Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua, 2010

Democratic Consolidation in the Americas in Hard Times

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Preface

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) takes pride in its support of the *AmericasBarometer*. While their primary goal is to give citizens a voice on a broad range of important issues, the surveys also help guide USAID programming and inform policymakers throughout the Latin America and Caribbean region.

USAID officers use the *AmericasBarometer* findings to prioritize funding allocation and guide program design. The surveys are frequently employed as an evaluation tool, by comparing results in specialized "oversample" areas with national trends. In this sense, *AmericasBarometer* is at the cutting-edge of gathering high quality impact evaluation data that are consistent with the 2008 National Academy of Sciences recommendations to USAID. *AmericasBarometer* also alerts policymakers and donors to potential problem areas, and informs citizens about democratic values and experiences in their countries relative to regional trends.

AmericasBarometer builds local capacity by working through academic institutions in each country and training local researchers**.** The analytical team at Vanderbilt University first develops the questionnaire and tests it in each country. It then consults with its partner institutions, getting feedback to improve the instrument, and involves them in the pretest phase. Once this is all set, local surveyors conduct house-to-house surveys. With the help of its partner, the Population Studies Center at the University of Costa Rica (CCP), interviewers are now entering the replies directly into Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) in several countries. Once the data is collected, Vanderbilt's team reviews it for accuracy and devises the theoretical framework for the country reports. Country-specific analyses are later carried out by local teams.

While USAID continues to be the *AmericasBarometer's* biggest supporter, this year the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the Swedish Development Corporation (SIDA), Princeton University, the University of Notre Dame, and York University and Université Laval (Canada) helped fund the surveys as well. Vanderbilt University's College of Arts and Science made a major contribution to the effort. Thanks to this support, the fieldwork in all countries was conducted nearly simultaneously, allowing for greater accuracy and speed in generating comparative analyses. Also new this year, the country reports now contain three sections. The first one provides an overall assessment of the economic crisis. The second section deals with particular themes key to democracy. Finally, the third section delves into country-specific themes and priorities.

USAID is grateful for Dr. Mitchell Seligson's leadership of *AmericasBarometer* and welcomes Dr. Elizabeth Zechmeister to his team. We also extend our deep appreciation to their outstanding graduate students from throughout the hemisphere and to the many regional academic and expert institutions that are involved with this initiative.

Regards,

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Prologue: Background to the Study

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This study serves as the latest contribution of the **AmericasBarometer** series of surveys, one of the many and growing activities of the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). The 2010 study is the largest we have undertaken, and we believe that it represents the largest survey of democratic values ever undertaken in the Americas. It covers every independent country in mainland North, Central and South America, and all of the larger (and some of the smaller) countries in the Caribbean. In 2010 we added, for the first time, Trinidad & Tobago, as well as Suriname. The study involved the tireless efforts of our faculty, graduate students, national team partners, field personnel, donors and, of course, the many thousands of citizens of the Americas who took time away from their busy days to be interviewed. This prologue presents a brief background of this study and places it in the context of the larger LAPOP effort.

LAPOP, founded over two decades ago, is hosted (and generously supported) by Vanderbilt University. LAPOP began with the study of democratic values in one country, Costa Rica, at a time when much of the rest of Latin America was caught in the grip of repressive regimes that widely prohibited studies of public opinion (and systematically violated human rights and civil liberties). Today, fortunately, such studies can be carried out openly and freely in virtually all countries in the region. The **AmericasBarometer** is an effort by LAPOP to measure democratic values and behaviors in the Americas using national probability samples of voting-age adults. In 2004, the first round of surveys was implemented with eleven participating countries; the second took place in 2006 and incorporated 22 countries throughout the hemisphere. In 2008, 24 countries throughout the Americas were included. Finally, in 2010 the number of countries increased to 26. All reports and respective data sets are available on the LAPOP website www.LapopSurveys.org. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided the principal funding for carrying out these studies. Other donors in 2010 are the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), York University and Université Laval in Canada, and Princeton University, Notre Dame University, and Vanderbilt University in the United States.

We embarked on the 2010 **AmericasBarometer** in the hope that the results would be of interest and of policy relevance to citizens, NGOs, academics, governments, and the international donor community. We are confident that the study can not only be used to help advance the democratization agenda, but that it will also serve the academic community, which has been engaged in a quest to determine which values and behaviours are the ones most likely to promote stable democracy. For that reason, we agreed on a common core of questions to include in our survey. The Inter-American Development Bank provided a generous grant to bring together leading scholars from around the globe in January 2009 to consider how the sharp economic down might influence democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean. The scholars who attended that meeting prepared proposals for inclusion of question modules in the 2010 round of surveys. All of those proposals are available on the LAPOP web site.

The LAPOP Central Team then considered each of these proposals and, as well, sought input from its country teams and the donor community. The initial draft questionnaire was prepared in early 2009, and we began the arduous task of determining which items from prior **AmericasBarometer** surveys would be cut so as to make room for at least some of the new items being proposed for 2010. We were able to keep a very strong core of common questions, but deleted some items and modules on which we had already conducted extensive research and believed we had a good understanding of the issues involved.

We then distributed the draft questionnaire to our country teams and donor organizations and built a Wiki on which we placed the draft so that all could make comments and suggestions. We began pretesting the instrument, first here on the Vanderbilt campus, then in the local Hispanic community, and then in countries throughout the hemisphere. Very slowly, over a period of months spent testing and retesting, we refined the survey by improving some items and dropping modules that were just not working. We sent repeated versions to our country teams and received invaluable input. By late October, we had a refined working draft of the core questionnaire.

We then brought all of our country teams and several members of the donor community to San Salvador, El Salvador in November. Building on experiences from the 2004, 2006 and 2008 rounds, it was relatively easy for the teams to agree upon the final core questionnaire for all the countries. The common nucleus allows us to examine, for each country, and between nations, themes such as political legitimacy, political tolerance, support for stable democracy, participation of civil society and social capital, the rule of law, evaluations of local governments and participation within them, crime victimization, corruption victimization and electoral behavior. For 2010, however, we also focused on new areas, especially the economic downturn and how it was affecting citizens. Each country report contains analyses of the important themes related to democratic values and behaviors.

A common sample design has been crucial for the success of this comparative effort. We used a common design for the construction of a multi-staged, stratified probabilistic sample (with household level quotas) of approximately 1,500 individuals per country.[1] Detailed descriptions of the sample are contained in annexes of each country publication.

The El Salvador meeting was also a time for the teams to agree on a common framework for analysis. For 2010 the reports are cantered on the economic downturn. Part I contains extensive information on the economic problem as it affected citizens and shows in what ways economic issues are related to key support for democracy variables. Yet, we did not want to impose rigidities on each team, since we recognized from the outset that each country had its own unique circumstances, and what was very important for one country (e.g., crime, voting abstention) might be largely irrelevant for another. But, we did want each of the teams to be able to make direct comparisons to the results in the other countries. So, we included a Part II, in which each team developed their own discussion of those common core issues, and, finally a Part III of each report, in which each country team was given the freedom to develop its own discussion relevant to their country of focus.

A common system of presenting the data was developed as well. We agreed on a common method for index construction. We used the standard of an alpha reliability coefficient of greater than .6, with a preference for .7 as the minimum level needed for a set of items to be called a scale. The only variation in that rule was when we were using "count variables," to construct an *index* (as opposed to a *scale*) in which we merely wanted to know, for example, how many times an individual participated in a certain

[1] With the exception in 2010 of larger samples in Bolivia (N=3,000), Chile (N = 1,965) Ecuador (N=3,000), and Brazil (N = 2,500).

form of activity. In fact, most of our reliabilities were well above .7, many reaching above .8. We also encouraged all teams to use factor analysis to establish the dimensionality of their scales. Another common rule, applied to all of the data sets, was in the treatment of missing data. In order to maximize sample N without unreasonably distorting the response patterns, we substituted the mean score of the individual respondent's choice for any scale or index in which there were missing data, but only when the missing data comprised less than half of all the responses for that individual. For example, for a scale of five items, if the respondent answered three or more items, we assign the average of those three items to that individual for the scale. If less than three of the five items were answered, the case was considered lost and not included in the index.

LAPOP believes that the reports should be accessible and readable to the layperson reader, meaning that we make heavy use of bivariate graphs. But we also agree that those graphs should always follow a multivariate analysis (either OLS or logistic regression), so that the technically informed reader could be assured that the individual variables in the graphs are (or are not) indeed significant predictors of the dependent variable being studied.

We also agreed on a common graphical format using STATA 10. The project's lead data analyst, Dominique Zéphyr, created programs using STATA to generate graphs which presented the confidence intervals taking into account the "design effect" of the sample. This approach represents a major advancement in the presentation of the results of our surveys, as we are now able to have a higher level of precision in the analysis of the data.[2] In fact, both the bivariate and multivariate analyses as well as the regression analyses in the study now take into account the design effect of the sample. The implementation of this methodology has allowed us to assert a higher level of certainty if the differences between variables averages are statistically significant.[3] Furthermore, regression coefficients are presented in graphical form with their respective confidence intervals. For 2010 we have refined these programs further, making the results, we hope, easier to read and quicker to comprehend.

Finally, a common "informed consent" form was prepared, and approval for research on human subjects was granted by the Vanderbilt University Institutional Review Board (IRB). All investigators involved in the project studied the human subject's protection materials utilized by Vanderbilt and then took and passed the certifying tests. All publicly available data for this project are de-identified, thus protecting the right of anonymity guaranteed to each respondent. The informed consent form appears in the appendix of each study.

Our concern from the outset was minimization of error and maximization of the quality of the database. We did this in several ways. First, we agreed on a common coding scheme for all of the closed-ended questions. Second, all data files were entered in their respective countries, and verified (i.e.,

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[2] The design effect becomes important because of the use of stratification, clustering, and weighting in complex samples. It can increase or decrease the standard error of a variable, which will then make the confidence intervals either increase or decrease. Because of this, it was necessary to take into account the complex nature of our surveys to have better precision and not assume, as is generally done, that the data had been collected using simple random samples. While the use of stratification within the sample tends to decrease the standard error, the rate of homogeneity within the clusters and the use of weighting tend to increase it. Although the importance of taking into account the design effect has been demonstrated, this practice has not become common in public opinion studies, primarily because of the technical requirements that it implicates. In this sense, LAPOP has achieved yet another level in its mission of producing high quality research by incorporating the design effect in the analysis of the results of its surveys.

[3] All **AmericasBarometer** samples are self-weighted expect for Bolivia and Ecuador, Brazil, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname and the United States. Users of the data file will find a variable called "WT" which weights each country file, which in the case of the self-weighted files, each respondent's weight is equal to 1. The files also contain a variable called "WEIGHT1500" that makes each country file weighted to a sample size of 1,500 so that no one country would count any more than any other in a comparative analysis.

double entered), after which the files were sent to LAPOP at Vanderbilt for review. At that point, for those countries still using paper questionnaires, now a minority of all countries, a random list of 50 questionnaire identification numbers was sent back to each team, who were then asked to ship those 50 surveys via express courier to LAPOP for auditing. This audit consisted of two steps. The first involved comparing the responses written on the questionnaire during the interview with the responses entered by the coding teams. The second step involved comparing the coded responses to the data base itself. If a significant number of errors were encountered through this process, the entire data base had to be re-entered and the process of auditing was repeated on the new data base. Fortunately, this occurred in only one case during the 2010 round of the **AmericasBarometer.** The problem for that country was quickly resolved after all of the data were re-entered. Finally, the data sets were merged by our expert, Dominique Zéphyr into one uniform multi-nation file, and copies were sent to all teams so that they could carry out comparative analysis on the entire file.

An additional technological innovation in the 2010 round is the expansion of the use of personal digital assistants (PDAs) to collect data in 17 of the countries and the use of the Windows Mobile platform for handheld computers using the system. Our partners at the Universidad de Costa Rica developed and enhanced the program, EQCollector and formatted it for use in the 2010 round of surveys. We have found this method of recording the survey responses extremely efficient, resulting in higher quality data with fewer errors than with the paper-and-pencil method. In addition, the cost and time of data entry was eliminated entirely. Another benefit of the PDAs was that we could switch languages used in the questionnaires in countries where we used multi-lingual questionnaires. Our plan is to expand the use of PDAs in future rounds of LAPOP surveys, hopefully making it universal in the next round.

In the case of countries with significant indigenous-speaking population, the questionnaires were translated into those languages (e.g., Quechua and Aymara in Bolivia). We also developed versions in English for the English-speaking Caribbean and for Atlantic coastal America, as well as a French Creole version for use in Haiti and a Portuguese version for Brazil. In Surname we developed versions in Dutch and Sranan Tongo, as well as our standard Caribbean English. In the end, we were using versions in 15 different languages. All of those questionnaires form part of the www.lapopsurveys.org web site and can be consulted there or in the appendixes for each country study.

Country teams then proceeded to analyse their data sets and write their studies. The draft studies were read by the LAPOP team at Vanderbilt and returned to the authors for corrections. Revised studies were then submitted and they were each read and edited by the LAPOP Central team. Those studies were then returned to the country teams for final correction and editing and were sent to USAID for their critiques. What you have before you, then, is the product of the intensive labor of scores of highly motivated researchers, sample design experts, field supervisors, interviewers, data entry clerks, and, of course, the over 40,000 respondents to our survey. Our efforts will not have been in vain if the results presented here are utilized by policy makers, citizens and academics alike to help strengthen democracy in Latin America.

The following tables list the academic institutions that have contributed to the project.

Country	Institutions	
Mexico and Central America		
Costa Rica	CCP	Universidad de Costa Rica
El Salvador	UCA iudop	FundaUngo
Guatemala	asies	
Honduras	FOPRIDEH Federacion de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo de Honduras	Hagamos Democracia
Mexico	data Opinión Publica y Mercados	ITAM INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO AUTÓNOMO DE MÉXICO
Nicaragua	B&A Borge y Asociados	
Panama	CIDEM Centro de Iniciativas Democráticas	

Andean/Southern Cone		
Argentina	UNIVERSIDAD TORCUATO DI TELLA	
Bolivia	Ciudadanía Comunidad de Estudios Sociales y Acción Pública	
Brazil	Universidade de Brasília	
Chile	Instituto de Ciencia Política	Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Colombia	Universidad de los Andes Facultad de Ciencias Sociales	observatorio de la democracia
Ecuador	FLACSO ECUADOR	CEDATOS Gallup International
Paraguay	IRD Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo	
Peru	***IEP Instituto de Estudios Peruanos***	
Uruguay	CIFRA	UM UNIVERSIDAD DE MONTEVIDEO
Venezuela	CISOR	

Caribbean		
Dominican Republic	GALLUP REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA	intec INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO DE SANTO DOMINGO
Guyana	DP DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS	
Haiti	Groupe de Recherche GRESS En Sciences Sociales	
Jamaica	THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES AT MONA, JAMAICA	
Suriname	THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES AT ST. AUGUSTINE, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	
Trinidad & Tobago	THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES AT ST. AUGUSTINE, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	

Canada and United States	
Canada	YORK UNIVERSITÉ UNIVERSITY redefine THE POSSIBLE.
United States	VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

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At Vanderbilt University, the study would not have been possible without the generosity, collaboration and hard work of many individuals. The College of Arts & Sciences provided critical support, while the Office of the Provost provided space. Neal Tate, Chair of the Department of Political Science at Vanderbilt was a strong supporter of the project since its inception at Vanderbilt and facilitated its integration with the busy schedule of the Department. Tragically, Neal died during the development of the 2010 round and never saw its completion. His position was filled by Professor Bruce Oppenheimer, who supported the project above and beyond the call of his temporary duty. Professors Jon Hiskey, Zeynep Somer-Topcu and Efren Pérez of the Department of Political Science made many helpful suggestions as the research effort proceeded. Tonya Mills, Grants Administrator, and Patrick D. Green, Associate Director, Division of Sponsored Research, performed heroically in managing the countless contract and financial details of the project. In a study as complex as this, literally dozens of contracts had to be signed and hundreds of invoices paid. They deserve special thanks for their efforts. Tonya Mills, our Grants Manager and Tina Bembry, our Program Coordinator, have provided exceptional support for the project. Rubí Arana took charge of the complex task of synchronization of the many versions of each country questionnaire and our common core. Without her careful eye, we would have missed many minor but critical errors in the translations and country customization process. Fernanda Boidi, who received her Ph.D. from our program last year, played a major role in the pretesting in many countries. She invested countless hours refining the questionnaire for us and saving us from many errors. María Clara Bertini ably supported us from her perch in Quito, Ecuador by running our web page, handling the subscriptions to the data bases and by formatting many of the reports written by country teams. We also want to name all of the Ph.D. students at Vanderbilt who did so much to make this round the best ever: Margarita Corral (Spain) Arturo Maldonado (Peru), Alejandro Díaz Domínguez (Mexico), Juan Carlos Donoso (Ecuador), Brian Faughnan (USA), Matt Layton (USA), Trevor Lyons (USA), Diana Orcés (Ecuador), Daniel Montalvo (Ecuador), Mason Moseley (USA), Scott Revey (USA), Mariana Rodríguez (Venezuela), and Daniel Zizumbo-Colunga (Mexico).

Critical to the project's success was the cooperation of the many individuals and institutions in the countries studied. Their names, countries and affiliations are listed below.

Country/ Institution	Researchers (located in country of study unless otherwise noted)
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Mexico and Central America Group	
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Guatemala	●Dr. Dinorah Azpuru, Senior Associate at ASIES in Guatemala and Assistant Professor of Political Science at Wichita State University, USA ●Sample design and coordination of field survey: Juan Pablo Pira, ASIES
El Salvador	●Dr. José Miguel Cruz, Visiting Professor, Florida International University, USA ●Dr. Ricardo Córdova, Executive Director of FUNDAUNGO
Honduras	●Dr. José Rene Argueta, University of Pittsburgh, USA ●Dr. Orlando Pérez, Professor and Chair of Political Science at Central Michigan University, USA
Nicaragua	●Dr. John Booth, Regents Professor of Political Science, University of North Texas, USA
Costa Rica	●Dr. Jorge Vargas, Sub-Director of the Estado de la Nación project, United Nations
Panama	●Dr. Orlando Pérez, Professor and Chair of Political Science at Central Michigan University, USA
Caribbean Group	
Dominican Republic	●Dr. Jana Morgan, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Tennessee, USA ●Dr. Rosario Espinal, Professor of Sociology, Temple University, USA
Guyana	●Everette Cleveland Marciano Glasgow, Development Policy and Management Consultants ●Mark Bynoe, Director, Development Policy and Management Consultants
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Canada	●Dr. Simone Bohn, Assistant Professor of Political Science, York University

Finally, we wish to thank the more than 40,000 residents of the Americas who took time away from their busy lives to answer our questions. Without their cooperation, this study would have been impossible.

Nashville, Tennessee
July, 2010

Executive Summary

The central question of this round of the AmericasBarometer studies of countries in the Americas is this: Should we be concerned that the great economic crisis of 2008-2010 could be undermining democracy in the Americas? While widespread democratic breakdown seems unlikely in Latin America after years of democratic stability, the coup of 2009 in Honduras and the ongoing erosion of democracy in Venezuela indicate some democratic fragility. This round of the AmericasBarometer surveys, based on over 40,000 interviews in 26 countries, explores the risks posed by economic adversity to democracy.

Chapter I shows that, after decades of lagging growth and outright decline from the 1970s through 2000, Nicaragua began a modest economic recovery. The decline of GDP and the decline in unemployment in Nicaragua were less than in other Central American countries and Mexico.

Democracy rating institutions noted with concern election system flaws, a recent climate of turmoil, and government intimidation of opposition, civil society and the media. President Ortega, lacking a majority in the National Assembly, strengthened executive authority. His pact with former president Alemán continued to strengthen the power of the FSLN and Liberal Constitutionalists at the expense of other parties.

Chapter II examines the direct impact of the recession on Nicaraguans. The nation and Nicaraguans' personal economies worsened in 2009. Many Nicaraguans perceived the crisis to be serious and experienced losses of jobs at the individual and household level as well as income loss. Those reporting reduced family incomes were significantly more pessimistic about the national and their personal economies. Nicaraguans blamed the crisis more on the Ortega administration than they did the previous administration

Chapter III examines whether the varying levels of economic crisis and related perceptions affected attitudes about democracy. Respondents around the Americas and in Nicaragua reported declines in life satisfaction. Despite the recession's impact on Nicaragua's economy and its citizens' lower life satisfaction since 2008, Nicaraguans nevertheless did not become less supportive of democracy (as was true for the Americas as a whole).

Further encouraging news is that institutional legitimacy was not undermined by the economic crisis. In Nicaragua, system support actually increased despite the economic crisis.

In Nicaragua satisfaction with democracy remained unchanged from 2008. In contrast to elsewhere in the Americas, Nicaraguans' perceptions of the economy had little influence on their satisfaction with democracy. Two main factors affected Nicaraguans' satisfaction with democracy -- positive evaluations of President Ortega and of the government's economic performance.

Economic crisis did not elevate popular support for an authoritarian response to economic difficulties in the Americas and Nicaragua was one of two countries where coup support declined.

Chapter III's findings underscore that positive evaluations of government economic performance contributed strongly to support for democratic governance. It appears that if governments could convince their citizens that they were doing a good job with the economy, then -- no matter that the economy is performing badly -- democracy would continue to enjoy support from citizens.

Chapter IV hypothesizes that crime and corruption can erode system support and support for the rule of law, both of which are important to democratic stability. Perceived insecurity in Nicaragua, as across the Americas, was much higher than actual crime victimization.

Reported victimization by corruption among Nicaraguans was low at 12 percent, well in the lower half of countries surveyed. Nicaragua's average perceived corruption level was low for the Americas. Corruption victimization and perceived corruption had both declined since 2006.

On balance, in Nicaragua the measureable impacts of crime, corruption, and citizens' perceptions of these on system support were surprisingly limited. System support was somewhat reduced by high perceived corruption, but not by actual corruption, crime or perceived insecurity.

A surprising finding is that Nicaraguans' support for the rule of law declined 25 points on a 0 to 100 scale from 2004 to 2008, although it recovered partially by 2010. The poor and persons who felt unsafe supported the rule of law more than the rich and those who felt secure.

The theory guiding Chapter V is that attitudes matter for the survival of democracy because they constrain leaders and elites' behavior. The chapter empirically tested whether a combination of citizen values that is both system-supportive and tolerant of political participation by regime critics would support democratic stability. The percentage of Nicaraguans of both high tolerance and high system support did not change much from 2004 to 2008, but rose in 2010 to 29 percent of Nicaraguans, roughly at parity with the rest of the Americas. While this recent development is encouraging, the overall record since 2004 indicates that Nicaraguan political culture is still in flux for both tolerance and system support.

Detailed analysis of political attitudes among Nicaraguans indicated a clear preference for democracy over other systems of governance, and on support for participation rights and restraints on the executive. Further, Nicaraguans scored very low on support for executive authoritarianism, but somewhat higher on military authoritarianism.

Nicaraguans' evaluations of specific institutions produced mixed results. Nicaraguans in 2010 trusted the Army and the National Police more than any other public sector institutions and were on balance positive about them. They rated all other public institutions as moderately untrustworthy or worse. Among institutions gaining in trust were the Army and the president. Trust in other institutions eroded, notably trust in elections and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal.

Finally, Chapter V analyzes the distribution of Nicaraguans' satisfaction with how democracy works. Perception of a bad economic crisis lowered satisfaction with democracy. Three political attitudes mattered most of all in determining democratic satisfaction – Nicaraguans' satisfaction with presidential performance and with government economic performance, and their preference for democracy. In contrast, identification with the opposition Liberals diminished democratic satisfaction.

Chapter VI reviews evidence related to social capital theory, which predicts that interpersonal trust would arise from participation in civil society and would in turn contribute to attitudes and behaviors supportive of democracy. Nicaraguans' trust levels proved very stable over time. Contrary to expectation, civil society activity in Nicaragua affected trust very little.

Involvement in civil society organizations varied widely across group type and has stabilized after a long post-revolutionary decline. The only Nicaraguan group type with a significant increase in participation since 2004 was Citizen Power Councils.

When Nicaraguans placed themselves along a left-right ideology scale, they revealed a trimodal (three-humped) distribution. One sixth placed themselves on the extreme political left, and just over a fifth positioned themselves on the extreme right. Roughly a third of the respondents located themselves in the middle of the left-right continuum. Despite this ideological polarization, Nicaraguans' other political attitudes did not vary much across the left-right spectrum. This finding somewhat allayed a concern that ideology might undermine democratic norms among those at the extremes.

Chapter VII presents the theory that those who participate in the local political arena and are satisfied with local government services may grow in their support for national institutions. Greater satisfaction with municipal government services bolstered Nicaraguans' national system support.

Nicaraguans were at roughly the average for the Americas in attendance at municipal government meetings and asking for help from the local government, but they ranked near the top in the Americas in their satisfaction with local government services.

Chapter VIII examines in detail the 39 percent of Nicaraguan citizens between the ages of 16 and 25. Young Nicaraguans (aged 16 to 25) were found to be better educated, slightly wealthier in terms of household resources, and less likely to have experienced a decline in family income than older Nicaraguans.

Young Nicaraguans, like their older fellow citizens, generally expressed democratic norms. The young were more tolerant than older Nicaraguans of homosexuals and gay marriage, but still on average disapproved of both. Younger Nicaraguans participated in politics less than older Nicaraguans in many ways, including civil society activism.

Younger Nicaraguans were somewhat more satisfied with the performance of the regime and economy, and were predominantly democratic but less politically engaged than older Nicaraguans. Nicaragua's youth resemble their older fellow citizens in far more ways than they differ from them. Nicaragua's younger citizens appear unlikely to alter the nation's style of politics, party identification, ideological patterns, or political behavior. Thus young Nicaraguans do not represent any threat to future political stability.

Chapter IX explores political participation in greater detail. Trends in participation over time appear to have stabilized after a long post-revolution decline during the 1990s and early 2000s. Nicaraguans' civil society engagement contributed greatly to mobilize their political participation. Involvement in community improvement groups and in Citizen Power Councils each contributed greater involvement in other types of political participation. CPC involvement associated with greater protesting.

Levels of civil society engagement overall appear essentially static since 2006 except for involvement in CPCs which rose from 2008 to 2010. This elevated CPC and community group involvement in turn likely accounted for the recent upturns in contacting public officials and in engaging local government. Sandinista sympathizers and voters were more active in the Citizen Power Councils than in community improvement organizations, so the FSLN and its supporters likely enjoyed increased influence over public policy.

Another broad pattern revealed was that party identification (sympathy for either of the two Liberal parties or for the Frente Sandinista) motivated Nicaraguans to vote and to engage in campaign and party activism. Although clientelist inducements were uncommon (4 percent), their effect nonetheless boosted participation and did so in targeted ways. For example, reporting having voted for either the

FSLN or the AL in the 2006 election was associated with both clientelist inducements on the one hand and with elevated local government, party, and campaign activity as well as contacting public officials on the other. Except for interest in politics, almost no attitudes associated with political participation.

Nicaraguans' position in society and their personal resources played a small role in shaping political participation except for the surprising finding the wealthy protested more than the poor. In general demographic factors had little effect on participation. This demonstrated that political participation, especially contacting, engaging local government, and protest were broadly diffused among Nicaraguans of all walks of life.

Chapter X examined Citizen Power Councils (CPCs) and other already existing community improvement groups (CIGs). While 12 percent of Nicaraguans reported involvement in CPC meetings, more than twice as many said they were involved in CIGs. We detected a significant overlap in membership in both CIGs and CPCs. Almost half of those involved CPCs were sympathizers of the Frente Sandinista. Only one in twenty CPC activists sympathized with either Liberal party. Among CIGs, about one person in three was also a Sandinista sympathizer and one in six was a Liberal. CPC activists came disproportionately from CIGs and were more educated than average. Otherwise CPC engagement was broadly distributed among Nicaraguans. Those involved in both CPCs and CIGs were more engaged with local government, contacted public officials more, and took part more in protests and demonstrations.

Because engaging with local government, contacting local and national officials and protest all send messages to those in power about citizens' demands, one may reasonably conclude that members of Nicaragua's community organizations generated a disproportionate share of whatever messages society was sending to the government. CPCs, while only engaging about an eighth of Nicaraguans, promoted higher rates of contacting and protesting than CIGs, and so likely accounted for a disproportionate share of the demands being made. Citizens in both CPCs and CIGs perceived they had greater influence on local government.

CPC and CIG activism had no discernible effect on Nicaraguans' democratic norms, contrary to one of the grand hypotheses of the social capital literature.

Part I: Hard Times and Their Effects on Democracy

Chapter I. Hard Times in the Americas: Economic Overview

Introduction

Since the last round of the AmericasBarometer in 2008, one of the most severe world-wide economic recessions since the Great Depression took place. This crisis affected most nations in the world; the Americas have not been immune. Yet, many of the nations in Latin America and the Caribbean seem to have managed the crisis unusually well, no doubt mitigating its potential impact on democracy. In this study, we first briefly examine the data on the economic downturn, but then we turn to the core of our analysis, the AmericasBarometer survey data, the largest survey of democratic public opinion ever conducted in the Americas. We look at the 2008 round, which was conducted before the full weight of the crisis had been experienced, and the 2010 round, when most countries were recovering. Sparked by a massive set of financial problems in the United States, the problem reached crisis proportions in September, 2008 several months after the 2008 AmericasBarometer fieldwork had been completed. The upshot was a near-universal decline in economic growth, increased unemployment, and increased poverty levels that are still being felt albeit unequally around the globe.

In the prior study in this series of analyses of public opinion in the Americas, we examined the impact of various governance indicators on support for stable democracy. In this round of the AmericasBarometer 2010, we report on the characteristics of those affected by the crisis, especially those who lost their jobs and those who state that their personal economies have deteriorated. Is the crisis linked to citizens' support for democracy and democratic principles? And ultimately, does the economic crisis threaten support for democracy?

In this chapter, we begin with a global overview of the economic crisis in terms of economic growth, unemployment, and poverty levels, followed by a regional and specific country assessment. We then document a global, as well as a regional, "democracy recession," and then discuss democracy at the country level. We conclude by identifying the important relationships scholars have theorized and found between economic and democratic decline.

Economic Overview

The 2010 AmericasBarometer survey took place in the context of the greatest global economic crisis in the past 80 years. In terms of economic expansion, world real GDP growths showed a systematic decline from 3.9 to 3 percent by the end of 2008, and in 2009 fell to a negative 1.4 percent (see Figure I.1). Yet, as the 2010 survey began, there were projections estimating a recovery was underway.[4] Moreover, while some countries were seriously affected by the crisis, others were not and were even able to sustain growth in the context of a world-wide slowdown. Indeed, it appears that unlike the severe crises of the past that sharply weakened Latin American and Caribbean economies, careful management of counter-cyclical policies averted many of the worst effects.

While by the time the 2010 round of surveys began, the world economy was exhibiting signs of economic recovery in a variety of countries, the effects of the crisis were still being suffered across the globe. Forty three poor countries in 2009 suffered serious consequences of the economic crisis, with

[4] IMF, *World Economic Outlook 2009: Crisis and Recovery* (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2009).

many facing underperformance in vital areas such as education, health, and infrastructure. By the end of 2010, even with recovery, it is believed that as many as 64 million more people will be living in extreme poverty than in 2009, that is, on less than $1.25 per day. Moreover, more than 1 billion people were expected to go chronically hungry reversing many benefits that had been obtained from successful anti-poverty programs implemented in the previous decade.[5]

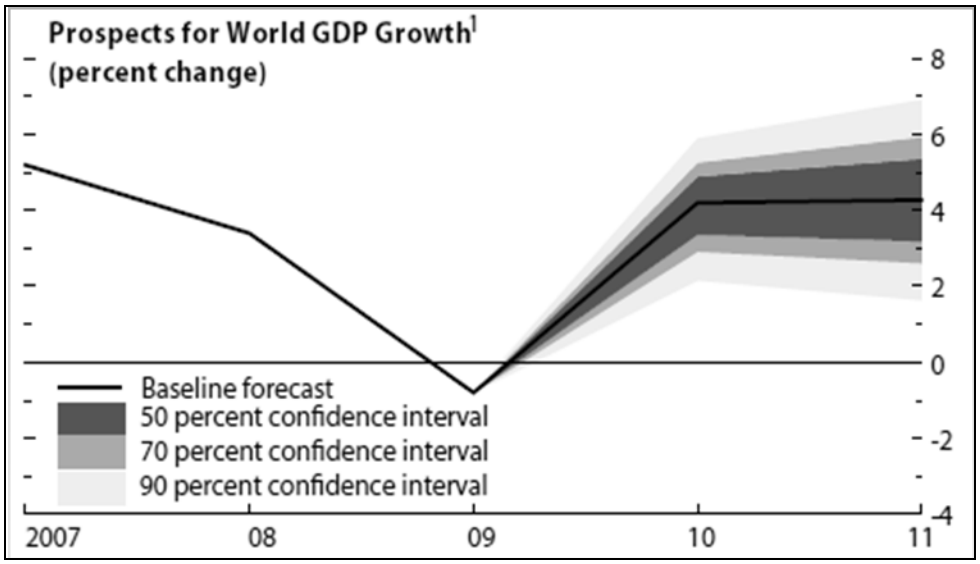


Figure I.1. World Real GDP Growth Estimates and Projections
(Source IMF, World Economic Outlook (2010)[6]

Crisis-related unemployment increases were substantial and widely felt. According to the International Labour Organization, the global unemployment rate for 2009 was estimated at 6.6 percent, corresponding to about 212 million persons. This means an increase of almost 34 million people over the number of unemployed in 2007, with most of this increment taking place in 2009. In addition, many workers fell into more vulnerable forms of employment and this, in turn, has reduced work benefits, swollen precarious employment conditions and elevated the number of the working poor. It is estimated that vulnerable employment increased by more than 100 million workers between 2008 and 2009.[7] Furthermore, even though "the extreme working poor," that is, individuals living on less than $1.25 per day, was reduced by 16.3 percentage points between 1998 to 2008, by the end of 2008, the extreme working poor remained at a total of 21.2 percent of all employment, implying that around 633 million workers were living with their families on less than $1.25 a day worldwide.[8]

All these figures point to the severity of the impact of the economic recession around the world. Yet, the crisis did not impact all regions or countries uniformly. While some regions and countries experienced pronounced economic setbacks, such as the United States, the European Union, and Japan to name a few, the impact in Latin America and the Caribbean as a region was not as severe.[9] Recent data from the World Bank indicate that after nearly a decade of strong performance, GDP growth in Latin

[5] See /www.worldbank.org/financialcrisis/bankinitiatives.htm and http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22152813~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607,00.html

[6] IMF, *World Economic Outlook 2010: Rebalancing Growth* (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2010).

[7] ILO, *Global Employment Trends: January 2010* (Geneva: International Labor Organization, 2010), 42.

[8] Ibid., 22.

[9] Following an estimated economic growth decline of 2.5 percent in 2009, the U.S. is expected to grow by 2.1 percent in 2010. Japan, on the other hand, the country that most severely felt the consequences of the crisis (-5.4 percent) compared to other industrialized nations is expected to grow only marginally in 2010 (0.9 percent).
See http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wesp2010files/wesp2010pr.pdf

America and the Caribbean decreased from an average of 5.5 to 3.9 percent between 2007 and 2008, and fell even further in 2009 (2.6 percent).[10] Economic recovery, however, seems to be underway based on the latest projections available as of this writing, and show that real GDP growth may increase from 3.1 and 3.6 percent in 2010 and 2011, respectively.[11] On the other hand, other projections from the Inter-American Development Bank suggest that Latin American exports are likely to decrease significantly for a time until world-wide demand is restored. Similarly, terms of trade between Latin American and advanced industrialized countries are also likely to deteriorate, as the prices of primary commodities have fallen.[12]

The financial turmoil also clearly had a negative impact on the Latin American labor market. The unemployment rate is estimated to have increased to 8.5 percent in the first quarter of 2009 compared to 7.8 percent during the same period in 2008, suggesting that more than one million more Latin American workers were unable to find jobs (UN 2010). Similarly, even though the working poor (i.e., those living on less than $2 a day) decreased by 6.2 percentage points between 2003 and 2008, best estimates are that a reversal took place in 2009.[13] Furthermore, the extreme working poor (i.e., those living on less than $1.25) rose from 7 to 9.9 percent in 2009.[14] These are just some examples of the serious "side-effects" that the financial crisis has had on Latin America.

The economic crisis in the U.S. and other advanced industrial nations also affected the level of remittances on which so many families in Latin America depend. For example, some estimates suggest that remittances constitute more than half the income for about 30 percent of recipient families, helping to keep these families out of poverty.[15] Remittances represent an important percentage of inflows to many local economies. Seven of the region's nations receive 12 percent or more of GDP from their families abroad: Haiti, Guyana, Jamaica, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. In many of these countries, remittances have become the first or second source of revenue, sometimes exceeding exports, tourism, and foreign investment (UNDP 2009). As early as 2008 the growth rates of remittances declined considerably across Latin America, even becoming negative in some countries (see Figure I.2).

[10] WorldBank, *Global Economic Prospects: Crisis, Finance, and Growth 2010*.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Eduardo Fernandez-Arias and Peter Montiel, "Crisis Response in Latin America: Is the 'Rainy Day' at Hand?," (Inter-American Development Bank, 2009).
[13] World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects: Crisis, Finance, and Growth 2010* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2010).
[14] ILO, *Global Employment Trends: January 2010*, 30.
[15] See http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=1910986 and http://www.ifad.org/events/remittances/maps/latin.htm

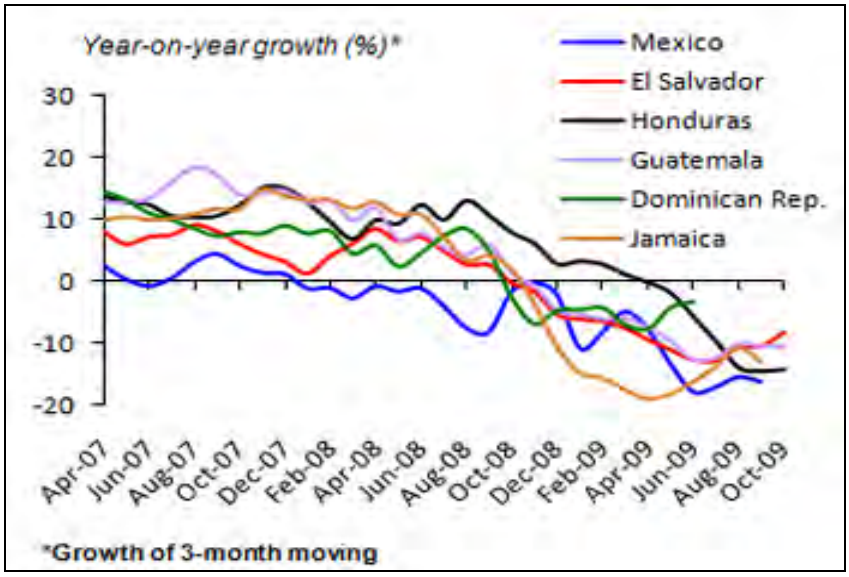


Figure I.2. Declines in Remittances to Latin America, 2007-2009 as Reported by the World Bank

Figure I.2 shows that throughout the year 2009, the growth rate of remittances decreased and turned negative in Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, and Jamaica. For example, remittances in Mexico decreased by 13.4 percent in the first nine months of 2009 from a consistent remittance growth rate of over 25 percent in 2006. Declines in remittances were also registered in South American countries, such as Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru.[16]

The most recent data available as of the writing of this report shows that while the crisis was the worst experienced in the region over the last two decades, by 2010 recovery was underway.[17] As shown in Figure I.3, drawn from a recent IDB study based on the seven largest economies in the region (collectively accounting for 91 percent of the region's GDP), the growth decline in 2009 was -2.0 percent, but the rebound in growth for 2010 is forecast to be a positive 3.7 percent growth rate.[18]

[16] See http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/MigrationAndDevelopmentBrief11.pdf

[17] Alejandro Izquierdo y Ernesto Talvi, *The Aftermath of the Global Crisis: Policy Lessons and Challenges Ahead for Latin America and the Caribbean* (Washington, D. C.: Inter-American Development Bank, 2010).

[18] These data are based on the seven largest economies in the region (collectively accounting for 91% of the region's GDP).

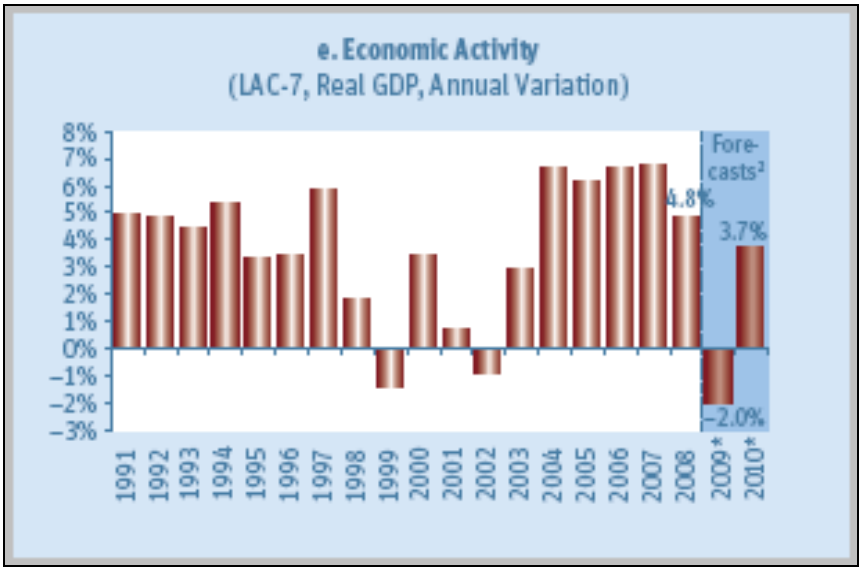


Figure I.3. Annual Change in Real GDP in Latin America, 1991-2010
(Source: Izquierdo and Talvi, 2010, p. 25)

The Mexican economy, for instance, experienced the steepest contraction compared to other countries in the region, dropping from a growth rate of 3.4 percent in 2007 to -6.5 percent in 2009. The general economic problems world-wide were exacerbated in Mexico in part due to the outbreak of the AH1N1 flu virus that produced declines in the important tourism industry. Brazil, in contrast, one of the relatively least affected countries in the region, still experienced a reduction in growth from 5.7 to -0.2 percent between 2007 and 2009. Projections for both countries indicate economic growth is expected to recover to between 3.5 and 3.9 percent in 2010-2011. The change from 2008-2009 in real GDP is shown in Figure I.4. As can be seen, all but eleven of the countries covered by the AmericasBarometer suffered declines in GDP.[19]

[19] Data on economic growth come from different sources and are not always consistent across time or between sources; as various parts of this report were written, we used the databases that seemed most trustworthy and that were available at the moment of the writing. Nicaragua is a clear example of the disparities in the information: International organizations estimated a positive growth rate (4.0 percent), while local sources calculated a negative rate (-2.9 percent).

