not be tolerant of the American Nazi Party or the Ku Klux Klan). For that reason, a variety of techniques have been developed to measure tolerance. It has been found, however, that each of these techniques produce scales of tolerance that tend to behave in the same way, and therefore it does not seem to be critical which measure is chosen.³⁵ In this study, a four-item scale of tolerance has been used, identical with the one used in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Each item is measured on a ten-point scale, and has been converted here to the 0-100 metric used throughout this study. The series reads as follows:

There are people who only say bad things about the Paraguayan form of government. How strongly (on a 1-10 scale) would you approve or disapprove of the right of those people to:

- D1. Vote?
- D2. Hold a peaceful demonstration to express their point of view?
- D3. Run for office?
- D4. Make a speech on T. V.?

The results of the analysis are shown in Figure 43. Although the differences are statistically significant among countries, the variation in absolute terms is not very great. Of the four countries, Paraguay has the lowest tolerance for the rights of opposition groups to vote, but again, it should be emphasized that the difference between Paraguay and Costa Rica, the best established democracy in Latin America is not great. In addition, all countries in the study including Paraguay are on the positive end of the continuum (i.e.,

³⁵James L. Gibson, "Alternative Measures of Political Tolerance: Must Tolerance be 'Least-Liked?'," *American Journal of Political Science*, 36, May, 1992, pp. 560-577.

higher than 50). In terms of the right to demonstrate, Paraguayans are also on the low side of this four nationa comparison, in a tie with El Salvador, but once again on the tolerant end of our 0-100 continuum. All of the four countries have average scores in the intolerant range for the item on the right to run for office, and all but El Salvador have scores in the intolerant range on the variable measuring the right to free speech (i.e., make a speech on T. V.). On the “run for office” item, Paraguay is the second lowest of the four countries, but surprisingly, Costa Rica is the very lowest. Finally, on the speech question, Paraguay is again the lowest of the three countries. In sum, Paraguayans emerge as somewhat less tolerant than the Latin American countries with which we are comparing them, but the differences, while statistically significant, are not large.

Many studies have shown that females are less tolerant than males and that those with higher levels of education are more tolerant than those with lower levels of education. In each of the countries included in this study, females and the less well educated express lower levels of tolerance than males and the better educated. Part of explanation of female intolerance is that their level of education tends to be lower, but even when education is held constant, females remain less tolerant. The results for Paraguay are shown in Figure 44, and are rather surprising. Even though

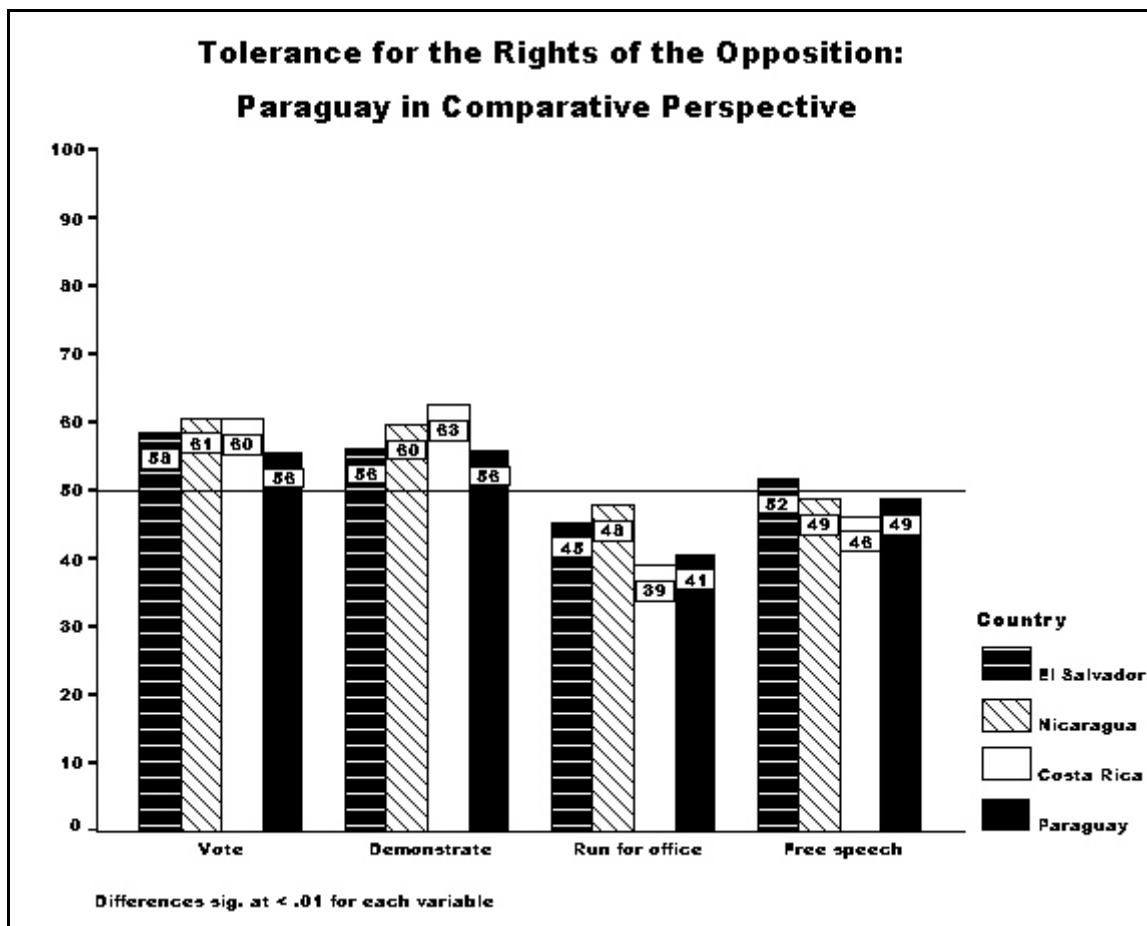


Figure 43

males and that those with higher levels of education are more tolerant than those with lower levels of education. In each of the countries included in this study, females and the less well educated express lower levels of tolerance than males and the better educated. Part of explanation of female intolerance is that their level of education tends to be lower, but even when education is held constant, females remain less tolerant. The results for Paraguay are shown in Figure 44, and are rather surprising. Even though

females are less tolerant than males on each of the four items, the differences are not statistically significant.

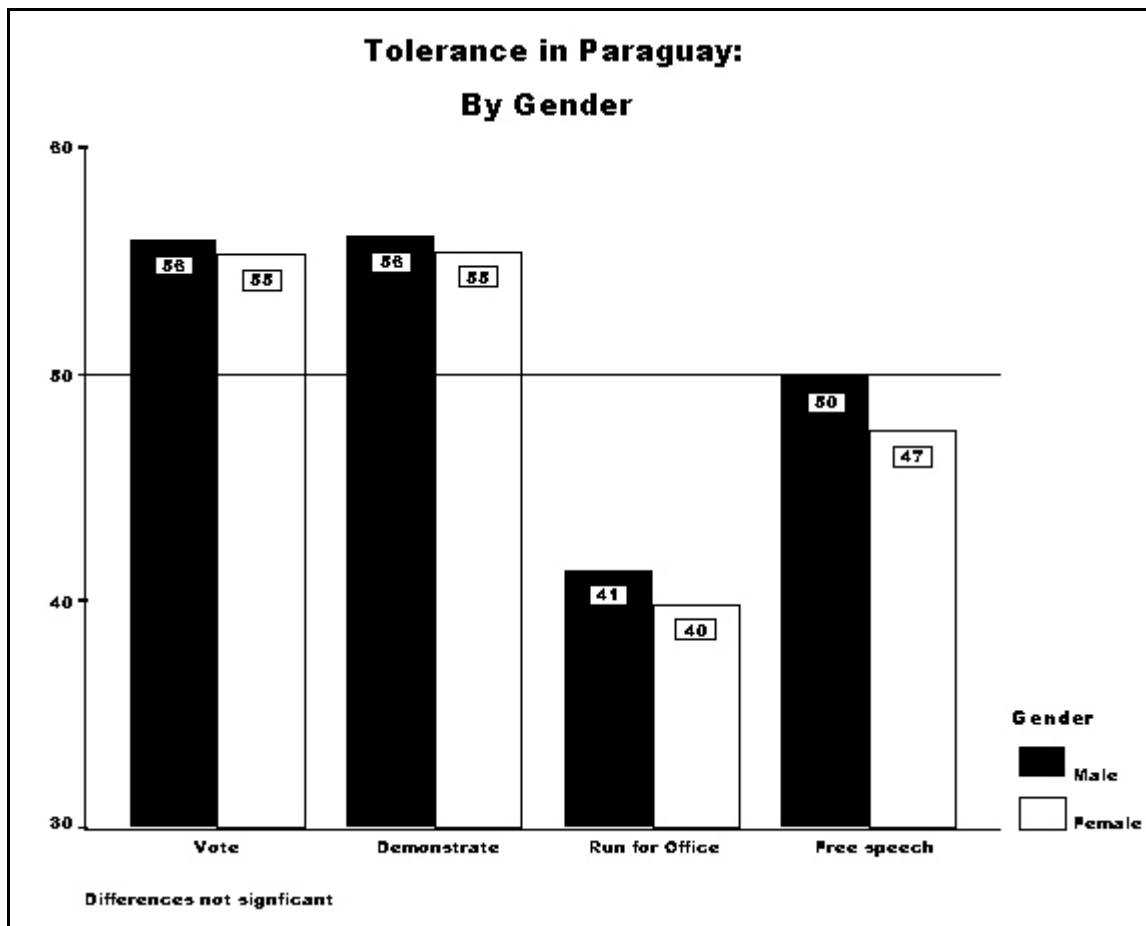
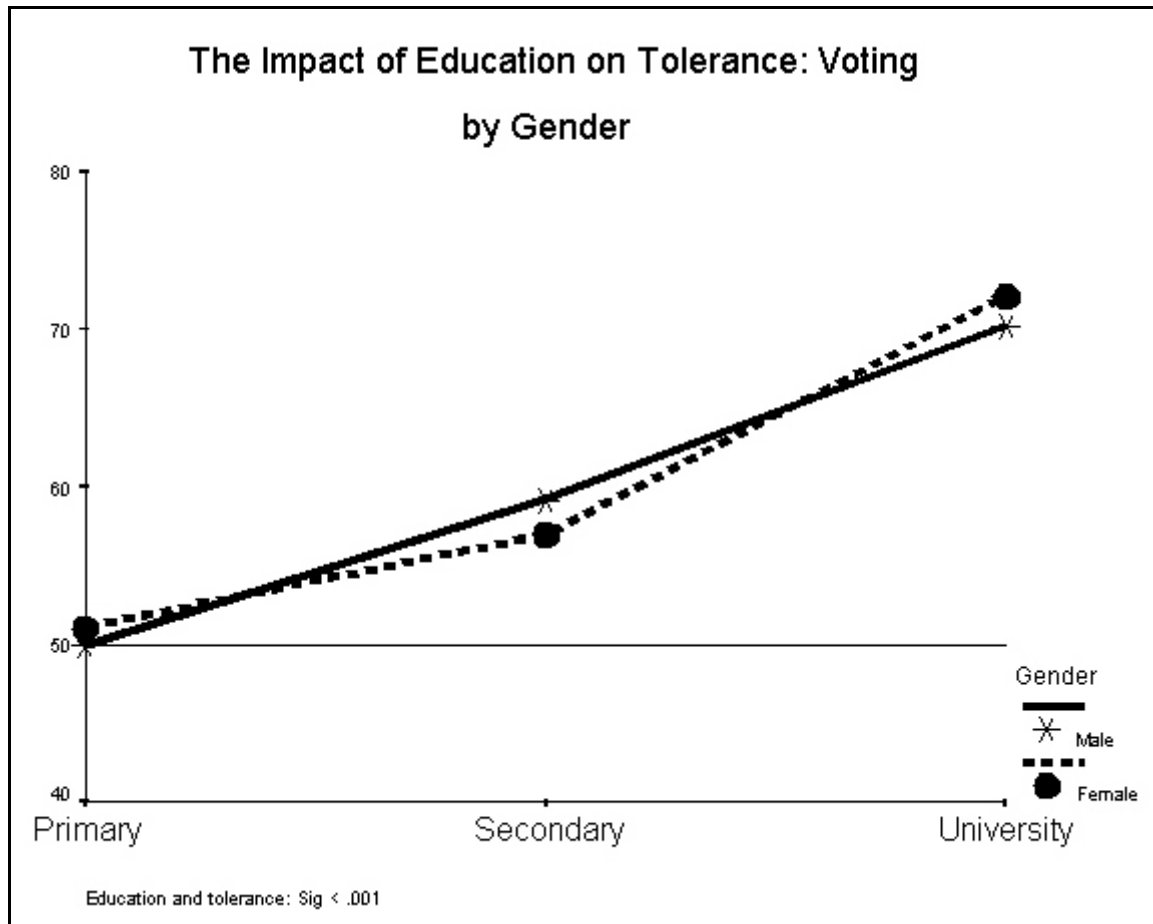


Figure 44

d in the other countries, with higher education being associated with higher tolerance, but in Paraguay, male/female differences do not emerge. The results for tolerance for the right to vote are shown in Figure 45. University educated Paraguayan are far more tolerant than those with only a primary education, but, again, differences by gender do not emerge, presenting a sharp contrast to countries like El Salvador and Nicaragua.