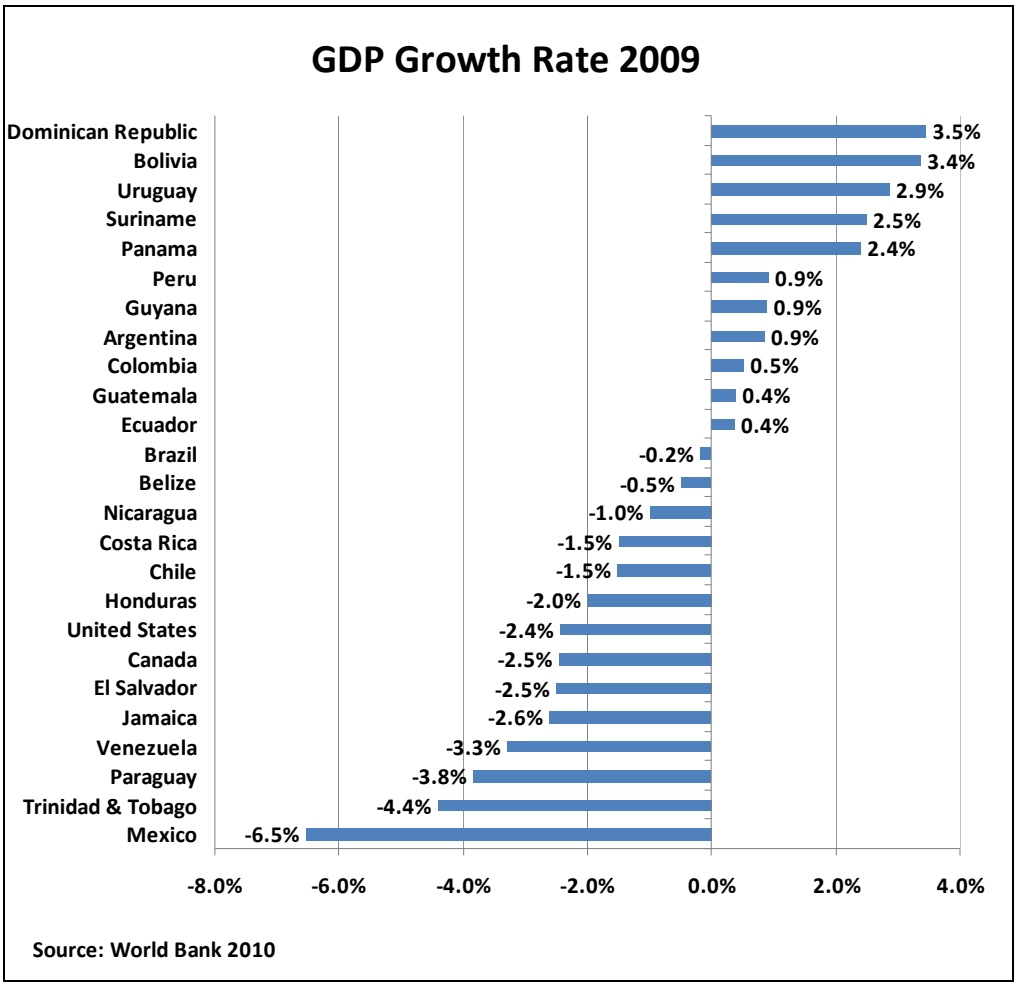


Figure I.4. Change in Real GDP, 2008-2009

Fortunately, the potential impact of the crisis was reduced owing to a number of factors. As the IDB's latest analysis states:

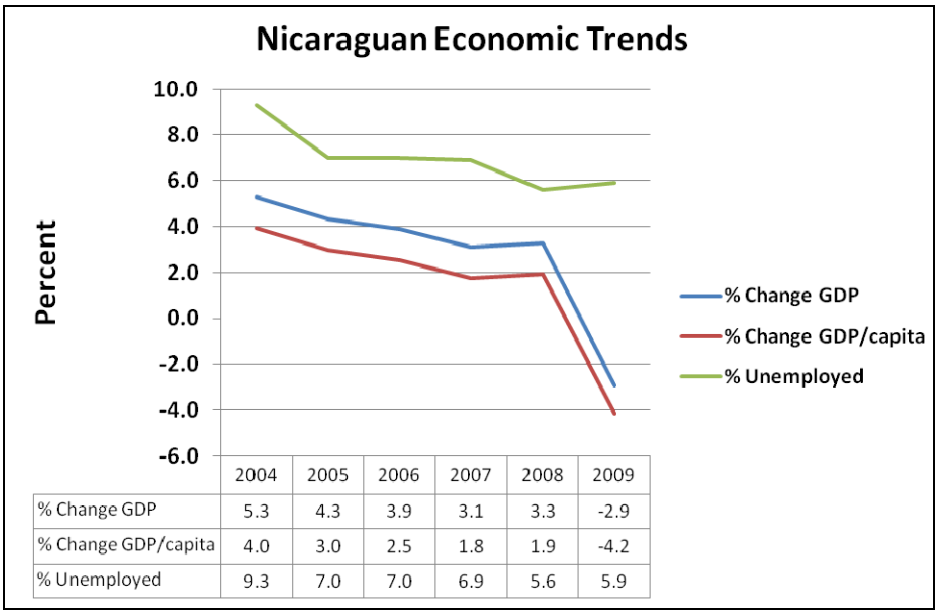
> "…even at the peak of the crisis, with the bottom of the abyss nowhere in sight, emerging markets in general and Latin America in particular, for the most part performed surprisingly well. True, following the Lehman Brothers debacle, stock and bond prices tumbled, currencies depreciated sharply and growth came to a halt as the region slipped into a recession in 2009. However, the region avoided currency and debt crises and bank runs so typical of previous episodes of global financial turbulence (1982, 1998 and 2001). The ability of the region to withstand an extremely severe shock without major financial crises was truly remarkable….[20]

According to the IDB, the consensus opinion is that a combination of low inflation, the availability of fiscal surpluses and international reserves, a largely flexible exchange rate system and sound banking systems make the impact of this crisis so much less severe than in the past.

[20] Izquierdo and Talvi, *The Aftermath of the Global Crisis: Policy Lessons and Challenges Ahead for Latin America and the Caribbean*, 1.

Dimensions of the Economic Crisis in Nicaragua

Nicaragua is one of the western hemisphere's poorest countries, a situation that remained true across the first decade of the 2000s. In 2003, for example, data from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) placed per capita GDP in Nicaragua at only $788 (calculated in 2000 U.S. dollars).[21] In 2005 the World Bank estimated that 15.8 percent of Nicaragua's population lived on less than U.S. $1.25 per day, and that the bottom quintile of the population earned only 3.8 percent of national income (the bottom ten percent only 1.4 percent of national income).[22] Despite this level of absolute and relative poverty, Nicaragua's economy grew across much of the first decade of the 2000s. Important economic trends were encouraging for several years prior to the onset of the recession in 2008. Indeed, data from the ECLAC indicate that Nicaragua's gross domestic product expanded 21.5 percent from 2003 to 2008 while GDP per capita increased 13.8 percent.[23] Figure IV.5 provides economic data on Nicaragua for 2004 through 2009, including gross domestic product (GDP) and GDP per capita changes as well as the unemployment rate.



	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
% Change GDP	5.3	4.3	3.9	3.1	3.3	-2.9
% Change GDP/capita	4.0	3.0	2.5	1.8	1.9	-4.2
% Unemployed	9.3	7.0	7.0	6.9	5.6	5.9

Figure I.5. Nicaraguan Economic Trends

As noted, from 2003 to 2008 economic growth was positive, increasing an average of almost 4 percent per year. The improvement in GDP per capita, tempered by Nicaragua's population growth, was lower but still almost 2.8 percent per year. In 2009, by contrast, the recession brought with it an estimated negative 2.9 percent change in GDP (-4.2 percent for GDP per capita).

Across the same period, Nicaragua's unemployment rates declined from above 9 percent in 2004 to an estimated 5.6 percent in 2008. From available estimates, unemployment appears not to have risen sharply because of the recession in 2008 and 2009. So, at least for three crude macroeconomic measures,

[21] Data on Nicaragua from the Economic Commision for Latin America and the Caribbean were accessed on May 17, 2010 and were found at http://websie.eclac.cl/infest/ajax/cepalstat.asp?carpeta=estadisticas&idioma=i.
[22] World Bank, *Data: Countries: Nicaragua*, accessed May 18 at http://data.worldbank.org/country/nicaragua.
[23] These data on Nicaragua from the Economic Commision for Latin America and the Caribbean were accessed on May 17, 2010 and were found at http://websie.eclac.cl/infest/ajax/cepalstat.asp?carpeta=estadisticas&idioma=i. These findings are closely confirmed by the Inter-American Development Bank Macro-Watch data, accessed May 17, 2010 at http://www.iadb.org/Research/LatinMacroWatch/CountryTable.cfm?country=Nicaragua.

Nicaragua suffered a noticeable economic slowdown in 2009. Nevertheless, the estimated effects of the slowdown on Nicaraguan unemployment were modest.

In summary, Nicaragua's absolute and relative poverty notwithstanding, between 2002 and 2008 the country's GDP grew 24.5 percent, so that overall the economy had strengthened through the middle of the decade. Unemployment correspondingly declined, and GDP per capita rose $109 to reach $897 (in 2000 U.S. dollars). For 2009, estimated GDP per capita declined almost $40 and unemployment edged up. Overall, however, in comparison to the drastic negative changes observed in Mexico, Nicaragua was weathering the recession with less damage.

Trends in Democratic Development

While the economic recession was a major event in many countries, politically it has been accompanied by a reversal in democratic development in many parts of the developing world.[24] According to the Freedom House Report 2010 *Global Erosion of Freedom*, for the fourth consecutive year, freedom declines offset gains in 2009 (Figure I.6). This is the longest uninterrupted period of democracy's decline in the 40 year history of the Freedom House series.[25] Many countries around the world suffered an escalation in human rights violations, at the same time as non-democratic nations (e.g., Iran, Russia) became even more repressive. Even countries that had experienced increases in freedom in recent years have now undergone declines in political rights and civil liberties (e.g., Bahrain, Jordan, and Kenya).

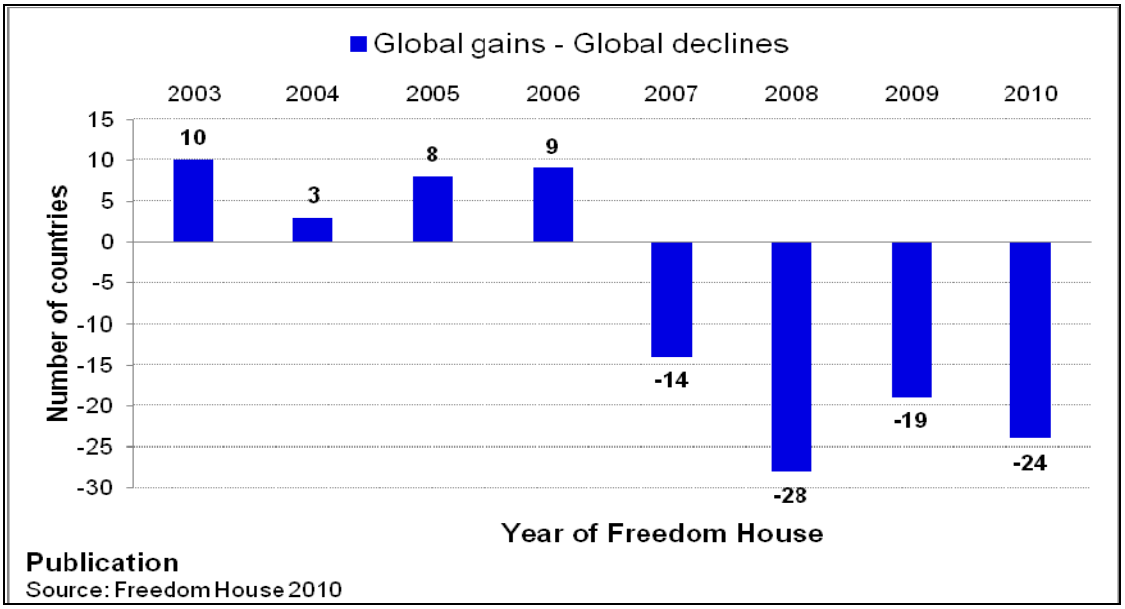


Figure I.6. Freedom in the World: Global Gains Minus Global Declines from 2003-2010, by Reporting Year

Examining Freedom House's specific classification of countries (Table I.1), 89 countries continue to belong to the "free" category, representing 46 percent of the world's 194 countries as well as 46 percent of the global population. The number of countries that are considered "partly free" decreased from 62 to 58 between 2008 and 2009, while the number of "not free" nations rose from 42 to 47 during

[24] Arch Puddington, "The Freedom House Survey for 2009: The Erosion Accelerates," *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 2 (2010).
[25] Freedom House includes two measures of democracy: *political rights* and *civil liberties.* Both measures contain numerical ratings between 1 and 7 for each country with 1 indicating the "most free" and 7 the "least free."

the same period, corresponding to 20 and 24 percent of the world's population, respectively. More specifically, in the "not free" category, more than 2.3 billion individuals reside in countries where their political rights and civil liberties are violated in one form or another. One nation, China makes up 50 percent of this figure. Electoral democracies also diminished to 116 from 123 in 2006 and among the 47 nations considered not free, nine countries scored the lowest possible ratings on both indicators.[26]

Table I.1. Global Trends in Freedom 1979-2009

Year	TOTAL COUNTRIES	FREE		PARTLY FREE		NOT FREE	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1979	161	51	32	54	33	56	35
1989	167	61	37	44	26	62	37
1999	192	85	44	60	31	47	25
2006	193	90	47	58	30	45	23
2007	193	90	47	60	31	43	22
2008	193	89	46	62	32	42	22
2009	194	89	46	58	30	47	24
Source: Freedom House 2010							

In the specific case of Latin America and the Caribbean, Central America experienced the greatest setbacks in democratic development, according to Freedom House, in the 2008-2010 period, highlighted by the 2009 coup d'état in Honduras, which resulted in the removal of this country from the "electoral democracy" category. Other decreases in freedom were registered in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Venezuela.[27] Figure I.7 indicates that of the 35 countries in the Americas, ten are not considered "free" by Freedom House. Nine (26 percent of Latin American nations) are rated "partly free" and one is rated "not free" because they exhibit deficiencies in their democracies, measured in terms of political rights and civil liberties. All these figures point to a current "democracy recession" in the Americas, much as there is a "democracy recession" in the world as a whole.

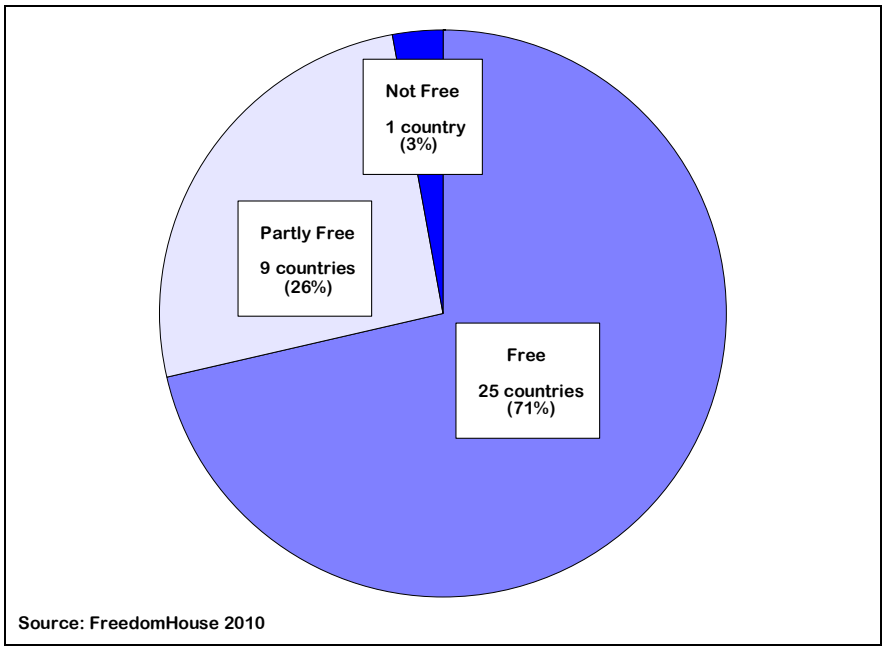


Figure I.7. Free, Partly Free, and Not Free Countries in the Americas

[26] See <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=70&release=1120>
[27] *Ibid.*

While Freedom House registers declines in freedom in the world and in Latin America, this does not mean that citizens have lost faith in democracy. Rather, the Freedom House measure focuses on institutions, not political culture, which is the focus of the present study. It is central to the theory of political culture that over the long term culture and institutions should be congruous with each other, but over the short term significant incongruities can emerge.[28] For example, in the years prior to the emergence of competitive democracy in Mexico, political culture there exhibited strong support for democracy.[29] So, too, it may well be that the democracy recession that is affecting institutions may be "corrected" over the long term by citizen support for democracy. On the other hand, authoritarian regimes might only serve to strengthen anti-democratic political cultures.

Dimensions of Democracy in Nicaragua

Evaluations of political freedom in Nicaragua remained contested in 2010. Freedom House rated Nicaragua at a score of 3 on political rights and 3 on political liberties (1 is the best score, 7 the worst score) from 2000 through 2008. However, following Nicaragua's much-criticized 2008 municipal elections, Freedom House downgraded Nicaragua's political freedom score from a 3 to a 4 in 2009.[30] Freedom House criticized "President Daniel Ortega's government" and cited as problems for political liberty "a pattern of authoritarian measures directed against opposition parties, civil society, and media [and] hostility exhibited towards human rights defenders."[31]

In sharp contrast, another organization that evaluates the quality of democracy, the Polity IV Project of the University of Maryland and George Mason University, ranks regimes' characteristics ranging from -10 (highly autocratic) to +10 (highly democratic), with a score of 6 or above regarded as meeting the minimum conditions for democracy, The Polity IV organization had evaluated Nicaragua's system of government with a score of 6 from 1990 through 1996 (the administration of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro), then raised it to 8 throughout the Arnoldo Alemán and Enrique Bolaños administrations (1997 to 2007). The score for the early 2000s may arguably be regarded as a better (more democratic) score than that given by Freedom House for the same period, although the evaluation systems are not entirely comparable. In an interesting contrast to Freedom House, Polity IV improved Nicaragua's score another point to 9 in 2008 following the reelection of Daniel Ortega as president. The Polity IV evaluation, despite listing concerns about various problematic issues related to the election system and court rulings, stated that "With the election of Daniel Ortega to the office of President in November 2006, Nicaragua seems to have passed another hurdle in its movement toward creating a liberal democratic order. These elections…were deemed to be free and fair by international observers and were accompanied by little electoral violence."[32] Polity IV interpreted Ortega's election as a sign of consolidation of democratic norms: the election in 2006 of a candidate and party that had been out of power for sixteen years and that were ideologically highly distinct from the incumbent Liberals.

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[28] Gabriel A. Almond y Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

[29] John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Political Culture and Democratization: Evidence from Mexico, Nicaragua and Costa Rica," in *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, ed. Larry Diamond (Boulder: Lynne Reinner, 1994), Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Political Culture and Regime Type: Evidence from Nicaragua and Costa Rica," *Journal of Politics* 55, no. 3 (1993).

[30] Freedom House. *Freedom in the World*, http://www.freedomhouse.org, accessed May 18, 2010.

[31] Freedom House, "Authoritarianism Overshadows Nicaraguan Elections," (press release, November 7, 2008, accessed May 18, 2010 at http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page70&release+718.

[32] Polity IV Project, *Polity IV Country Report 2008: Nicaragua*, accessed on May 18, 2010, at http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/Nicaragua2008.pdf.

Merits of the external evaluations of Nicaraguan democracy aside, the administration of Daniel Ortega moved quickly to establish itself. President Ortega was able to win some legislative victories by forging temporary alliances with opposition factions in the National Assembly, and he used executive authority to address various policy issues and problems. Four new cabinet-level secretariats were added – Security and Food Sovereignty, Communication and Citizenship, National Policies, and Atlantic Coast Development. One particularly controversial initiative was the creation of Citizen Power Councils (CPCs) to promote citizen participation in programs at all levels of government. The CPCs, established under the National Plan for Human Development headed by the president's wife Rosario Murillo, received criticism to the effect that the CPCs constituted a means to enhance FSLN control over citizens and local government. The program was also denounced by some as an unconstitutional intrusion on the responsibilities of legally constituted local and regional governments.

Although Polity IV upgraded Nicaragua's democracy score in 2008, it and other observers have nevertheless noted multiple problematic aspects of the government in recent years.[33] Many of Nicaragua's problems arose from an agreement originally forged between President Arnoldo Alemán of the Liberal Alliance (AL) and former president Daniel Ortega of the FSLN in 1999. This arrangement between the two main leaders of the two largest parties reformed the constitution, "packed the Supreme Court, strengthened both party leaders within their own parties, and rewrote the electoral law to especially advantage the Liberal Constitutionalists …[Alemán's party] and FSLN at the expense of all other smaller parties and political movements."[34] Alemán's successor, President Enrique Bolaños, also a Liberal, persuaded the National Assembly to lift his predecessor's immunity from prosecution as a member of the Assembly. Alemán was convicted of corruption and imprisoned. This divided the Liberal movement, which did not agree on a unity candidate in 2006, an event that almost certainly accounted for Ortega's 2006 election victory.

The Supreme Electoral Council (CSE), staffed mainly by allies of Alemán and Ortega, ruled the Conservatives and Sandinista Renewal Movement (MRS) ineligible to participate in the 2008 municipal elections because of a failure to meet the new, more demanding party registration qualifications. This further narrowed the political field to the benefit of Liberal and Sandinista candidates. The Ortega administration began monitoring and intimidating civil society groups and denied accreditation to several international and national election observer efforts in the 2008 municipal vote. Critics lodged numerous accusations of fraud during the 2008 vote, and violent demonstrations broke out over the conduct of the election. The CSE awarded a sweeping victory to the FSLN, which captured nearly three times the number of municipal elections (105) as the PLC (37); the Liberal Alliance (AL) won only four.

In 2010 the opposition members of the National Assembly, who held the majority of the body, declined to attend Assembly sessions and thus denied it a working quorum. With Sandinista delegates in the Assembly lacking a majority, President Ortega was unable to get several key bureaucratic posts filled without the cooperation of the opposition majority. President Ortega responded by decreeing that officials whose terms had expired would continue in office until their successors were chosen. Angered by the decree, the opposition majority then held a rump Assembly session in April 2010 to overturn the decree-law. Pro-Sandinista activists then protested violently, attacking the National Assembly building with

[33] These paragraphs based on *ibid*., and John A. Booth, Christine J. Wade, and Thomas W. Walker, *Understanding Central America*, pp. 103-107, and Freedom House, "Authoritarianism Overshadows…", Freedom House, *Freedom of the Press – Nicaragua (2008)*, http://www.freedomhouse.org/inc/content/pubs/pfs/inc_country=7549&year=2008, accessed May 18, 2010.
[34] Booth, Wade and Walker, p. 103. Other information in this section is also drawn from Booth, Wade and Walker, pp. 102-107, and from Orlando J. Pérez and Mitchell A. Seligson, *Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua, 2008: The Impact of Governance*, Nashville, Tennessee, Latin American Public Opinion Project/AmericasBarometer, Vanderbilt University, 2009, pp. 3-4.

stones and homemade fireworks mortars, burning vehicles, and temporarily holding hostage some of minority members of the Assembly.

Apparently pursuant to the Alemán-Ortega pact, the Supreme Court in 2009 overturned the former president's conviction. This made it possible for Arnoldo Alemán to seek the presidency once again, which he appeared likely to do as the candidate of the PLC as this report was being written. The Supreme Court also ruled in 2009 that Daniel Ortega and other Nicaraguan office holders (both Sandinistas and Liberals) could run for reelection despite an apparent constitutional provision to the contrary.

The Relationship between Hard Times and Democracy

Should we be concerned that the economic crisis could have spilled over and affected democracy? Are the declines measured by Freedom House in 2009 partially a result of economic troubles? Or can we find evidence in the AmericasBarometer of a robust democratic culture that has withstood the challenges brought on by hard times? Over the years, many scholars have examined the apparent connection between economic crisis and democratic instability, approaching the problem from two schools of thought. The first has focused on the individual, analyzing the impact of economic crisis on democracy through the lens of ordinary people—in short, how do individuals react to perceived economic decline? Much of the literature tells us that certain segments of society are more vulnerable to supporting anti-democratic alternatives than others. The poor in particular seem to lead this group of "democracy's fickle friends"[35], as they are seen as having led the backlash against democratic governments during times of economic crises. The current economic crisis has, as noted, produced more impoverished Latin American citizens, thereby creating potentially problematic conditions for democracy in the region.

Other research has addressed the effects of national level economic conditions on democracy, focusing specifically on how underdevelopment, sluggish economic growth, and severe income inequality affect democratic consolidation. In their often-cited analysis of the relationship between economic development and democracy, Przeworski et al. found that no democracy had collapsed where the country's per capita income exceeded $6,055. [36] In Latin America, however, only Chile and Argentina currently lie above that threshold, meaning that most Latin American countries enter the current economic crisis without the "inoculation" protection of historically adequate levels of economic development.[37]

In terms of economic growth, Przeworski et al. also found that "democracies in poorer countries are more likely to die when they experience economic crises than when their economies grow." [38]As mentioned above, economic growth in Latin America has slowed to a crawl in most of the countries, placing most nations in Przeworski et al.'s danger zone. Finally, scholars have demonstrated that the grievances brought on by high levels of inequality can produce violent forms of political participation and potentially destabilize democracies.[39] Historically, Latin America has had the highest levels of income inequality of any region in the world.

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[35] Nancy Gina Bermeo, *Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times: The Citizenry and the Breakdown of Democracy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003).
[36] Adam Przeworski et al., "What Makes Democracies Endure?," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 1 (1996).
[37] Abby Córdova and Mitchell Seligson, "Economic Shocks and Democratic Vulnerabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean," *Latin American Politics and Society* 52, no. 2 (2010).
[38] Adam Przeworski et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 117.
[39] Edward N. Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Insurgency and Inequality," *American Political Science Review* 81 (1987).

While widespread democratic breakdown seems inconceivable in Latin America after so many years of democratic stability, the breakdown in Honduras and the continued declines in Venezuela show that democracy remains fragile in some countries. Might the economic crisis undermine citizen support for key components of liberal democracy and weaken democratic stability?[40] In this round of the AmericasBarometer surveys, including over 40,000 interviews in twenty-six countries, we have the data to explore that very question.

Conclusion

Following a discussion of the economic crisis' impact on the region and Nicaragua, the present chapter looked at how democracy has fared during the economic crisis in the Latin American and Caribbean region, and more specifically in Nicaragua. It also analyzed the trends in democratic development in the last few years and concluded with a brief discussion of the theoretical relationship between economic crisis and democracy.

Nicaragua, after years of lagging growth and outright decline from the 1970s through 2000, began to turn the corner economically. Although its GDP is the second lowest in the Americas, Nicaragua's economic growth in the early and mid-2000s increased GDP over 20 percent. Despite a drop in output in 2008 and 2009, unemployment did not rise sharply. In comparative terms Nicaragua fell in the middle range on GDP decline, faring better than nine other countries in the Americas including the United States, Mexico and some of its immediate neighbors in Central America.

Democracy-evaluating institutions have disagreed about how to score the Nicaraguan case. Freedom House lowered its score in 2009, but Polity IV increased it after the 2006 election. Both democracy-rating organizations, however, noted with concern the election system flaws, a recent climate of turmoil, and the intimidation of opposition, civil society and the media. Nicaragua's political situation since the publication of the last AmericasBarometer country report in 2008 has remained tense. President Daniel Ortega, lacking a majority in the National Assembly, has strengthened executive authority and engaged in practices criticized as intended to intimidate opponents and critics. His pact with former president Alemán continues to strengthen the power of the FSLN and Liberal Constitutionalists within the political system at the expense of other parties. Court rulings have positioned both Ortega and Alemán to seek the presidency again in 2011.

In the following chapter, we will focus on citizen perceptions of the economic downturn as measured by the AmericasBarometer 2010. In Chapter III of this study we will examine how well the political culture of democracy has fared under economically difficult times. In that chapter we will look at support for democracy, system support, and life satisfaction as three key variables that will help us understand how the region as a whole, as well as Nicaragua, have fared since 2008.

[40] Abby Córdova and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Economic Crisis and Democracy in Latin America," *PS: Political Science and Politics* (2009), Abby Córdova and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Economic Shocks and Democratic Vulnerabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean," *Latin American Politics and Society* forthcoming (2010).

Chapter II. Citizens' Perceptions and Experiences During Hard Times in the Americas

Introduction

In the previous chapter we presented a general overview of the economic crisis in the world, in the Americas, and in Nicaragua, followed by a summary of the trends in democracy since the 2008 AmericasBarometer study was conducted. In this chapter we concentrate on citizens' perceptions and experiences during hard times by attempting to answer the questions: 1) how did citizens perceive the crisis, 2) whom did they blame for it; and 3) how did citizens experience the crisis in the Americas? We first present a regional comparative assessment of citizens' perceptions of the crisis as well as where Nicaragua is located in relation to the other countries in the Americas. We then assess citizens' experiences with economic instability in the countries included in the 2010 AmericasBarometer survey.

Perceptions of the Magnitude of the Economic Crisis

In order to look specifically at the economic crisis, the Latin American Public Opinion Project developed two new survey items. This is the first time that these items have been used in the AmericasBarometer, and they were developed especially for the 2010 round of surveys. The two items represent a sequence. First, respondents were asked if they perceive an economic crisis. Second, among those who thought that there was, we asked who is to blame for it. The following is the text of the items themselves:

CRISIS1. Some say that our country is suffering a very serious economic crisis, others say that we are suffering a crisis but it is not very serious, while others say that there isn't any economic crisis. What do you think? **[Read options]**
(1) We are suffering a very serious economic crisis
(2) We are suffering a crisis but it is not very serious, or
(3) No economic crisis

CRISIS2. Who is the most to blame for the current economic crisis in our country from among the following: **[READ LIST, MARK ONLY ONE RESPONSE]**
(01) The previous administration
(02) The current administration
(03) Ourselves, the Belizeans
(04) The rich people of our country
(05) The problems of democracy
(06) The rich countries **[Accept also Unites States, England, France, Germany, and Japan]**
(07) The economic system of the country, or
(08) Never have thought about it
(77) **[Don't read]** Other

Looking at the Americas as a whole, including all 26 countries in the AmericasBarometer 2010, we can see in Figure II.1 that the majority of citizens in the Americas perceive an economic crisis, be it serious or not very serious.

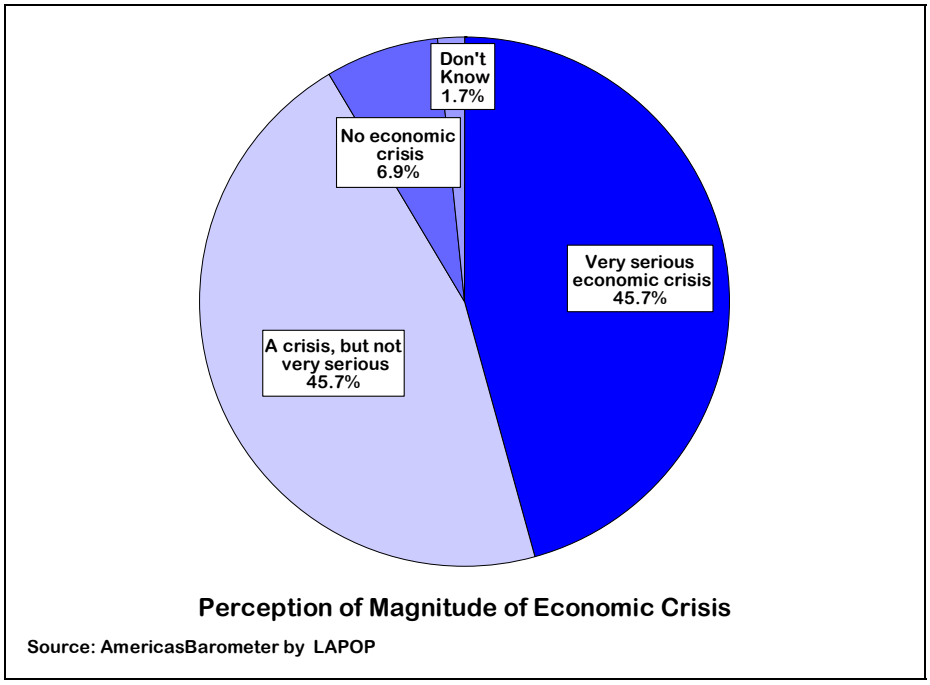

Figure II.1. Perceptions of the Economic Crisis in the Americas, 2010 (Percentage of Total Population)

Among all these countries, we see in Figure II.2 that Jamaica, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the United States have the highest percentages with respect to citizens' perceptions of a crisis, although in all of the countries a very high percentage perceive a crisis.

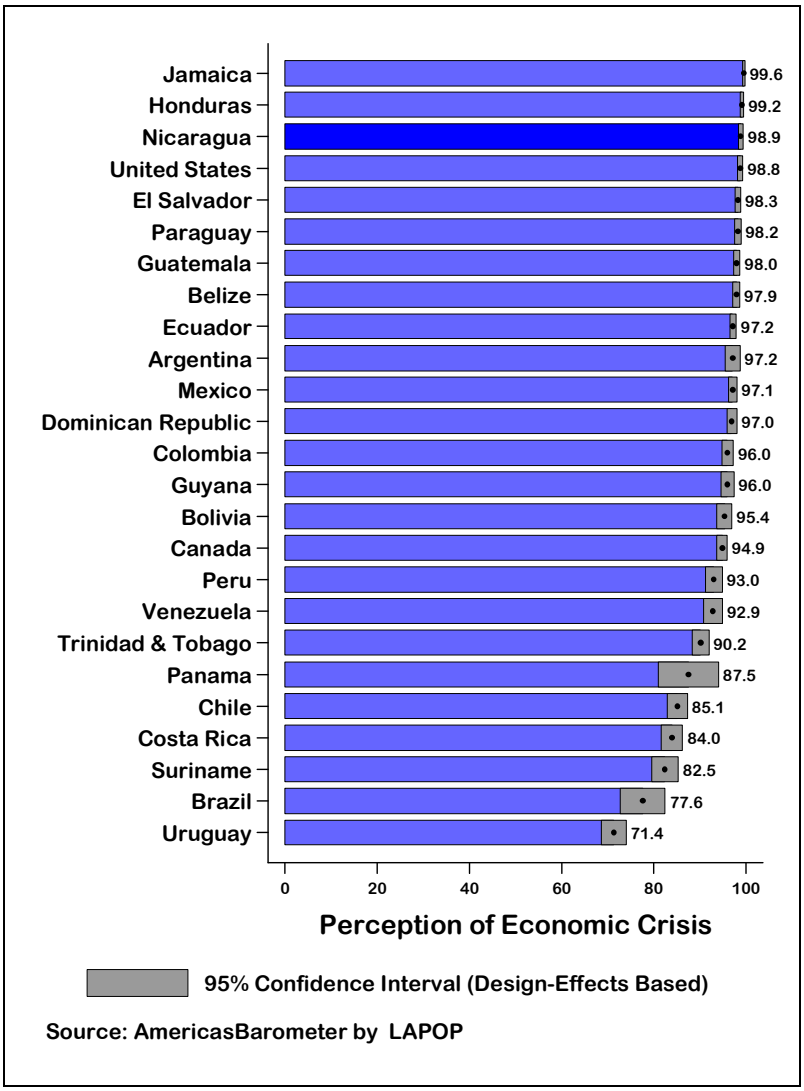

Figure II.2. Percentage of the Population that Perceived There is an Economic Crisis

As may be seen in Figure II.3, in 2010 Nicaraguans were highly aware that there was an economic crisis. Forty percent described it as "not very serious," but 58.9 percent viewed it as "very serious." Only one percent said there was no economic crisis.

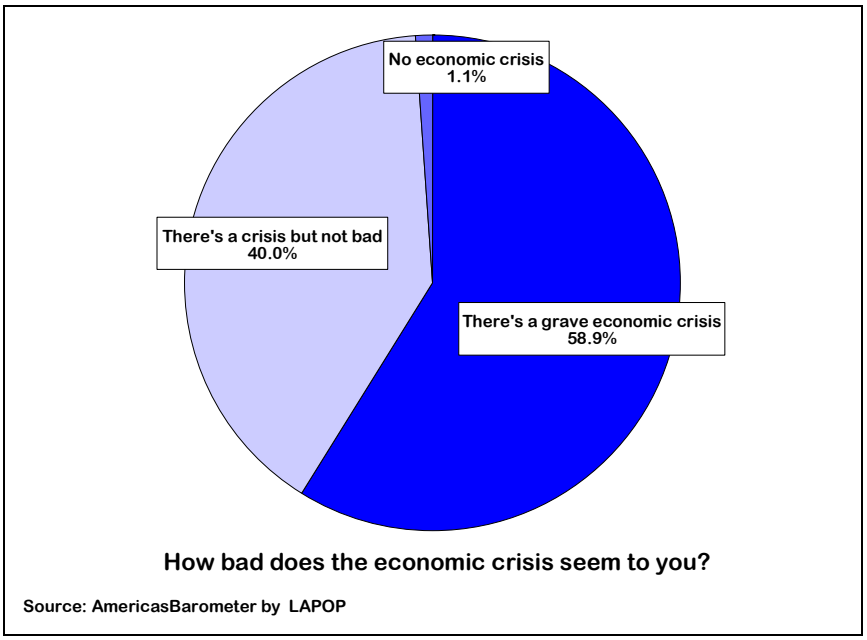

Figure II.3. Perception of an Economic Crisis in Nicaragua, 2010

Who is to Blame for the Economic Crisis?

In this section we examine to whom Latin Americans attribute responsibility for the economic crisis. The results for the Americas as a whole are provided first.

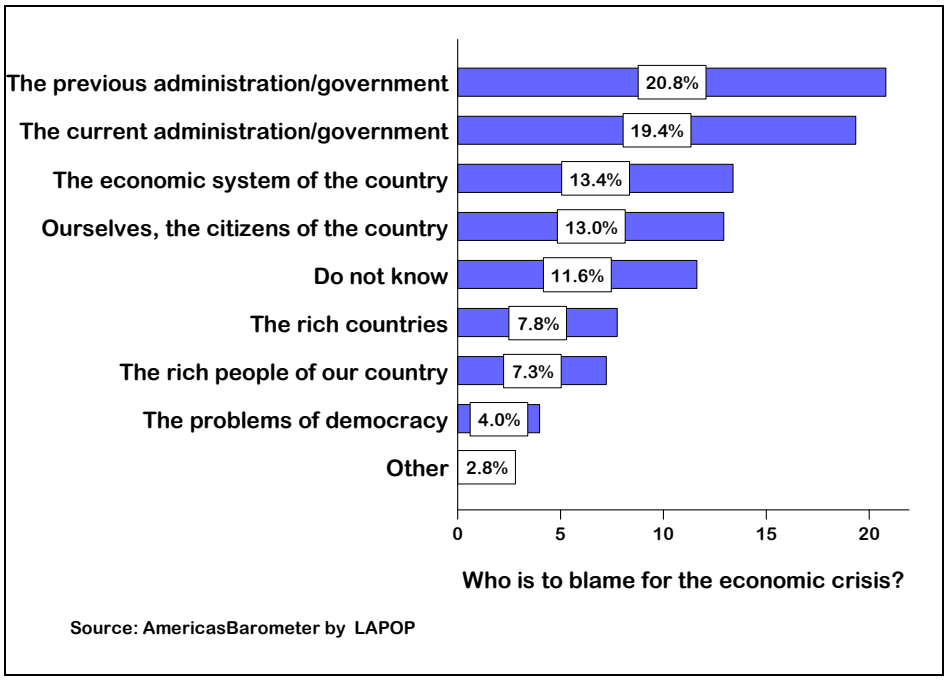

Figure II.4 . Who is to Blame for the Economic Crisis? (Percentage of Total Population)

The majority of citizens who perceive a crisis in the Americas blame either the current or previous administration for the economic crisis (Figure II.4). Fewer than 10 percent of Latin Americans who perceive a crisis blame the rich countries or advanced industrial countries, contrary to what one might

have expected, especially in the Latin American context. Many individuals in these countries, instead, blame themselves for the economic crisis. We examine these results by the major regions in the Americas, with the results shown in Figure II.5. As figure shows, based on citizens' opinion, current governments as former governments are the main responsible for the crisis. However, it is important to say that in the Caribbean countries, 17.4 percent of the people blame to themselves for the economic crisis in theses nations.

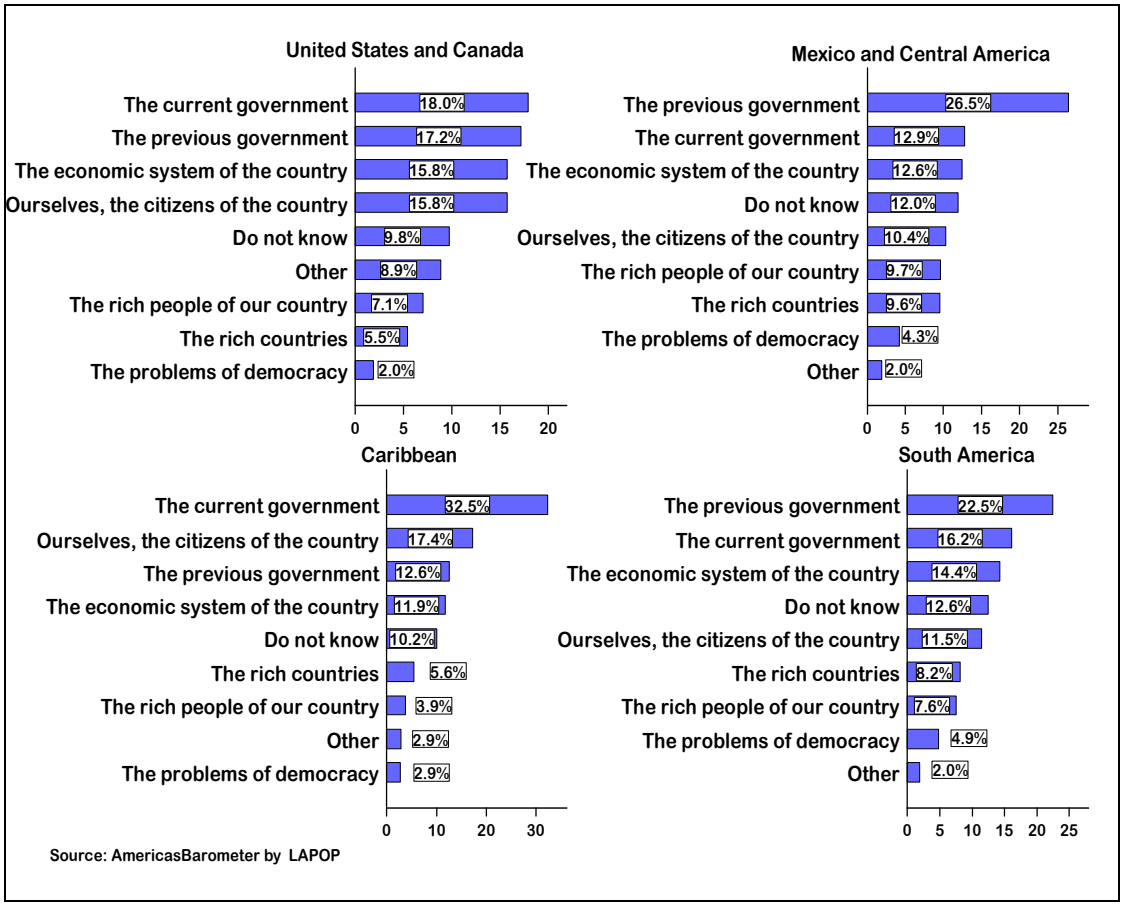

Figure II.5. Who is to Blame for the Economic Crisis? Regional Overview

Country Specific Analysis: Evidence for Nicaragua 2010

Mexicans and Central Americans in general as well as South Americans tended to blame their previous governments more for the current economic crisis and to blame the present administration somewhat less. Figure II.6 shows that Nicaraguans, in contrast, placed less blame on the previous government for current economic woes (17.3 percent) than on the present administration (27.5 percent). As noted in Chapter I, Nicaragua experienced notable economic growth during the Bolaños administration, but that growth decelerated and then reversed during the Ortega administration when the worldwide recession began in 2008. Ultimately, then, this attribution of responsibility to the present administration (on whose watch it occurred) makes at least some sense on its face. It is, however, it is difficult to imagine to what extent Nicaragua's government bears any real responsibility for a world financial crisis that originated in the United States and Europe. For 15.4 percent of Nicaraguans (the explanation ranking only in third place) their own country's economic system was to blame for the current crisis, a few points higher than respondents in the rest of the Americas (Figures II. 4 and II.5). It is

interesting to note that, despite living in a country with a leftist party such as the FSLN in power and following the Sandinista revolutionary government (1979-1990), Nicaraguans were less prone to blame the rich for the country's economic difficulties than one might expect. Only 4.2 percent of Nicaraguans mentioned the rich as the source of the crisis, compared to 9.7 percent of Central Americans and Mexicans. President Ortega deemphasized class themes in his campaign for reelection in November 2006, so this may have diminished a tendency to attribute blame to the rich in the current political environment.

Figure II.6 also demonstrates that Nicaraguans blamed rich countries for the economic crisis at about the same rate (6.4 percent) as respondents from around the Americas (6.9 percent). In contrast, other Central Americans and Mexicans were more than 3 percentage points more likely than Nicaraguans to blame rich countries for the crisis (Figure II.5). Given that the crisis did in fact originate in the securities industries of wealthy countries, it is somewhat surprising that so few Nicaraguans laid the blame for the crisis on "rich countries." Over 8 percent of Nicaraguans mentioned "problems with democracy" as the root of the current economic crisis, a level roughly twice that of the average for Latin America and the Caribbean overall.

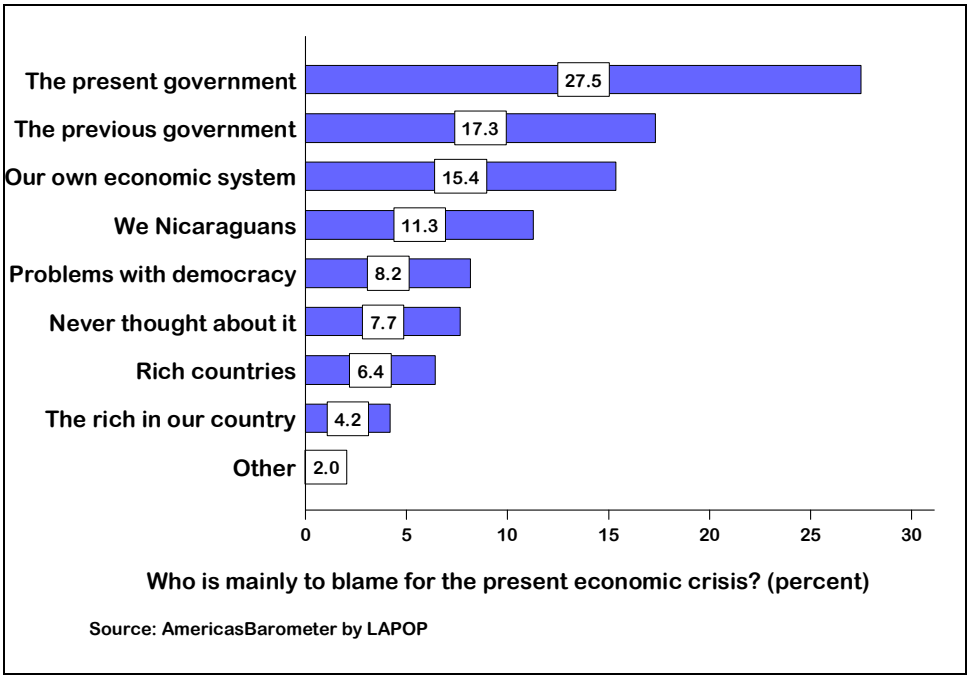

Figure II.6. Who Is to Blame for the Crisis? Nicaragua

Personal Experiences with Economic Instability

In the previous section, we analyzed the magnitude of the economic crisis and who is to blame for it. Here, we explore how citizens experience the crisis.

Jobs Loss

The questions used in this section are the following:

OCUP1B1. Have you lost your job in the past two years? **[Read options]**
(1) Yes, you lost your job but found a new one.
(2) Yes, you lost your job and have not found a new one
(3) No, you did not lose your job
(4) No, you did not work because you decided not to work or because of disabilities

OCUP1B2. Besides you, has anyone in your household lost his or her job in the past two years?
(1) Yes (2) No

The results for the Americas as a whole are shown in Figure II.7 below. While three- quarters of the population did not report having lost a job, about 7 percent did report losing a job but also finding a new one. About 8.5 percent of the respondents lost jobs but did not find a new one. Looking at the households as a whole, over 16 percent of respondents report lost jobs.

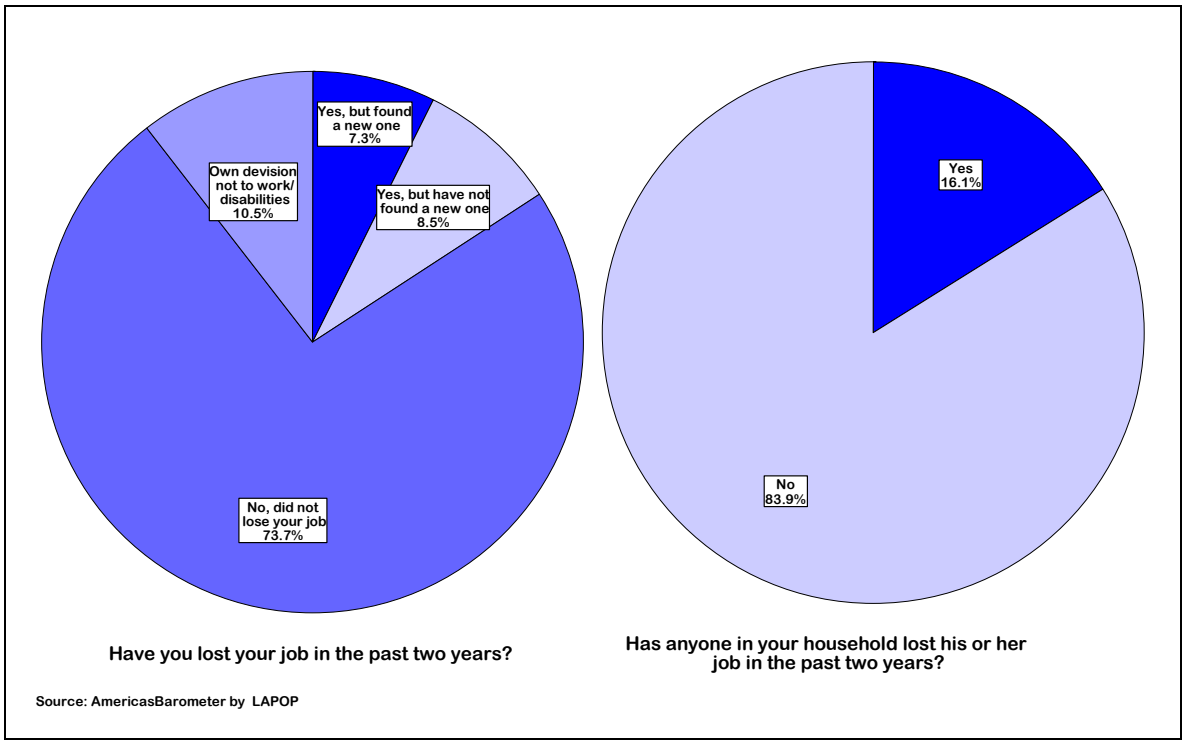

Figure II.7. Job Loss in the Americas, 2010

To get an overall picture of job loss, a composite indicator variable was computed based on these two items, which shows if at least one household member lost his or her job in the past two years (Figure II.8). In comparative perspective, Nicaragua ranks in the top of countries on household job loss, with 29.8 percent of the respondents reporting at least one household member job loss.

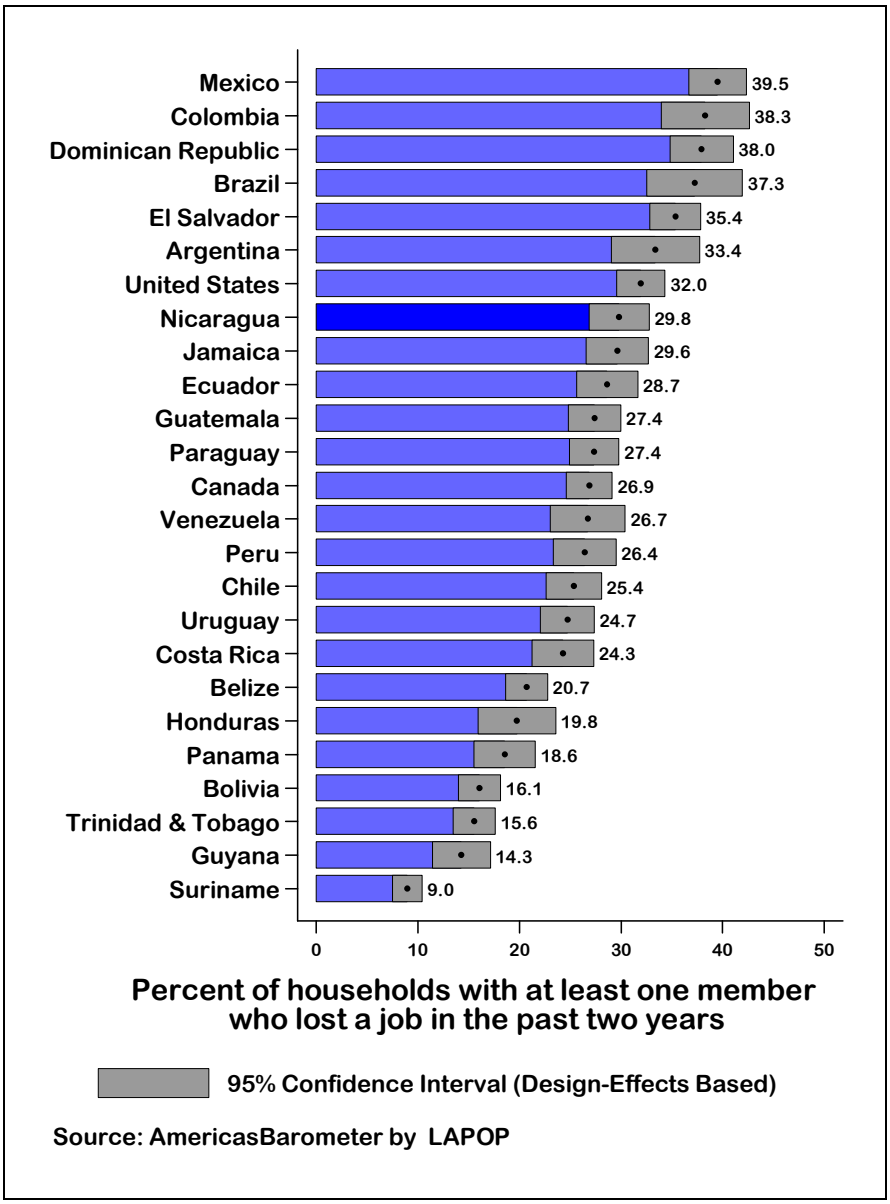

Figure II.8. Percentage of Households with Least One Family Member Who Lost His or Her Job in the Past Two Years

Among Nicaraguans, roughly one percent fewer people (22.8 percent) reported having lost jobs in the previous two years than among Latin American and Caribbean residents overall. Finding a new job, however, was somewhat harder for Nicaraguans, with 9.1 percent reporting having not found another job (Figure II.9) compared to 8.5 percent for residents of the region as a whole. For the entire household, 20.8 percent of Nicaraguans reported having a job loss in their households compared to only 16.2 percent for the entire region.

Turning to details about different segments of the Nicaraguan population and how they have fared in the economic downturn, Figure II.10 reveals that men and women kept their jobs at about the same rate, but that men did much better than women in finding a new job after losing one. Women made up over two thirds of the population not working because of a handicap or a personal decision not to seek employment. The proportion of men and women who had not lost their jobs (almost 77 percent of the 2010 survey's respondents overall – Figure II.10) was roughly equal. Men were disproportionately more employed than women (Figure II.10). More men (almost 70 percent) than women (30 percent) who lost

jobs found new ones. The share of men who lost jobs and did not find a new one (55 percent) is greater than the share of women (45 percent). Overall, then, men in Nicaragua have had more luck than women in finding new employment.

Figure II.10 demonstrates that, compared to the 77 percent of the population who reported not having lost their jobs, workers 46 and older had trouble finding new jobs. Workers 30 years or younger made up 61 percent of the people who found new jobs after losing one, compared to 51 percent of those who did not find another job.

Figure II.10 suggests a mixed impact for education in helping laid-off Nicaraguans find new employment, with the most educated cohort having more difficulty finding new employment. Among those who had lost a job, fewer university-educated respondents reported finding a new job (16 percent) than reported not finding one (20 percent). In contrast, having completed some secondary education seemed to provide an advantage in finding a new job once having been laid off. Respondents reporting no formal education made up 10.4 percent of the population not employed by choice or because of a handicap, a significantly higher proportion than among those employed or who had been employed but lost jobs.

The impact of the recession on the employment of rural and urban Nicaraguans reveals modest differences. Among those who lost their jobs and found another, 59 percent were urban residents, and 61 percent of those who did not find a new job also were urban dwellers. Rural residents made up 52 percent of the population not employed by choice or because of incapacity.

To sum up, one way to read these findings are that the impact of the recession is wide-ranging, affecting much of the population. Not all the impact was equal across demographic segments, however. Among Nicaraguans who had lost their jobs, those less likely to have found a new one were women, those older than 45, the university-educated, and very slightly urban residents.

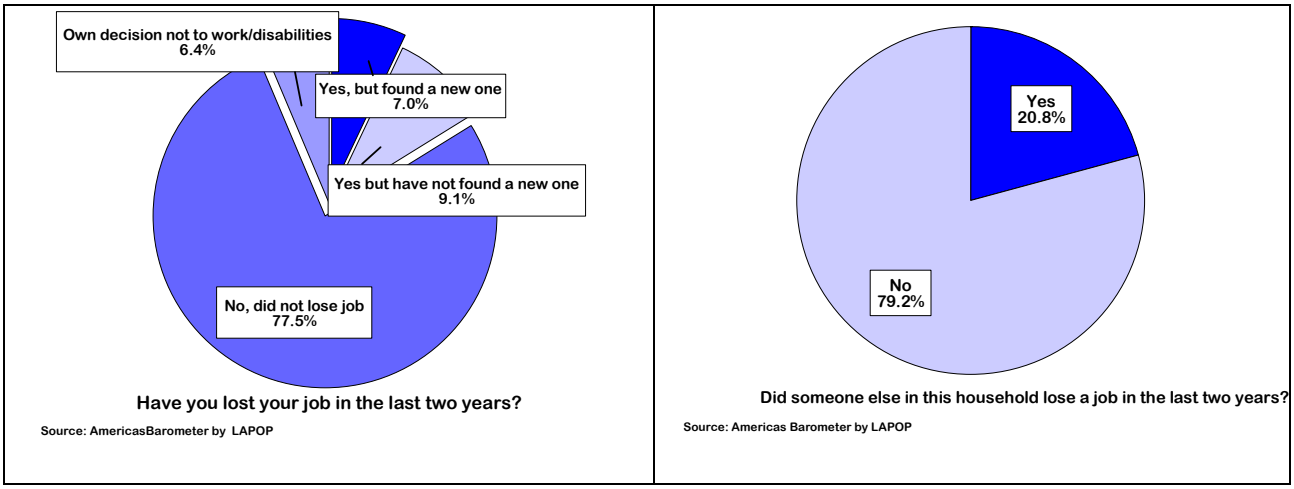

Figure II.9. Percentage of Nicaraguans Who Lost Jobs, 2010

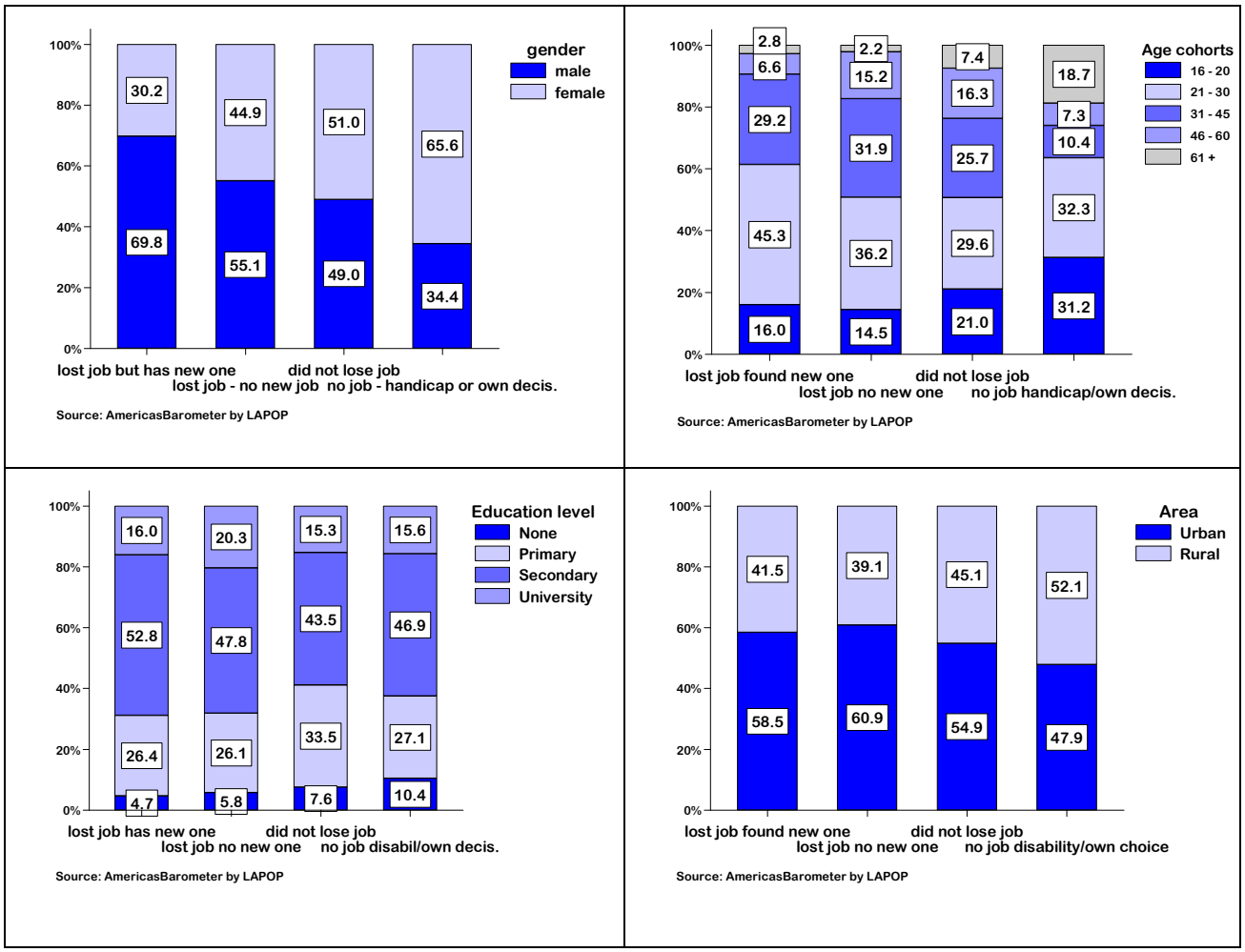

Figure II.10. Percentage of Nicaraguans Who Lost Jobs by Sex, Age, Education, Area

Reported Decrease in Household Income

We now examine reports by our respondents about changes in their household incomes. We asked the following question:

> **Q10E.** Over the past two years, has the income of your household: **[Read options]**
> (1) Increased? **[Go to Q11]**
> (2) Remained the same? **[Go to Q11]**
> (3) Decreased? **[Go to Q10F]**

The results for the Americas as a whole (see Figure II.11) show that about half of the respondents say that their incomes have remained the same, with almost thirty percent saying that their incomes have declined, and one fifth saying that they have increased.

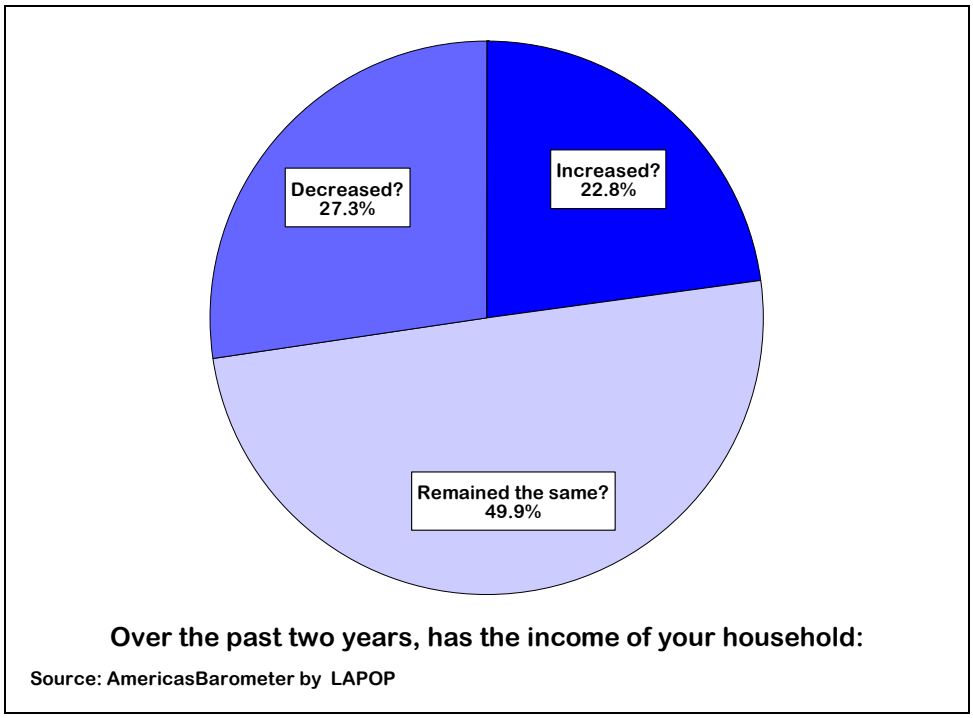

Figure II.11. Reported Household Income Changes, 2008-2010 in the Americas

Figure II.12 shows these results by country, ranked by the percentage of respondents who say that their incomes have declined. As can be seen, there is wide variation in the Americas, with up to half of the respondents in some countries reporting a decline in income, whereas in other countries the situation is the reverse, with up to half of respondents reporting an increase in income. These findings reinforce our argument that the economic slide has affected countries in very different ways in the Americas.

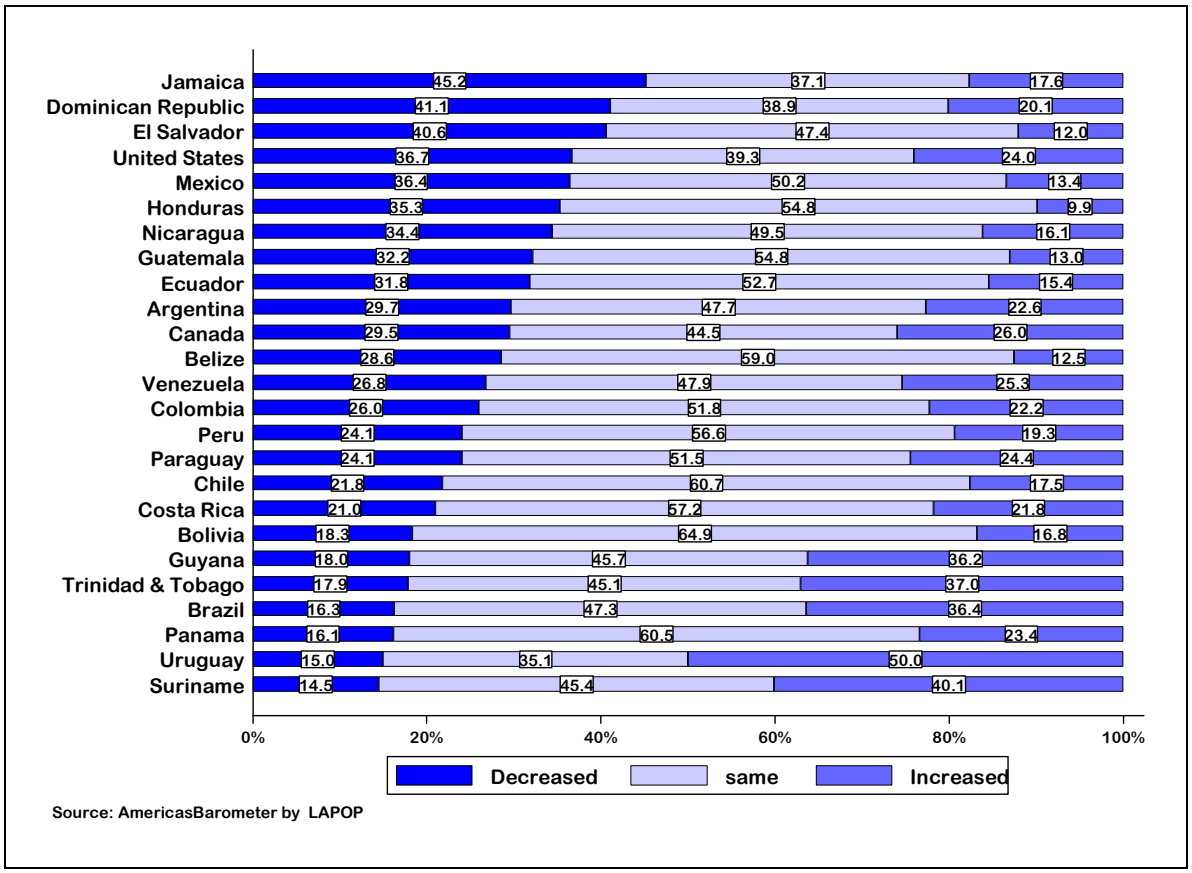

Figure II.12. Has your Household Income Decreased, Remained the Same, or Increased over the Past Two Years? (Percentage of Total Population)

Who Was Most Affected by Economic Hardship?

As shown in Figure II.13, a greater percentage of individuals living in rural areas reported that their household income decreased over the past two years in the Latin American and Caribbean region as a whole.

Moreover, Figure II.13 shows that as family wealth declines, the percentage of individuals reporting a decline in income increases; in other words, the poorest individuals in the region are most likely to have reported suffering a decline in their household income. While in prior LAPOP studies we have used an indicator of wealth based on an additive index of ownership of household goods, in this study we implement a new indicator using the same variables, but based on a different methodology for measuring relative wealth, one based on Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The methodology allows ranking individuals from poor to rich taking into account local economic conditions.[41]

[41] For more information on how this indicator was computed and its reliability, see: Córdova, Abby B. 2009 "Methodological Note: Measuring Relative Wealth using Household Asset Indicators." In AmericasBarometer *Insights* Series. (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights.php).

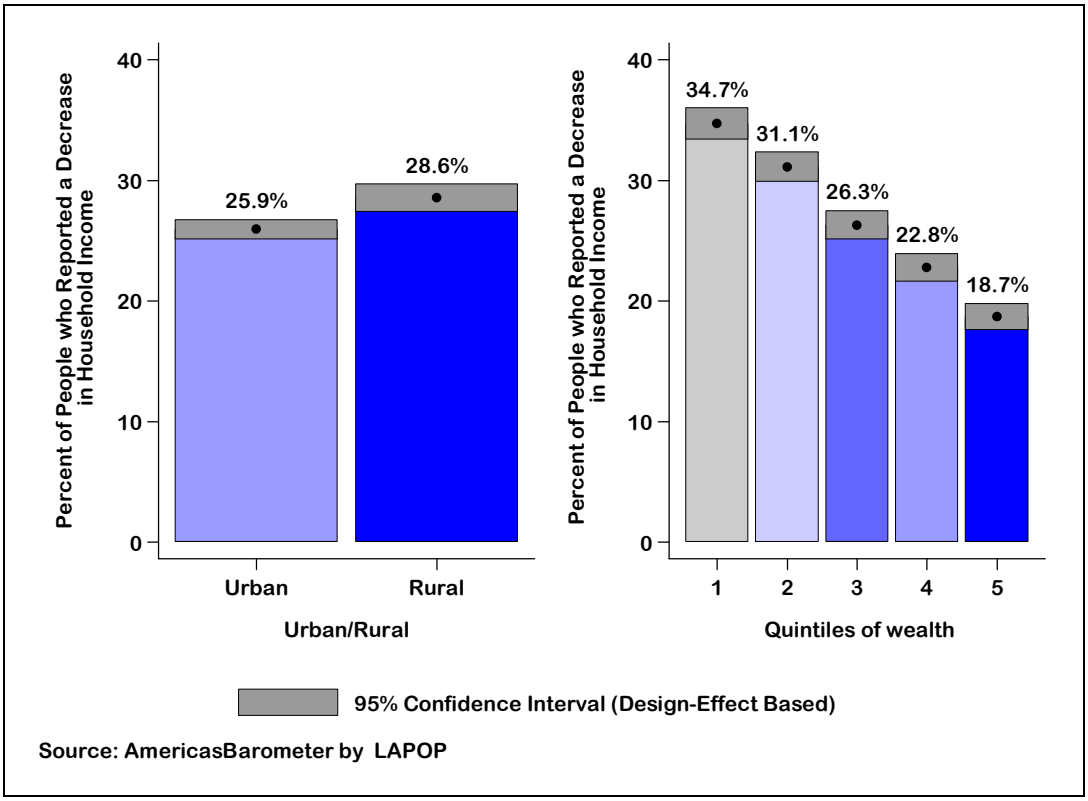

Figure II.13. Percentage of Individuals in the Americas Reporting a Decrease in their Household Income by Area of residence and Level of Wealth, 2010

As shown in Figure II.14, 34.4 percent of Nicaraguans reported that their incomes had declined in the last two years, 6.2 percent more than for the Americas as a whole. This finding fits with the general patterns of Nicaragua's economic standing as one of the region's poorest countries and one with a very large percent of poor people. Only 16.1 percent of Nicaraguans reported an increase in income (4.8 percent less than the region as a whole).

The impact of the recession on Nicaraguans in terms of diminished family income fell much more heavily on rural Nicaraguans (38.9 percent reported a decline) than urban dwellers (only 30.8 percent). Reporting increased income generally rose as wealth increased, with 24 percent of the richest fifth of the population reporting income growth; roughly double that for the poorest fifth. Interestingly, the effect by levels of income was not straightforward. As expected, the wealthiest income quintile had the lowest percent reporting *diminished* incomes (30.4 percent). But the wealth cohorts reporting the most income declines were the second poorest and middle quintiles of income. This finding strongly suggests that the fraction of the poor in Nicaragua has grown because of the recession. Meanwhile roughly the same share of the poorest and richest quintiles of Nicaraguan reported income declines. Obviously, the adverse impact of this economic crisis fell disproportionately on the well-being of the poor.

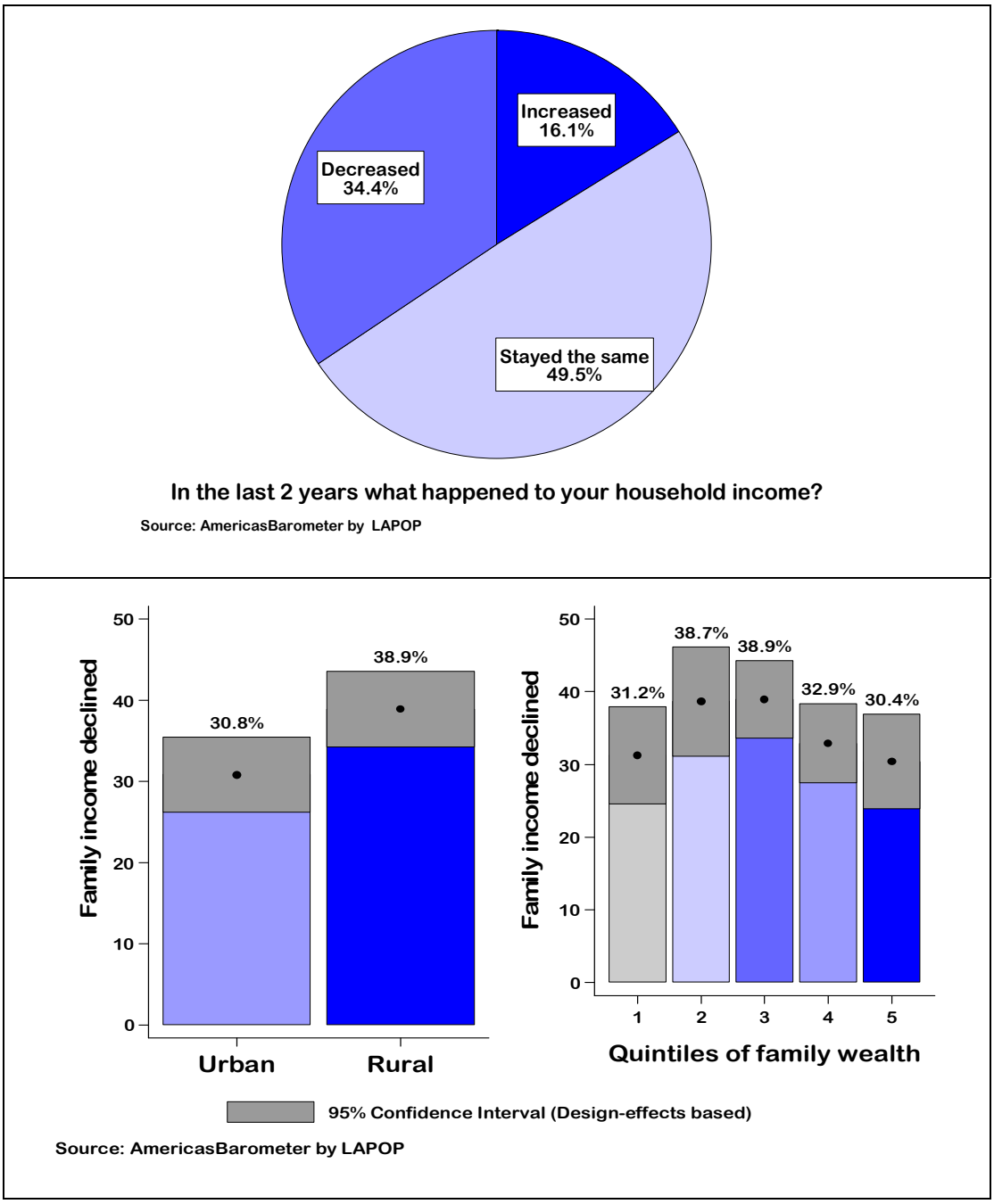

Figure II.14. Nicaraguans' Decline in Household Income, by Area and Wealth, 2010

Perceptions of Both the Personal and National Economy

The AmericasBarometer traditionally reports on respondents' perceptions of their personal and national economic situation. We ask respondents to consider their personal and national economic situations currently and as compared to a year prior to the interviews. Below are the items used in the survey:

SOCT1. How would you describe **the country's** economic situation? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad or very bad? (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad
SOCT2. Do you think that **the country's** current economic situation is better than, the same as or worse than it was 12 months ago? (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse
IDIO1. How would you describe **your** overall economic situation? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad or very bad? (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad
IDIO2. Do you think that **your** economic situation is better than, the same as, or worse than it was 12 months ago? (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse

We now couple these items with the one analyzed above asking about reports of decreases in household income. As can be seen in Figure II.15, those who perceive their personal or economic situation to be very bad are far more likely to have experienced a loss of household income when compared to those who report that their personal economic situation is very good. The same findings hold, a bit less sharply, for the perception of the national economy and also for perceptions of personal and national economic situations when compared to a year earlier.

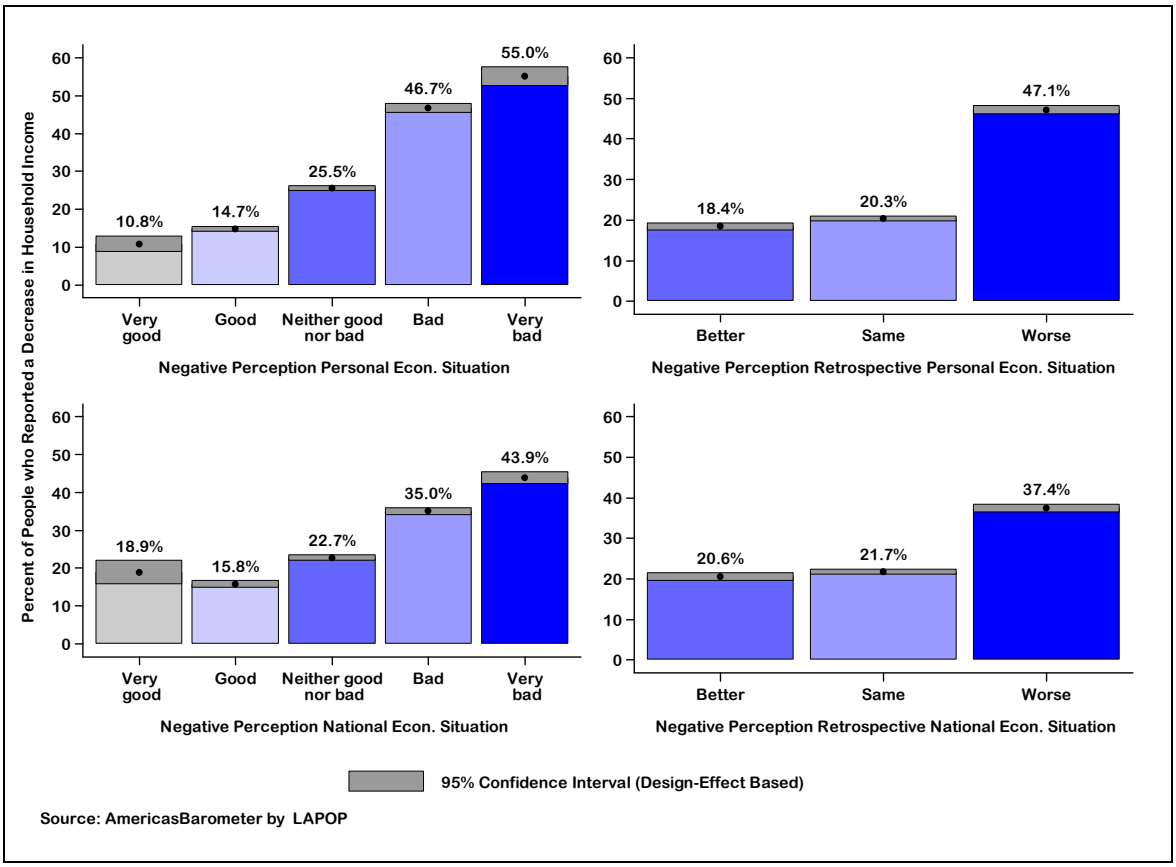

Figure II.15. Relationship Between Citizens' Experiences and Perceptions of the Economy During Hard Times in the Americas

Turning to Nicaragua, we can see in Figure II.16 that among Nicaraguans the situation is very similar to that found for the region as a whole. Those who experienced a decline in their family income viewed the national economy and their family's economic situation more negatively. Nicaraguans who perceived their personal economic situation to be very bad were eleven times more likely to have experienced a loss of household income than those who reported that their personal economic situation

was very good. The same findings held, a bit less sharply, for Nicaraguans' perceptions of the national economy, and also for perceptions of personal and national economic situations when compared to a year earlier.