The pattern for education and tolerance is the same as that found

**Figure 45**

The pattern for the other tolerance variables is the same. In Figure 46 the relationship is shown for support for the right to demonstrate. Notice that for all educational levels, Paraguayans average on the tolerant end of the continuum (i.e., above 50 on the scale).

Figure 47 shows the relationship for tolerance

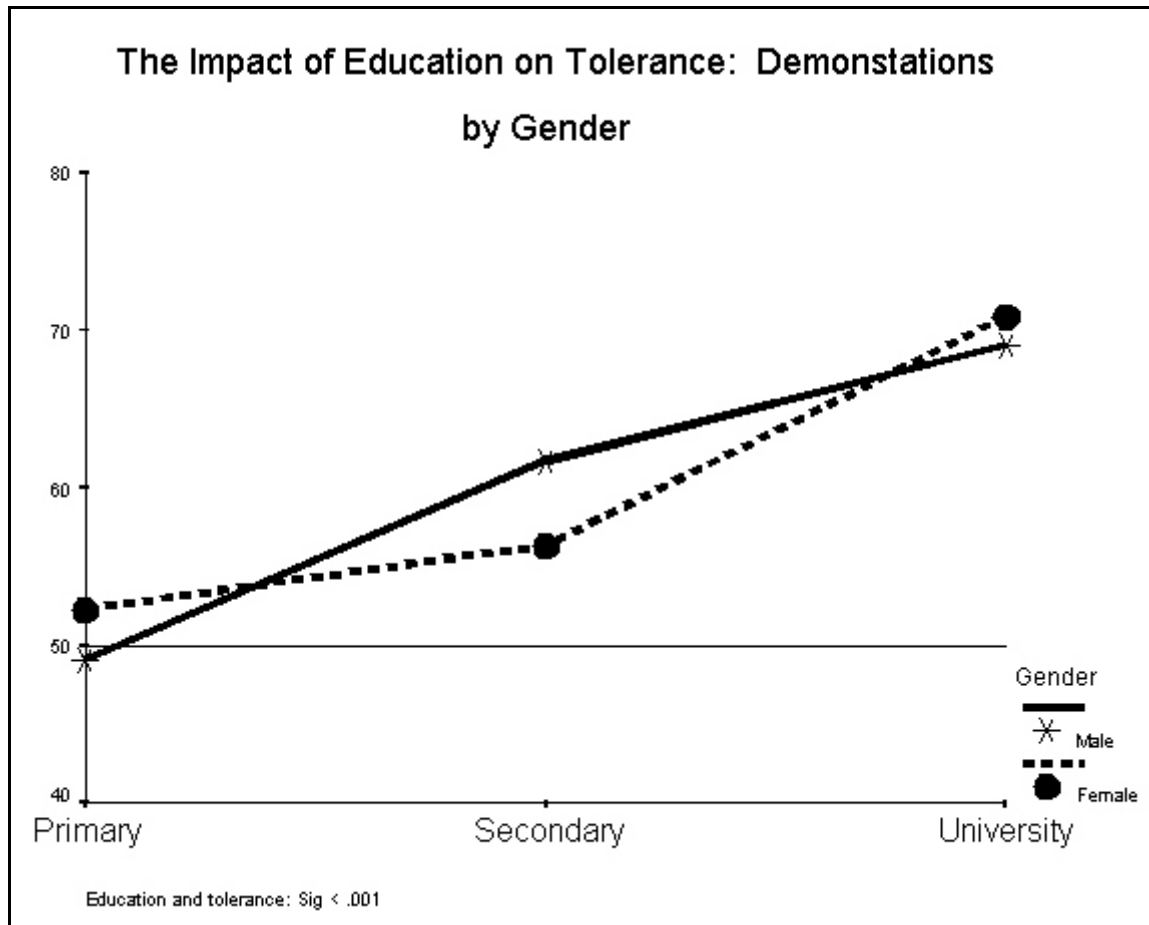


Figure 46

nce for the right to vote. Although the pattern is the same as for the other measures of tolerance, it is important to note that unlike the prior two measures, only at the level of university education does tolerance move into the positive end of the continuum. Apparently, Paraguayans jealously guard this important political right and are reluctant to grant it to political minorities.

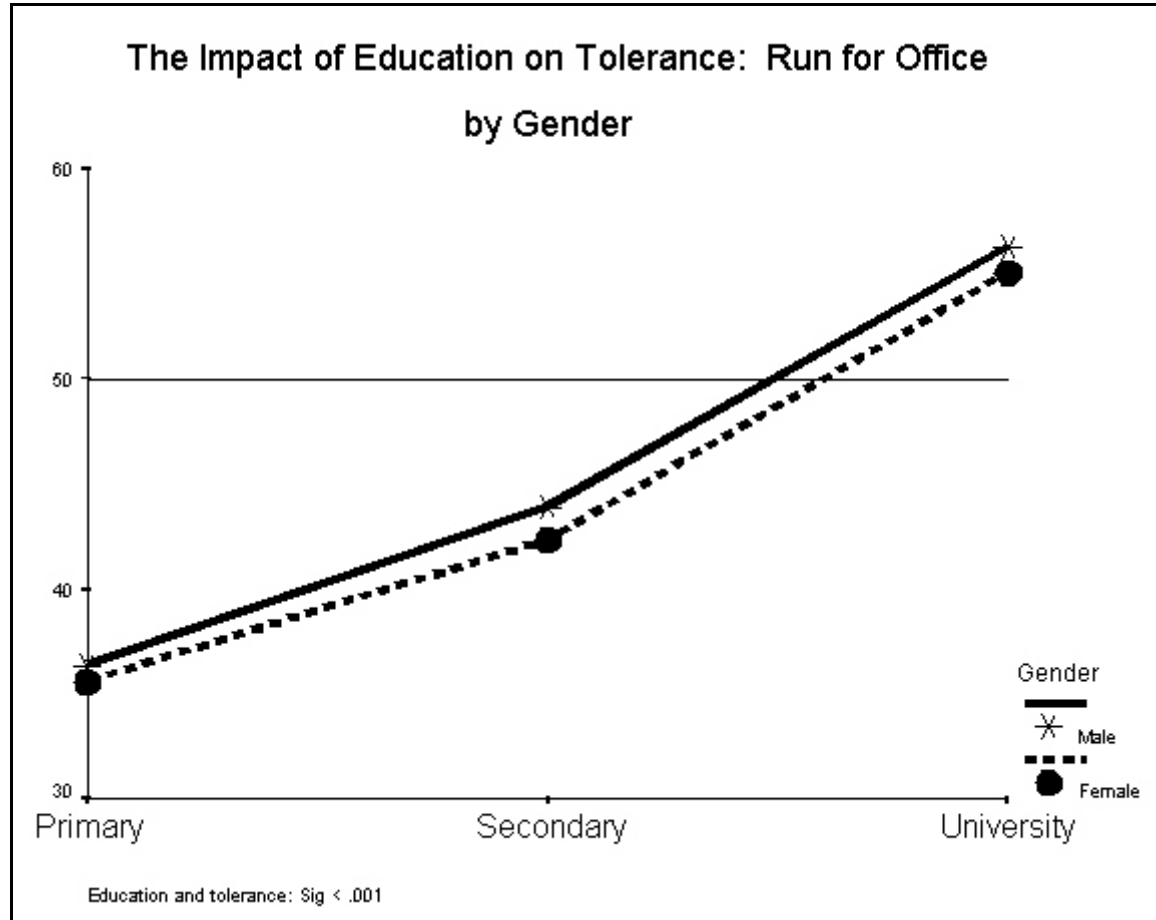
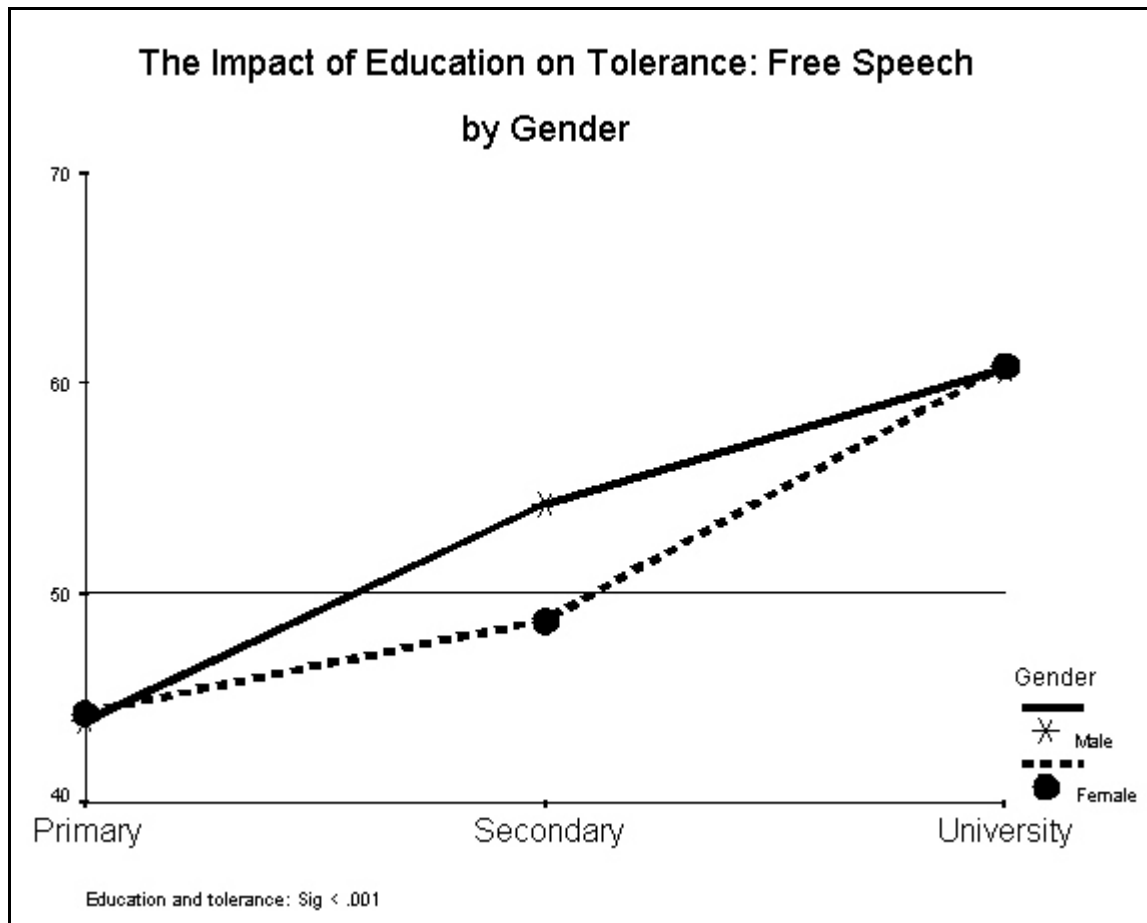


Figure 47

The final tolerance item, support for the right to free speech, is displayed in Figure 48. Although the overall pattern is the same, with both males and females who have university education expressing tolerance above the 50 on the 0-100 scale, only males are in the tolerant range for those with high school education.