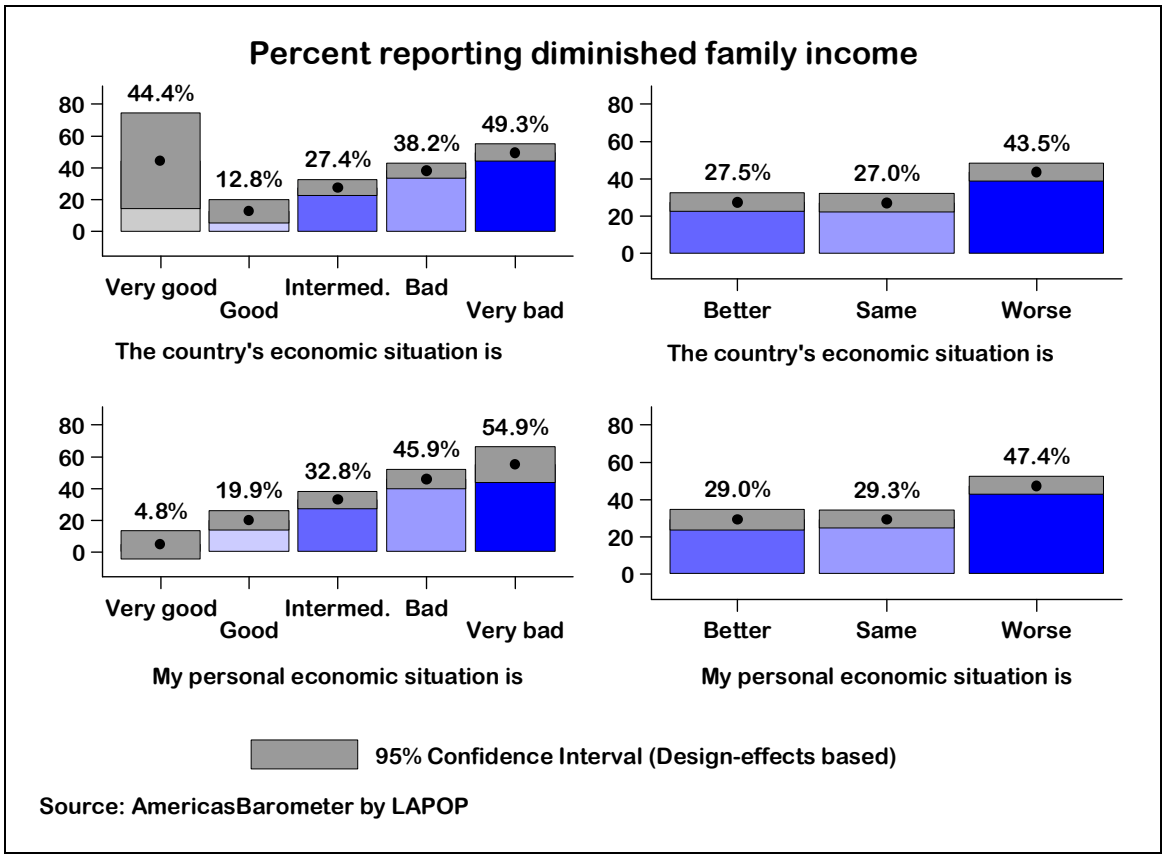

Figure II.16. Nicaraguans' Perceptions of the National and Personal Economies and Reported Household Income Declines

Conclusion

Even though Nicaragua ranked in the middle of countries of the Americas on output decline, a comparatively large percentage of Nicaraguans perceived the crisis to be serious, almost certainly because of the country's comparatively very low GDP per capita. Nicaragua was relatively high (at 30 percent) on a combined index of personal and household job loss. Nicaraguans were also comparatively high for the Americas for reported income declines (34 percent). Among Nicaraguans who had lost jobs, men, those with secondary educations, and younger workers reported more success in finding another job.

Two thirds of Nicaraguans viewed the crisis as very serious. Nicaraguans also had a clear grasp of the implications of the national economy and their own personal economies. Those reporting more pessimistic views of the national and their personal economies were also significantly more likely to report reduced family incomes. Nicaraguans blamed the crisis more on the Ortega administration (during which the recession occurred) than on the Bolaños administration (when growth was higher). In short, Nicaraguans' national and personal economies worsened. They recognized the situation for what it was. The more they were adversely affected as individuals; the worse were their economic assessments.

Chapter III. Democratic Values in Hard Times

Introduction

Thus far, we have seen how Latin American citizens have fared during the great economic recession that began in 2008 in relation to their experiences with unemployment, household income, and their perceptions of national and personal economic well-being. In this chapter, our objective is to go a step further and see how key attitudes toward democracy have fared during these hard times.

Bad economic times have often been linked in the academic and journalistic literature to challenges to democracy. For example, some research suggests that poor individuals, whom we have seen above were hard hit by income declines in the current crisis afflicting wide swaths of the region, are particularly vulnerable to increasing support for anti-democratic alternatives during hard economic times.[42] Others suggest that national economic underdevelopment and low growth rates also affect democracy, while poor national economic indicators may affect individuals support for key components of democracy.[43]

Given the severity of the impact of the most recent economic recession in many regions of the world, and to a lesser extent in Latin America and the Caribbean, we want to know how citizens' democratic values have fared during this difficult period. Has the crisis been associated with declines in support for democracy as a system of government and satisfaction with democracy? Furthermore, has system support (i.e., political legitimacy) declined when times got tough, or have citizens rallied around governments that have dealt effectively with the crisis? And most importantly, do Latin American citizens express greater authoritarian preferences under crisis conditions? We saw in the previous chapter that the economic recession had different effects on different regions in the Americas. Through the analysis of the AmericasBarometer 2010, we will take a more detailed look into these conundrums by examining the results by region and focusing on Nicaragua.

Under hard economic conditions worldwide, we want to know how the citizens of the Americas perceived the crisis. We begin by looking at the most general of all measures that of subjective well-being, commonly referred to "life satisfaction," or "happiness." We do this because research suggests that economic conditions are linked to citizens' feelings about their lives in general, with those individuals who experience economic hard times presumably expressing low levels of subjective well-being, while those individuals who enjoy better economic conditions expressing greater happiness.[44] On the other hand, the same research takes note of contradictions between economic conditions and life satisfaction or happiness.[45]

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[42]But see the work of Bermeo, who reviews this thesis and ultimately rejects it; Bermeo, *Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times: The Citizenry and the Breakdown of Democracy*.

[43] Córdova and Seligson, "Economic Shocks and Democratic Vulnerabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean", Ethan B. Kapstein y Nathan Converse, *The Fate of Young Democracies* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Przeworski et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*.

[44] Frey S. Bruno and Alois Stutzer, *Happiness and Economics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), Ronald Inglehart y Hans-Dieter Klingemann, "Genes, Culture, Democracy, and Happiness," en *Culture and Subjective Well-Being*, ed. Ed Diener and Eunkook M. Suh (Cambridge, Mass MIT Press, 2000).

[45] Carol Graham. *Happiness around the World : The Paradox of Happy Peasants and Miserable Millionaires* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), Carol Graham; Eduardo Lora; and Inter-American Development Bank., *Paradox and Perception : Measuring Quality of Life in Latin America* (Washington, D.C.: Inter-American Development Bank : Brookings

When we look at the specific case of the Americas, how satisfied with their lives are the citizens of the Americas now in the aftermath of the economic recession compared to two years ago? To respond to this question we examine two survey items, one which asks people about their current happiness and the other which asks them how happy they were in 2008, the period before the crisis had become full-blown. We subtract from their reports of their current happiness their reported level of happiness in 2008 and compute national averages for each of the countries in the Americas. The questions asked are shown below:

[GIVE CARD "A"]
LS6. On this card there is a ladder with steps numbered 0 to 10. 0 is the lowest step and represents the worst life possible for you. 10 is the highest step and represents the best life possible for you.
On what step of the ladder do you feel **at this moment**? **Please choose the ladder that represents best your opinion. [Point out the number on the card that represents "the worst life possible" and the number that represents "the best life possible." Indicate to the interviewee that he/she can choose an intermediate score]**.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	88	98
Worst life possible										**Best life possible**	**DK**	**DA**

LS6A. On which step would you say you stood two years ago, that is to say in 2008?

Figure III.1 shows that, on average, there is an even split in the Americas, with about half the countries having citizens who report, on average, that they are happier today than they were in 2008, while about half of the countries have citizens who report, on average that they are less happy in 2010 than in 2008. Examining Figure III.1, we see that citizens of Uruguay, Guyana, Brazil, and Paraguay on average say that they are more satisfied with their lives in 2010 than they report that they were in 2008. In stark contrast, Jamaicans report that their happiness in 2010 is sharply lower than they report it was in 2008. Other countries in which average reported happiness in 2010 is lower than in 2008 are Belize, the United States, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Honduras.[46] Thus, we have our first hint that even though the economic crisis affected the Americas in many ways, it was not associated with a hemisphere-wide decline in life satisfaction. But this item is very general, and in the following section we examine a set of items specifically designed to measure citizens' perceptions of the economic recession.

Institution Press, 2009), Carol Graham and Stefano Pettinato, *Happiness and Hardship : Opportunity and Insecurity in New Market Economies* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001).

[46] To be clear, we are not comparing here the 2008 and 2010 survey, but two items from the 2010 survey that report on current (2010) and prior (2008) happiness. We do not have a panel design in this survey (we have repeated cross-sections) and do not know the actual level of happiness reported in 2008 for those interviewed in 2010.

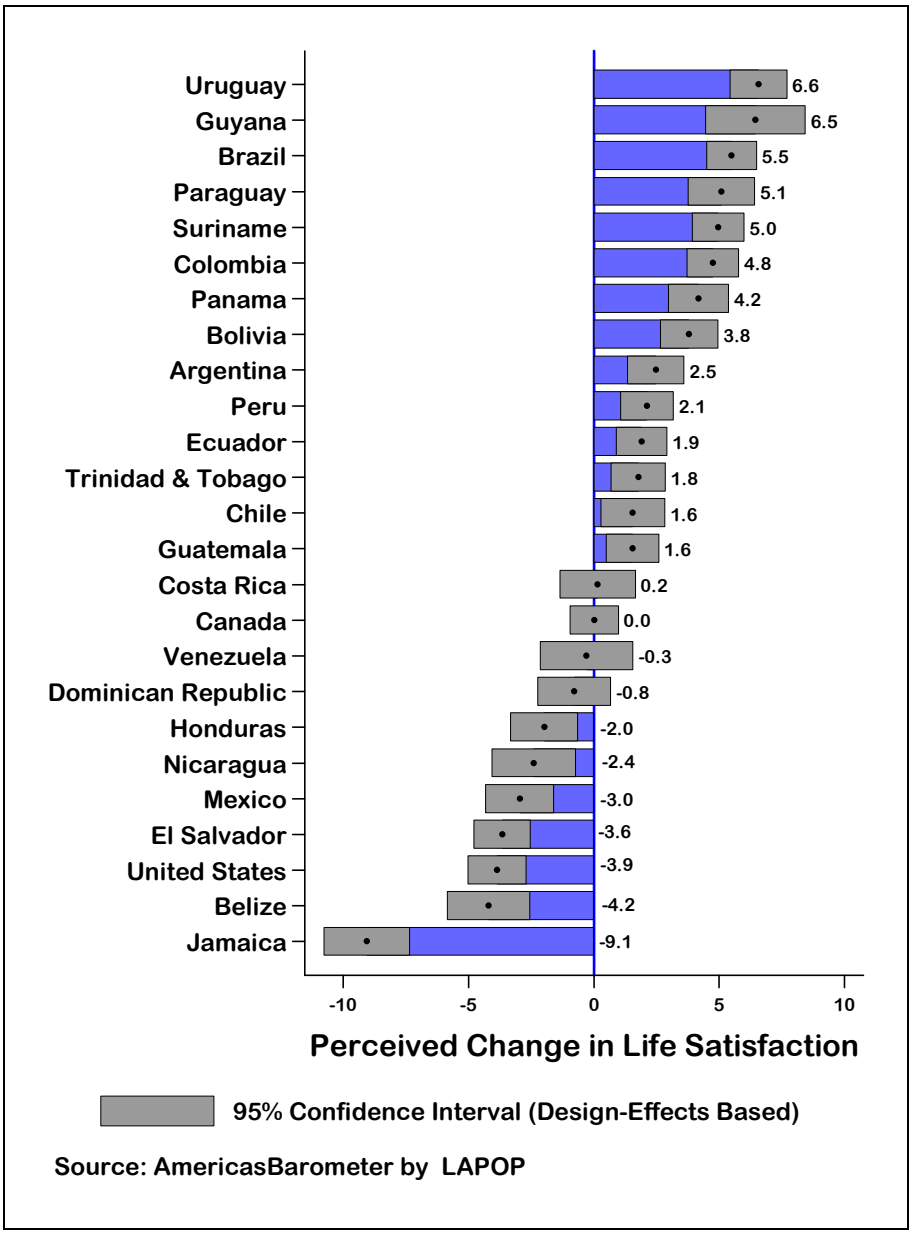


Figure III.1. National Average Increases and Decreases in Reported Life Satisfaction in 2010 vs. 2008

A different view of these data looks a bit more carefully at each segment of the survey population to show the percentages that expressed declines or increases in life satisfaction between 2008 and 2010. The results are shown in Figure III.2. Some countries, Jamaica for example, had over half of the population expressing a decline in life satisfaction, whereas in Suriname by contrast, fewer than one-fifth expressed a decline, and just under one-half expressed an increase.

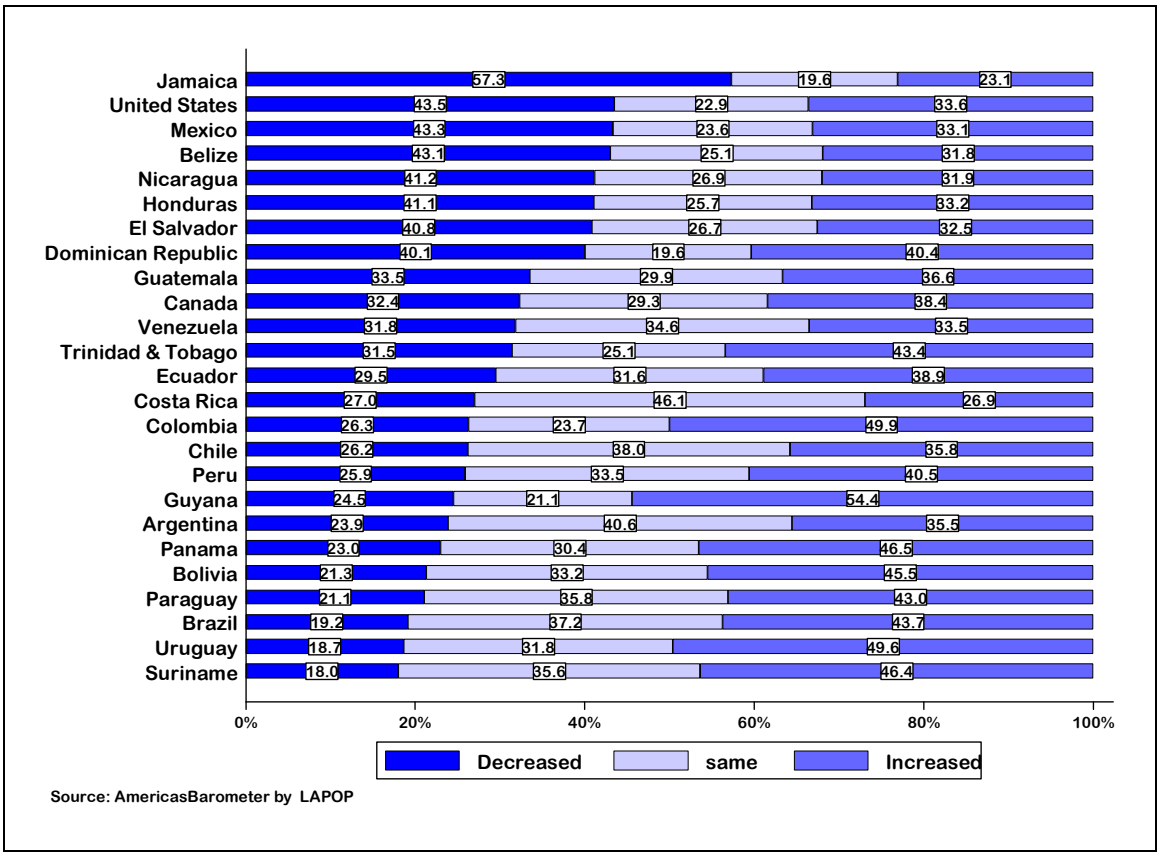


Figure III.2. Perceptions of Changes in Life Satisfaction in 2008 vs. 2010 (Percentage of Total Population)

We now examine how life satisfaction changes relate to the respondent's evaluation of his/her personal retrospective economic situation. That is, in the prior chapter we examined how respondents viewed their own (and also national) economic situation at the moment of the interview and then looking back a year.

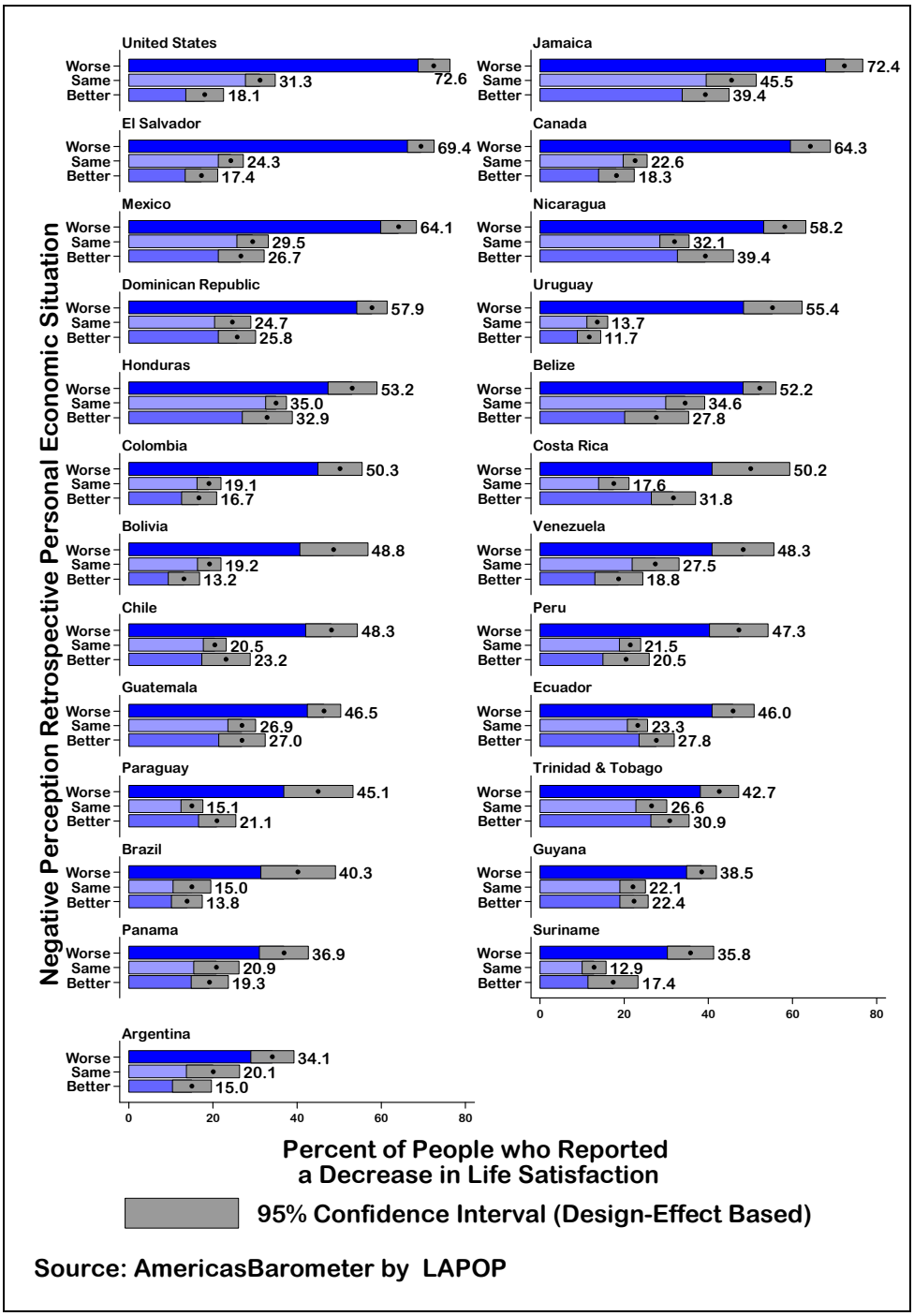


Figure III.3. Percentage of the Population who Perceived a Decline in Life Satisfaction, by Perceptions of the Personal Retrospective Economic Situation

Looking now only at those who expressed a decline in life satisfaction as shown in this chapter, we can see from Figure III.3 that there is a systematic link to the perception of respondent's retrospective personal economic situation. Figure III.3 shows this is the pattern for each country in the study. The overall conclusion is that nearly everywhere, life satisfaction declines when individuals report that their personal economic conditions have deteriorated. Among Nicaraguans, 58 percent of who viewed their economic situations as worse also reported a decline in life satisfaction.

Putting this finding into a broader context, we can examine multiple determinants of changes in life satisfaction. These results are shown in the regression chart in Figure III.4. We need to emphasize

that we are not explaining levels of life satisfaction, but the *changes* in life satisfaction reported by our respondents when we compare the level of such satisfaction that they reported possessing at the time of the interview to the one that they reported having possessed two years earlier.[47] To this regression equation, we added the traditional socioeconomic and demographic control variables including age, sex, education, residence (urban vs. rural) area, and wealth quintiles. While in prior LAPOP studies we have used an indicator of wealth based on an additive index of ownership of household goods, in this study we implement a new indicator using the same variables, but based on relative wealth.[48] Also included in the regression are variables measuring economic evaluations, and government economic performance.

The results shown in the regression plot (Figure III.4) are controlled for variation by country (the "country fixed effects"), the variation that was shown in Figures III.1 and III.2 in this chapter. Each variable included in the analysis is listed on the vertical (y) axis. The impact of each of those variables on attitudes of support for democracy is shown graphically by a dot, which if located to the right of the vertical "0" line indicates a positive contribution, and if to the left of the "0" line a negative contribution. Statistically significant contributors are shown by confidence interval lines stretching to the left and right of each dot; only when the confidence intervals do not overlap the vertical "0" line is the factor significant (at $p < .05$ or better). The relative strength of each variable is indicated by standardized coefficients (i.e. "beta weights").

The results show that basic socio-economic characteristics such as wealth and area of residence have no significant effect on satisfaction. We do see that the demographic characteristics of age and sex matter to some degree; females report a more positive change over the 2008-2010 period, while older respondents report just the opposite, namely that they are *less* satisfied in 2010 than they were in 2008. This result, however, may be influenced by the normal aging process, such that older people on average suffer from more health afflictions and limitations and as such have more reason to report a decline in their life satisfaction.

A block of economic variables, however, has a consistent and in most cases far stronger impact on life satisfaction. The strongest impact by far has already been shown in Figure III.3-- respondents who have a negative retrospective perception of their own personal economic situation also have a strongly diminished sense of life satisfaction. Also associated with lower levels of life satisfaction is the respondent's perception that his country is experiencing a serious economic crisis. Not only does perception of one's economic situation matter, but the objective self-report of a decline in household income over that same period of time (2008-2010) is associated with lower levels of life satisfaction. In a similar vein, living in a household in which at least one member lost his or her job during this period decreases happiness.

Also very importantly, a variable that has a *strong positive impact* on changes in perceived life satisfaction 2008-2010 is the perception of government economic performance.[49] Since satisfaction with the general performance of the incumbent chief executive is also included in the regression equation (and it also has a positive effect), this means that even though individuals may perceive that they are not doing well economically, and may also have lived in a household that has suffered unemployment, when the

[47] We stress that this is not a panel design and therefore we do not have data on the same respondent in 2008 and 2010. We are relying on self reports of current and previous levels of satisfaction.

[48] For more information on this indicator, see: Córdova, Abby B. 2009 "Methodological Note: Measuring Relative Wealth using Household Asset Indicators." In AmericasBarometer Insights Series. (http://sitemason.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/AmericasBarometerInsightsSeries).

[49] This was measured by two survey items, N1 and N12, which measure respondent evaluation of the government's effectiveness in fighting poverty and unemployment.

government is perceived as managing the economy well, life satisfaction is higher. This finding points to the importance of government policy in managing the economy in times of stress.

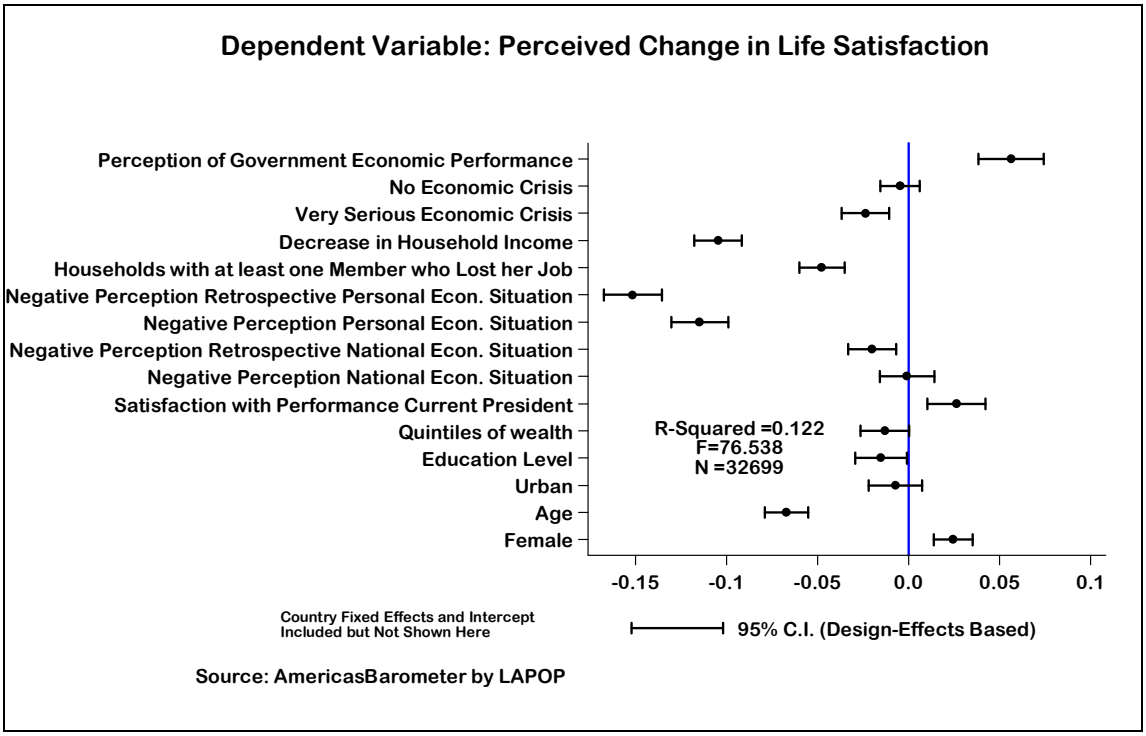


Figure III.4. Determinants of Perceived Change in Life Satisfaction in the Americas, 2010 (Total Sample)

When we perform this analysis for Nicaragua (Figure III.5) several influences on change in life satisfaction between 2008 and 2010 are similar to those observed for the Americas as a whole. Perceived government economic performance correlates positively with a positive change in life satisfaction. The strongest predictor of increased life satisfaction is a positive perception of one's personal economic situation. Nicaraguans reporting a decrease in household income and those in households with job loss also report declining life satisfaction between 2008 and 2010. Finally, none of the demographic variables have any influence on the change in life satisfaction, indicating that Nicaragua's substantial decline in life satisfaction between 2008 and 2010 is broadly distributed across gender, age, class, and education levels.

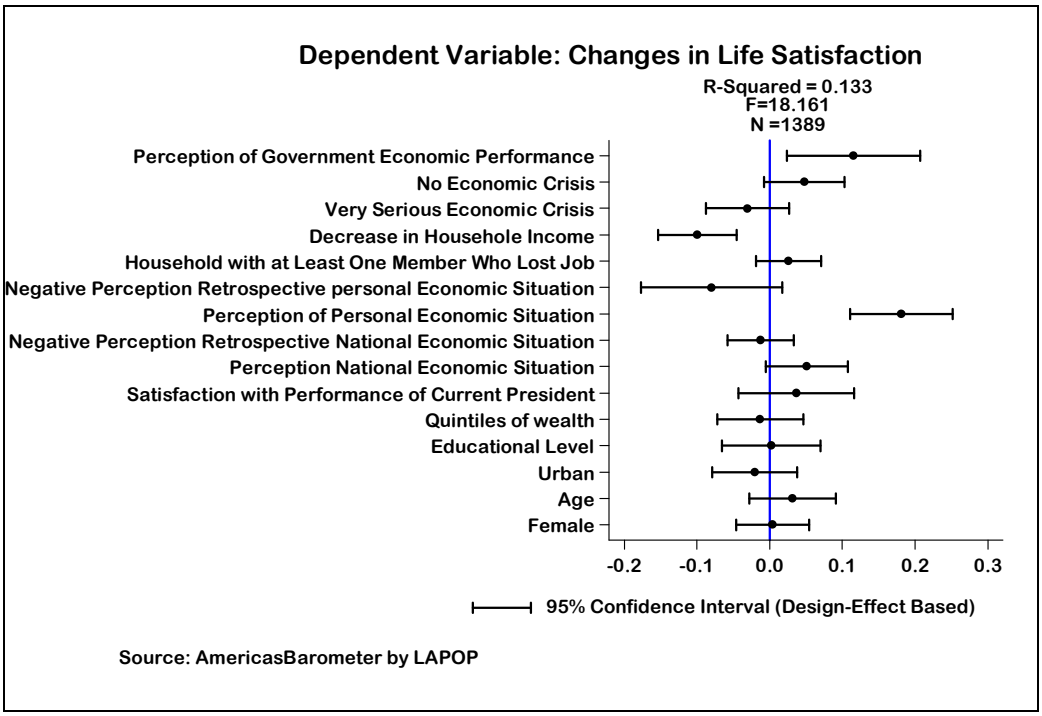


Figure III.5. Determinants of Changes in Life Satisfaction, Nicaragua 2010

Figure III.6 illustrates the impact of two variables on the degree to which life satisfaction of Nicaraguans changed from 2008 to 2010. The left hand graph reveals a life satisfaction decline among those below the 50 point scale midpoint for perception of government economic performance compared to an improvement for those above the scale midpoint. For instance, there is a difference of 19 out of 100 points between Nicaraguans in the bottom quarter of the scale of perceived government economic performance and those in the top quarter. The right hand graph shows that for those who place themselves in the bottom two groups of the personal economic situation evaluation, life satisfaction averages significantly below those for Nicaraguans in the three higher groups. To reiterate the larger point made above for the region, Figures III.5 and III.6 demonstrate that, independently of the effect of their own personal economic situations, Nicaraguans' views of how the government has managed the economy have affected whether their life satisfaction has risen or fallen since 2008. Nicaraguans who approve of the government's economic performance have also shown life satisfaction increases, and vice versa.

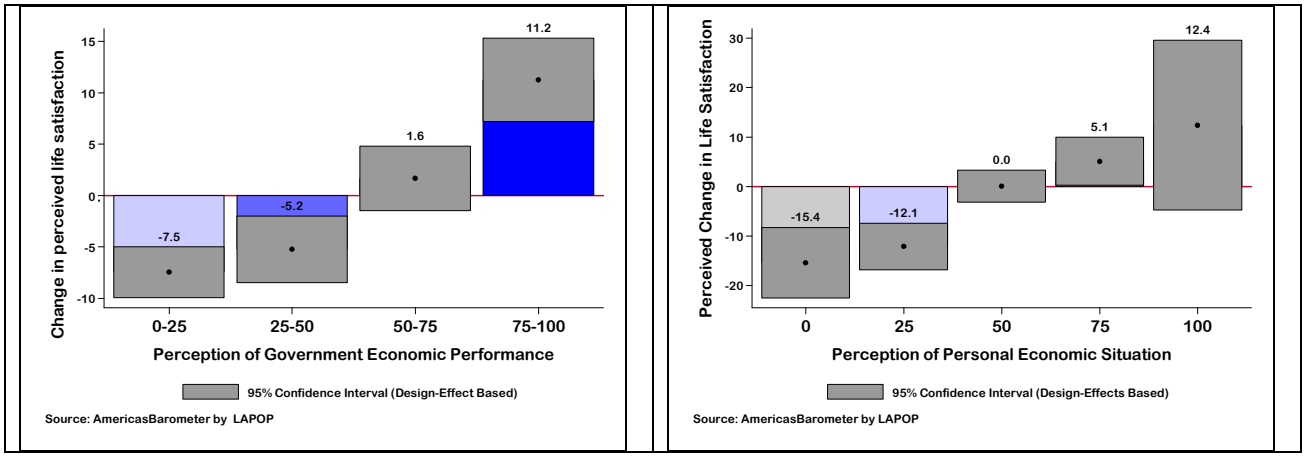


Figure III.6 Impact of Perceived Government Economic Performance and Personal Economic Situation on Life Satisfaction Changes, Nicaragua

Support for Democracy

This round of the AmericasBarometer provides evidence that, despite the economic crisis, support for democracy in the region has not declined. The results comparing support for democracy in 2008 with those in 2010 are shown in Figure III.7.[50] The dark blue bars in this chart show the *average* levels of support for democracy found in 2010 whereas the light blue bars show the average levels found in 2008.[51] The reader should note that whenever the two grey areas overlap, there is no statistically significant difference between the two years. For example, support for democracy declined in Mexico from 68.5 to 66.8, but this decline is not statistically significant. Indeed, what we find is that in many countries the change is not significant in either direction. Several countries experienced a significant decline in support for democracy in 2010 compared to 2008: Argentina, El Salvador, Canada, Peru, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. The Canadian decline was the sharpest. In contrast, in Chile support for democracy increased significantly between 2008 and 2010, at least as measured by this general "Churchill" item that has been so widely used in the comparative study of democracy. In any other country was not found an increase statistically significant.

[50] Support for democracy was measured by the following question: **ING4.** Democracy may have problems, but it is better than any other form of government. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements (1-7 scale)? This item, like most other LAPOP items, was recoded into a 0-100 scale to facilitate comparisons.

[51] Note that in some countries (Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname), we do not have 2008 survey data, so only one bar is shown.

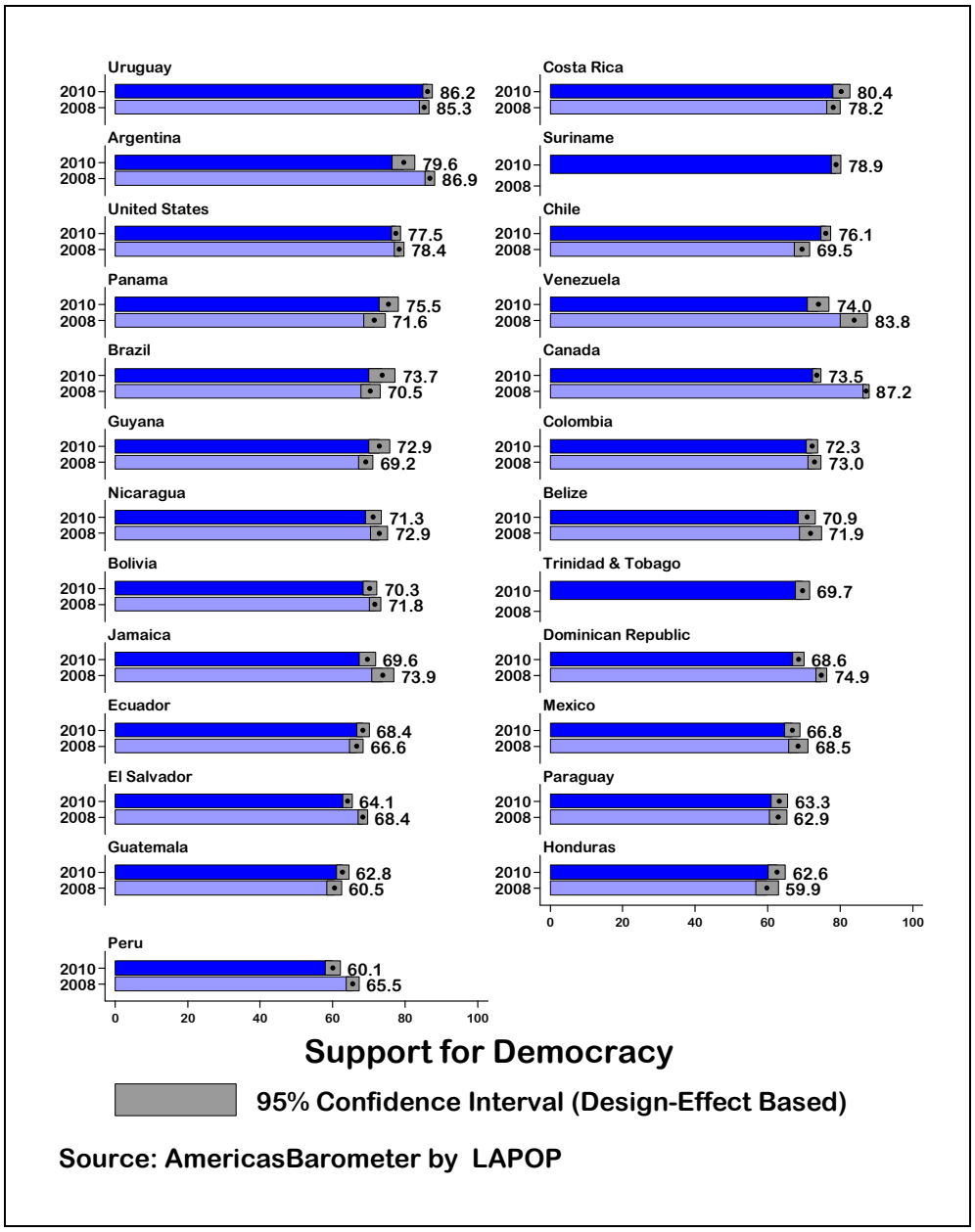


Figure III.7. Average Support for Democracy across the Americas, 2008 vs. 2010

While national averages in support for democracy declined significantly in only a minority of countries, this does not mean that the crisis itself did not take its toll. Support for democracy, like all attitudes, is affected by a wide variety of factors, with the economic crisis being only one of them. A given country may have been seriously buffeted by the economic decline, but if the crisis was managed well by the government, citizens are not likely to have lost faith in their systems. In order to have a better idea of the magnitude of the impact of hard times on *individual attitudes toward democracy*, we carried out a regression analysis (See Figure III.8).