**Figure 48**

variation is a function of education. In order to examine the relationship of region to tolerance, the presentation is clearer if a single scale of tolerance is created by summing up the four tolerance variables and dividing by four to once again have a range of 0-100. The scale so produced turned out to be highly reliable.³⁶ Figure 49 shows that the regions do not differ greatly from each other, but that Asunción and the Metropolitan region are the only ones in which tolerance is in the positive end of the continuum for both males and females. The very low tolerance score for females in the Chaco may not be reliable owing to the small sample size in that area.

³⁶The Alpha reliability coefficient was .82.

Tolerance varies by region, but some of this variation

Urban
rural
differences
are statistically
significant
($p < .01$),
as
shown

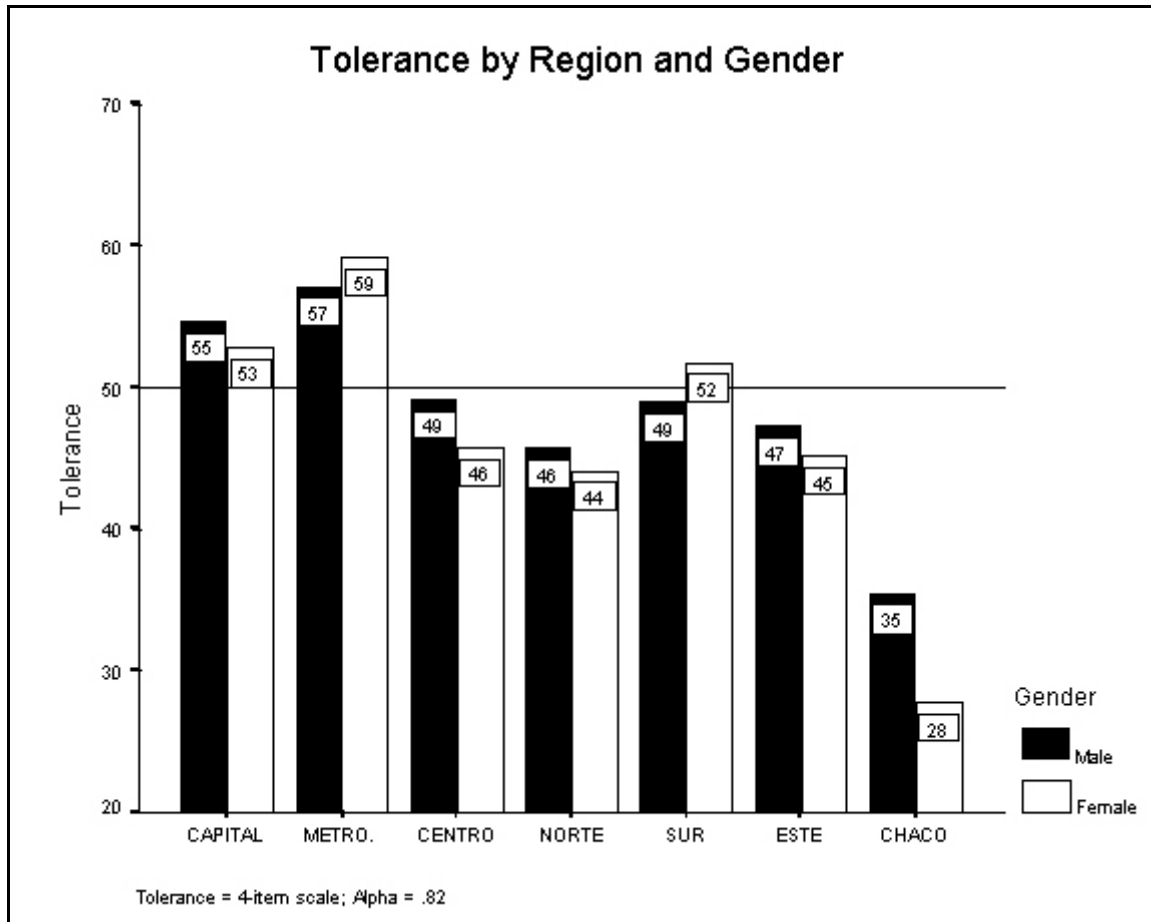
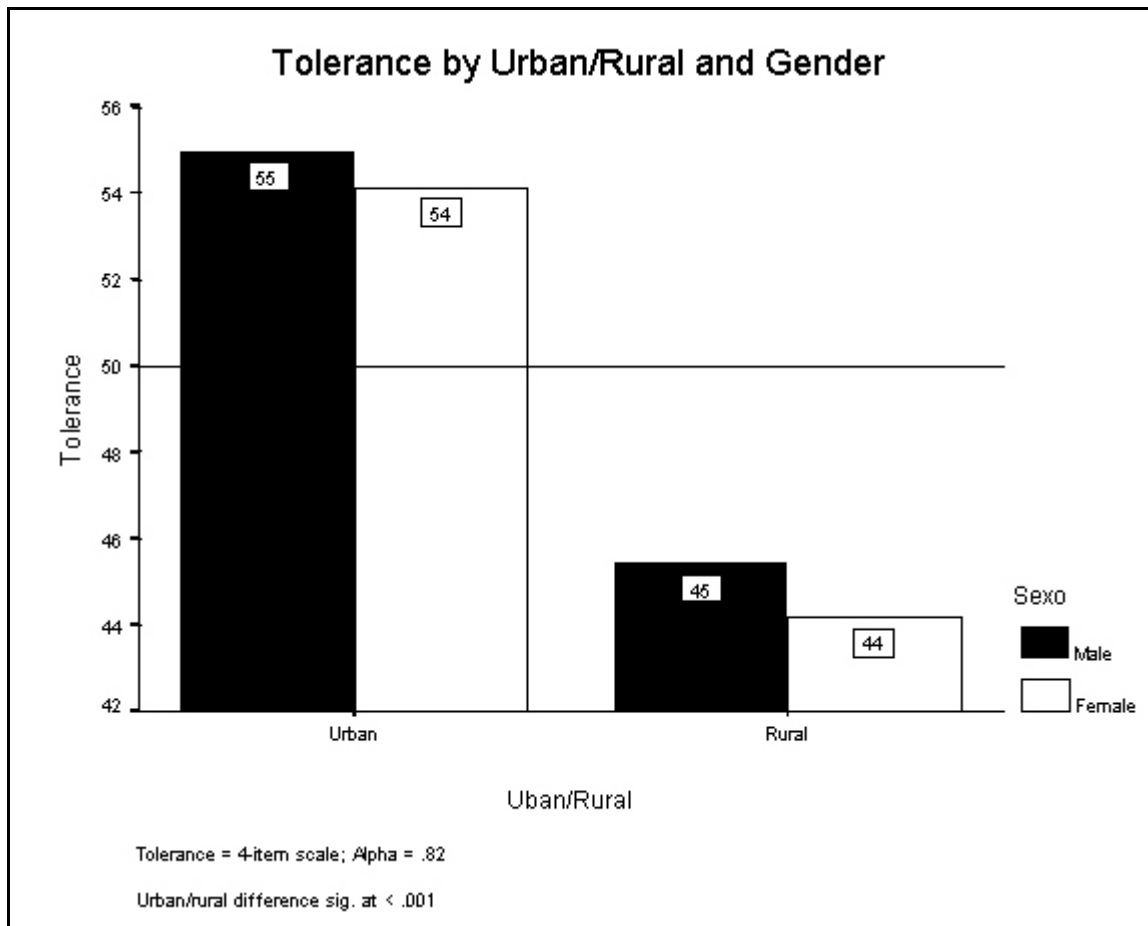


Figure 49

own in Figure 50. It is again important to note the absence of any meaningful difference between males and females, and also it should be recognized that the variation in urban/rural levels of tolerance are largely a function of education.

**Figure 50**

Tolerance does not show significant variation by age in Paraguay. It does, however, show such variation by income. As is shown in Figure 51 poorer Paraguayans are less tolerant than richer. Of course, education and tolerance are closely related. When the level of education is controlled for, wealth loses its impact on tolerance.³⁷

³⁷In an OLS regression using education and income (unrecoded) as predictors, education is the only significant term, although income has a sig. level of .051.

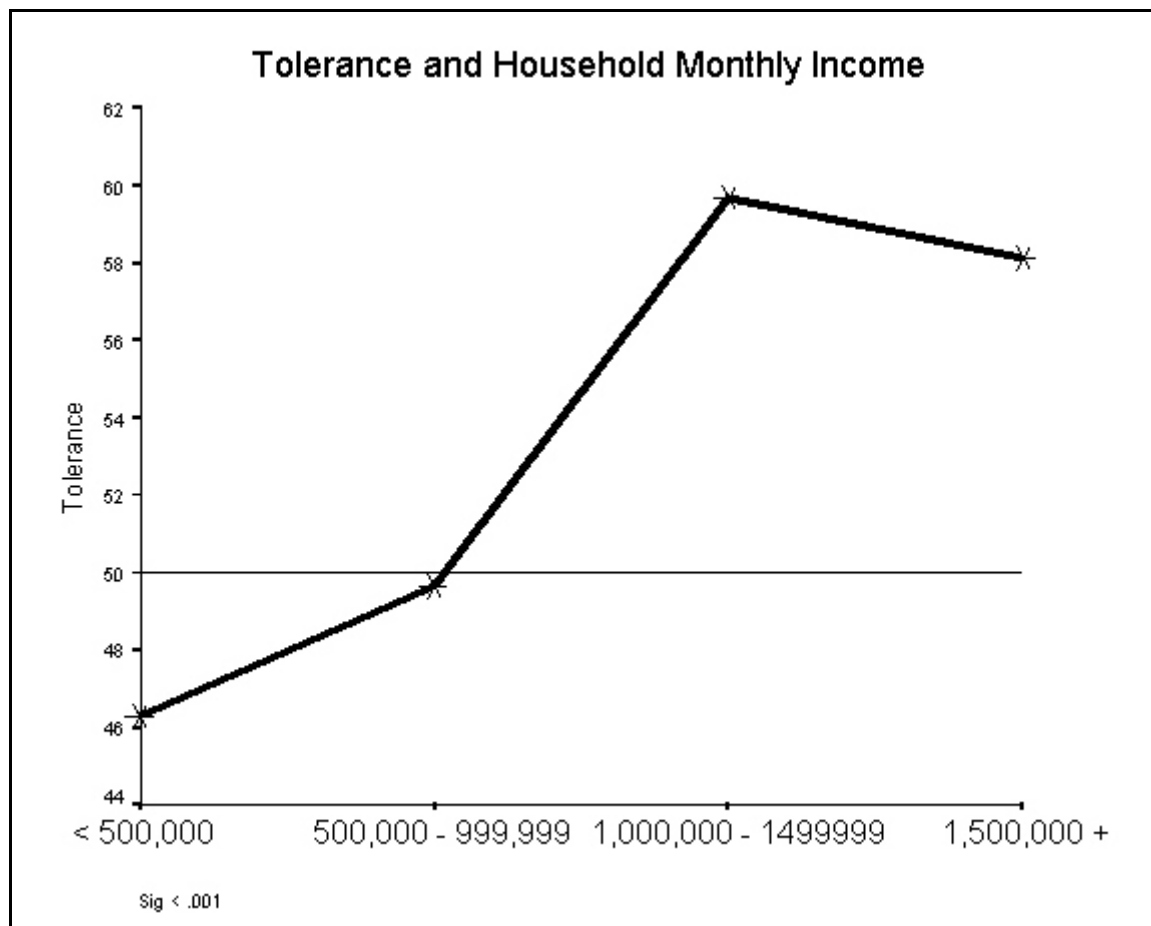


Figure 51

Income is often only poorly measured by survey questions in which respondents are asked to state their income. There are many reasons for this, not the least of which is that many people feel that income is private information, or that they fear that the survey could somehow be used to levy taxes on them.³⁸ In addition, in rural areas, much income is in-kind (i.e., crop and livestock production) and difficult to translate into monetary income.³⁹ The survey contained an alternative measure of personal wealth

³⁸An additional factor that limited the use of income in the Paraguay survey was the fact that a large proportion of the respondents clustered themselves in the lower end of the seven-point scale used to measure levels of income (variable Q10). This means that Q10 did not discriminate well. In future surveys, a more finely calibrated range of incomes should be utilized.

³⁹Many poorer farmers keep few (or no) records of farm product sales and costs of production.

that has often been found to be more reliable. We asked each respondent if in their home s/he had any of the appliances or material goods in the following list: TV, refrigerator, telephone, car or truck, washing machine, microwave oven, motorcycle, or a tractor. We also determined if the house had electricity and running water. An index was formed of these items.⁴⁰ When income is measured using this index rather than income, it is found to be a significant predictor of political tolerance, now “washed out” by education.⁴¹ That is, both education and wealth, as measured by appliances and material goods possession, both are positive associated with tolerance, such that the better educated and the wealthier both have higher levels of education than the less well educated and the poorer. Education is a slightly stronger predictor of tolerance than wealth.⁴² The relationship between the wealth index and tolerance is shown in Figure 52. The relationship is rather dramatic; at the low end of wealth, tolerance is 10 points into the negative range of the 0-100 continuum, whereas at the high end of wealth, tolerance reaches almost 80 on the scale.

⁴⁰One point was given for each material object, except that if two TV’s (black and white or color) were owned, an extra point was given for those respondents. The overall scale ranged from a low 0 to a high of 11.

⁴¹Both education and the wealth index were used in their unrecoded form.

⁴²These results were obtained from an OLS multiple regression equation.

Much research has suggested that religion has an important impact on political tolerance. Not in Paraguay. Practicing Catholics



Figure 52

are not significantly more intolerant than non-practicing Catholics. Surprisingly, fundamentalist Christians (Evangélicos) are no more or less tolerant than their Catholic bretheren. Even those without any religion, while slightly more tolerant than others, are not significantly different. Religiosity, measured in terms of frequency of prayer (Q5) or in terms of the respondent's own perception of the importance of religion in his/her life had no significant bearing on tolerance.⁴³ It should be kept in mind that this study is measuring political tolerance, not religious tolerance, so it may well be that religion does make a difference in some areas, but we did not measure those here.

Finally, the question of language and tolerance needs to be explored. As was already noted, the use of Guaraní is closely associated with education, such that those

⁴³Variable RF6, which measured the subjective importance of religion, did find that a very small proportion of the sample said that religion was not very important in their lives (codes 3 and 4), but those individuals turned out to be less tolerant than those who stated that religion was important to them.

who speak it as their primary language at home have, on average, lower education levels. It has also been shown that tolerance is associated with education. When taken alone as a variable, those who speak Guaraní as their language at home are significantly less tolerant than those who speak Spanish. However, when education is entered as a control variable, the association disappears, once again demonstrating that language use is not the critical factor in the political attitudes studied here. Therefore, it would be wrong to associate the use of language with lower levels of political tolerance.

The Relationship Between System Support and Tolerance

How do tolerance and system support relate, and what impact is there on democratic stability of the different combinations of these two variables?⁴⁴ Reducing complexity to the simple, dichotomous case, support can be either high or low, and likewise tolerance can be either high or low. Table 2.2 represents, for this dichotomous situation, all of the theoretically possible combinations of system support and tolerance.

Table XX
Theoretical Relationship Between
Tolerance and System Support
in Institutionally Democratic Polities

System support	Tolerance	
	High	Low
High	Stable Democracy	Authoritarianism
Low	Unstable Democracy	Democratic Breakdown

Let us review each cell, one-by-one. Systems that are populated by individuals who have high system support and high political tolerance are those we would predict would be most stable. This prediction is based on the simple logic that high support is needed in non-coercive environments for the system to be stable, and tolerance is needed for the system to remain democratic. Systems with this combination of attitudes are likely to experience deepening of democracy and might eventually end up as one of Dahl's polyarchies.⁴⁵

⁴⁴This framework was first presented in Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, *Perspectivas para una democracia estable en El Salvador* (San Salvador: IDELA, 1993).

⁴⁵Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.

When system support remains high, but tolerance is low, then the system should remain stable (because of the high support), but democratic rule ultimately might be placed in jeopardy. Such systems would tend to move toward authoritarian (oligarchical) rule in which democratic rights would be restricted.

Low support is the situation characterized by the lower two cells in the chart, and should be directly linked to unstable situations. Instability, however, does not necessarily translate into the ultimate reduction of civil liberties, since the instability could serve to force the system to deepen its democracy, especially when the values tend toward political tolerance. One could easily interpret the instability associated with the Martin Luther King years in the United States as ones that led directly to the deepening of democracy in that country. Hence, in the situation of low support and high tolerance, it is difficult to predict if the instability will result in greater democratization or a protracted period of instability characterized perhaps by considerable violence. On the other hand, in situations of low support and low tolerance, democratic breakdown seems to be the obvious eventual outcome. Presumably, over time, the system that would replace it would be autocratic.

It is important to keep in mind two caveats that apply to this scheme. First, note that the relationships discussed here only apply to systems that are already institutionally democratic. That is, they are systems in which competitive, regular elections are held and widespread participation is allowed. These same attitudes in authoritarian systems would have entirely different implications. For example, low system support and high tolerance might produce the breakdown of an authoritarian regime and its replacement by a democracy. Second, the assumption being made is that over the long run, attitudes of the mass public make a difference in regime type. Attitudes and system type may remain incongruent for many years. Indeed, as Seligson and Booth have shown for the case of Nicaragua, that is what may well have occurred. But the Nicaraguan case we studied was one in which the extant system was authoritarian (i.e., Somoza's Nicaragua) and repression had long been used to maintain an authoritarian regime, perhaps in spite of the tolerant attitudes of the citizens.⁴⁶

⁴⁶Mitchell 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. A different version appears as "Cultura política y democratización: vías alternas en Nicaragua y Costa Rica." In Carlos Barba Solano, José Luis Barros Horcasitas y Javier Hurtado, *Transiciones a la democracia en Europa y América Latina*. México: FLACSO y Universidad de Guadalajara, 1991, pp. 628-681. Also appears as "Paths to Democracy and the Political Culture of Costa Rica, Mexico and Nicaragua," Larry Diamond, ed., *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*. Boulder: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1994, pp. 99-130.

Empirical Relationship Between Tolerance and System Support in Nicaragua

It is now time to put together the two variables that have been the focus of our discussion by examining the joint distribution of the two variables.⁴⁷ To do this, both variables are dichotomized into "high" and "low." To do this the indexes of tolerance and system support, reported on above, are utilized. The scale was divided into high and low at the mid-point of 50 on the 0-100 scale.⁴⁸

As noted in the discussion of political tolerance, an overall index was formed of the four items in that scale. In order to summarize in the same fashion overall levels of system support, a scale was constructed of the five basic items in the "B" series, the ones analyzed with reference to El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. This group of items forms a reliable scale, and has the virtue of allowing direct comparisons with the other countries.⁴⁹ In order to show the overall comparison of system support for the four countries, Figure is introduced here. As can be seen, the pattern is much like we have seen before, with Costa Rica having far higher levels of system support than the other countries, and Paraguay in a tie with El Salvador. Nicaragua once again is at the very bottom.

⁴⁷It is important to note that the results presented here differ from those in prior presentations of the University of Pittsburgh Public Opinion Project. In many of those presentations the expanded scale of items was utilized, whereas here the focus is on the core list. As a result, the percentages reported in the following tables vary somewhat from some earlier reports and publications.

⁴⁸Note that both scales range from 0-100. Scores 0-49 (a total of 50 scale points) are considered to be "low," whereas those 50 through 100, a total of 51 scale points are considered to be "high." Although this procedure yields 1 more scale point in the high range, the split at 50 seems much more natural than 50.5, which would be the true mid-point of the scales. In any event, since the same mid-point is being used for all four countries in the study, there is a uniformity of treatment for them all.