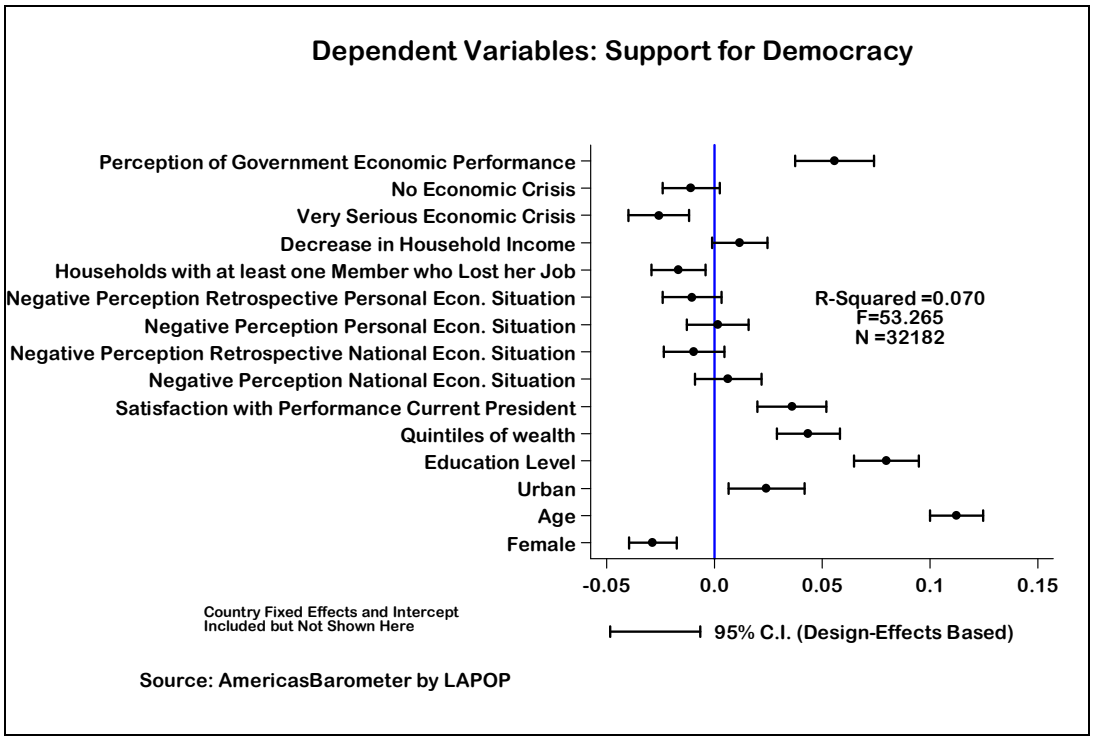


Figure III.8. Determinants of Support for Democracy in the Americas, 2010 (Total Sample)

Figure III.8 shows that age and education are the most powerful predictors of support for democracy. The finding that education increases support for democracy is consistent with our previous studies of democracy in the Americas, and once again reinforces the notion that education is one of the most effective ways to build a political culture supportive of democracy. Elsewhere in this report we take note of the power of education to increase political tolerance, another key element in a democratic political culture. We also find that those who live in urban areas are more supportive of democracy than those who live in rural areas, a finding we have also reported before. Females are often found to be less supportive of democracy, and we find this again here, even when controlling for education and other variables. While there is much dispute regarding the theoretical impact of wealth on support for democracy, in the 2010 AmericasBarometer, looking at the region as a whole (but controlling for the impact of country of residence, the "country fixed effects") we find that higher wealth levels are positively associated with greater support for democracy.[52]

What is striking about the results presented in Figure III.8 is that the economic crisis has only a limited impact on reducing support for democracy. Among respondents who live in households in which a member has lost his/her job, there is a small reduction in support for democracy, but the other economic perceptions play no significant role one way or the other. Also, there is a negative but slight impact of the perception of a severe crisis. But far more important is the very strong effect, once again, of a positive perception of government management of the economy. We find that, like life satisfaction, when citizens perceive that their government is handling the economy well, they are more supportive of democracy.

Our conclusion is that at the very general level of support for democracy, we do not find a cross-national decline, nor do we find (with one small exception) that individual perceptions and economic

[52] John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Inequality and Democracy in Latin America: Individual and Contextual Effects of Wealth on Political Participation," in *Poverty, Participation, and Democracy*, ed. Anirudh Krishna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

experiences during the crisis lowered support for democracy. This is certainly encouraging news, suggesting greater resilience of democracy than many analysts had predicted. It also suggests that the democracy recession observed by Freedom House does not seem to have affected public commitment to democracy in most of the region.

When we perform this analysis for Nicaragua (Figure III.9) we see that, as above for the whole region, few economic perceptions have a significant impact on preference for democracy. The two small exceptions: first, Nicaraguans living in households where someone lost a job express lower support for democracy. Second, those who perceive their personal economic situation to be good, report greater support for democracy.

Other factors shaping support for democracy in Nicaragua in 2010 are age and education, both of which correlate with a stronger preference for democracy. This pattern is consistent with that for all the Americas. One small but notable difference between Nicaragua and the larger region is that Nicaraguan women and men have no significant difference in preference for democracy. Both greater wealth and satisfaction with the performance of President Ortega associate negatively with support for democracy.

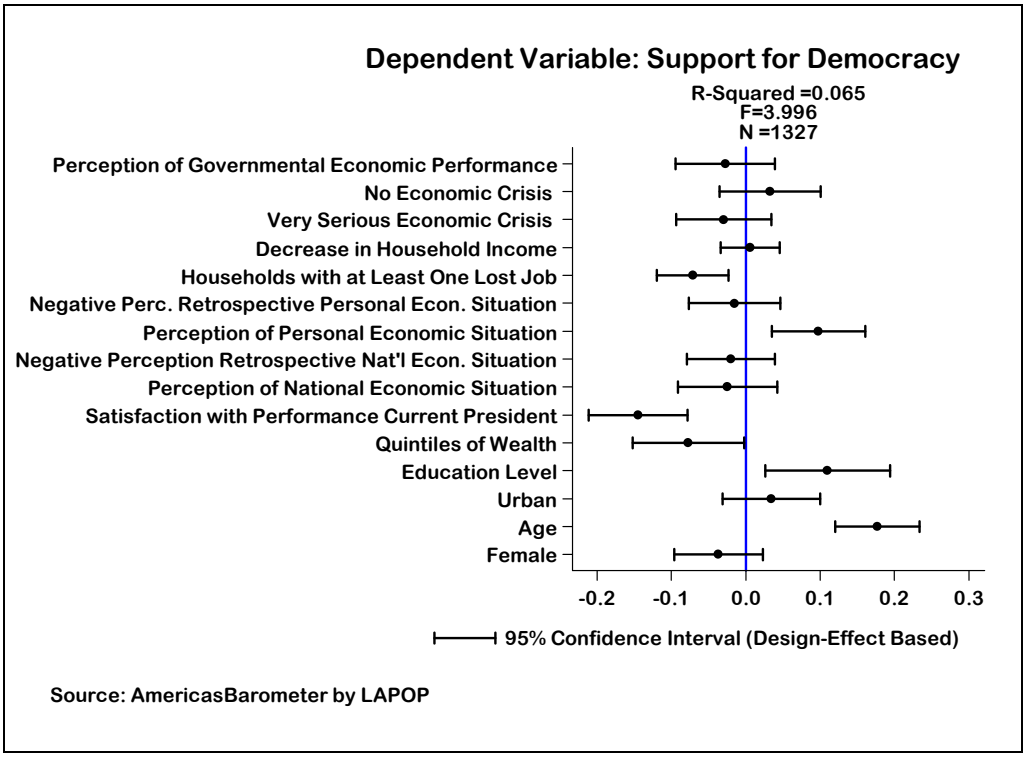


Figure III.9. Determinants of Support for Democracy in Nicaragua, 2010

Support for the Political System

Belief in the legitimacy of one's government (i.e., system support) is a key requisite for political stability. In an extensive investigation based on LAPOP survey data John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson found that legitimacy emerges from multiple sources, but that the performance of government in satisfying citizen needs and demands is central.[53] Some research suggests that there has been a steady decline in political support for the system, even in many advanced industrial democracies over the past 30 years.[54] Does this decline mean that low levels of system support place democracy at risk? So far, there is no indication of that for the advanced industrial democracies. But what of the consolidating democracies in Latin America and the Caribbean? This subject was treated in depth for the 2006 round of the AmericasBarometer data, but we look at it in this year's report in the context of the severe economic crisis.

For many years LAPOP has utilized a system support index based on five variables, each scored on a 1-7 basis, but converted to the traditional 0-100 LAPOP scale for better understanding of the results:

B1. To what extent do you think the courts in (country) guarantee a fair trial? (**Read:** If you think the courts do not ensure justice at all, choose number 1; if you think the courts ensure justice a lot, choose number 7 or choose a point in between the two.)

B2. To what extent do you respect the political institutions of (country)?

B3. To what extent do you think that citizens' basic rights are well protected by the political system of (country)?

B4. To what extent do you feel proud of living under the political system of (country)?

B6. To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of (country)?

To understand the dynamics of system support, we compare the levels from 2008 to those in 2010. As shown in Figure III.10 some countries experience important changes in system support. For example, Honduras, in the aftermath of the coup and the elections that restored democracy to the country, support soared from its pre-coup low of 46.4 up to 60.4. It needs to be kept in mind, however, that the survey in Honduras was taken only one month after the inauguration of the new administration, and thus the level of support may be elevated by the well-known "honeymoon effect" that new governments usually get. Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay also saw statistically significant increases in support for the political system, despite the economic crisis. On the other hand, only Belize, Canada, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic saw statistically significant (albeit quantitatively small) decreases in system support between 2008 and2010. The other countries remained statistically unchanged.

[53] System Support is an index created from five questions. For a more detailed explanation of how this index was created, see Chapter V in Part II of this study. See also John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Political Support and Democracy in Eight Nations.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

[54] Russell J. Dalton, *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), Pippa Norris, ed., *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

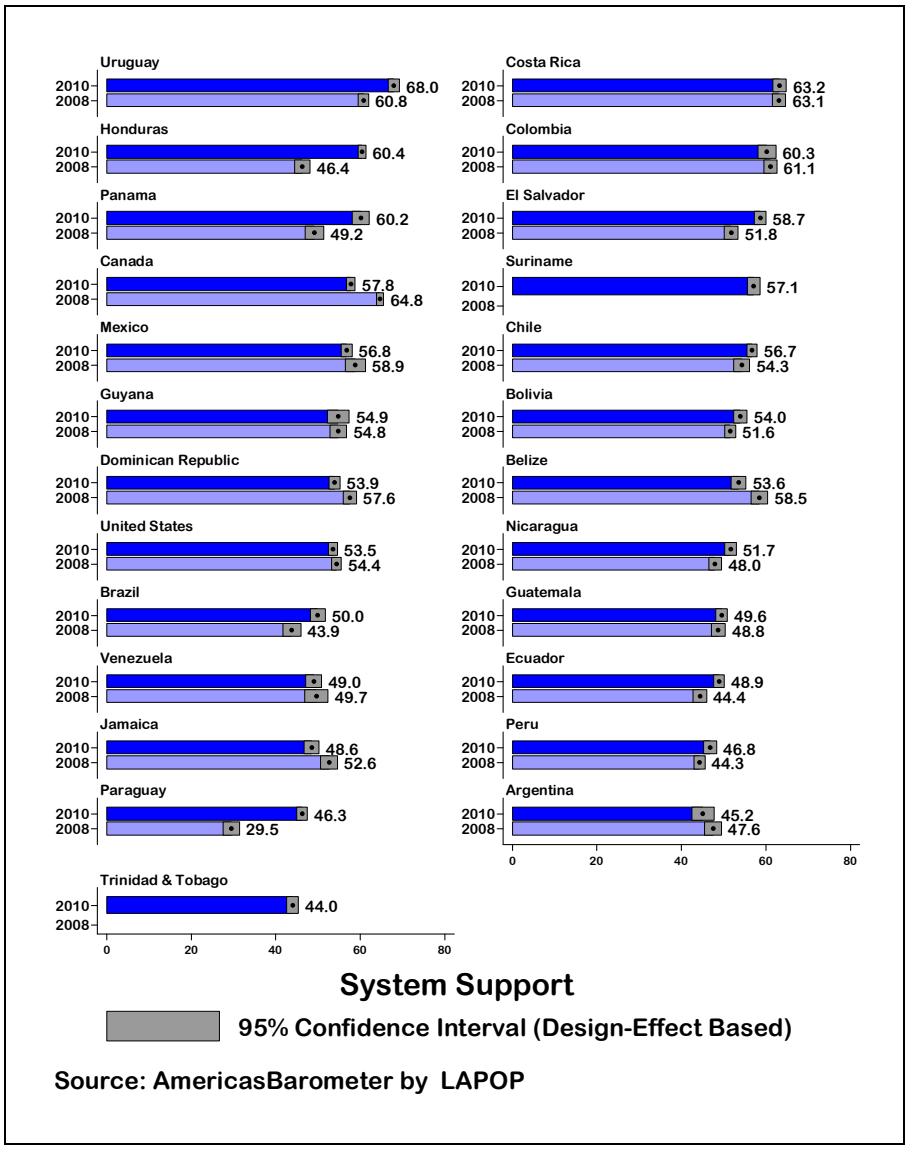


Figure III.10. Average System Support in the Americas, 2008 vs. 2010

Turning now to the determinants of system support, we see that, indeed, perception of a very serious economic crisis correlates negatively with Latin Americans' system support, illustrated in Figure III.11. Further, as we saw with support for democracy, low system support is present among those who hold a pessimistic view of their household and national incomes. Older people and women have significantly higher system support, but the effect is quite small. Also, unemployment have a negative impact on system support.

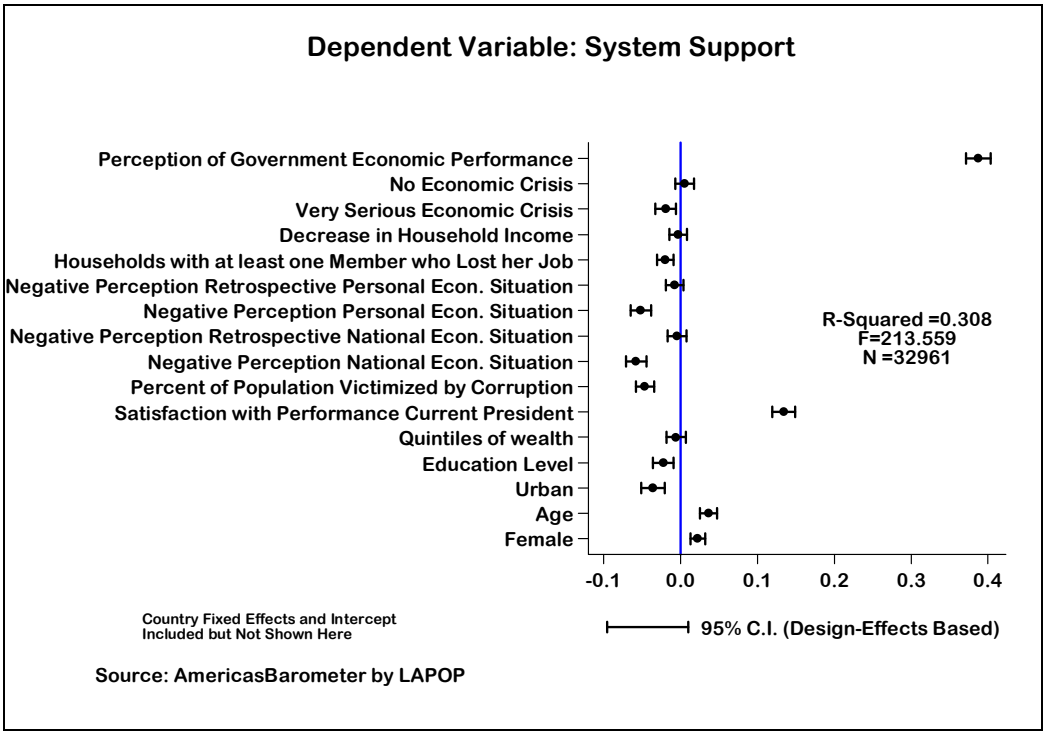


Figure III.11. Determinants of System Support in the Americas, 2010 (Total Sample)

Evidence that in many countries citizens did in fact perceive improved government economic performance appears in Figure III.12. Note that in Chile, Uruguay, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Ecuador, Brazil, Paraguay and the United States significant increases were found. On the other hand, only in Jamaica, Guatemala, Colombia, Costa Rica and Belize significant declines were recorded by the two surveys.

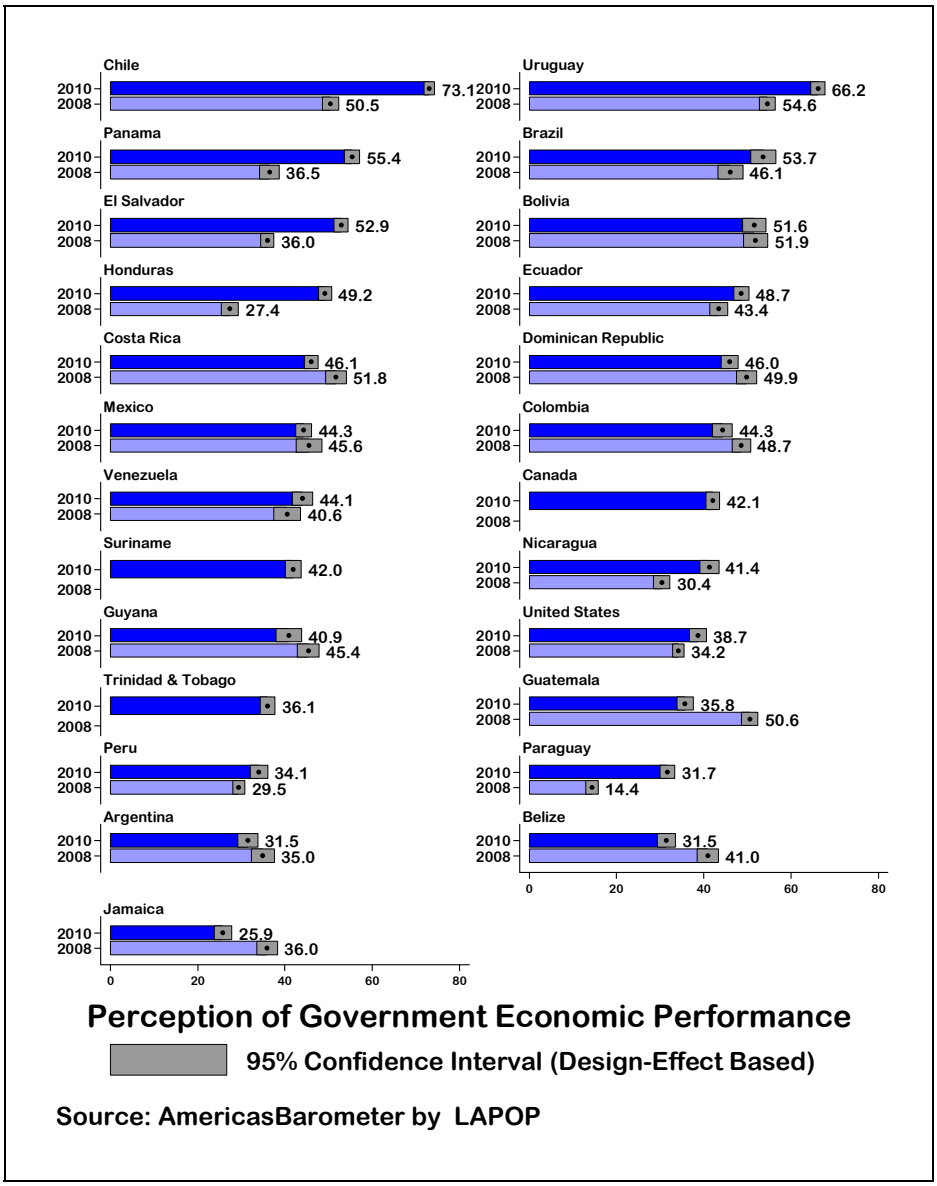


Figure III.12. Perception of Government Economic Performance, 2008 vs. 2010

Direct evidence at the national level that improvements in the perception of government economic performance are in part driving levels of system support is shown in Figure III.13. In this chart, country averages are presented for both the variation in average perception of government performance and the 2008-2010 variations in system support. The results are very clear: the greater the change in satisfaction with government management of the economy, the greater the change in system support.

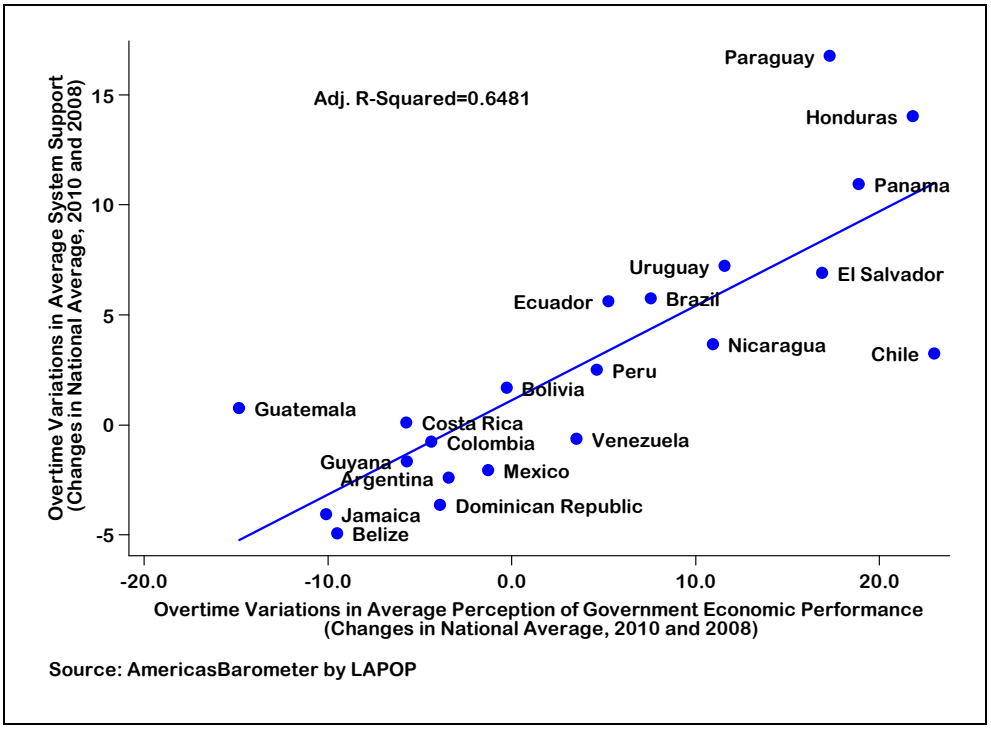


Figure III.13. Change in Perceptions of Government Economic Performance as a Predictor of Change in System Support (2008-2010), Country Level Analysis

Not only is this result found at the national level, we find it regionally as well. In Figure III.14 we examine these same items of change in perception of government performance and change in system support, but using the sub-national strata of each sample. For example, in Bolivia, each department is a separate sample stratum, whereas in other countries regions are used for the strata. Details of the sample designs are contained in the appendix of each country report. What we see is that even at the sub national level, when the average perception of government economic performance is perceived as shifting in a more positive direction, average system support increases.

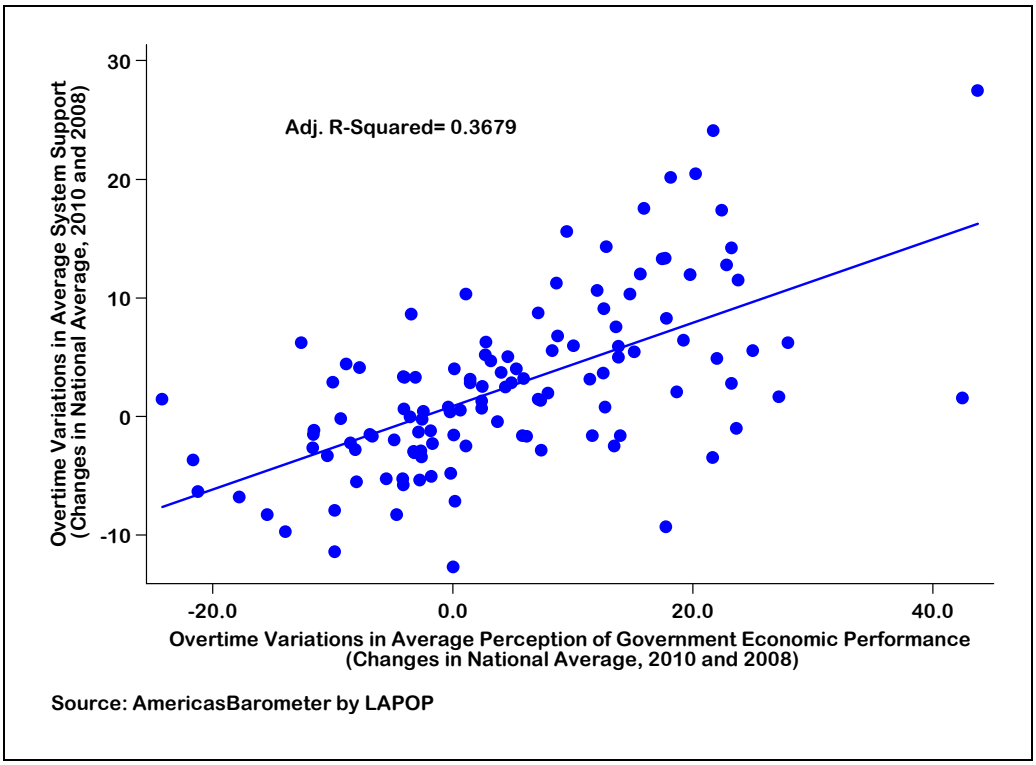


Figure III.14. Change in Perceptions of Government Economic Performance as a Predictor of Change in System Support (2008-2010), Regional Level Analysis

What are the determinants of system support in Nicaragua? Figure III.15 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis employing the same variables as used above for the region at large. The results are rather simple, and track important results for the regional analysis. Nicaraguans by a wide margin express higher system support when they view the government's economic performance positively. Satisfaction with the Ortega administration's performance also contributes independently to Nicaraguans' system support. As is true for the Americas as a whole, Nicaraguan women are more system-supporting than men. One modest difference with the larger region is that, other factors held constant, Nicaraguans with a negative perception of their personal economic situations have a very slight tendency toward higher system support, rather than lower support. This finding may result from the country's poor majority holding relatively favorable attitudes toward a political system that grew out of a leftist revolution, and toward an administration that has emphasized help for the poor.

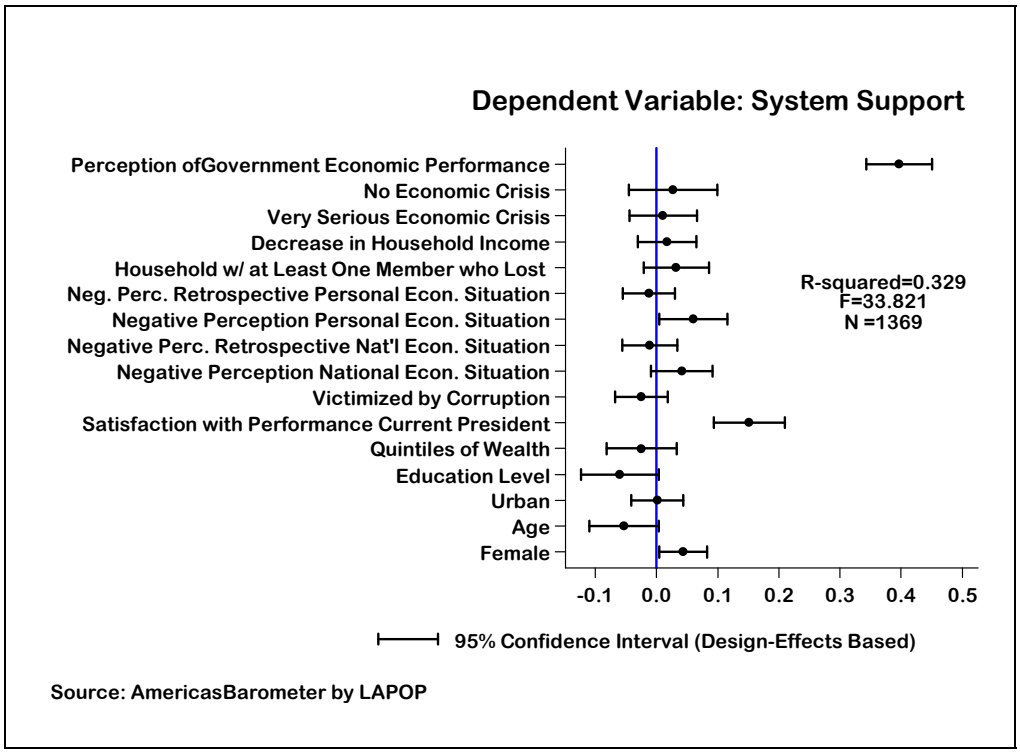


Figure III.15. Determinants of System Support in Nicaragua, 2010

Figure illustrates the two strongest effects on system support among Nicaraguans. In the left hand graph, moving from the lowest quarter of the 100 point range of satisfaction with government economic performance to the highest quarter of the range produces a 26 point increase in system support. In the right hand graph, there occurs a 28 point increase in system support between Nicaraguans who viewed the performance of the incumbent president as very bad and those who viewed it as very good.

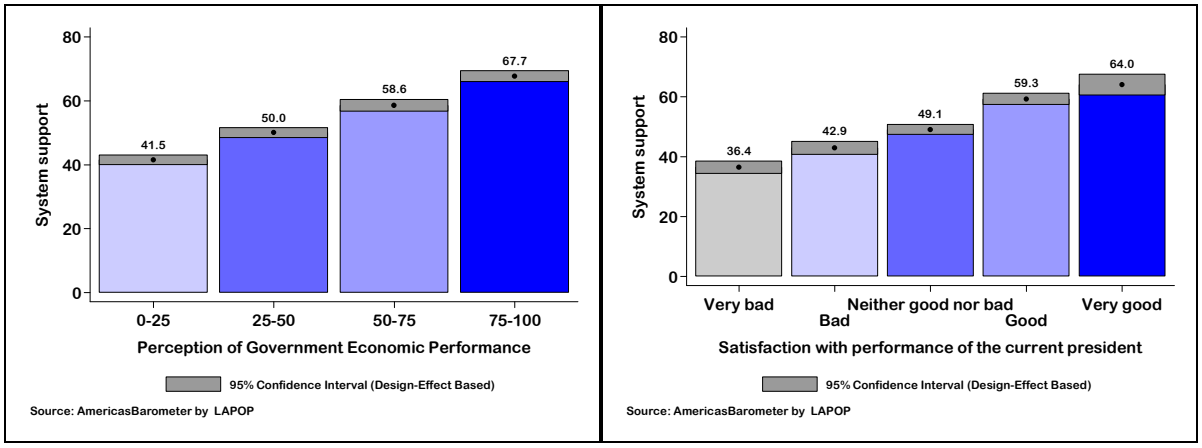


Figure III.16. Effect of Perceived Government Economic Performance and Satisfaction with Presidential Performance on System Support, Nicaragua (2004-2010)

We turn now to consider the determinants of satisfaction with the way democracy works.

Satisfaction with Democracy

While support for democracy as a system of government continues to be high in the Americas despite the economic crisis, what about satisfaction with democracy, another variable commonly used in tracking democratic consolidation around the world? Research in the advanced industrial democracies has found that satisfaction with democracy has been in long-term decline, a process that began some decades ago and continues, indicating that this is a process not directly linked to economic downturns.[55] During periods of economic crisis in the Americas, is it more likely that citizens will express lower levels of satisfaction with democracy? Certainly that is what the classical hypotheses based on considerable social science literature suggest, as we noted in Chapter I. Put differently, citizens may continue to support democracy in principle as the best form of government, but in practice, they may believe that democracy has not delivered. The question thus becomes: Are citizens of the countries of the Americas less inclined to express satisfaction with democracy when they are living in hard economic conditions? Evidence from the AmericasBarometer suggests that this may in fact be true, at least in some countries.

An examination of Figure III.17 shows that in a number of countries average satisfaction with democracy declined between 2008 and 2010. In Mexico, for example, a country especially hard hit by the economic crisis, satisfaction dropped from 50.4 on our 0-100 scale to 44.6, a decline that is statistically significant. Venezuela suffered the sharpest decline, dropping from 58.8 to 46.3. Other statistically significant declines occurred in Argentina, Canada, Guatemala, Guyana, and the Dominican Republic.

On the other hand, there were some countries in which satisfaction with democracy increased sharply. Consider Honduras, a country that experienced a coup in 2009.[56] In that country, satisfaction increased from 44.8 to 57.8. The largest shift occurred in Paraguay, a country at the very bottom of satisfaction in 2008, with a score of 30.2, leaping to 49.9 in 2010. The 2008 survey was conducted just prior to the April, 2008 election that brought the decades-long dominant party rule to an end in that country; no doubt this was a factor in the robust increase in democratic satisfaction measured in the 2010 survey.

Another significant increase occurred in El Salvador, where, as in Paraguay, the opposition (in this case the FMLN) won power for the first time in 15 years in the presidential election. Other cases with significant increases during 2008 – 2010 period in satisfaction with democracy were Uruguay, Chile, Honduras Panama and Bolivia. In several countries, however, there was no statistically significant shift in satisfaction with democracy despite the severe economic crisis that left its imprint worldwide.

[55] Dalton, *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Norris, ed., *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government.*

[56] Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Trouble in Central America: Crime, Hard Times and Discontent," *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 2 (2010).

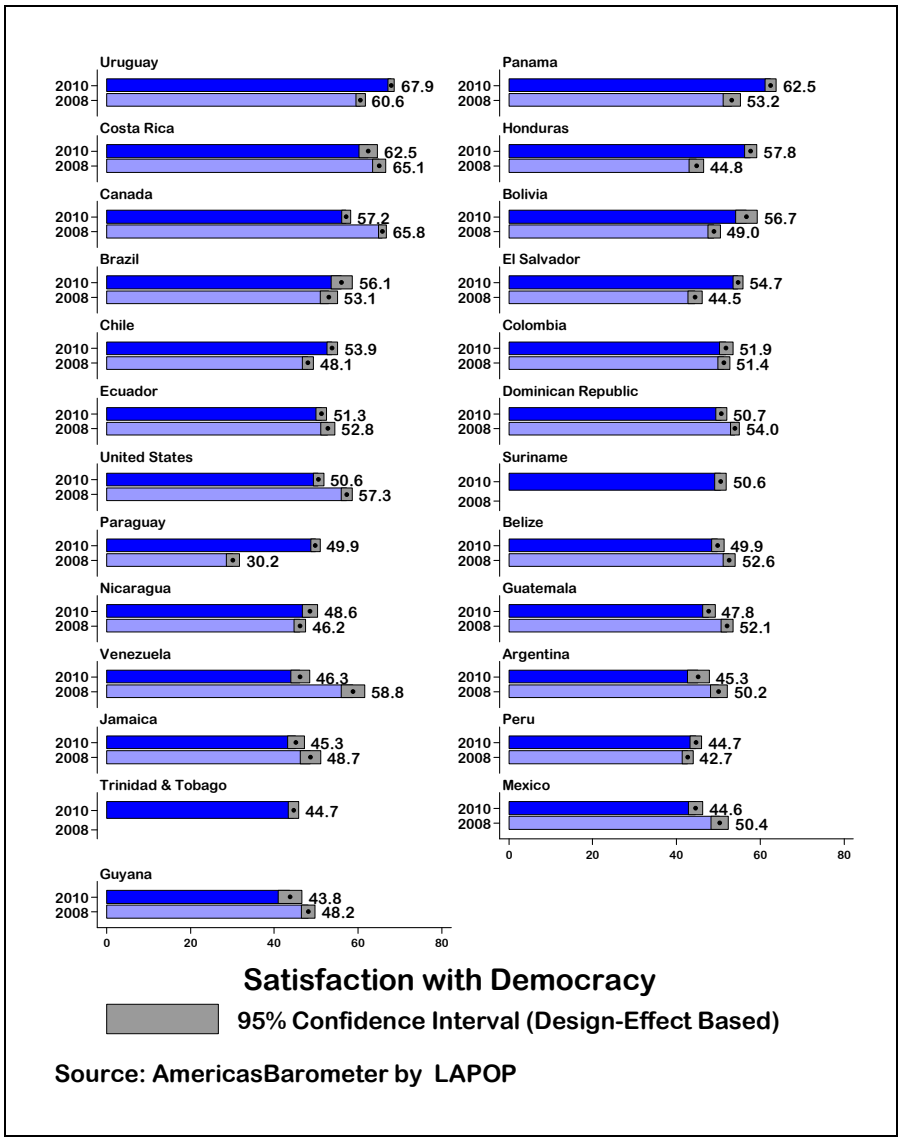


Figure III.17. Satisfaction with Democracy, 2008 vs. 2010, AmericasBarometer Survey

Moving on to the determinants of democratic satisfaction, we see that, indeed, perception of a very serious economic crisis correlates negatively with this attitude among Latin Americans, shown in Figure III.18. We also see that negative perceptions of personal and national economic situations as well as negative perceptions of retrospective personal and national economic situations are associated with lower levels of satisfaction with the way democracy works. In addition, older people have significantly higher democratic satisfaction, while educated individuals and those who live in urban areas show lower levels of this satisfaction. Yet these effects are quite small.

More interestingly, as we found with life satisfaction, support for democracy and system support, the major impact on satisfaction with democracy is from perception of government economic performance *in addition to satisfaction with the performance of the current president.* Once again, we see that individuals in the Americas are strongly affected by their views as to how their governments perform. But we also see that satisfaction with the incumbent president matters *more* when related to satisfaction with democracy; this suggests that while perceptions of governments as responding effectively to the crisis were important, perceptions of the presidents' performance during hard economic times are also highly important.

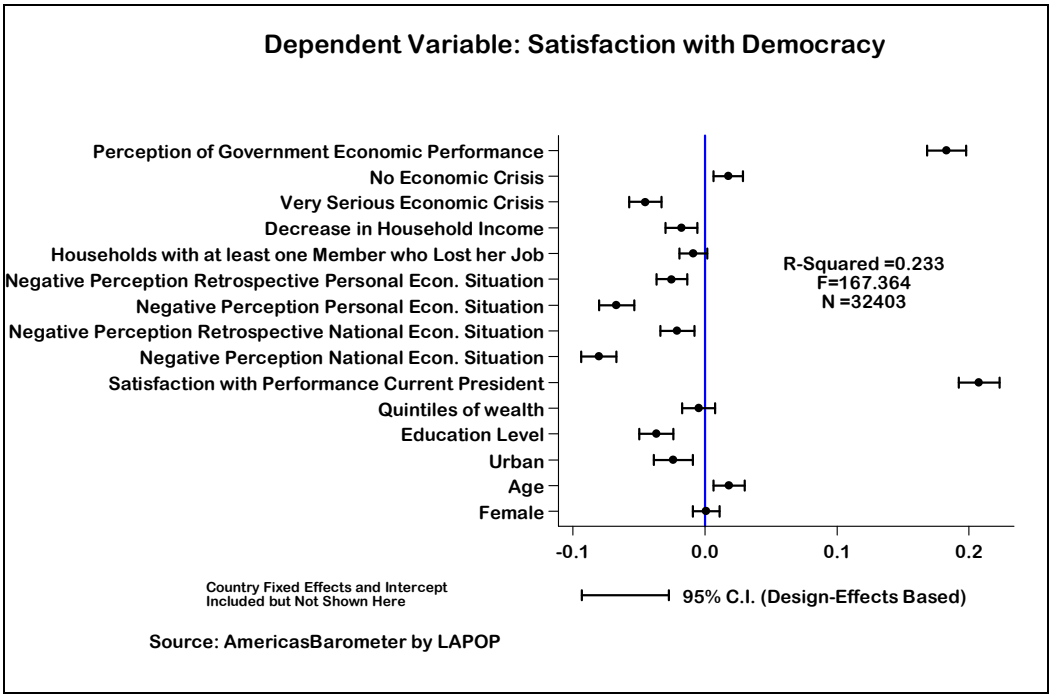


Figure III.18. Determinants of Satisfaction with Democracy in the Americas, 2010 (Total Sample)

Figure III.19 replicates the analysis of determinants of satisfaction with democracy for Nicaragua alone. Satisfaction with President Ortega's performance is the biggest determinant of satisfaction with democracy, followed by a positive view of the government's economic performance. A negative perception of the national economic situation negatively affects satisfaction with democracy in Nicaragua, other factors held equal. Thus Nicaragua fits the general pattern for the Americas -- satisfaction with democracy depends strongly on citizens' evaluation of presidential performance and on their view of the government's economic performance.

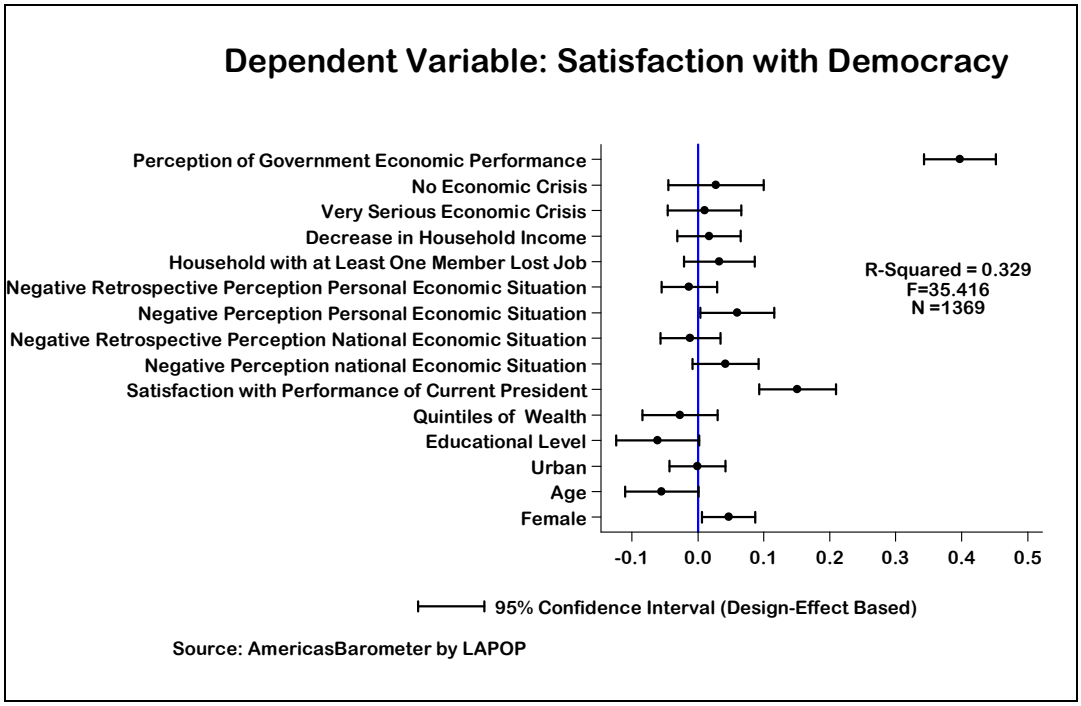


Figure III.19. Determinants of Satisfaction with Democracy in Nicaragua, 2010

Figure III.20 illustrates the impact of these independent variables on satisfaction with democracy. The left hand graph shows that satisfaction with democracy increases 32 of 100 scale points as one moves from Nicaraguans who view President Ortega's performance as very bad to those who view it as very good. The effect of a good perception of the economy on Nicaraguans' satisfaction with democracy is also positive. Democracy satisfaction increases from a score of 43.1 points among those in the bottom quarter of the evaluation scale for government economic performance to a score of 61.6 among those in the top quarter.