⁴⁹The Alpha reliability coefficient is .70

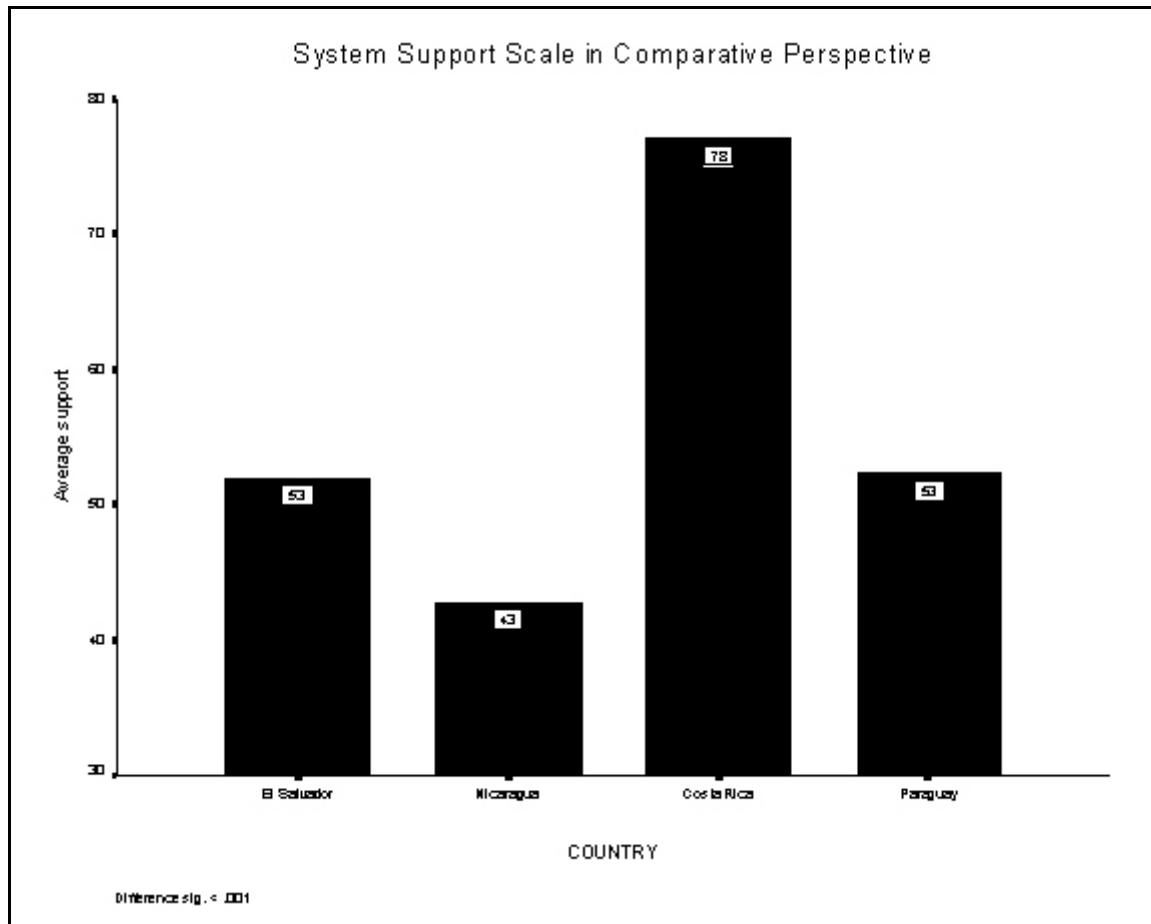
**Figure 53**

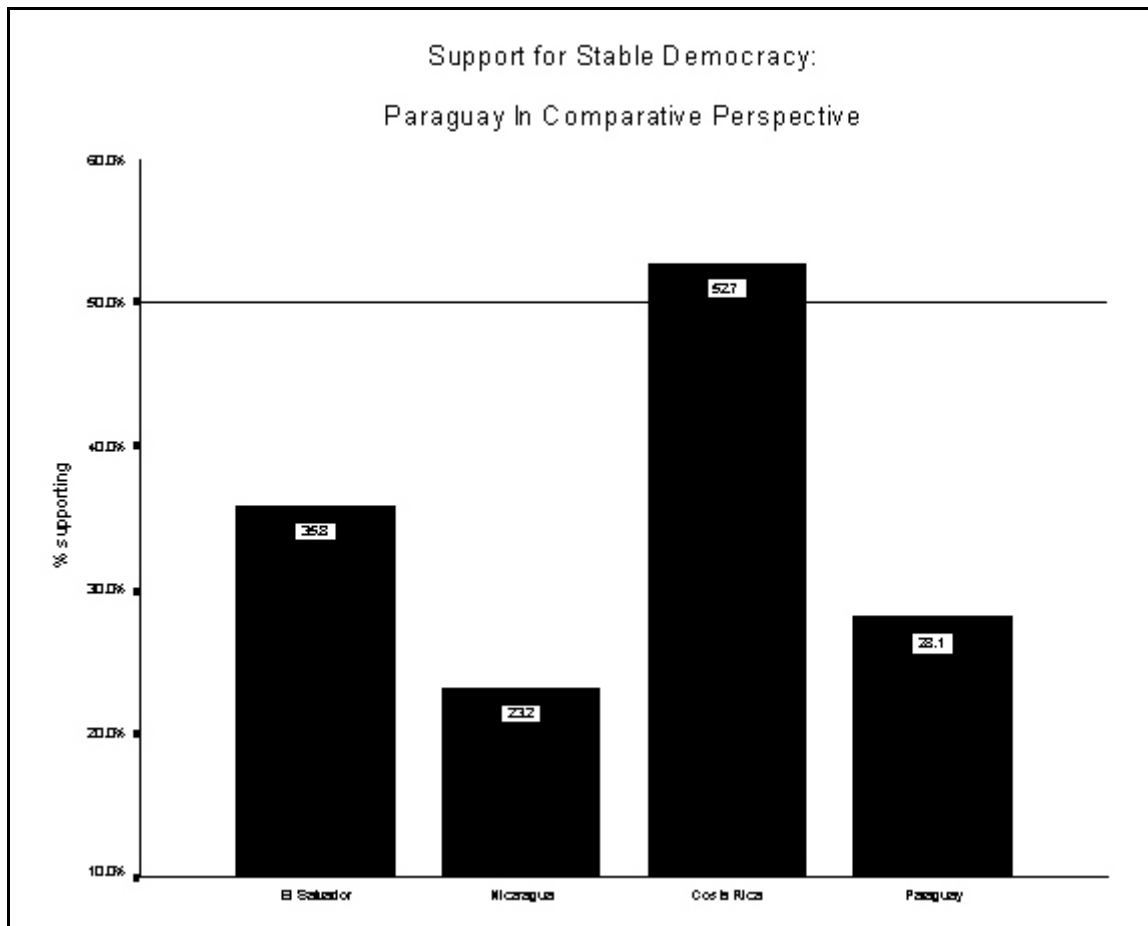
Table XX shows the relationship between system support and political tolerance in Paraguay for 1996.

Empirical Relationship Between
Tolerance and System Support
in Paraguay, 1996

		Tolerance	
System support		High	Low
	High	Stable Democracy 28.1	Authoritarianism 29.3
	Low	Unstable Democracy 20.0	Democratic Breakdown 22.6

To place these findings in comparative perspective, we can now turn to the other countries in the data base. Figure 54 shows the results for the critical “stable democracy” cell. Paraguay is somewhat above Nicaragua, and below El Salvador. Costa Rica, not surprisingly, stands out as having by far the highest proportion of its citizens in the stable democracy cell.⁵⁰

⁵⁰The percentages displayed in this figure can vary depending upon the distribution of missing data in each country. This is because the distribution depends upon two variables (system support and tolerance), which are in turn indices comprised of multiple variables, each of which can have non-response. The overall pattern displayed in the figure does not change when non-response is handled on a per-country basis.

**Figure 54**

These results come as no surprise. As emphasized in the introduction of this study, democracy is new to Paraguay and it would be a mistake to assume that the attitudes that are important to support democratic rule are widely present. Yet, it is not at all clear that such attitudes are found in abundance in any nascent democracy. Over time, however, positive experiences with democracy ought to increase both system support and political tolerance.

Costs and Benefits of Non-Democratic Rule

It has been argued in this study that democratic values are vital for the long-term stability of democracy. Up to this point, the focus has been on an examination of the degree of support for those values, especially system support, satisfaction with local government and political tolerance. It is important not to neglect the dark side of political values, i.e., support for non-democratic means of governance. Given Paraguay's long history of military rule, it is appropriate to examine the conditions under which Paraguayans would support a military coup. In order to give these results meaning, comparative data is employed. The only directly comparable data come from the 1995 national survey of El Salvador, a country that in many respects has been shown to have values very similar to those found in Paraguay. Those comparisons are used here.

In Figure 55 direct comparisons are made between El Salvador and Paraguay for three items. We asked the respondents the following question: "Some people think that it would be justified, under certain circumstances, that the military take power. In your opinion, the takeover of the military would be justified when: 1) unemployment is high; 2) there are many student strikes; 3) there are a lot of strikes by unionized workers. These three variables (JC1, JC4, JC9) in fact constitute some of the most frequent justifications that have been utilized by military men to take power in Latin America. About 10-12% of the respondents did not answer this question. As can be seen, in both countries about one-quarter of those who did said that a coup could be justified by high unemployment. In Paraguay, student and worker strikes also justifies a coup by about one-quarter of the population, whereas in El Salvador, a significantly lower percentage of the population, about 15%, would justify a coup under those circumstances.

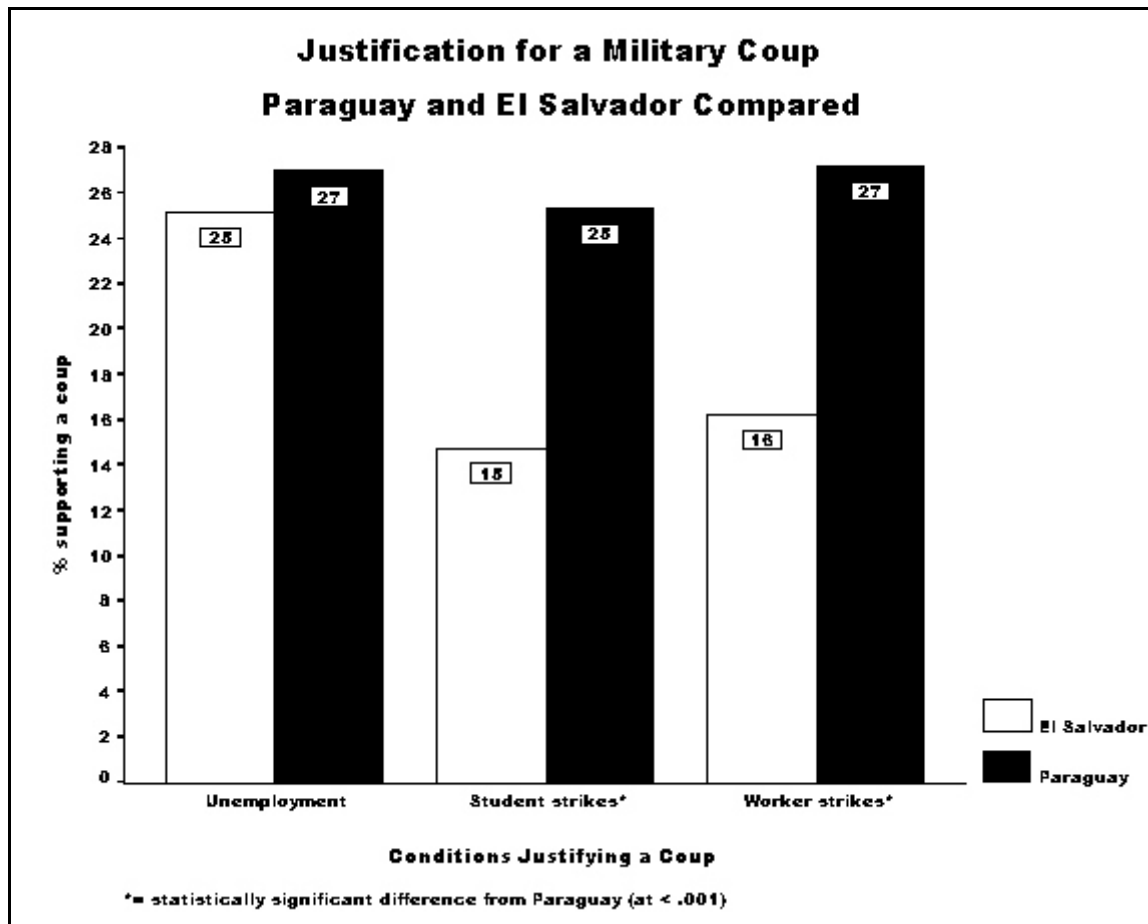
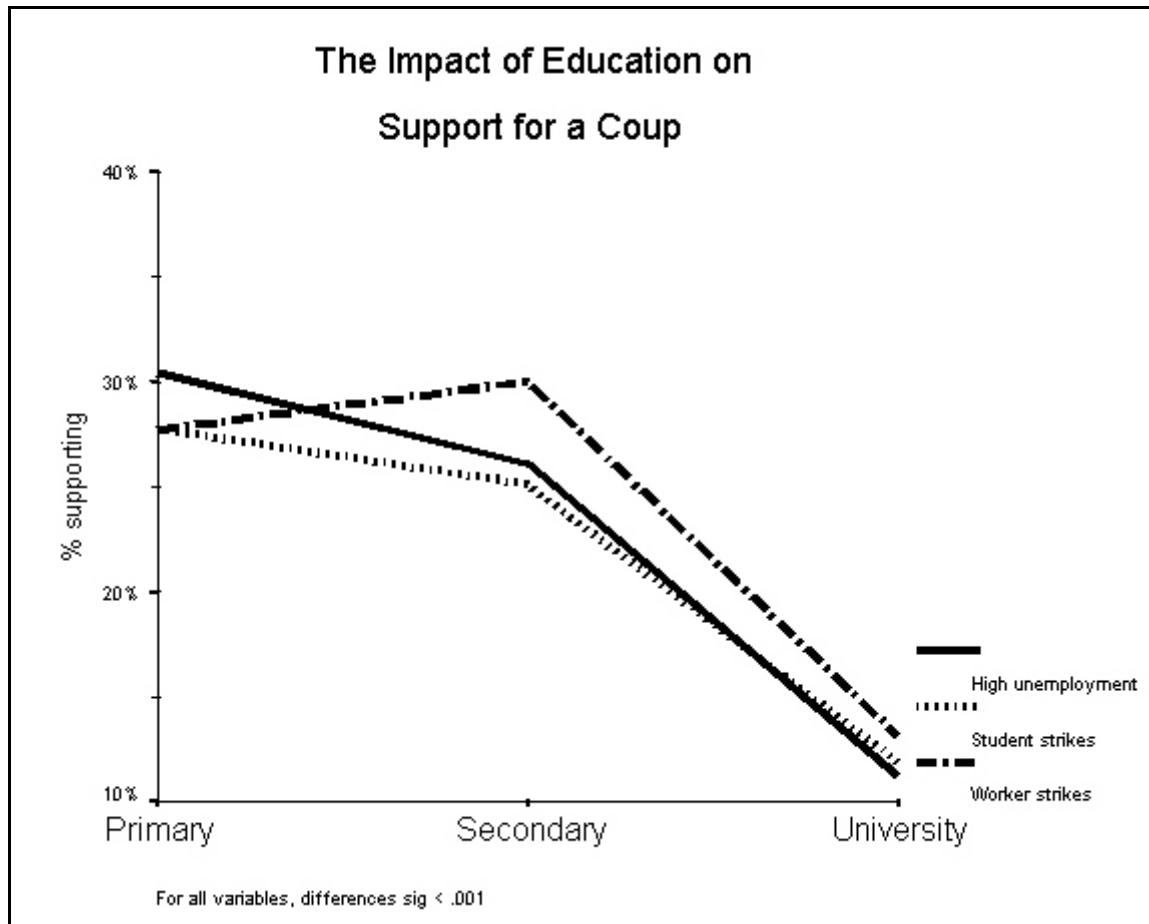


Figure 55

blems varied by socio-economic and demographic factors. The most important factor explaining differences in support for a coup in Paraguay was education. Figure 56 shows that support is much higher among those with the lowest levels of education and drops to very low levels among those with university education. For example, high unemployment would justify a coup among about 30% of those with primary education, but only about 10% among those with university education. Thus, educational differences produce a tripling of support/resistance to a coup. The patterns for all three potential justifications for a coup are similar, except that among those with a secondary education, support for a coup because of workers' strikes is even higher than for those with a primary education. This might be an indication of the importance of organized labor among these two education groups, but in Paraguay, few workers are unionized, so the impact for that factor would have to be minimal.

Support for unconstitutional means to solve economic and political problems

**Figure 56**

Gender differences also emerge, and by now they are of no surprise. Males are less supportive of a coup than females, as is shown in Figure 57. Age also has a significant relationship, but it is not linear, and thus has no easy explanation. No significant relationship emerges with income or rural/urban residence, when the other variables are held constant.