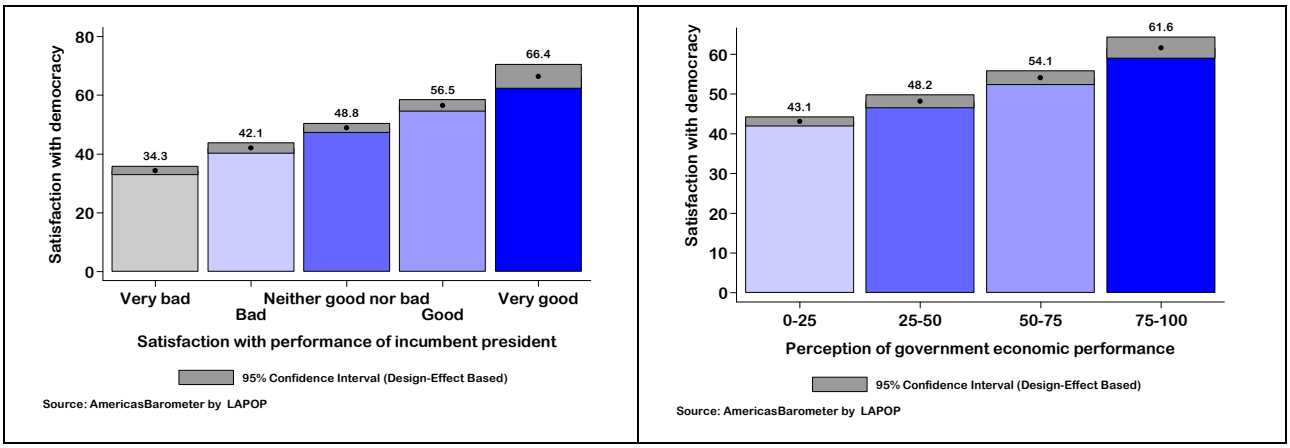


Figure III.20. Impact of Presidential Approval and Satisfaction with Government Economic Performance on Satisfaction with Democracy, Nicaragua (2004-2010)

Support for Military Coups

An extreme reaction to hard times is for the military to take over in a coup. Historically in Latin America a number of such coups have been attributed to economic crises, but militaries have also been forced from power when economic crises broke out during their period of authoritarian rule. The Honduran coup of 2009 heightened interest in military coups, which many had thought were a thing of the dark past of Latin America's history. In the context of the current economic crisis, we now evaluate citizens' support for this authoritarian alternative. We asked our respondents if they would justify a coup under three distinct conditions: high unemployment, high crime, and high corruption.[57]

The comparisons 2008-2010 are shown in Figure III.21. We do not have comparative data for all countries since respondents living in three countries that do not have an army (Costa Rica, Panama and Haiti) were not asked these questions in 2008. In 2010, however, for those three countries we did ask about a takeover of the country by their police forces, in order to create some sort of hypothetical alternative. Moreover, the question on a military coup was not asked in Jamaica or Paraguay in 2008.

The results show that support for a coup is very low in most countries and especially low in Panama and Costa Rica. On our 0-100 scale, only one country scores even as high as 50. On the other hand, such support was very high in Honduras in 2008, perhaps not surprisingly, a coup occurred there in

[57] The Index of Support for Military Coups was created from three questions. They ask: Now, changing the subject, some people say that under some circumstances it would be justified for the military of this country to take power by a coup d'état (military coup). In your opinion would a military coup be justified under the following circumstances? **JC1**. When there is high unemployment. **JC10**. When there is a lot of crime. **JC13**. When there is a lot of corruption. Response options were (1) A military takeover of the state would be justified; and (2) A military takeover of the state would not be justified, later recoded into 100= a military coup is justified, 0=a military coup is not justified.

2009. Post-coup, support for such illegal takeovers of a democratic system dropped sharply in Honduras. It may be that the coup itself resolved the problems that Hondurans were having with the regime and now they saw no reason for it; or it could be that the experience with the coup itself lessened support for this type of action. We leave the discussion of the coup issue to the detailed country report on Honduras. Coup support also declined significantly in 2010 from 2008 levels in Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Guyana. We also note that coup support increased significantly only in one country for which we have data, Guatemala, between 2008 and 2010.

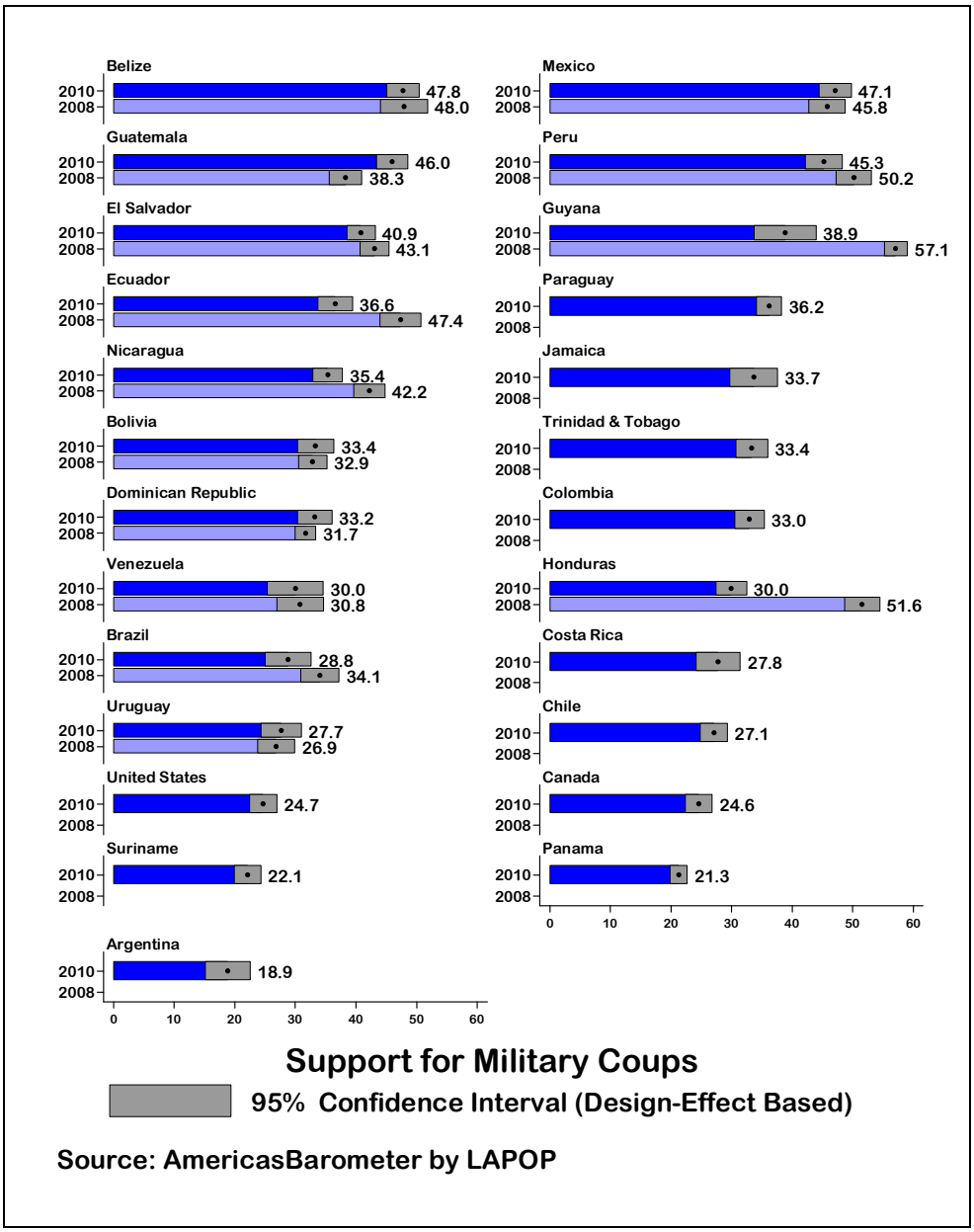


Figure III.21. Justification of a Military (Police) Coup in the Americas, 2008 vs. 2010

Returning to the relationship between hard economic times and authoritarian tendencies is support for military coups higher among those who perceive an economic crisis or who are unemployed? We see in Figure III.22 that unfortunately this is the case. Unemployment and the perception of a very serious economic crisis are associated with significantly greater support for military coups among Latin Americans. Furthermore, individuals who exhibit a negative perception of the national economic situation

also show higher support for military coups, suggesting that Latin Americans, under crisis conditions, do take into account economic factors when thinking about ways to punish those in power, even if these may put democracy at risk.

Interestingly, older, wealthier, and more educated individuals show lower pro-coup tendencies. An interesting finding and consistent with previous results is the effect of satisfaction with the performance of the current president. Those who evaluate the president positively show lower levels of support for coups, indicating the significant role that the president plays in reducing the support for authoritarian alternatives. Perception of government efficacy did not yield any significant results when related to support for military coups.

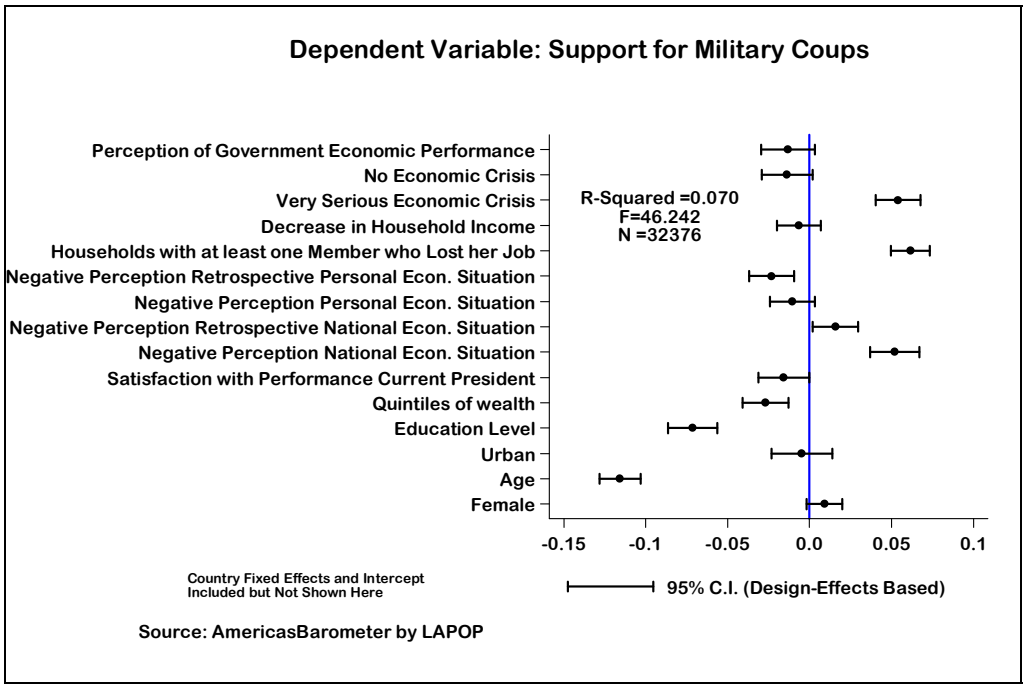


Figure III.22. Predictors of Support for Military Coups in the Americas, 2010 (Total Sample)

Nicaraguans' support for coups in 2010 declined significantly from its 2008 level of 42.2 on the 100 point scale to 35.4. This demonstrates that the economic crisis has not pushed Nicaraguans to embrace this drastic authoritarian remedy despite the economic downturn. Figure III.23 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis of the determinants of support for military coups in Nicaragua. Some results from Nicaragua resemble those from the region at large. One similarity is that Nicaraguans who perceive a very serious economic crisis and those in job-loss households are significantly more willing to support a military coup. Older Nicaraguans do not support military coups, another similarity to the rest of the region. Nicaraguans with a negative view of the national economy express greater support for military coups, other factors held constant.

Nicaraguans unhappy with their personal economic situations do not support coups. We speculate that this suggests that Nicaraguans are reacting to the effects of the coup in neighboring Honduras. There, economic sanctions imposed by external aid donors aggravated the economic downturn of 2009. We suspect that Nicaraguans surmise that a coup in their own country could further undermine the Nicaraguan economy. This would be unwelcome because the Nicaraguan economy was already slumping at the time of the 2010 survey after a growth spurt in previous years. Overall, our findings reveal that a

large (and increasing) majority of Nicaraguans do not view their armed forces as a potential savior from the current economic crisis.

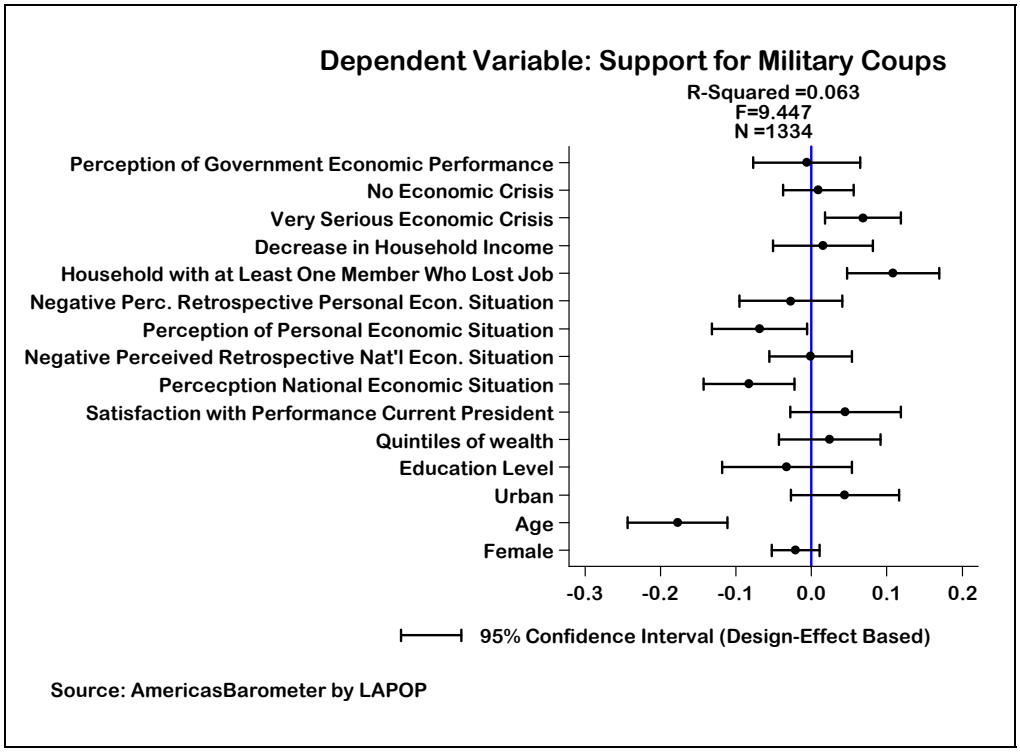


Figure III.23 Determinants of Support for Military Coups in Nicaragua, 2010

Figure III.24 illustrates the impact of household job loss and perception of the national economic situation on support for a military coup. In the left hand graph we see that while Nicaraguans are well below the scale midpoint on coup support, job loss at the household level clearly contributes modestly to increased coup support. While the number of Nicaraguans who view the economy as very good is so small that the error term (indicated by the grey area on the bar) is huge, for the other end and middle of the scale in the right hand graph it is clear that the better one views the economy, the less one tends to support coups.

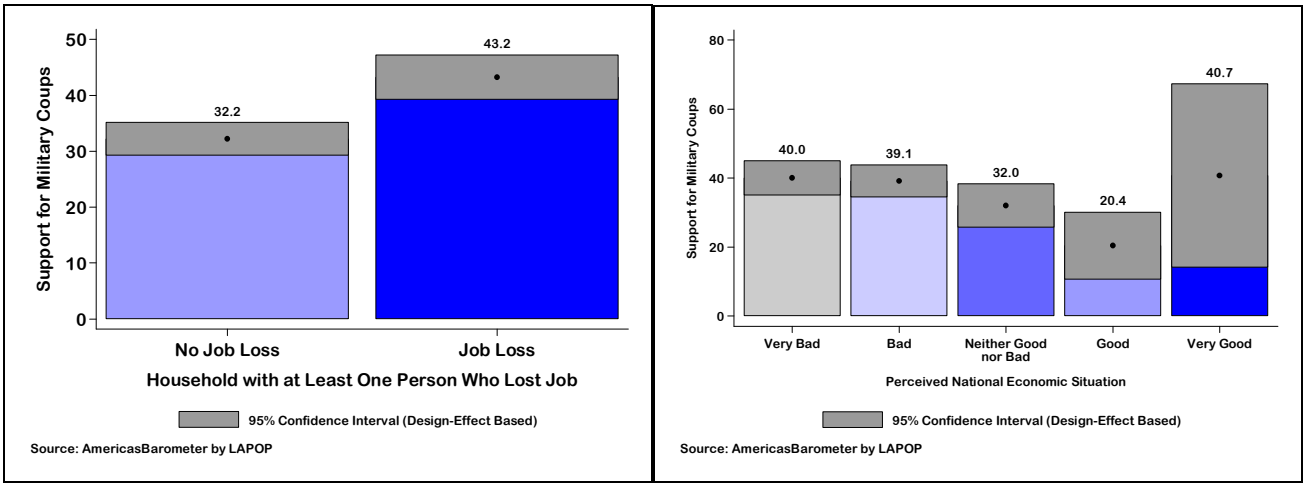


Figure III.24. Impact of Household Job Loss and Perception of National Economy on Support for a Military Coup, Nicaragua 2010

Conclusion

From this chapter emerge several conclusions. First, economic crisis has affected the whole Latin America. Second, the impact of the crisis has been uneven. Third, the economic crisis had several effects within each country. In Nicaragua, one of the poorest countries and one affected adversely by the recession of 2009, citizens regard the national economic situation as very poor and their personal economic situations as relatively poor. On average they view both the national and their personal economies as having suffered.

How did the varying levels of economic crisis and these perceptions affect attitudes about democracy among the region's' citizens? Respondents around the Americas report declines in levels of life satisfaction that tend to correspond to the severity of national economic performance. Nicaraguans are among those reporting the largest life satisfaction declines, an outcome that corresponds to Nicaragua's relatively poor economic performance. Nicaraguans' decline in life satisfaction is driven by how they assess their personal economic situations, by household job loss and by views of the government's economic performance.

Despite the decline in Nicaragua's economy since 2008 and despite their declining life satisfaction, Nicaraguans on average have not become less supportive of democracy. As in the Americas as a whole, the impact of the economic crisis on support for democracy has been limited; those declines that are observed come mainly among individuals reporting household job loss and negative views of their personal economic situations. Regionally, observed increases in support for democracy come largely from a positive view of government economic performance.

In another bit of encouraging news, institutional legitimacy in the form of system support has not been seriously eroded by the economic crisis. Twice as many nations show an increase in system support as a decrease. The major determinant in the Americas of system support is the perception that government has been successful at economic management. Nicaragua is one of the countries where system support actually increased, and did so despite the economic crisis. As observed for the region, Nicaraguans who believe the government's economic performance is good report higher system support.

Related to support for the political system is satisfaction with democracy. Regionally, dissatisfaction with democracy grew in a few countries, but we are encouraged to report that even more countries saw a significant increase in democratic satisfaction. Economic perceptions play an important and logical role in shaping satisfaction with democracy, as does evaluation of government economic performance. In Nicaragua satisfaction with democracy remains unchanged from 2008. Unlike in the region at large, perceptions of the economy among Nicaraguans have little influence on their satisfaction with democracy. What notably and positively affect democratic satisfaction are positive evaluations of both the Ortega administration and the government's economic performance.

Overall support for military coups has not increased in the Americas except in Guatemala. There is, therefore, no meaningful growth in popular justification or support for a military-authoritarian response to economic difficulties. Nicaragua is one of two countries where coup support actually declined in 2010, despite the country's economic woes. Regionally, individuals who express greater support for coups are those adversely affected by household job loss and by income declines and who view their nations' economies as having declined. Among Nicaraguans, job loss and perceptions of a serious economic crisis contribute to higher levels of coup support.

It is worth emphasizing that the findings in this chapter underscore that citizen evaluations of government economic performance contribute strongly to support for democratic governance. We have observed a general tendency for individuals suffering income decline, job loss, or negative economic perceptions to be somewhat less supportive of democracy and democratic institutions, and to be less satisfied with democracy. However, believing that the government is managing the economy well works strongly in the other direction by reinforcing support for democracy. In short, governments that can convince their citizens that they are doing a good job with the economy, no matter that the economy is performing badly will enjoy greater institutional support from citizens. For a reservoir of legitimacy and for democratic norms to be sustained, therefore, governments need not necessarily succeed in reversing the local effects of a worldwide economic crisis – an insurmountable task in the short term. What they must do is provide evidence they are making competent efforts to ameliorate its effects by providing good economic management. On balance, governments of the Americas seem to be accomplishing this task. We believe our findings reveal that such perceptions are central to maintaining democratic norms and democratic legitimacy in the Americas.

Part II: Rule of Law, Crime, Corruption, and Civil Society

Chapter IV. Rule of Law, Crime, and Corruption

Introduction

In Part I of this study, we presented a general overview of the economic crisis and democratic development. We also focused on citizens' perceptions of the economic crisis by answering the question: *who are those most likely to be affected by the crisis?* We presented a regional comparative assessment of citizens' perceptions of key economic variables, followed by an evaluation of the impact of the crisis in terms of unemployment and perceptions of national and personal economic welfare. We concluded Part I with a general assessment of the extent to which those who report being affected by the crisis may express lower democratic support. In Part II of this study, we attempt to test key hypotheses that relate to rule of law, crime, and corruption. The objective of this section is to specify the degree to which crime and corruption influence support for democracy. The variables used in Part I that measure the economic crisis are used as additional control or predictor variables in this part, but are not the central focus.

Theoretical Background

In previous studies in the LAPOP AmericasBarometer series the basic framework for examining the effect of crime and violence in the Americas has derived from the political culture literature. Seligson and others have contended that for stable democracy to survive requires a high level of support for the democratic political system and political tolerance.[58] Crime and insecurity may erode these attitudes. The fundamental hypothesis is, then, that "violence and insecurity erode support for the [political] system because they reduce credibility in the system's institutions and they foment attitudes which support alternative authoritarian regimes."[59]

Perception of Insecurity and Crime

Despite such expectations, actual crime victimization in Latin America and the Caribbean has proven to have little impact on support for democracy.[60] In contrast, analyses of the same pooled samples in the Americas shows that the *perception of insecurity* has negatively affected support for stable democracy, interpersonal trust, and support for the rule of law. Data from Nicaragua, however, do not always fit these wider patterns. Pérez and Seligson found that neither crime victimization nor the perception of insecurity had any significant negative effect on support for democracy, but that both factors eroded interpersonal trust among Nicaraguans.[61] They also reported that crime victimization was associated with higher (not lower) levels of political tolerance, but that perceived insecurity was associated with lower support for basic political participation rights. Nicaragua's distinctiveness in the

[58] See, for instance, Seligson, "Toward a Model of Democratic Stability: Political Culture in Central America," *Estudios interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe* 11, no. 2 (2000)., and Cruz, *The Impact of Violent Crime on the Political Culture of Latin America: The Special Case of Central America*, ed. Mitchell A. Seligson, Challenges to Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean: Evidence from the Americasbarometer 2006-07 (Vanderbilt University, 2008).
[59] Cruz, *The Impact of Violent Crime on the Political Culture of Latin America: The Special Case of Central America*., p. 221.
[60] *Ibid*., p. 228.
[61] Orlando J. Perez and Mitchell A. Seligson, *Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua: The Impact of Governance* (Nashville, Tennessee: Latin American Public Opinion Project, 2008).

effect of crime victimization and insecurity may well have to do with its relatively low rate of violent crime compared to other countries in the hemisphere and to the more immediate neighborhood of Mesoamerica (especially countries to Nicaragua's north).

The item used to gauge respondents' sense of their safety and security refers to their neighborhoods, and to how safe the feel there.

AOJ11. Speaking of the neighborhood where you live and thinking of the possibility of being assaulted or robbed, do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe or very unsafe?

a) Comparative Perspective

Where does Nicaragua fit into the empirical evidence from the 2010 survey for the Americas concerning the perception of insecurity and crime victimization? Figure IV.1 places Nicaraguans in the midrange of expressed insecurity for the region as a whole. On the 100 point scale, Nicaragua's mean at 38.9 falls halfway between Peruvians, who at 53.8 report the highest level of perceived insecurity, and citizens of the United States who at 22.5 report the least insecurity. Paradoxically, Nicaraguans' perceptions of insecurity are not significantly lower than those of Hondurans or Salvadorans, countries in which the violent crime rate is much higher. Further, Nicaraguans' perceptions of insecurity at 38.9 out of 100 are significantly higher than those of Costa Ricans (32.2), despite the fact that these countries' violent crime rates are similar.

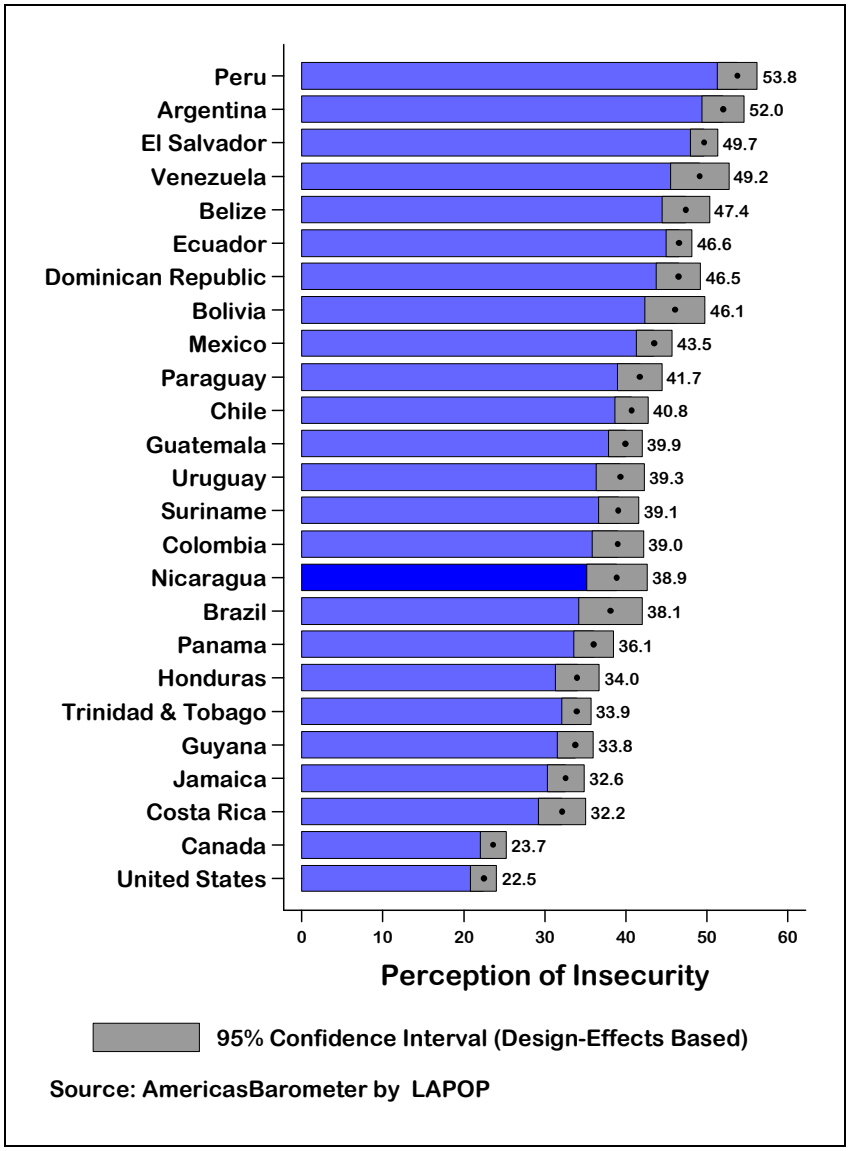


Figure IV.1. Perception of Insecurity across the Americas

b) Perception of Insecurity Over Time

To what extent have these perceptions developed among Nicaraguans? Figure IV.2 shows the Nicaragua insecurity perceptions in 2004, when the average among interviewees by AmericasBarometer was 45.0 points. Insecurity perception in 2008 was significantly lower (33.7) than the average reached in 2004. Although this average has increased (38.9 in 2010) this change is not statistically significant.

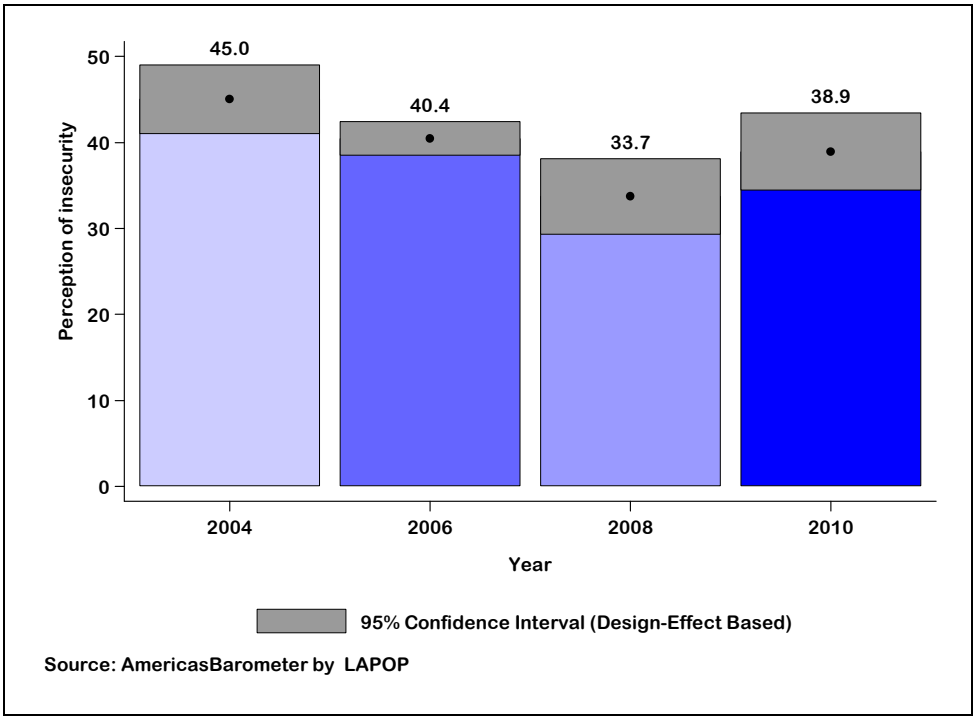


Figure IV.2. Perception of Insecurity in Nicaragua, 2004 to 2010

Crime Victimization

a) The Measurement of Crime Victimization

The Latin American Public Opinion Project has developed a new item to measure crime victimization more accurately by getting more precise responses. In previous surveys crime victimization was measured with the following item: *have you been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months?* In this round, this question was slightly modified and is now accompanied by some examples of criminal acts.[62] For the 2010 survey round the following items are used:

[62] The AmericasBarometer team expected that the new VIC1EXT item would produce an increase in individual crime reporting for 2010 over the 2008 levels, even when crime levels remain constant. Our results for Guyana 2008, where the new item was tested, showed that the impact of this wording change was real, but not large.

VIC1EXT. Now, changing the subject, have you been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months? That is, have you been a victim of robbery, burglary, assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion, violent threats or **any other type** of crime in the past 12 months? (1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Go to VIC1HOGAR]** (88) DK **[Go to VIC1HOGAR]** (98) DA **[Go to VIC1HOGAR]**
VIC2AA. ¿Could you tell me, in what place that last crime occurred?**[Read options]** (1) In your home (2) In this neighborhood (3) In this municipality (4) In another municipality (5) In another country (88) DK (98)DA (99) N/A
VIC1HOGAR. Has any other person living in your household been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months? That is, has any other person living in your household been a victim of robbery, burglary, assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion, violent threats or **any other type** of crime in the past 12 months? (1) Yes (2) No (88) DK (98) DA

Turning to the Nicaraguan data for 2010 (Figure IV.3, left hand graph), our survey found that 19.2 percent of Nicaraguans reported having been a crime victim within the previous 12 months. Represented in the right hand graph in Figure IV.3 are the results extending the question about crime victimization to the whole household. In 2010 just over one third of Nicaraguans reports having been victimized by a crime that affected either or both the respondent and another member of her household. About one in twelve persons reports multiple crime victims in the household (respondent and someone else), and about one in seven reports that the victim was another member of the household.

Among crime victims, 22.4 percent say that the crime occurred in their homes (see Figure IV.4). Almost a quarter of the crime victims locate the event within the immediate neighborhood or community, and just over a third place the locale of the crime within the municipality in which they reside. Only 18.6 percent say the crime occurred outside the municipality within which they live.

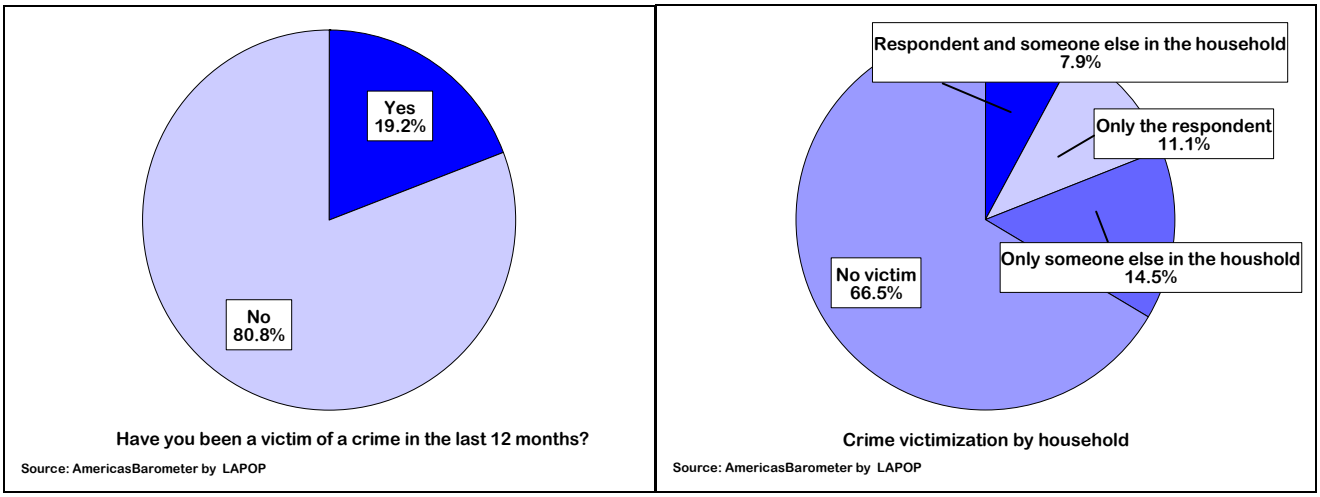


Figure IV.3. Individual and Household Crime Victimization, Nicaragua 2010

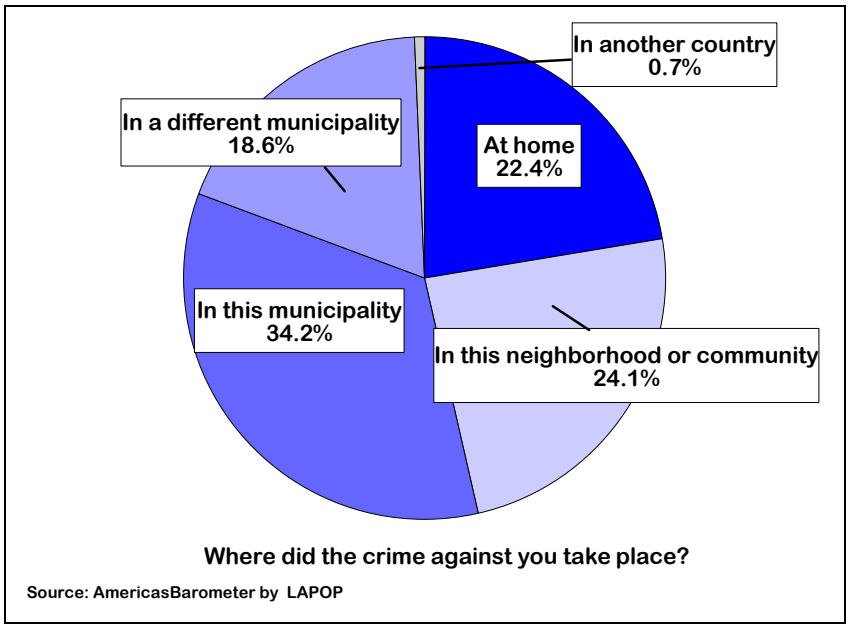


Figure IV.4. Place of Respondent's Crime Victimization, Nicaragua 2010

b) Crime Victimization in Comparative Perspective

As in the case of perceived insecurity, Nicaraguans fall in the middle range of crime victimization when compared to the rest of the Americas. Figure IV.5 shows that Nicaraguans' reported victimization rate for 2010 of 19.2 percent is almost exactly in the middle of the crime victimization reports. Guyana has the lowest rate at 9 percent, and Peru the highest at 31.1 percent.

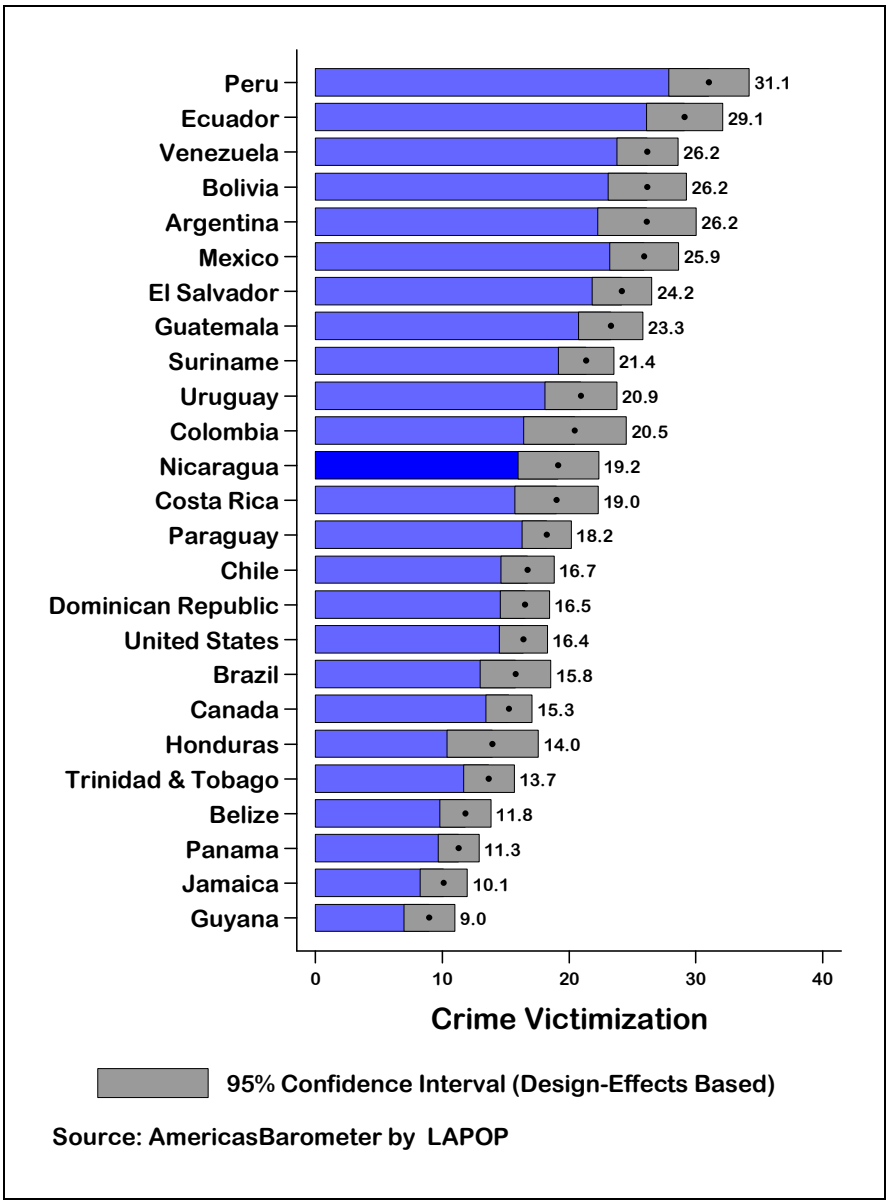


Figure IV.5. Percentage of People Victimized by Crime across the Americas, 2010

Nicaraguans report crime victimization at rates not significantly higher than their southern neighbors the Costa Ricans, and not significantly lower than their northern neighbors the Guatemalans and Salvadorans. This last finding is particularly interesting, because Guatemala and El Salvador by all accounts have a much higher rate of violent crime and a serious problem with urban criminal gangs. Nicaragua's reported crime victimization rate is also not significantly different from that of neighboring Honduras. Honduras is similar to Nicaragua in its level of poverty, but has both a much higher murder rate and a more serious gang problem than Nicaragua.

c) Crime Victimization Over Time

As previously mentioned, given the addition of specific examples of categories of crime to our standard crime victimization question in 2010 (i.e., VIC1EXT), AmericasBarometer expected that crime victimization reports would go up in 2010 compared to 2008. This leaves us with the conundrum of

whether reports of crime would be up as a result of "real" crime increases or whether this increase would merely reflect the change in the wording of the question.