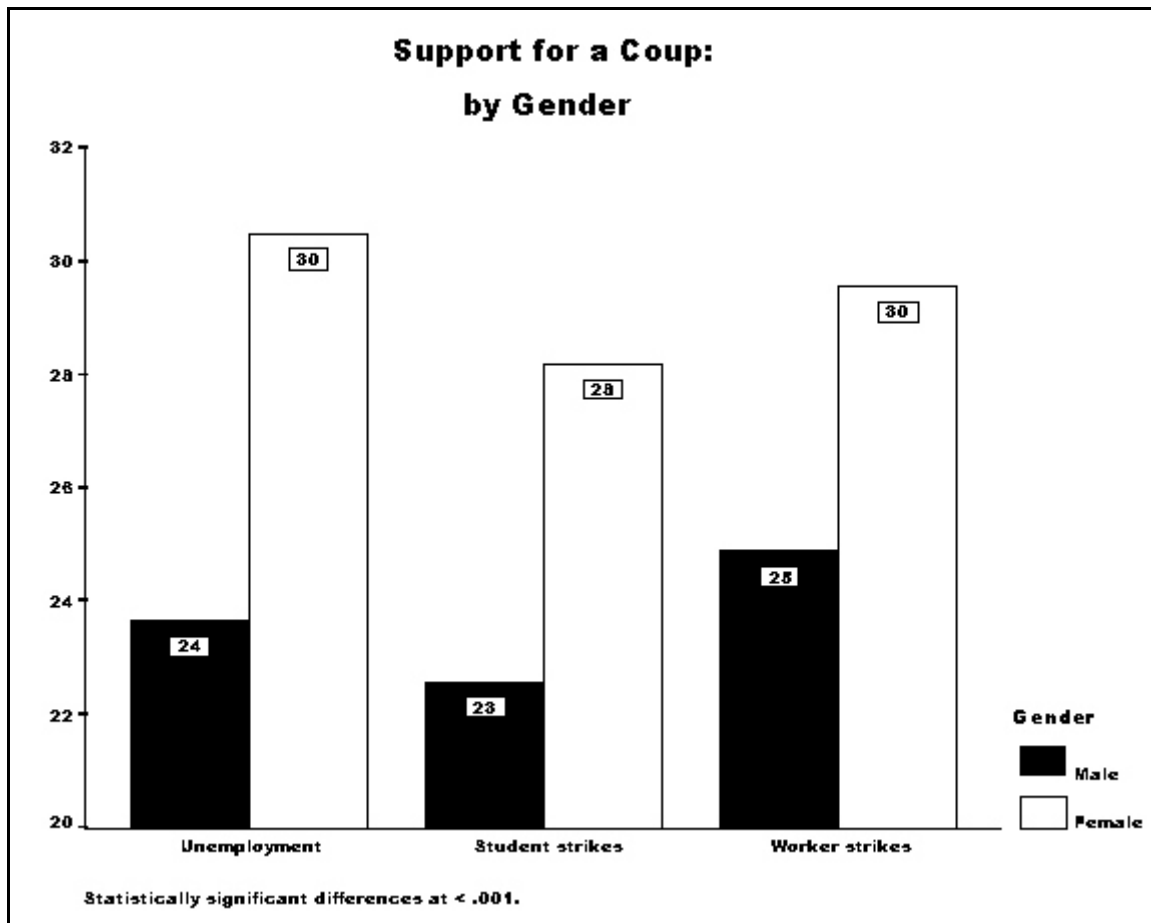


Figure 57

s on the perception citizens have about the advantages and disadvantages of military rule. The survey attempted to determine the extent of support for military government by looking at their perceived costs and benefits (see questions BC1 to BC16). In Paraguay, since the Stroessner regime lasted so long, it was necessary to ask questions directly related to that regime, whereas in El Salvador, the questions referred generically to military regimes. Figure 58 shows the comparison between El Salvador and Paraguay. It is clear that there remains a great deal of support in Paraguay for the Stroessner regime, with two-thirds of the sample saying that he helped economic growth and reduced unemployment, while over three-quarters believe that he helped to reduce crime. In El Salvador, support for military rule is much lower, but the reader should be cautioned that, as already noted, in El Salvador the question concerned military rule generically, whereas in Paraguay it referred to the Stroessner regime.

Support for a military coup in part depends

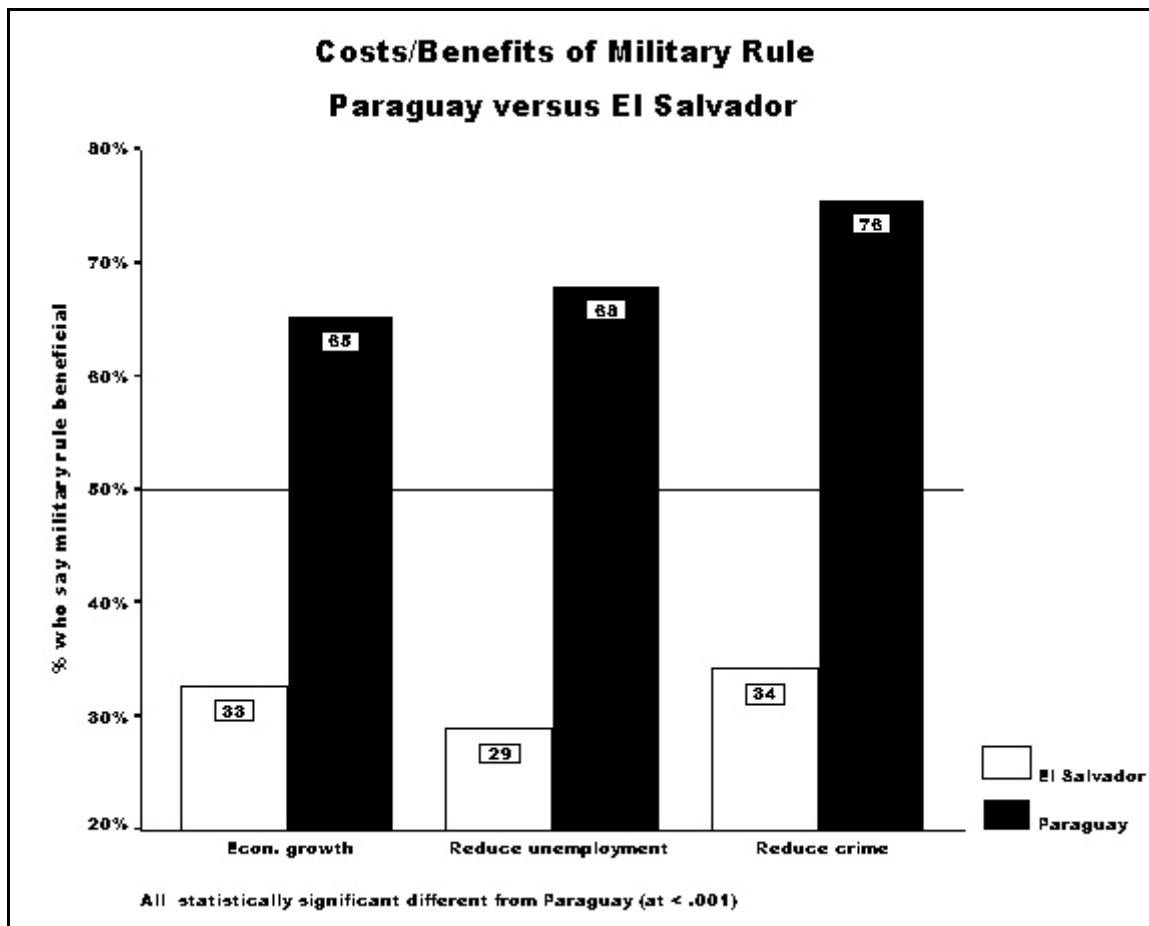


Figure 58

A clear indication of the difference between Paraguay

Paraguay and El Salvador comes in the direct questions (BC15): Do you think that there is any reason what could justify a coup that would interrupt the democratic process? This item no longer refers to Stroessner and therefore removes his persona from the content of the item. As can be seen in Figure 59 fewer than one-fifth of Paraguayans could envision circumstances that would justify a military coup, compared to about one-third of Salvadorans. It needs to be kept in mind, however, that not long before the survey Paraguay experienced a nearly successful military coup that may have left the public hyper-sensitive to the prospects of another. For this reason, it is difficult to interpret the results of the following and preceding figures since they seem to be so heavily influenced by personality and immediate circumstances. Furthermore, whereas only 18% of Paraguayans could imagine circumstances that would justify a coup, as we have already seen above when asked if a coup could be justified by high unemployment or strikes, as many as 9% more (27% in total) of Paraguayans thought that a coup could be justified. It should be kept in mind, however, that those questions asked about a military takeover, whereas the question reported on in the following figure

referred not only to a coup, but to the interruption of democracy. Perhaps some Paraguayans believe that some form of democracy could continue under military rule.

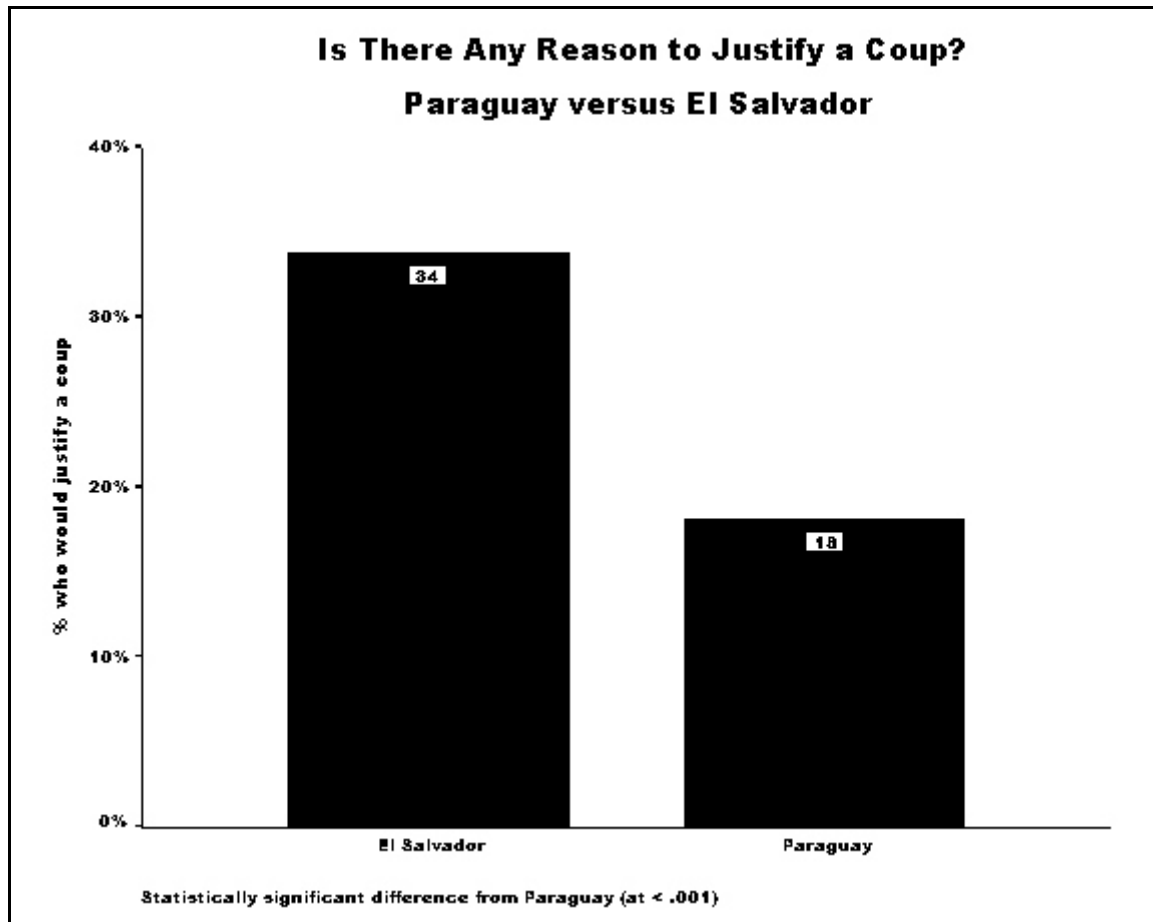
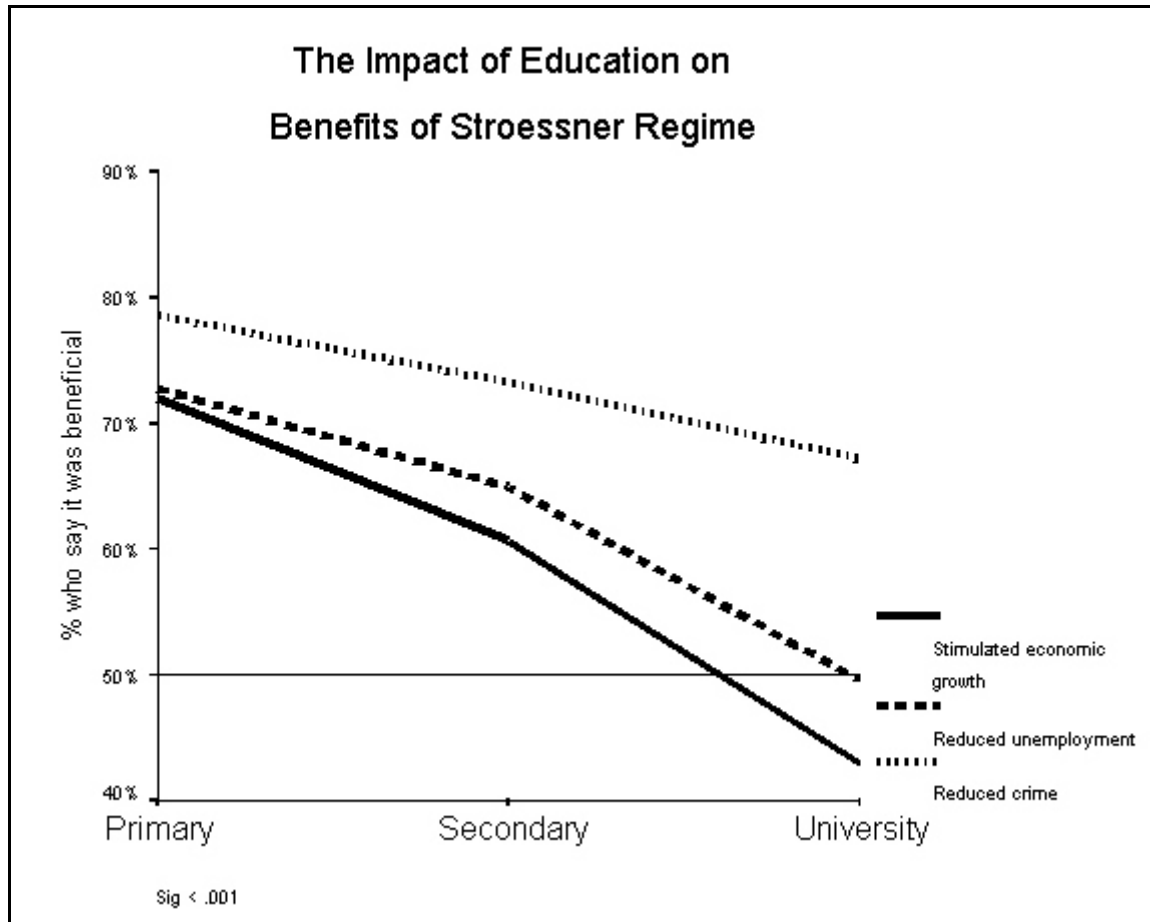


Figure 59

It is also notable that even though support for the perceived benefits of the Stroessner regime are high, those with university education are more skeptical. Figure 60 shows the results. Among those with university education, less than half believe that the Stroessner regime helped stimulate economic growth or reduced unemployment. Nonetheless, there remains strong support for Stroessner, even among the university educated, in terms of success in fighting crime.

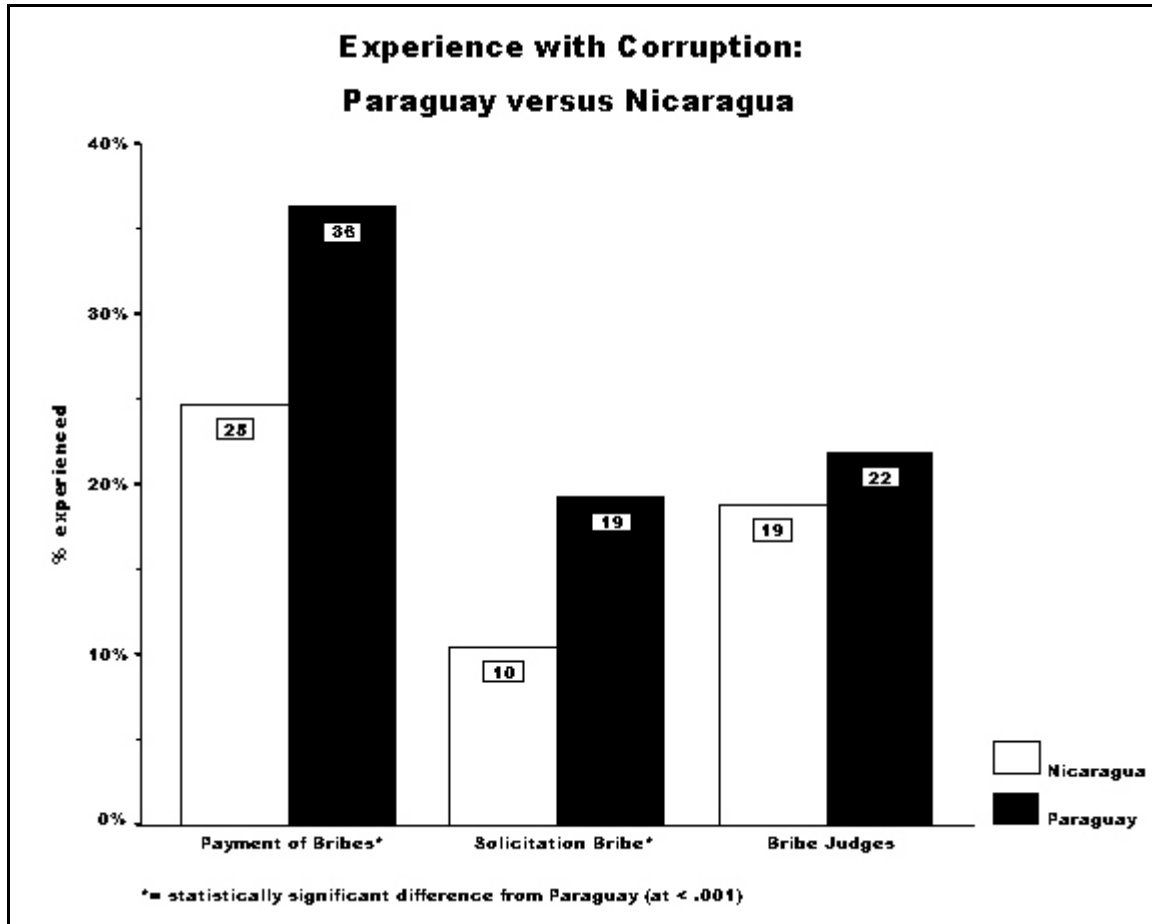
**Figure 60**

Corruption

One important factor in citizen confidence in the political system is the extent of corruption. Citizens can have a strong degree of confidence in the integrity of the institutions and elected officials in their country or can believe that corruption is so widespread that decisions are based primarily upon bribery rather than sound public policy. In the survey a series of questions was asked to measure two elements of corruption. First, we wanted to know the degree of citizen personal experience with corruption. Second, we wanted to know citizen perception of the magnitude of corruption in key democratic institutions. Comparable data exist for a national survey of Nicaragua that was conducted in 1996 by the author of this study.⁵¹ The sample of Nicaragua was large, consisting of some 2,400 respondents. A cluster of the items from the Nicaragua study was included in the Paraguay study, with the same wording.

The data measuring experience with corruption is shown in Figure 61. The most commonly experience form of corruption in both countries was knowledge of someone paying a bribe to a public employee. In Nicaragua one-in-four citizens have knowledge of this form of illegal activity, while in Paraguay, over one-third of the population have this experience. The flip side of the bribery issue is when public officials solicit bribes. Only about one-in-ten Nicaraguans reports being directly approached for a bribe in the two years prior to the survey, whereas in Paraguay it was nearly one-in-five. Finally, in a question that asked about knowledge of an individual who has paid a bribe in the courts, the two countries are quite similar, with about one-fifth in both countries reporting knowledge of this crime.

⁵¹Mitchell A. Seligson, *Nicaraguans Talk About Corruption: A Study of Public Opinion*, A Report to USAID, Nicaragua (Washington, D. C.: Casals and Associates, 1996).

**Figure 61**

The next series of items measured the degree to which citizens viewed their key political figures as being honorable or corrupt. The comparative results are displayed in Figure 62. Nicaraguans are somewhat more likely to view their political leaders and key institutions as corrupt rather than honest, when compared to Paraguayans.

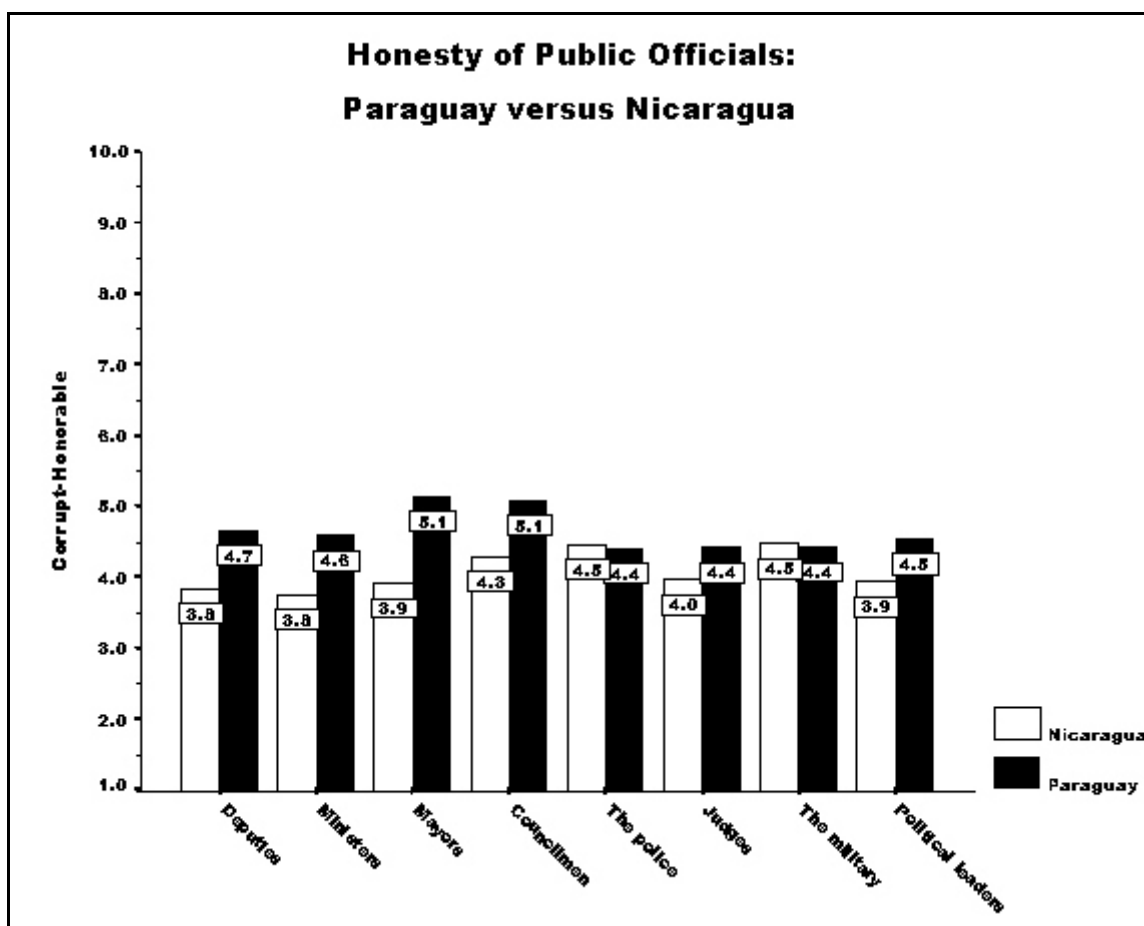


Figure 62

which a global analysis is relevant is EXC9. In this question we asked the respondents to compare the prevalence of bribery “today” with its prevalence during the time of Somoza. Since there is no directly comparable item in the Nicaragua survey, only the results for Paraguay are shown. Figure 63 shows the results. There seems to be no consensus on the historical comparison implied by this question. About one-third of Paraguayans say that bribery is greater today than during Somoza, while an almost equal number say that it is about the same. Smaller percentages believe that bribery has been reduced or do not express any belief on this question.