In Nicaragua (Figure IV.6) reported crime is indeed slightly higher in 2010 than in previous years. However, the increase in crime victimization fails to attain a level of statistical significance. Thus we cannot say whether Nicaragua is experiencing a rise in its crime rate, or whether it stems from the change in measurement introduced for the 2010 report. The evidence about the possible evolution of crime victimization rates, therefore, is inconclusive.

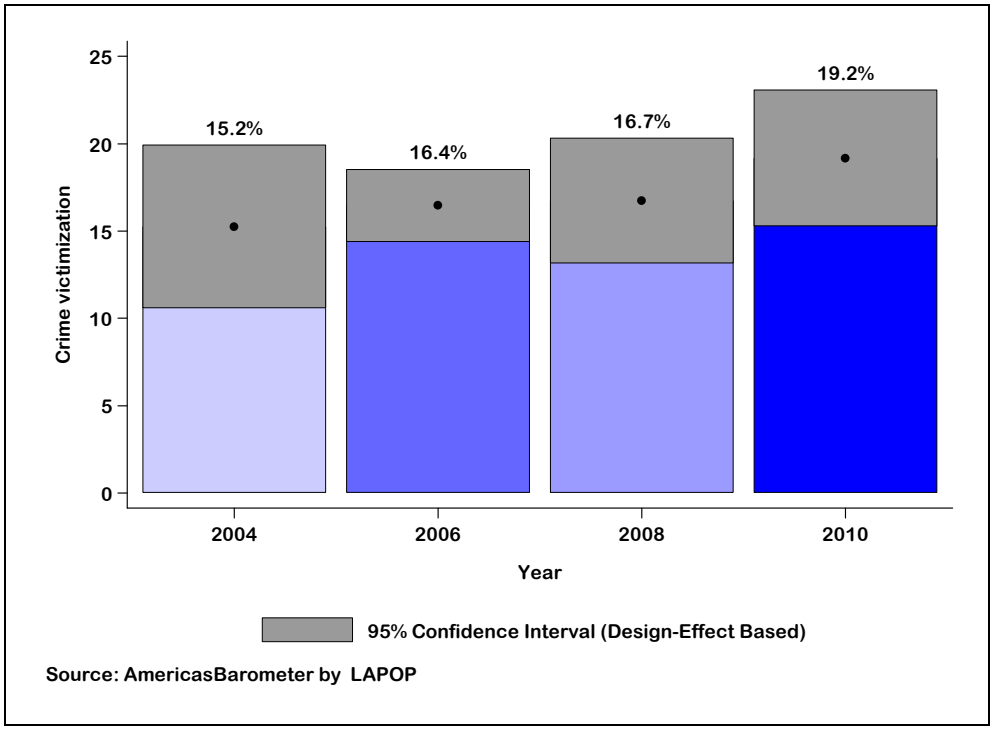


Figure IV.6. Crime Victimization in Nicaragua, 2004-2010

d) Who is more likely to be a Victim of Crime?

In order to determine who among Nicaraguans is more likely to be a crime victim, we employ multiple regression analysis, which allows the comparison of the independent effect on the dependent variable of several other explanatory variables. The result of this analysis is shown in Figure IV.7. In this and all other regression charts we standardize all variables and indicate the zero mean as a blue line. Each predictor that does not intersect with that line is a significant predictor ($p<0.05$). Any coefficient to the right of the zero line indicates a positive and statistically significant net effect of that variable on the dependent variable. In contrast, any coefficient to the left of the zero line indicates a negative and statistically significant net effect. The farther the coefficient lies away from the blue line, the stronger is its effect on the dependent variable.

What Figure IV.7 reveals is that crime victims in Nicaragua are likely to be more educated and prosperous than non-victims. This makes sense on its face because, as the celebrated robber Willie Sutton reportedly said when asked why he robbed banks, "That's where the money is." Richer and more educated people are more likely to have property worth stealing than those who are less economically fortunate. Nicaraguan women are less likely to be crime victims than men. Those who view their family

economies as suffering experience no more crime than other Nicaraguans. Similarly, age has no impact on falling victim to crime.

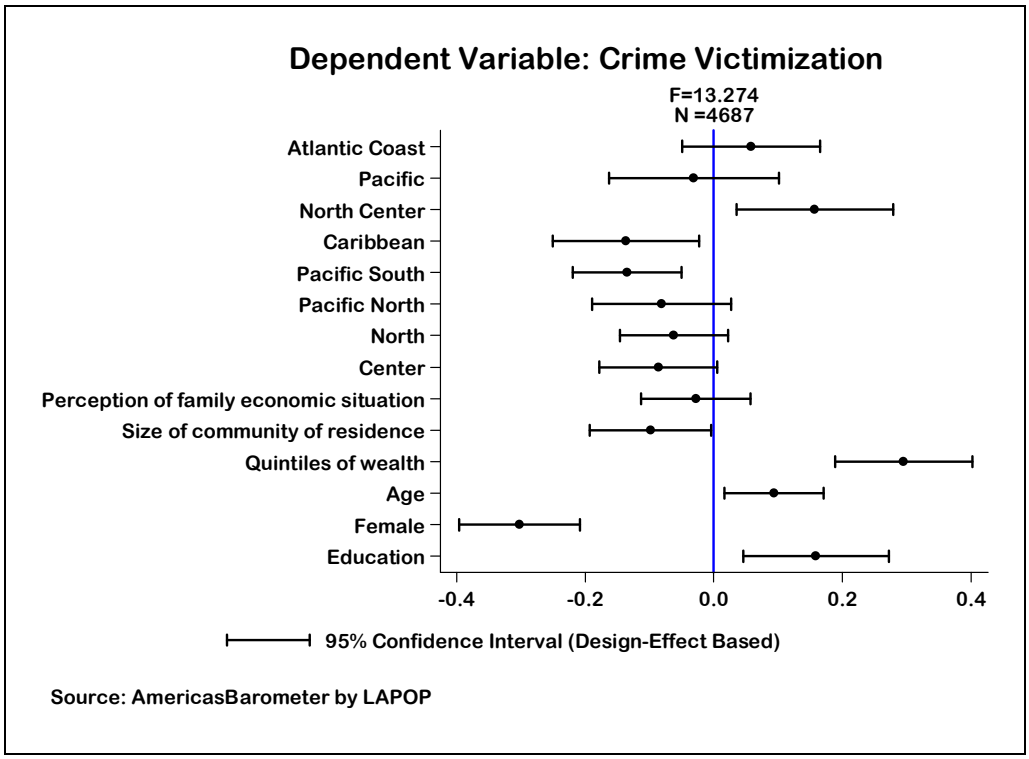


Figure IV.7. Who is More Likely to Be a Victim of Crime in Nicaragua? (2004-2010)

In terms of the social-geographic distribution of crime, residents of smaller cities and towns are less likely to fall victim to crime than those who dwell in larger cities. The Northern, North Central and Central regions have significantly lower crime than does the capital city. Residents of other parts of the country have crime victimization levels similar to that of the metropolitan Managua area.

In order to illustrate which Nicaraguans fall victim to crime, Figure IV.8 graphs the different means for gender, education, wealth, and community size. These clearly demonstrate that men are significantly more likely – by 5 percentage points – than women to experience crime. There is no significant difference in crime victimization between citizens with no education or only primary education. However Nicaraguans with secondary schooling experience almost twice as much crime as the two least educated cohorts, and persons with university education suffer well more than twice as much crime. In terms of wealth, no wealth quintile is significantly higher or lower than its immediate neighbors. However, the highest wealth cohort experiences a significantly higher level of crime (24.5 percent) than the lowest cohort (12.5 percent). Finally, the size of the community Nicaraguans live in matters quite a bit. Managuans experience almost triple the crime rate of rural residents. There is a steady decline in crime victimization as community size diminishes.

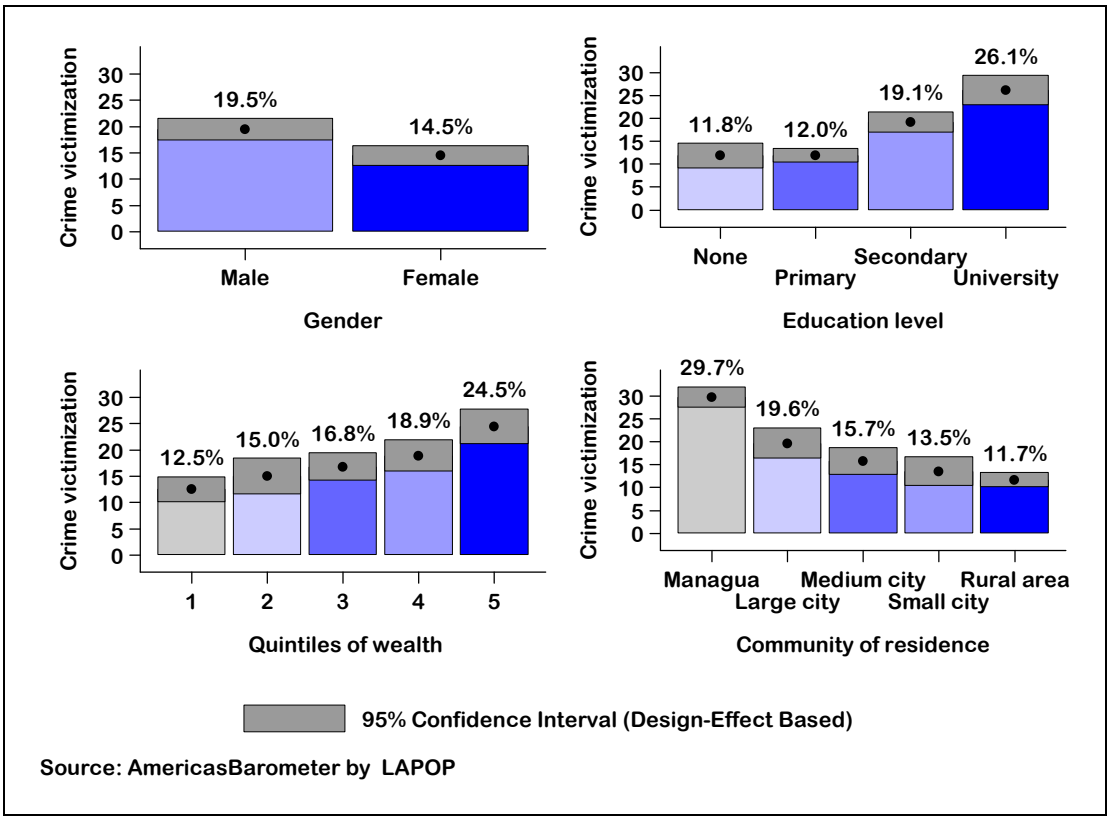


Figure IV.8. Crime Victimization by Sex, Community Size, Education Level and Wealth, Nicaragua 2004-2010

In order to illustrate more clearly the geographic distribution of crime victimization among Nicaraguans, Figure IV.9 presents evidence comparing each of four regions to the rest of the country. First, in the upper left hand quadrant we see that Managua residents are almost twice as likely as other Nicaraguans to experience crime, at 28.7 percent versus 15.2 percent. In the upper right hand graph we see that for residents of the central region (surrounding but not part of the capital Managua), the crime rate is significantly lower, as it is in the North and North Central regions (see the bottom two graphs in Figure IV.9).

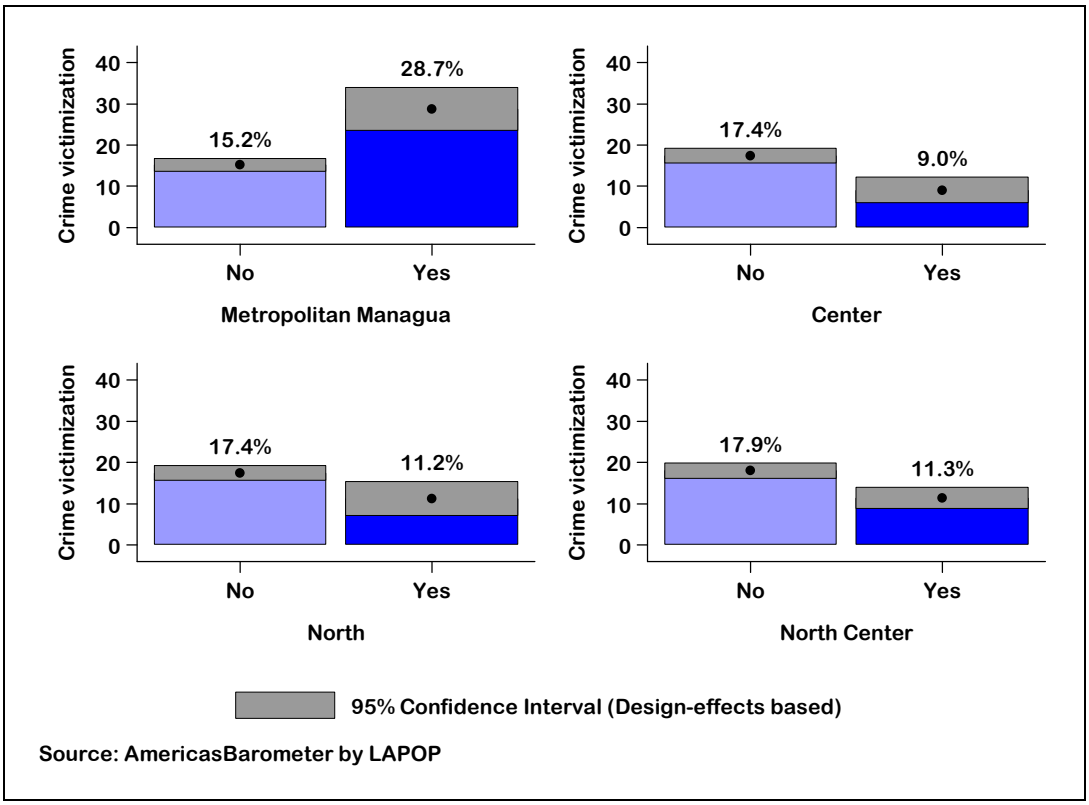


Figure IV.9. Crime Victimization by Region, Nicaragua

Corruption

Theoretical Background

We turn now to the question of corruption and how it affects Nicaraguans. At the macro-social level the conventional argument is that corruption retards economic development by discouraging investment and restraining trade, much as taxes on investment capital or tariffs on trade goods would undermine economic growth by reducing the movement of goods and capital. Some scholars have argued that in the political arena corruption can, however, have the beneficial effect of increasing political stability because of its redistributive effect or because it facilitates cooperation among political actors.[63] In contrast others hold that corruption erodes political legitimacy and retards democratic consolidation.[64] A recent empirical study by Zephyr using AmericasBarometer data from 2006 found that experiencing corruption lowered citizens' preference for democracy and reduced their satisfaction with the way democracy functions in Latin America and the Caribbean.[65] Evidence from Nicaragua for 2008 was

[63] Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); Jeanne Becquart-Leclercq, "Paradoxes of Political Corruption: A French View," in *Political Corruption: A Handbook*, ed. Arnold J. Heidenheimer, Michael Johnston, Victor T. LeVine (New Brunswick, NJ: 1989).

[64] Doh C. Shin, *Mass Politics and Culture in Democratizing Korea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Roderic Ai Camp, Kenneth M. Coleman, and Charles L. Davis, "Public Opinion About Corruption: An Exploratory Study in Chile, Costa Rica and Mexico," (Portland, Oregon2000); Susan J. Pharr, "Officials' Misconduct and Public Distrust: Japan and the Trilateral Democracies," in *Dissaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, ed. Susan J. Pharr and Robert D. Putnam (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000b).

[65] Dominique Zéphyr, *Corruption and Its Impact on Latin American Democratic Stability*, ed. Mitchell A. Seligson, Challenges to Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean: Evidence from the Americasbarometer 2006-07 (Vanderbilt University, 2008).

mixed. Experiencing corruption had no impact on Nicaraguans' democratic norms, but it did significantly undermine their interpersonal trust and sense of national institutional legitimacy.[66]

Given the empirical evidence, we shall test for whether both the experience of corruption and the perception that corruption is widespread undermine Nicaraguans' democratic norms, their satisfaction with democracy, and their evaluation of the national political system's legitimacy.

The Measurement of Corruption

The Latin American Public Opinion Project has developed a series of items to measure corruption victimization. These were first tested in Nicaragua (Seligson, 1999 and Seligson, 1997) and have been refined and improved in many studies since then. Because definitions of corruption can vary by culture, to avoid ambiguity we define corrupt practices by asking such questions as this: "Within the last year, have you had to pay a bribe to a government official?" We ask similar questions about bribery demands at the level of local government, in the public schools, at work, in the courts, in public health facilities, and elsewhere. This series provides two kinds of information. First, we can find out where corruption is most frequent. Second, we can construct overall scales of corruption victimization, enabling us to distinguish between respondents who have faced corrupt practices in only one setting and those who have been victimized in multiple settings. As in studies of victims of crime, we assume it makes a difference if one has a single experience or multiple experiences with corruption.

The full series of corruption items is as follows:

[66] Perez and Seligson, *Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua: The Impact of Governance*.

	N/A Did not try or did not have contact	No	Yes	DK	DA
Now we want to talk about your personal experience with things that happen in everyday life...					
EXC2. Has a police officer asked you for a bribe in the last twelve months?		0	1	88	98
EXC6. In the last twelve months, did any government employee ask you for a bribe?		0	1	88	98
EXC11. In the last twelve months, did you have any official dealings in the municipal council office? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** In the last twelve months, to process any kind of document like a permit, for example, did you have to pay any money beyond that required by law?	99	0	1	88	98
EXC13. Do you work? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** In your work, have you been asked to pay a bribe in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98
EXC14. In the last twelve months, have you had any dealings with the courts? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** Did you have to pay a bribe to the courts in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98
EXC15. Have you used any public health services in the last twelve months? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** In order to be seen in a hospital or a clinic in the last twelve months, did you have to pay a bribe?	99	0	1	88	98
EXC16. Have you had a child in school in the last twelve months? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** Have you had to pay a bribe at school in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98

An item that is related to the topic but that measures the respondent's *perception of corruption* (rather than actual victimization) is also included in the questionnaire:

EXC7. Taking into account your own experience or what you have heard, corruption among public officials is **[Read]**
(1) Very common (2) Common (3) Uncommon or
(4) Very uncommon? (88) DK (98) DA

Perception of Corruption

a) Comparative Perspective of Corruption's Perception

How do Nicaraguans compare to citizens of other countries in their perception of the extent of corruption? Figure IV.10 shows that they view corruption as very common. On a 0-100 scale, countries of the Americas range from a low of 50.5 for Suriname to a high of 83.1 for Trinidad and Tobago.

Nicaragua is in the bottom quarter of countries on perceived corruption with an average of 67.5. Only five countries have lower perceived corruption averages -- Brazil, El Salvador, Uruguay, Canada and Suriname. Nicaraguans perceived the level of corruption in their system at a level statistically indistinguishable from those of citizens of the United States and Chile.

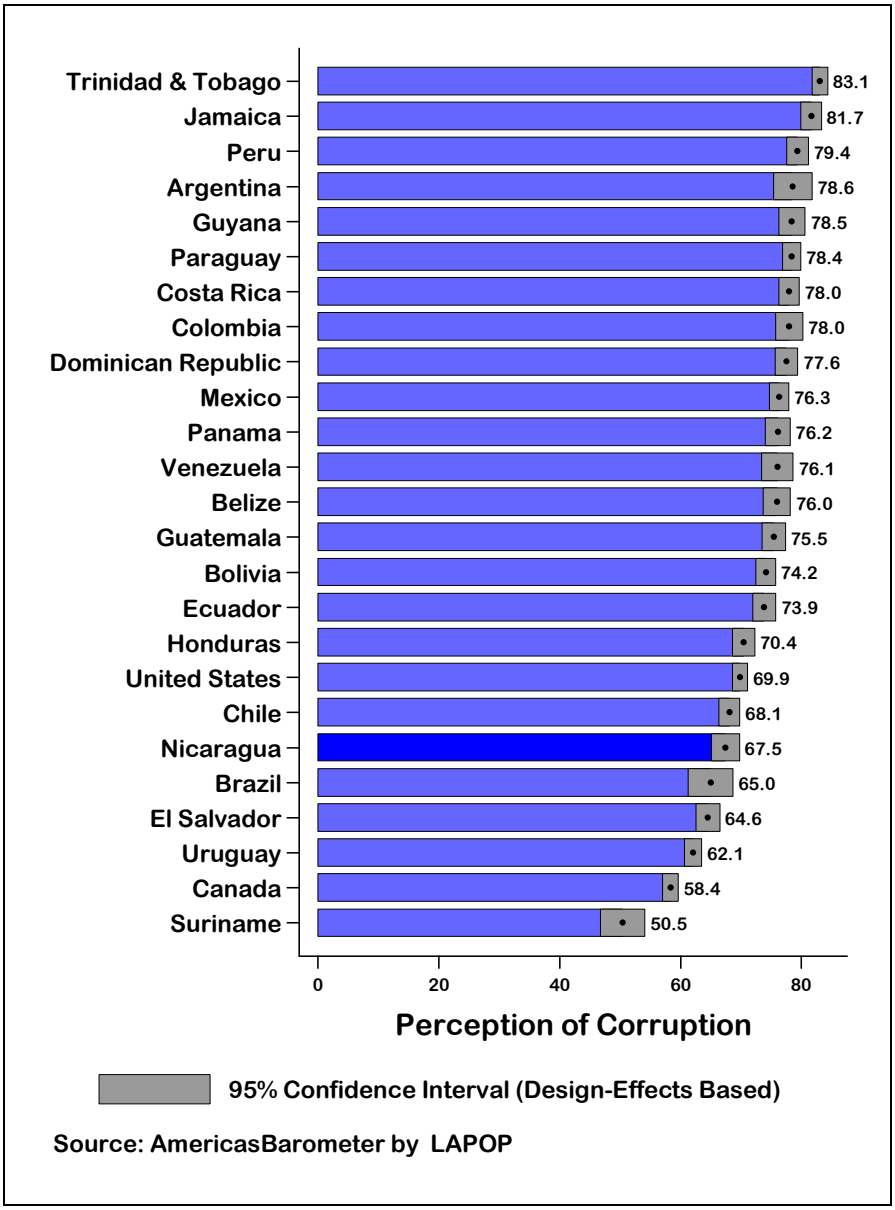


Figure IV.10. Perception of Corruption across the Americas

b) Perception of Corruption Over Time

How has the perception of corruption changed since 2004 in Nicaragua? There is a distinct and significant variation as revealed in Figure IV.11. During the administration of President Bolaños (the 2004 and 2006 surveys) the perceived level of corruption rose several points, from a score of 71.9 in 2004 to 83.5 in 2006. In contrast, under the administration of President Ortega (the 2008 and 2010 surveys) perceived corruption has declined significantly to 74.3 in 2008 and then to 67.5 out of 100 in 2010.

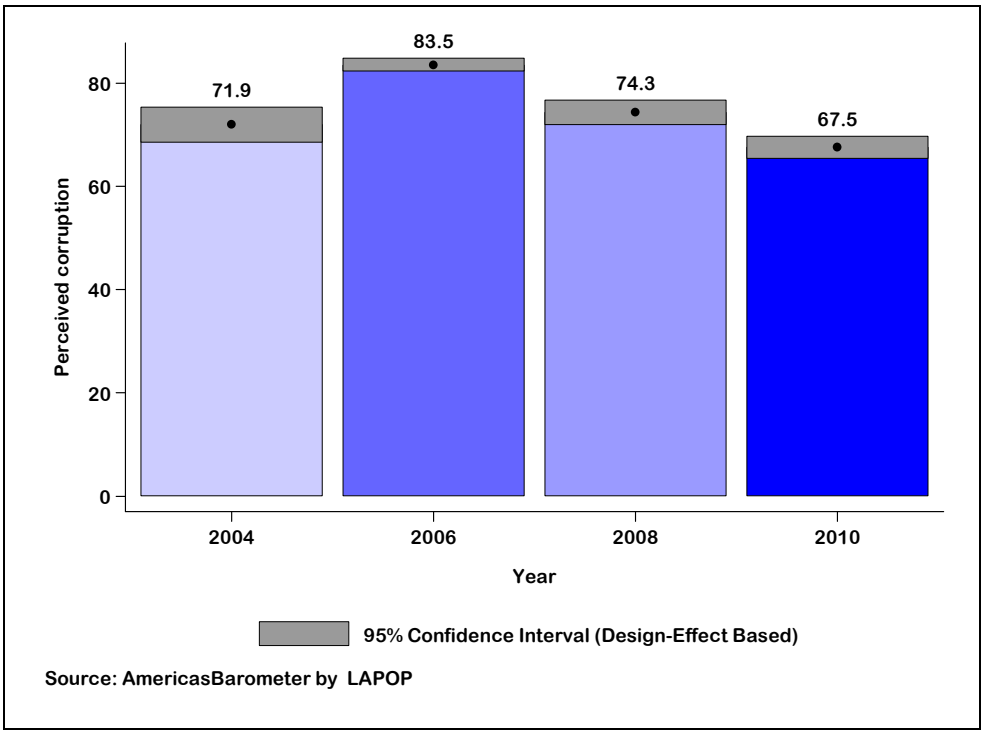


Figure IV.11. Perceived Corruption over Time, Nicaragua 2004-2010

Corruption Victimization

In this section, we focus on three variables: corruption victimization, which is a dichotomous variable measuring whether people have victimized by corruption or not, total number of ways (not times) respondents have been victimized by corruption, and perceptions about corruption.

Beginning with the measure of whether or not people have been victimized by (that is, actually personally experienced) corruption, Figure IV.12 puts Nicaragua into the hemispheric context. There we see that corruption victimization ranges from a high of 35 percent in Mexico to a low of 4.2 percent in Canada. Only 12.1 percent of Nicaraguans report personally experiencing corruption within the past year, a level that places Nicaragua among the lower-corruption countries among the 25 that had been surveyed at the time this was written. Nicaraguans report experiencing corruption at rates that are not significantly different from several neighboring countries including Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia. Overall, then, the findings place Nicaragua among the lower-corruption countries in the Americas, at least based upon the experience of the citizenry. Moreover, in recent years the trend in perceived corruption has been in the downward direction, a positive development. Our working hypothesis suggests that this trend should contribute to citizens' support for democracy and for Nicaragua's institutions.

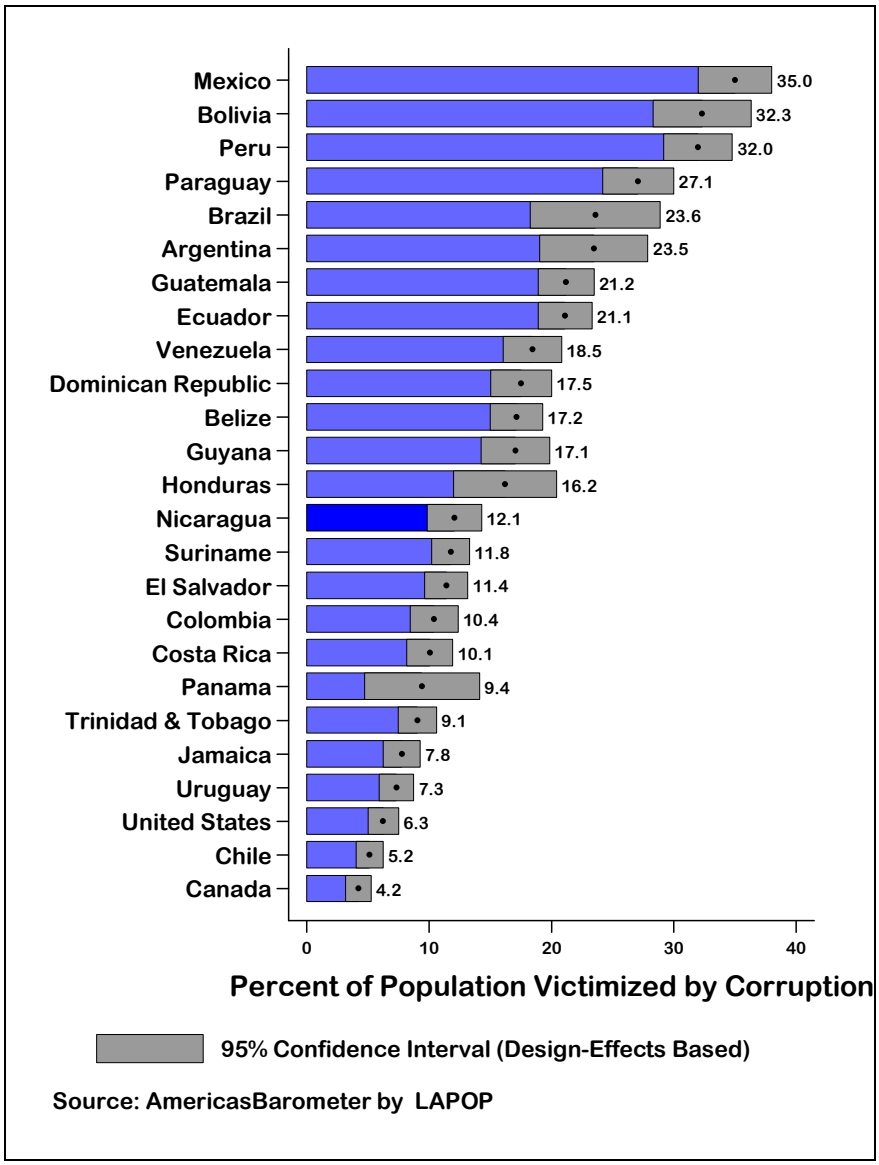


Figure IV.12. Corruption Victimization in Comparative Perspective

To go into more detail, Figure IV.13 summarizes the frequency of corruption victimization among Nicaraguans over the four surveys from 2004 to date. There we see that among those who have experienced corruption, twice as many report only one type (10.5 percent) as report two or more. Note that the level of bribe solicitation for 2004-2010 inclusive is higher by about 3 percent than the figure for 2010 alone (12.1 percent) because of higher reports in previous years. Thus more than five of six Nicaraguans surveyed since 2004 report no corruption experience at all. By 2010 those not reporting corruption were more than 7 in eight Nicaraguans, a meaningful reduction in the level of corruption experienced. Again, our working hypothesis suggests that this trend should contribute to citizens' support for Nicaragua's political system.

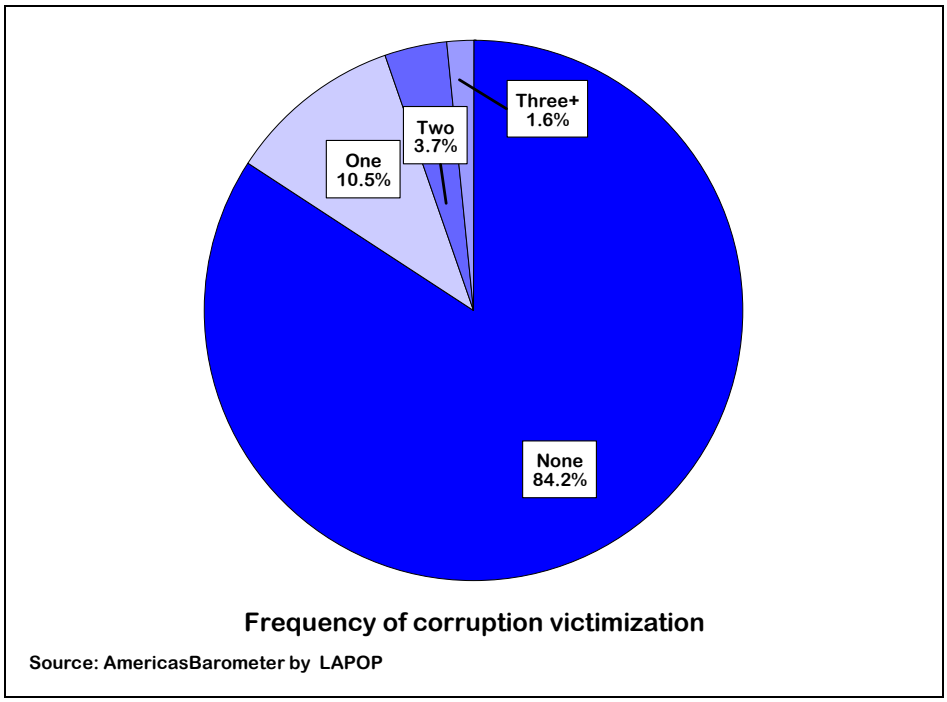


Figure IV.13. Total Index of Corruption Victimization, Nicaragua

Figure IV.14 presents evidence of change in the experience of corruption across time. It shows a trend that corresponds to the one reflected in the levels of perceived corruption. Actual corruption experience was highest in 2006 (18 percent), and had fallen significantly in 2010 to only 12.1 percent. Once again, the corruption trends observed in recent years have been downward, a fact that our theory contends should earn the Nicaraguan government increased legitimacy.

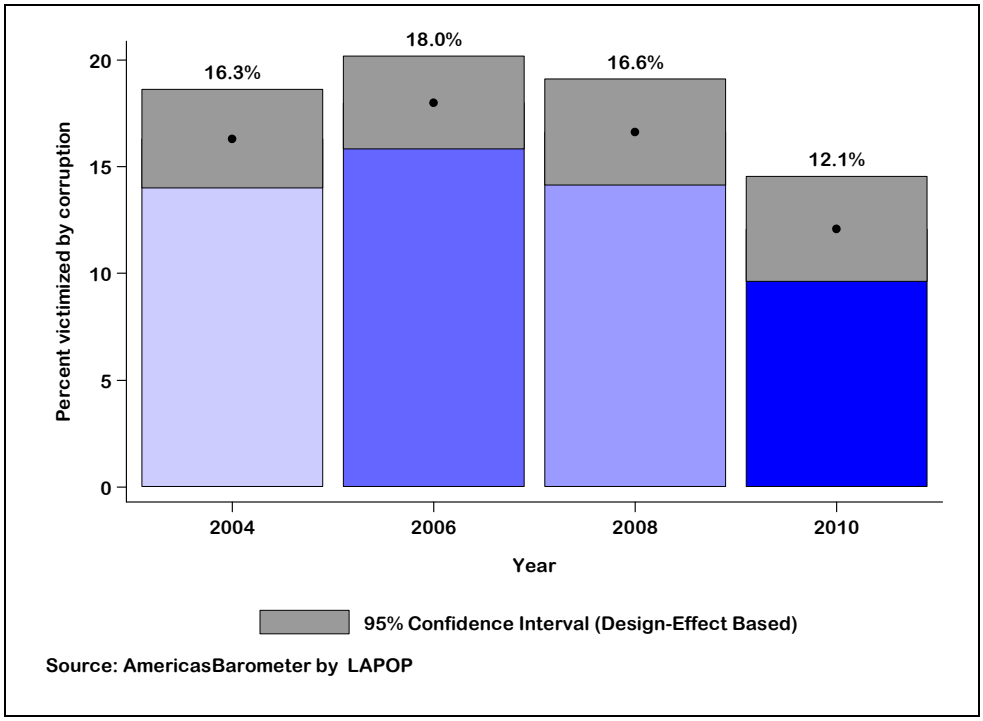


Figure IV.14. Percent of Population Victimized by Corruption by Year in Nicaragua

a) Who is more likely to be a Victim of Corruption?

We turn now to the question of which Nicaraguans have experiences with corruption. Figure IV.15 graphs the results of a logistic multiple regression analysis for the experience of corruption with independent variables representing demographic traits of our respondents and information about where they are located by region and community size. What we see first is that women are far less likely to experience corruption than men, perhaps because among the activities normally undertaken by males in families are bureaucratic interactions. The wealthy and the educated are much more likely – and independently so -- to be corruption victims in Nicaragua. The higher incidence of corruption among the more educated and economically comfortable likely occurs because of the interactions such people would typically have with the political system and bureaucracies. Those with greater wealth and education are more likely than poorer and less educated Nicaraguans to have taxes to pay, permits to obtain, automobiles to drive and register, and other assets and activities that would engage them with bureaucracies. Finally, Nicaraguans with more children also report modestly higher corruption victimization.

In terms of the social geography of corruption victimization, Figure IV.15 demonstrates that living in a smaller community has the advantage of reducing corruption experience. Compared to residents of the metropolitan Managua area, residents of the Pacific South and Caribbean parts of the country experience less corruption. Only those in the north central area report significantly more corruption experience than citizens of the capital city and environs.

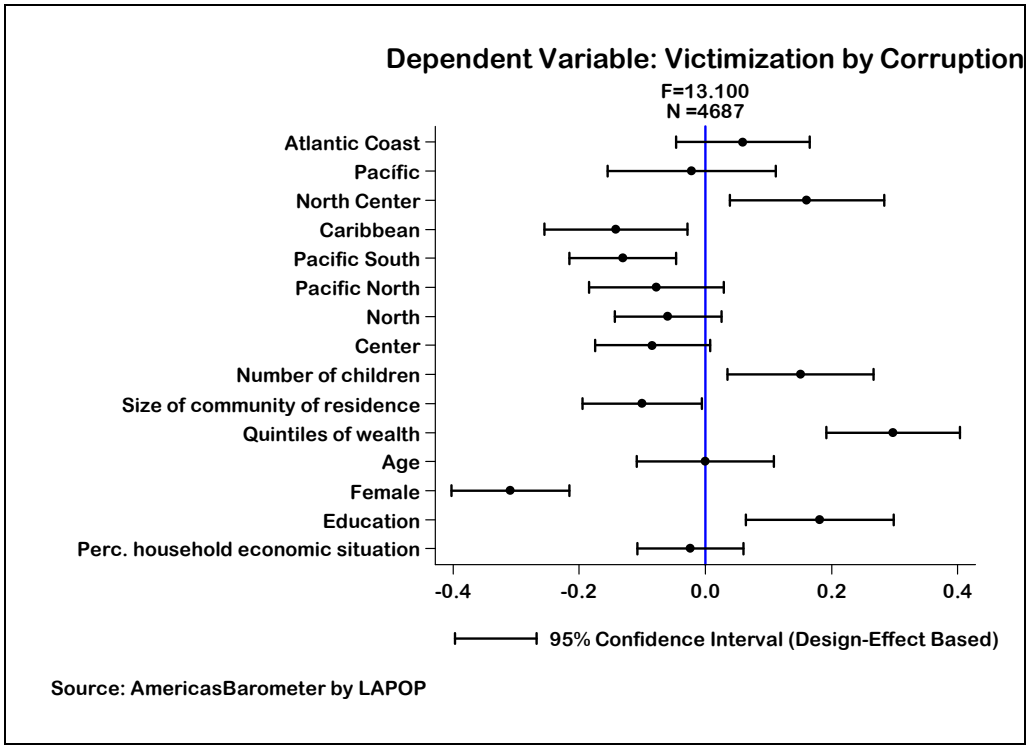


Figure IV.15. Who is More Likely to Be a Victim of Corruption in Nicaragua?

Figure IV.16 lays out the differences in corruption experience among Nicaraguans by gender, wealth, education, and number of children, the demographic factors that were shown to be significantly associated with being solicited for a bribe. The difference by gender (almost 20 percent for males versus almost 12 percent for females) is striking. Larger still is the very sharp difference between the corruption experience of the wealthiest quintile of Nicaraguans (25.3 percent) and all the other quintiles (ranging

from 11.4 percent to 16.6 percent). The education level difference is similar; those with higher education experience close to double the bribe solicitation levels (24.5 percent) of those with no or only primary education (13.2 percent). On close inspection the raw difference in corruption victimization by numbers of children seems to peak among those with 3 or 4. The differences by number of children, however, fail to attain statistical significance in the bivariate analysis, and appear only in the regression model when the effects of all the other variables are held constant.

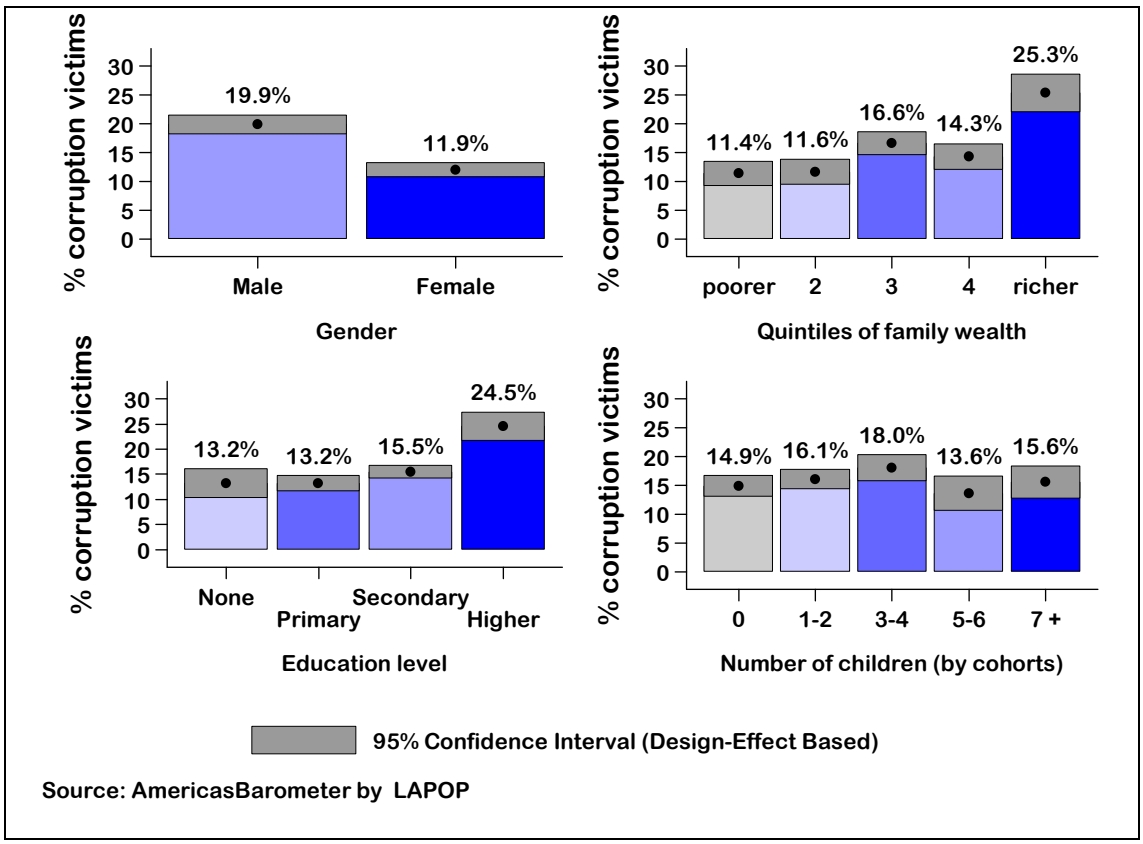


Figure IV.16. Corruption Victimization by Education, Sex, Children and Wealth in Nicaragua

Figure IV.17 illustrates the social geography of corruption victimization. Residents of the Managua metropolitan area and other big and medium cities experience significantly more corruption than residents of rural areas and small towns. Those who live in the Pacific South and Caribbean report less corruption experience than other Nicaraguans by 5 percent and 7 percent respectively. Residents of the North Central area report almost 3 percent higher corruption experience.