We have seen the overall levels of belief in

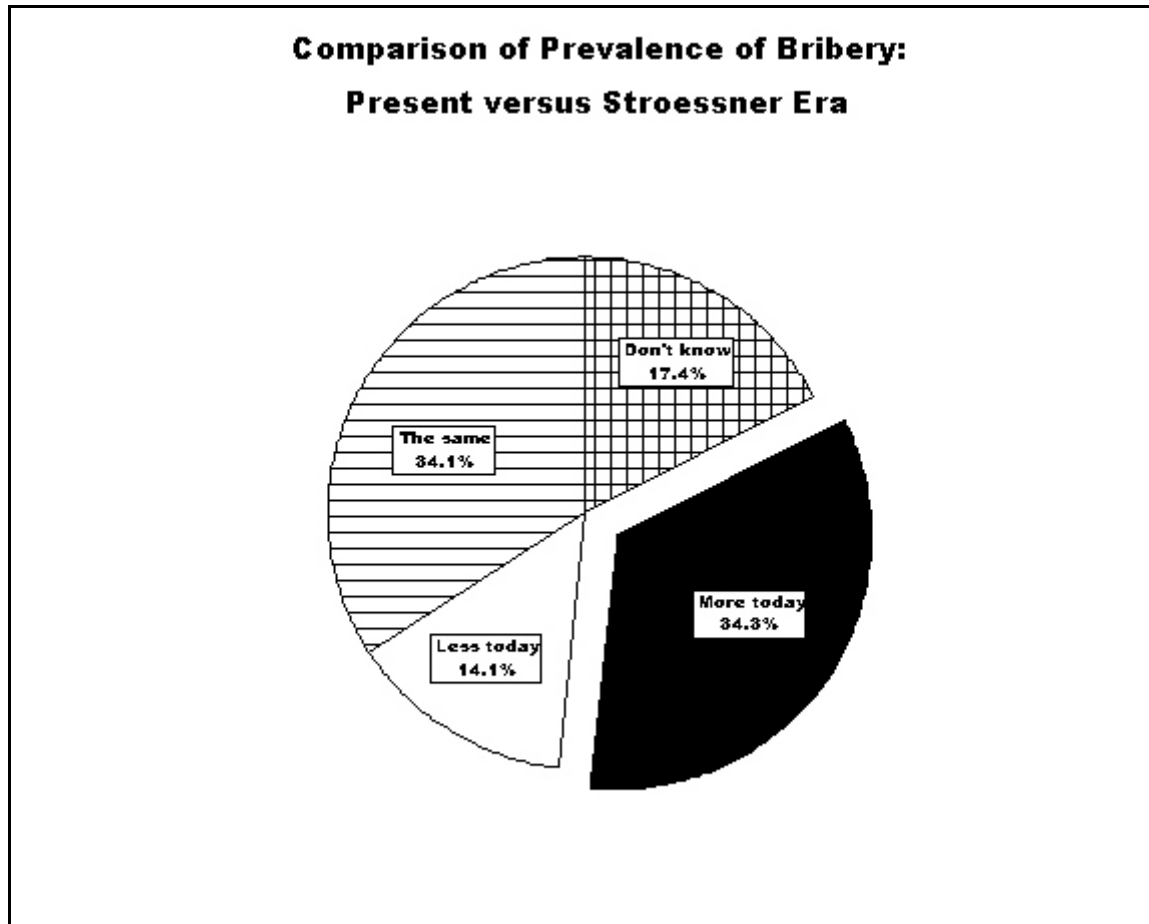


Figure 63

the honesty-dishonesty of the Paraguayan political system, and noted comparisons with Nicaragua. Now it is appropriate to examine differences within Paraguay. In order to simplify the presentation, the focus is on EXC7, the variable that measures the extent to which Paraguayans believe that bribery is practiced in the country.⁵² There is some variation among the zones, as is shown in Figure 64. As already noted, a preponderance of Paraguayans are more likely to believe that bribery is commonly practiced. The capital and metropolitan areas are least likely to believe in the honesty of the system. This, however, is partly a function of differences in education and exposure to the media as will be demonstrated below. A regression analysis

⁵²The item provided for four responses, from bribery being “very common” to it being “not at all common.” These were recoded on a 0=100 scale, with 100 being the most honest and 0 being the least honest.

demonstrated that education was the most important predictor of this variable, followed by gender and newspaper readership.⁵³

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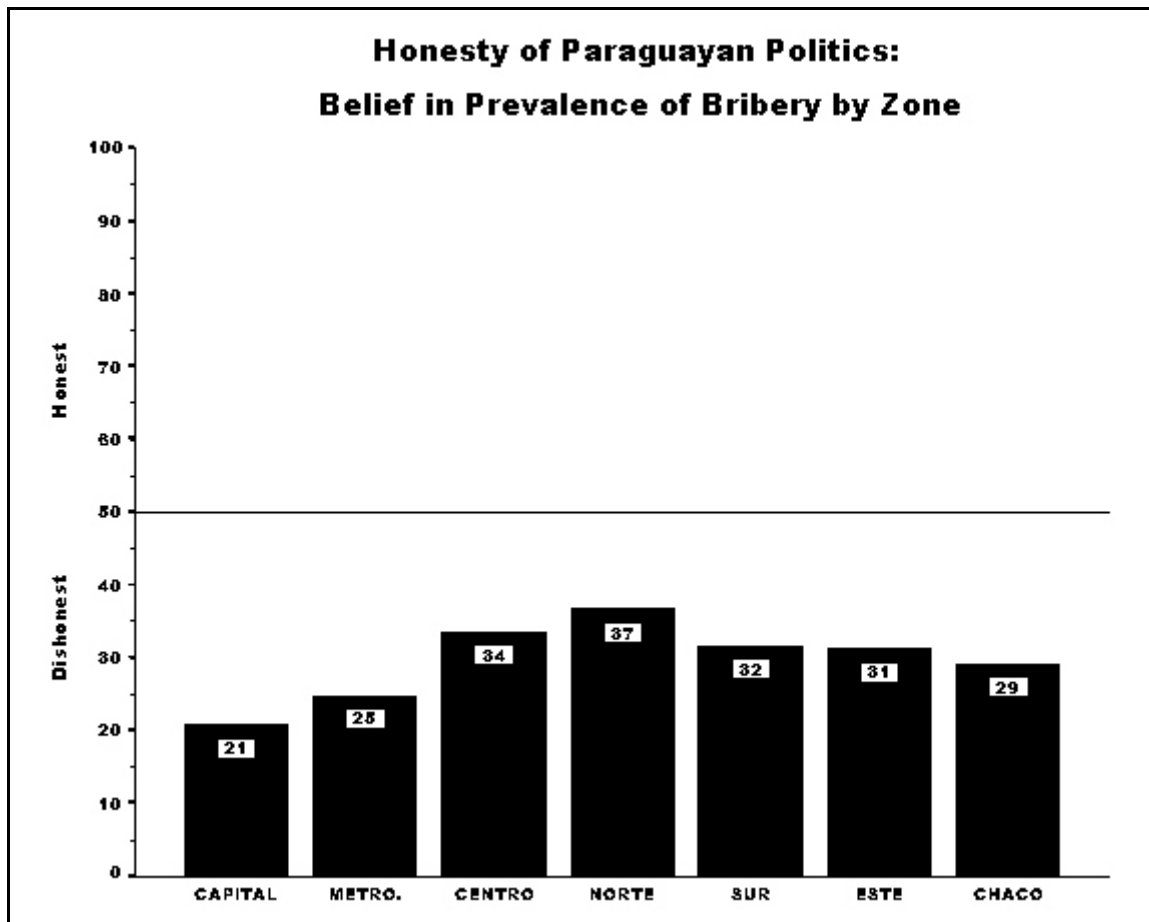


Figure 64

corruption in the system are shown for various levels of education, controlled by gender, in Figure 65. As can be seen, education has a strong effect on perceptions of the degree of corruption in Paraguay: those with primary education are far more likely to

⁵³These variables were significant, when controlling for the others as well as radio and TV exposure, use of Guaraní, and age. Urban-rural differences were also significant, but since these have already been partially highlighted in the differences by zone, they are not elaborated upon further here.

believe that the system is honest than are those with university education. In addition, females are more likely than males to see the system as honest, and this is true for each level of education, so that on our scale of 0-100, females with only primary education average near 40, while males with a university education average near 15.

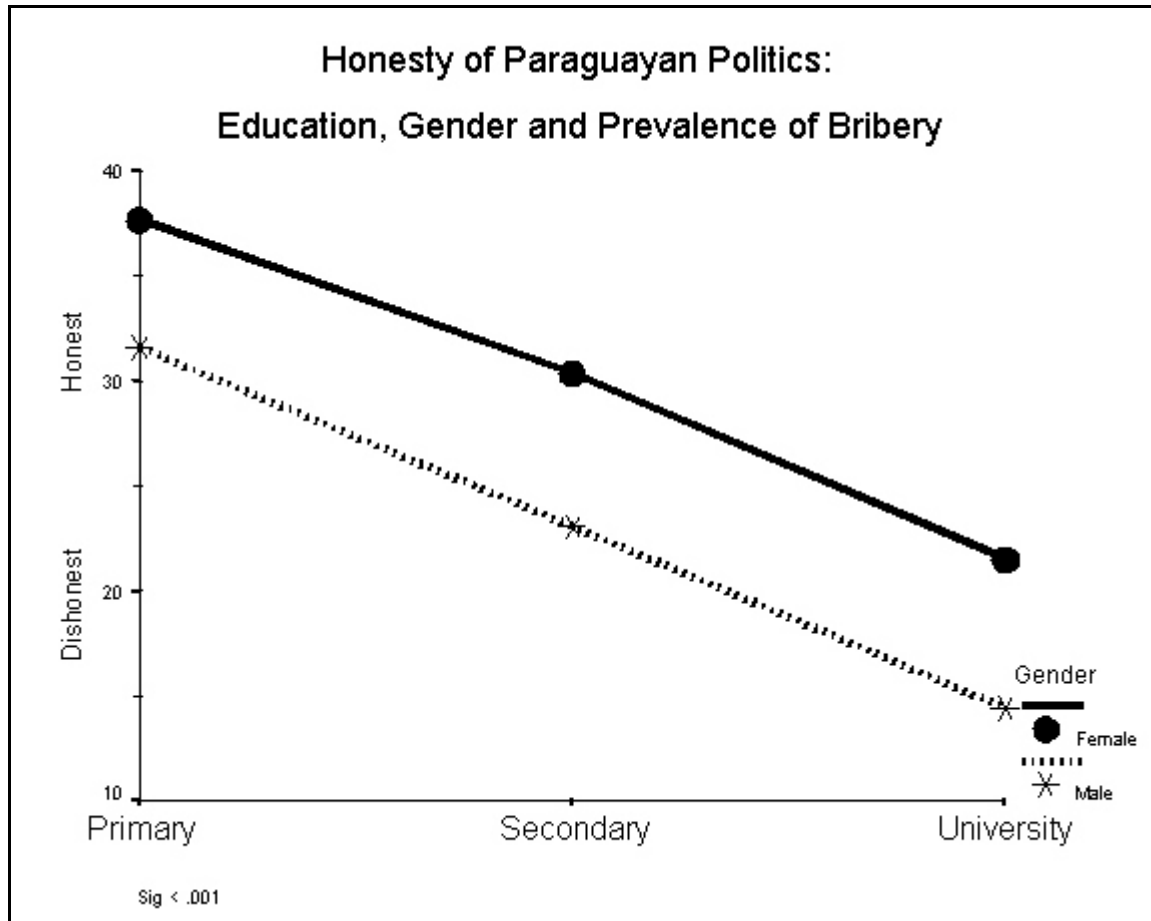


Figure 65

Differences in other respects on corruption are very small. For example, newspaper readership shows a very weak association with higher perception of corruption, whereas exposure to other forms of the media does not.