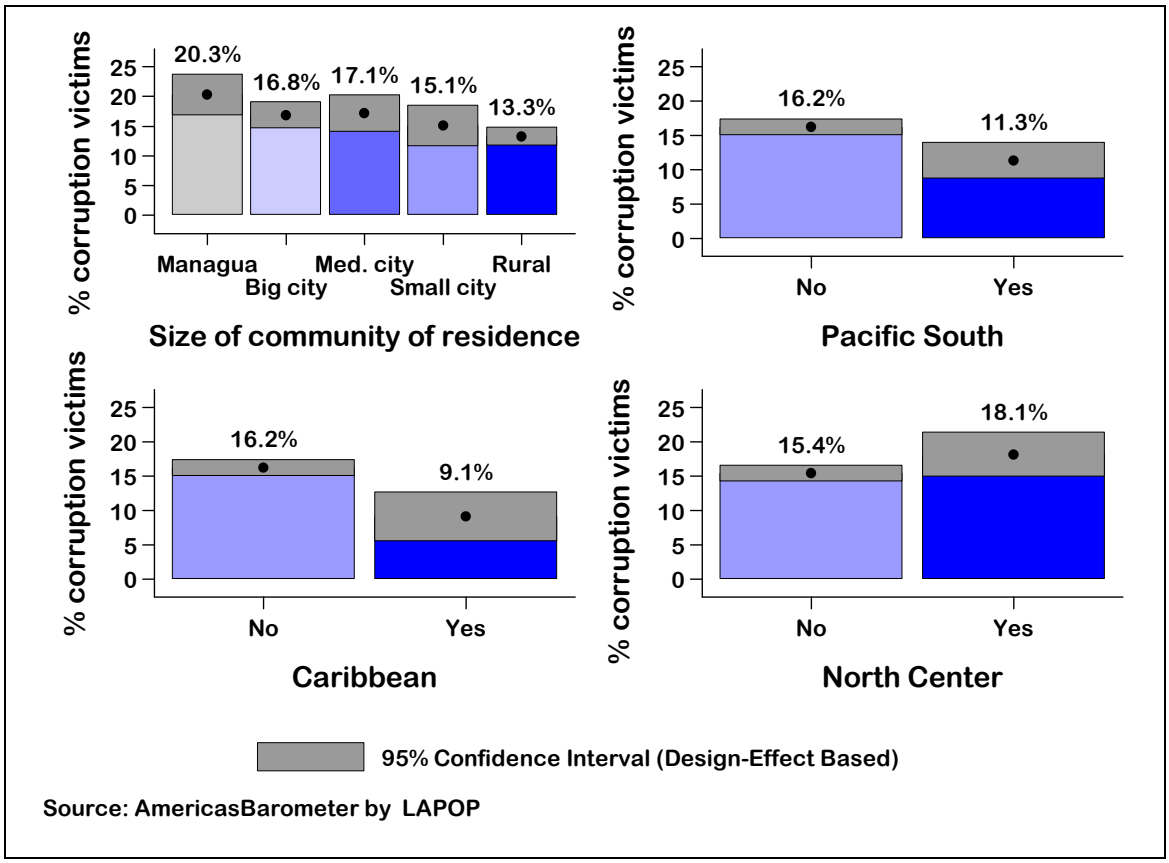


Figure IV.17. Geographic Distribution of Corruption Victimization, Nicaragua

Based on these data we would expect residents of smaller communities and those more distant from the bureaucratic centers of large cities and the national capital to report higher levels of institutional legitimacy and support for democracy because they experience less corruption. We now turn to this analysis in the following section.

The Impact of Crime, Insecurity and Corruption on Democracy

We now examine the impact of crime victimization, perception of insecurity, perception of corruption and corruption victimization on system support. The main hypothesis of this chapter is that personal victimization by crime or corruption, and the perception that one is insecure or that corruption is widespread, can erode key elements of democratic stability. Those who suffer such experiences or hold such views, the literature argues, are less likely to believe that democracy as a political system is valuable and less likely to support national democratic institutions and the rule of law.

We turn first to factors that may affect Nicaraguans' evaluation of their national institutions and system. Figure IV.18 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis that incorporates the crime and corruption experiences and beliefs just mentioned along with several demographic and social geographic characteristics. The model also includes various measures related to respondents' and their families' economic well-being and attribution of responsibility for the economic crisis. Finally, we include a measure of interest in politics and another evaluating the performance of the incumbent president. The model presented has been trimmed somewhat from a larger model (not shown here) that included several more economic status and perception variables that proved to have no effect on the model. Some of those that remain also have no impact on support for the political system, but their absence usefully illustrates

that economic factors (to anticipate the results somewhat) do not greatly affect Nicaraguans' system support.

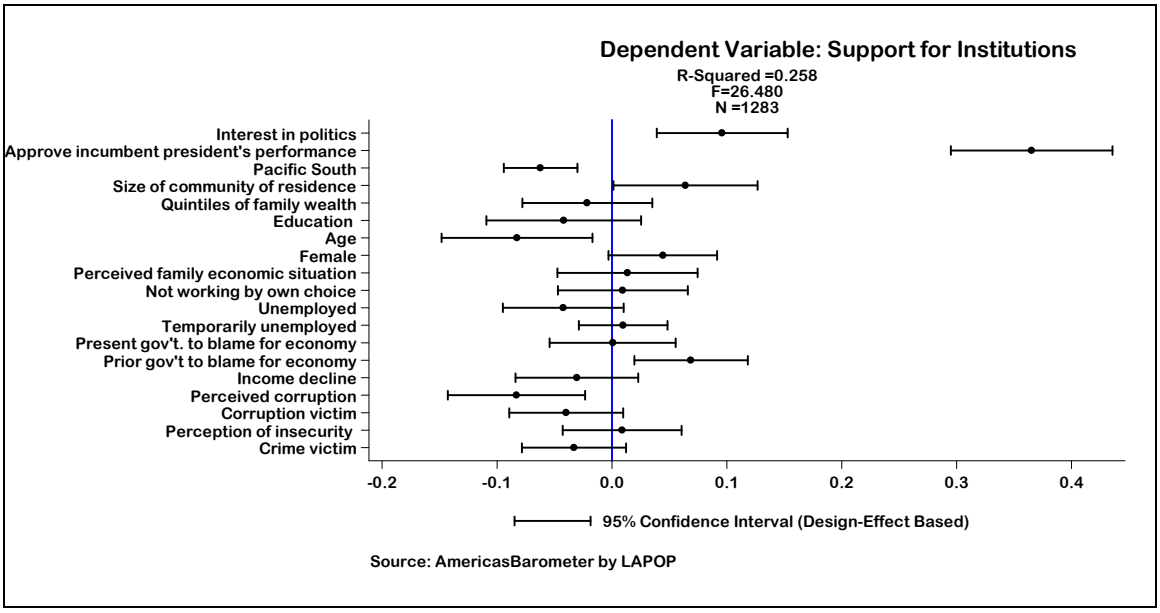


Figure IV.18. Determinants of System Support in Nicaragua (2010)

We see in Figure IV.18 that only a few variables modeled actually affect system support. Contrary to expectations, experiencing crime, perceiving insecurity, and experiencing corruption have no impact on Nicaraguans' evaluation of their political system. Perceiving widespread corruption, in contrast, has a modest negative effect on system support, as hypothesized. It may be that, compared other nations where both crime and corruption victimization are more widespread, Nicaragua's crime and corruption levels are insufficient to undermine political support. Individuals who perceive widespread corruption, however, nevertheless do support the system somewhat less.

Turning to other factors, the largest impact by far on system support is approval of the job being done by the incumbent president. Further, independently of this and other variables, blaming the previous government for the economic crisis contributes positively to system support. This finding is particularly interesting when contrasted to the absence of effects of family economic conditions and demographics (except age) on Nicaraguans' political system support. In short, what Figure IV.18 shows is that, aside from the extent of perceived corruption, political factors (support for President Ortega's performance, interest in politics, blaming the previous administration for the economy) drive system support, while crime, corruption experience, and one's personal or family economics have little effect on support.

Figure IV.19 illustrates the effects of two of these key variables on system support. First, the left hand graph demonstrates clearly the strong effect of satisfaction with President Ortega's performance on institutional support in 2010. Nicaraguans who view Ortega's performance as very bad report an average system support level of 36 on a 0-100 scale, while those who view his performance as very good report an average of 70 on system support. Although the association is strong, the direction of causality here is not clear. It may be that Sandinistas, pleased that their party is in power, express high levels of satisfaction with presidential performance as a result. But the opposite could be true as well – that those who believe President Ortega is performing well have their system support strengthened as a consequence. Indeed, both things may be happening at once.

The right hand graph in Figure IV.19 illustrates the negative impact of perceived corruption on system support in 2010. The effect revealed is a 13 point decline in system support (out of 100) as one moves from Nicaraguans who see very little or no corruption to those who see a great deal of it. Believing there is widespread corruption has a greater impact on Nicaraguans' system support than actually experiencing corruption in this country that is a low-corruption setting, relative to many of its neighbors in the Americas.

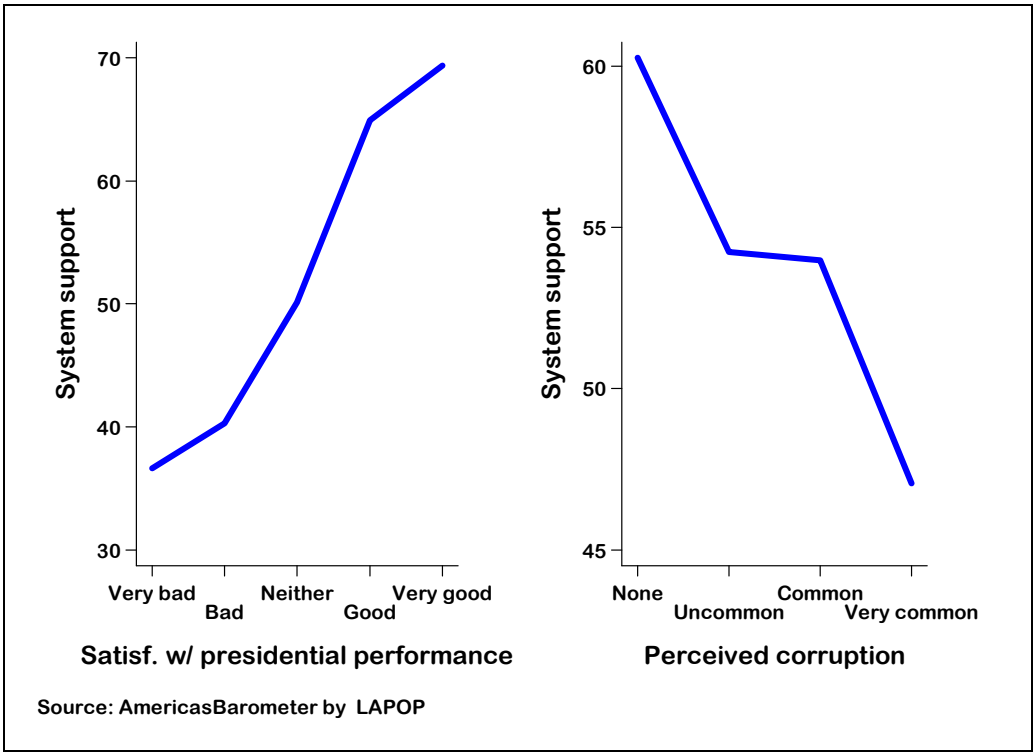


Figure IV.19. Effects of Perceived Corruption and Presidential Performance Evaluation on System Support, Nicaragua 2010

Turning to Figure IV.20 we see in the left hand graph that the effect of the size of community of residence on system support is not linear. In the larger cities system support is lowest at around 46.5 on the 100 point scale. It rises to almost 52 in medium sized cities, then declines to about 49.5 for small cities and rural areas. Clearly the residents of Nicaragua's larger cities express lower rates of support for institutions than do those who live medium-sized cities and smaller communities. Institutional support is somewhat lower in the small urban and rural environments than in the medium-sized cities, but still above that of the larger cities.[67]

In Figure IV.20 (the right hand graph) age also demonstrates a curvilinear relationship to system support. Younger Nicaraguans (ages 16 to 20) report an average support on the 100 point scale of almost 52. That support level then declines progressively across older cohorts to bottom out at just below 47 among Nicaraguans aged 46 to 60. Average institutional support then rises somewhat among the cohort aged 61 and above.[68] On balance, then, the young in Nicaragua support the political system more than

[67] The levels of system support by size and age were also calculated for 2010 only. The results are not substantively different from those depicted in Figure IV.20.

[68] Such curvilinear effects of age on political behavior and attitudes are common in other settings, sometimes owing to generational effects caused by traumatic national events or great social change, and sometimes because of changes in the capacities and resources of older citizens. For examples see John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson (2009), and Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie (1972).

those who are older. We should emphasize, however, that the range of variation across the age groups averages only 5 points on the 100 point support scale, so we are not finding a generational chasm in system support.

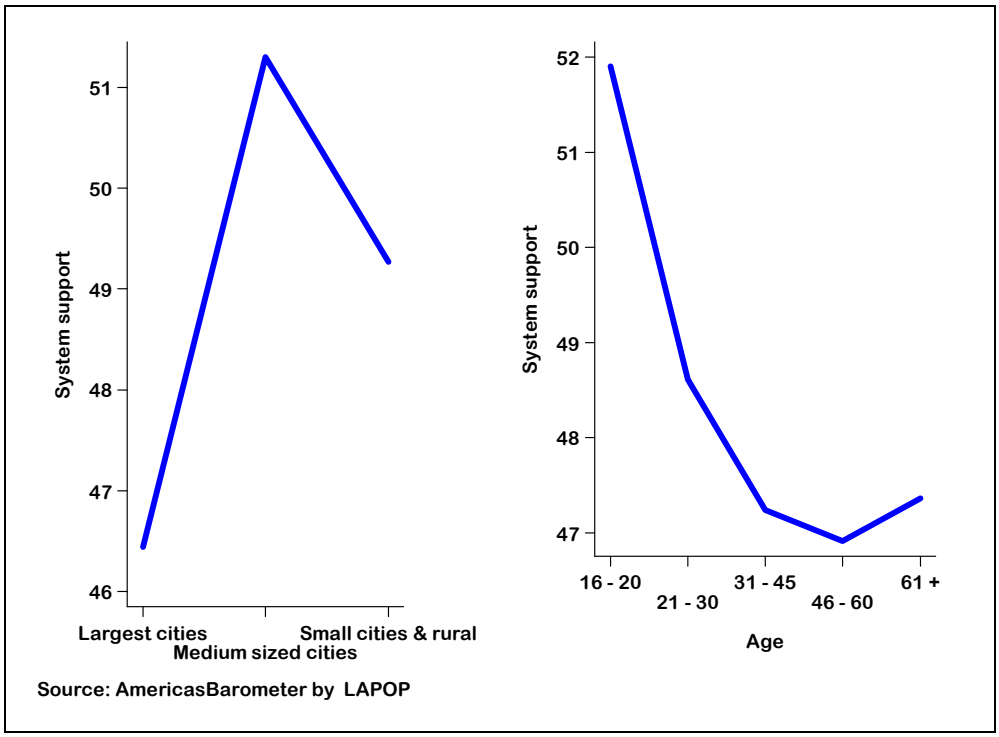


Figure IV.20. Effect of Community Size and Age on System Support, Nicaragua 2004-2010

Support for the Rule of Law, and the Impact of Crime and Insecurity

Where do Nicaraguans stand on support for the rule of law? How has support for law evolved over time? The AmericasBarometer surveys use the following item to gauge citizens' support for the rule of law. It focuses on the principle that public authorities should not merely enforce the law but should also comply with it themselves. We assume that those who prefer that the authorities themselves should be law abiding when dealing with criminals are respectful of the rule of law.

AOJ8. In order to catch criminals, do you believe that the authorities should always abide by the law or that occasionally they can cross the line?
(1) Should always abide by the law (2) Occasionally can cross the line

Figure IV.21 presents a breakdown of the percentage of Nicaraguans who express support for the rule of law across the four Nicaragua surveys since 2004. In 2010 the level is of support for the rule of law is 54.2 percent. This represents a significant 7.5 percent increase over 2008.

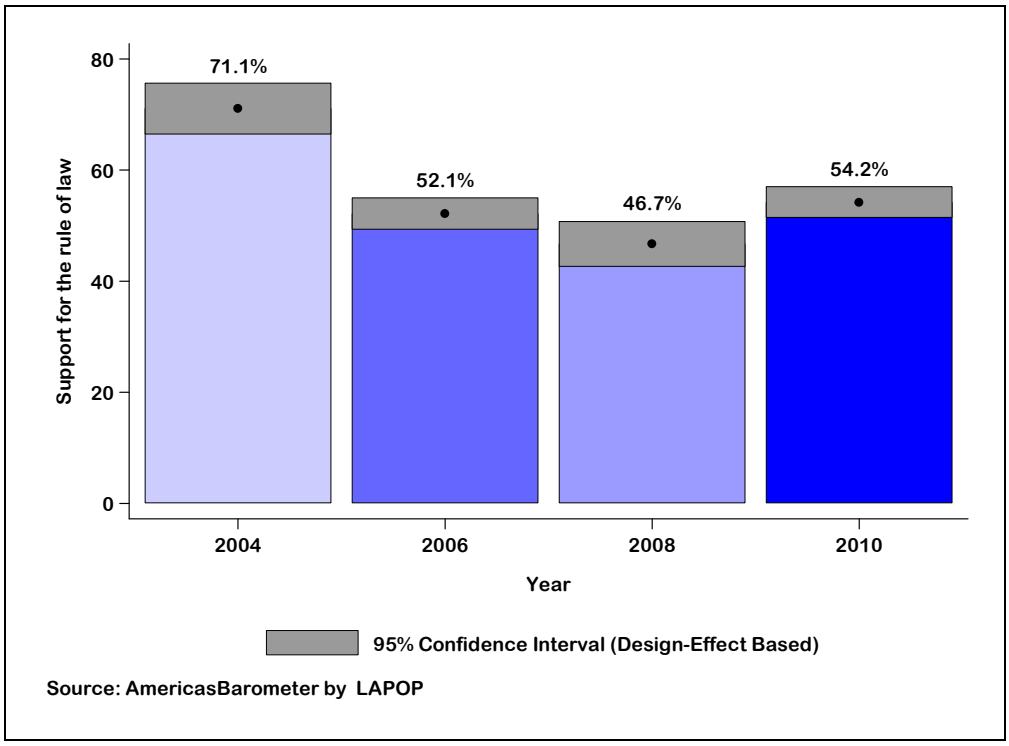


Figure IV.21. Support for the Respect of the Rule of Law in Nicaragua (2004-2010)

Although support for the rule of law increased from 2008 to 2010, the highest level of agreement that officials dealing with criminals should themselves follow the law was recorded in 2004 at 71.1 percent. It then plunged 19 percent to 52.1 percent in 2006 and still further to 46.7 percent in 2008. While it is difficult to discern why such a dramatic change in support for the rule of law might have occurred, we can say some things about who among Nicaraguans experienced such a decline. First, the level of support for the rule of law did not change significantly among Sandinista or Liberal identifiers. In contrast, it declined among those who classified themselves as not supporting any party or any of the small parties; these groups experienced nearly a 26 percent decline between 2004 and 2008.

Which social groups changed the most on support for law between 2004 and 2008? The decline of about 25 percent expressing support for the rule of law among the poorest two quintiles of Nicaraguans was the largest drop observed for any wealth cohort. This poorest 40 percent of the population began in 2004 with the highest levels of support of any wealth group, averaging about 76 percent. In contrast, the wealthiest quintile had reported the lowest average drop in support for the rule of law, but also started with the lowest level of any group (58 percent). Younger Nicaraguans (under age 25) lost an average of 26 percentage points in support for the rule of law between 2004 and 2008, having started from the highest level (77 percent expressing support) of any age cohort. The oldest cohort of Nicaraguans lost about 15 percentage points over the same 4-year period, but started from a base more than percent lower than the youngest two cohorts. Nicaraguans in the middle quintile of education experienced a 35 percent decline in support for the rule of law from 2004 to 2008, followed by all those with less education (a 25 percent decline). Those with the least education in 2004 had the highest level of support for the rule of law.

To sum up, there has been a large decline in support for the rule of law among Nicaraguans since 2004, which is bad news if one regards such a cultural norm as a necessity for democratic stability. This decline in support for the rule of law from 2004 to 2008 was the greatest among the poor, among the young, and (to some extent) among the less educated. In each of these cases the groups that declined the

most in support for the rule of law began the period under study in 2004 reporting the highest levels of support, and their levels in 2008 had become much closer to those of older, wealthier and better educated Nicaraguans. Despite this major 24 percent change for 2004 to 2008, support for the rule of law began to recover between 2008 and 2010, which we believe to be an encouraging development.

a) Support for the Rule of Law in Comparative Perspective

How do Nicaraguans compare to their neighbors around the hemisphere on support for the rule of law? Using 2010 data in Figure IV.22, Nicaraguans at 54.2 percent fall into the bottom third of the array, at least 20 percentage points below Belizeans and Jamaicans. Support for the rule of law in Nicaragua is similar to that found in Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, Honduras and Uruguay.

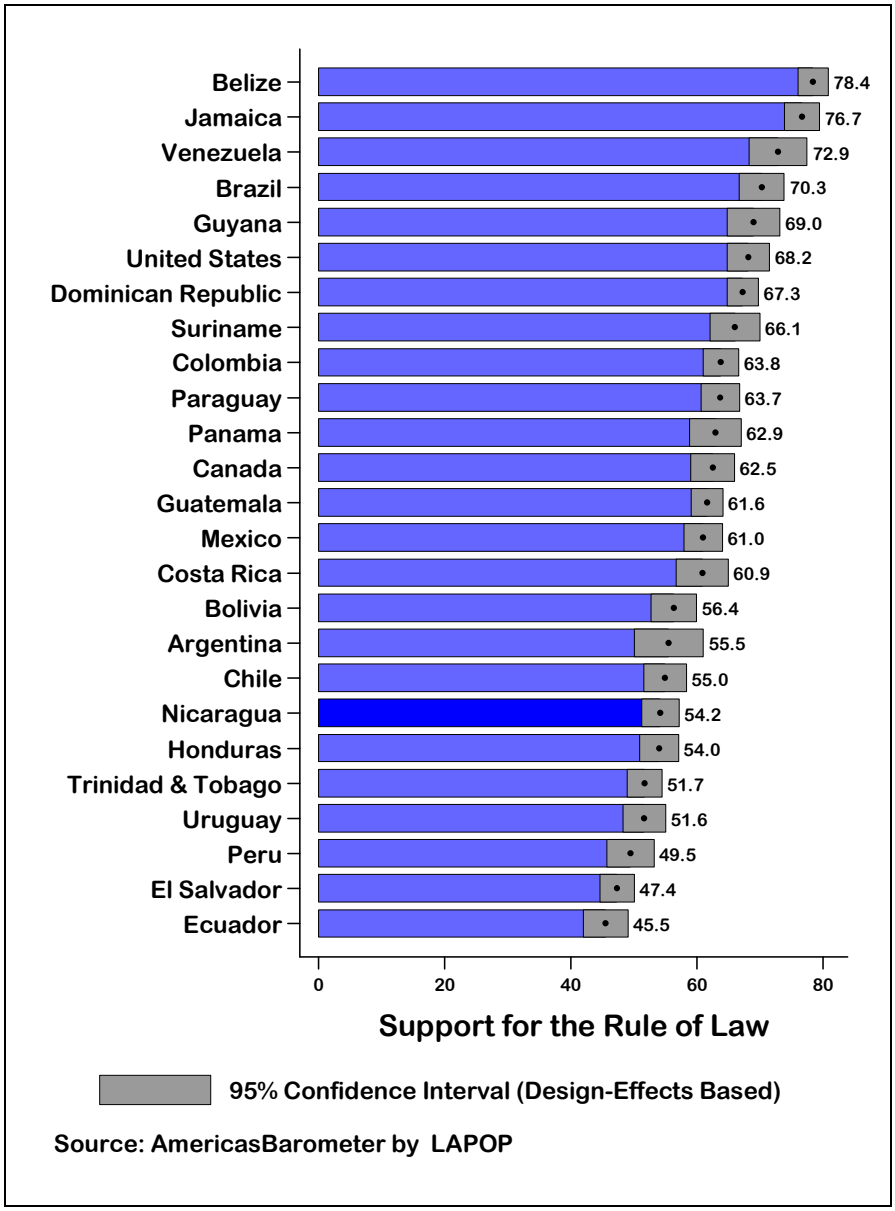


Figure IV.22. Support for the Respect of the Rule of Law in Comparative Perspective

b) Impact of Crime Victimization and Perception of Insecurity on Respect for the Rule of Law

The working hypothesis for this analysis is that citizens' willingness to support the rule of law, believed to be an important component of stable democracy, depends in part on their experiences with and perceptions of crime and corruption. We initially employed a logistic multiple regression model that incorporated the crime and corruption experiences and beliefs about them as well as several demographic and social geographic characteristics. Also included were various measures related to the respondents' and their families' economic well-being and attribution of responsibility for the economic crisis. Finally, we included a measure of interest in politics and another evaluating the performance of the incumbent president.

In Figure IV.23 the model presented has been trimmed somewhat from a larger model that included several more economic status and perception variables and political variables that proved to have no effect on the model. Some of those that remain also have no impact on support for the rule of law, but their absence usefully illustrates that (to anticipate the results somewhat) certain factors do not greatly affect Nicaraguans' system support. Some of the variables that are not influential have significant import in theoretical terms because they were expected to have effects that we did not find.

Figure IV.23 reveals that poorer Nicaraguans are more supportive of the rule of law than those who are better off. Holding other factors constant, women and older Nicaraguans support the rule of law more than men and younger Nicaraguans. Perceiving insecurity significantly reduces Nicaraguans' support for the rule of law, and corruption victimization also has a small and barely significant negative effect. Perception of corruption and actual crime victimization have no effect on citizens' beliefs that authorities should follow the law when dealing with criminals. Economic status and perception variables (job loss, changes in personal and family income) fell out of the model and were dropped for the trimmed version shown in Figure IV.23. In sum, these findings to some extent support the hypotheses of the study, that being a victim of crime or corruption can undermine support for the rule of law. The result is mixed – perceived insecurity has the greatest negative effects, followed by corruption victimization. Perceiving corruption and experiencing crime do not perform as expected.

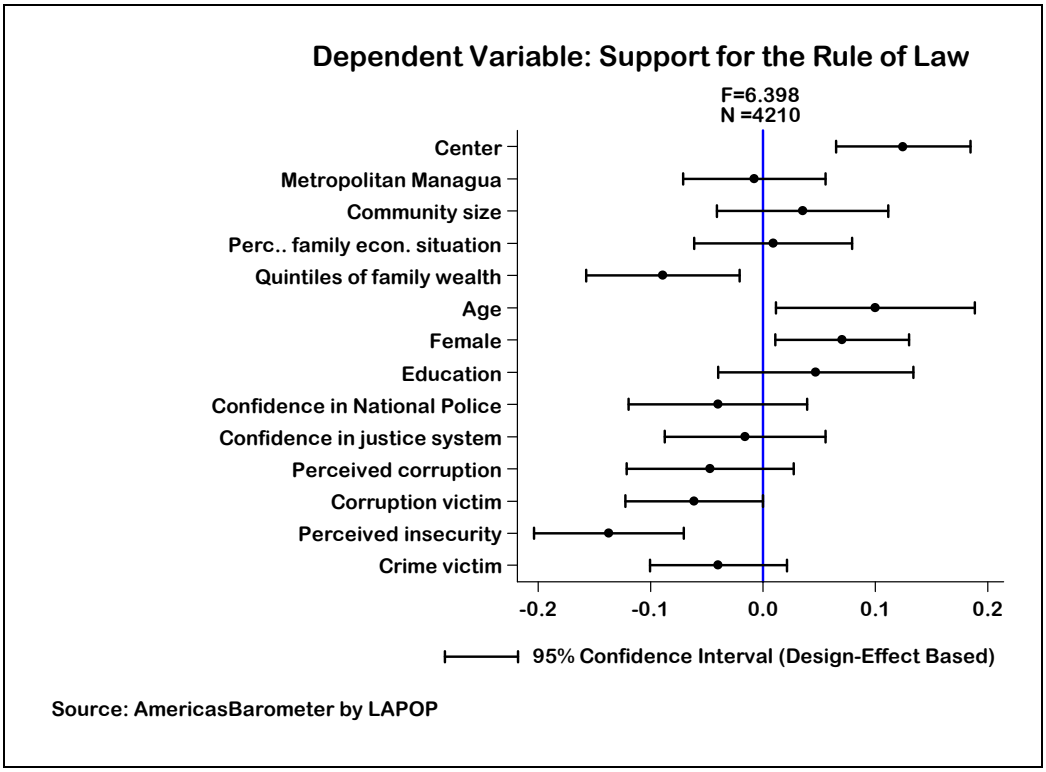


Figure IV.23. Determinants of Support for the Respect of the Rule of Law in Nicaragua

Figure IV.24 illustrates some of these more significant effects on support for the rule of law. The upper left hand graph shows the modest but significant impact of wealth on support for the rule of law. What is most remarkable here is that, with other variables controlled, *Nicaraguans who are wealthier are significantly less likely to support the rule of law* by about 4 percentage points. The upper right hand graphs shows women to be slightly but significantly more likely to support the rule of law than are men. Compared to the rest of Nicaraguans, residents of the Center Zone (excluding Managua) are almost 9 percent more supportive of the rule of law (lower left hand graph).

Finally, turning again to the central hypotheses, the lower right hand quadrant of Figure IV.24 reveals the effect of perceived insecurity on Nicaraguans' support for the idea that officials arresting criminals should obey the law at all times. At 61 percent, those who feel the safest are several percentage points more supportive of the rule of law than those who feel either unsafe (53.3 percent) or very unsafe (57.9 percent). This confirms the expectation that perceiving oneself to be insecure can contribute to lower support for the rule of law.

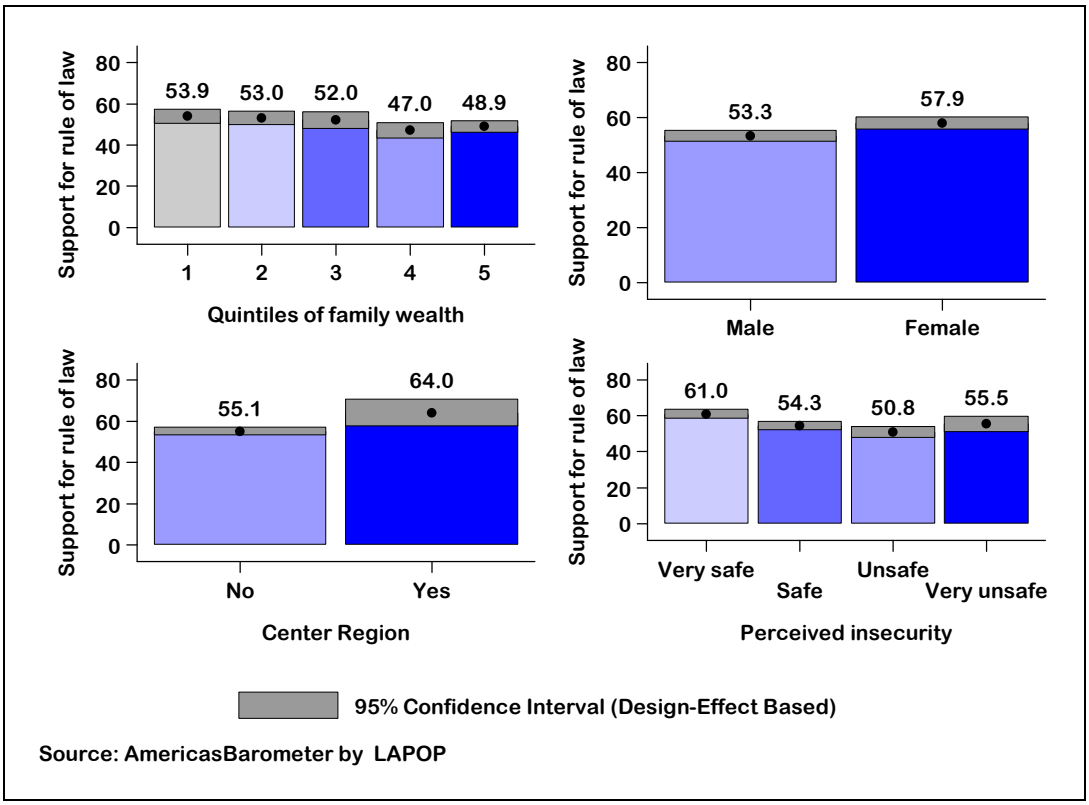


Figure IV.24. Factors Associated with Support for the Rule of Law, Nicaragua

A further comment concerning the evidence in Figures IV.23 and IV.24 concerns what *is not shown*. In earlier models excluded to save space we found that virtually none of the economic variables related to personal or family economic status have any effect on the support for law (apart from family wealth itself). This suggests that the level of support for the rule of law in Nicaragua is has little to do with transitory economic change even if it affects individuals and families directly. Moreover, support for the incumbent president, partisan identification, and interest in politics have no effects, indicating that support for the rule of law is not contingent upon partisanship. Finally, the relatively low level of corruption experience and corruption perception in Nicaragua, as well as that of crime victimization, failed to affect citizens' support for the rule of law. Only the perception of insecurity clearly performed as expected in undermining citizens' commitment to the notion that public officials should be law-abiding.

Conclusions

The main hypothesis of this chapter has been that crime and corruption can erode system support and support for the rule of law, both of which are important to democratic stability. Nicaraguans report a crime victimization rate of 19 percent for individuals and about one third for households, placing them in the middle range for the Americas. Most Nicaraguans report the crimes to have occurred close to home. The main correlates of crime victimization are living in a bigger city, and being wealthier and better educated. Perceived insecurity in Nicaragua, as across the Americas, is much higher than actual crime victimization. Nicaraguans rank in the middle of the hemispheric pack with 39 percent reporting that they feel at least somewhat unsafe.

Reported victimization by corruption among Nicaraguans is low at 12 percent, well in the lower half of countries include in the AmericasBarometer surveys. Perceived corruption levels are several times

greater than actual corruption experience -- 68 percent of Nicaraguans view corruption as widespread. Nicaragua's position in the Americas on perceived corruption is relatively low. Both corruption victimization and perceived corruption have declined significantly since 2006. Corruption victims are disproportionately wealthier, better educated, and male; they also have more children, and live in Managua or the North Central region. The impacts of crime, corruption, and the perceptions of these on system support are surprisingly limited. System support is somewhat reduced by high perceived corruption, but not by experiencing corruption or crime, or by perceived insecurity.

This chapter's most troubling finding is that Nicaraguans' support for the rule of law declined a striking 25 points out of 100 from 2004 to 2008, albeit recovering 8 points by 2010. Nicaragua's poor in 2010 are much more likely to support the rule of law than the wealthy. Those perceiving high levels of insecurity, counter to our expectations, have higher levels of support for the rule of law. Older Nicaraguans and women also have higher support for the rule of law. Nicaragua's poor and insecure are more supportive of the rule of law than are the rich and secure.

Explanations for the precipitous decline in Nicaraguans' belief that officials should obey the law when dealing with criminals are beyond the direct reach of our data. Developments in the political system come to mind as possible sources of eroding support for the rule of law. Nicaraguans in the mid-2000s witnessed repeated events suggesting that the law and constitution might be affected by political interests: a former president was convicted of embezzlement but later released; the Supreme Court of Justice struck down the constitution's provision against self-succession in office to the benefit of the ruling party; and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal's conduct and the outcome of the 2008 municipal election were widely criticized. We surmise that these institutional challenges in turn contributed to a loss in public belief that officials should be law-abiding.

Chapter V. Legitimacy, System Support, and Political Tolerance

Introduction

The legitimacy of the political system has long been viewed as a crucial element in democratic stability.[69] New research has emphasized the importance of legitimacy for many aspects of democratic rule.[70] In the preceding chapter, we have examined political legitimacy as an important element of democratic stability, but our focus has been narrow, as we were examining several other key elements in the stability equation. In this chapter, we deepen our understanding of political legitimacy by first returning to research that has appeared in prior studies published by the Latin American Public Opinion Project, namely those that look at the joint effect of political legitimacy and political tolerance as a predictor of future democratic stability. Second, we examine a much broader range of political institutions than are used in the analysis of political legitimacy. And third, we expand the analysis further to consider what a broader culture of democracy might contribute to democratic stability.

The Legitimacy/Tolerance Equation

AmericasBarometer studies for prior years, defined political legitimacy in terms of "system support" along with tolerance to political opposition. These variables have been used in combination to create a kind of early warning signal that could be useful for pointing to democracies in the region that might be especially fragile. The theory is that both attitudes (support for the system and political tolerance) are needed for long-term democratic stability. Citizens must *both* believe in the legitimacy of their political institutions *and* also be willing to tolerate the political rights of others. In such a system, there can be majority rule accompanying minority rights, a combination of attributes often viewed as a quintessential definition of democracy. The framework laid out in Table V.1 represents all of the theoretically possible combinations of system support and tolerance when the two variables are divided between high and low.

The items used for creating the "system support" index are the following:

[69] Dictatorships, of course, like to be popular and have the support of broad sectors of the population, but when they fail at that, they have the ultimate recourse to coercion. In democracies, governments that attempt to resort to coercion usually quickly fall.

[70] James L. Gibson, Gregory A. Caldeira, and Lester Kenyatta Spence, "Why Do People Accept Public Policies They Oppose? Testing Legitimacy Theory Wth a Survey-Based Experiment," *Political Research Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (2005). Bruce Gilley, *The Right to Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Booth and Seligson, *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Democracy and Political Support in Eight Nations.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

I am going to ask you a series of questions. I am going to ask you that you use the numbers provided in the ladder to answer. Remember, you can use any number. **B1**. To what extent do you think the courts in (country) guarantee a fair trial? (**Read*:*** If you think the courts do not ensure justice at all, choose number 1; if you think the courts ensure justice a lot, choose number 7 or choose a point in between the two.)
B2. To what extent do you respect the political institutions of (country)?
B3. To what extent do you think that citizens' basic rights are well protected by the political system of (country)?
B4. To what extent do you feel proud of living under the political system of (country)?
B6. To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of (country)?

Table V.1. Theoretical Relationship between System Support and Political Tolerance

	Tolerance	
System Support (i.e., legitimacy)	High	Low
High	Stable Democracy	Authoritarian Stability
Low	Unstable Democracy	Democracy at Risk

Let us review each cell, one by one. Political systems populated largely by citizens who have high system support and high political tolerance are those political systems that would be predicted to be the most stable. This prediction is based on the logic that high support is needed in non-coercive environments for the system to be stable. If citizens do not support their political system, and they have the freedom to act, system change would appear to be the eventual inevitable outcome. Systems that are stable, however, will not necessarily be democratic unless minority rights are assured. Such assurance could, of course, come from constitutional guarantees, but unless citizens are willing to tolerate the civil liberties of minorities, there will be little opportunity for those minorities to run for and win elected office. Under those conditions, of course, majorities can always suppress the rights of minorities. Systems both that are politically legitimate, as demonstrated by positive system support, and that have citizens who are reasonably tolerant of minority rights are likely to enjoy stable democracy.[71]

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 (oligarchic) rule in which democratic rights would be restricted.

Low system support is the situation characterized by the lower two cells in the table, 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. Hence, in the situation of low support and high tolerance, it is difficult to predict whether 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 direction of the eventual outcome. One cannot, of course, on the basis of public opinion data alone, predict a breakdown, since so many other factors, including the role of elites, the position of the military and the support/opposition of international players are all crucial to this process. But, systems in which the mass public neither support the basic institutions of the nation, nor support the rights of minorities, are vulnerable to democratic breakdown.

[71] Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971)..

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 both elites and 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, incongruence might have eventually helped to bring about the overthrow of the Somoza government. But the Nicaraguan case was one in which the extant system was authoritarian and repression had long been used to maintain an authoritarian regime, perhaps in spite of the tolerant attitudes of its citizens.[72]

System Support

Theoretical Background

a) Components of System Support

Figure V.1 graphs the components of the main measure of system support that LAPOP has employed for several AmericasBarometer surveys for the period 2004-2010. The value for each component is the average score on a 0 to 100 scale for the items listed above. Nicaraguans average 61 out of 100 on support for their political institutions. Their score for agreement that one should support the system is 49.9, right at the scale mean. The evaluation score for the court system is 44.4 (below the midpoint by several scale points, followed closely by agreement that rights are protected (43.8) and feeling pride in the system (43.8). So on only one item do Nicaraguans fall well above the scale midpoint, and for the rest they are either at or below the midpoint.

[72] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Social Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood, 1985), 1; James S. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

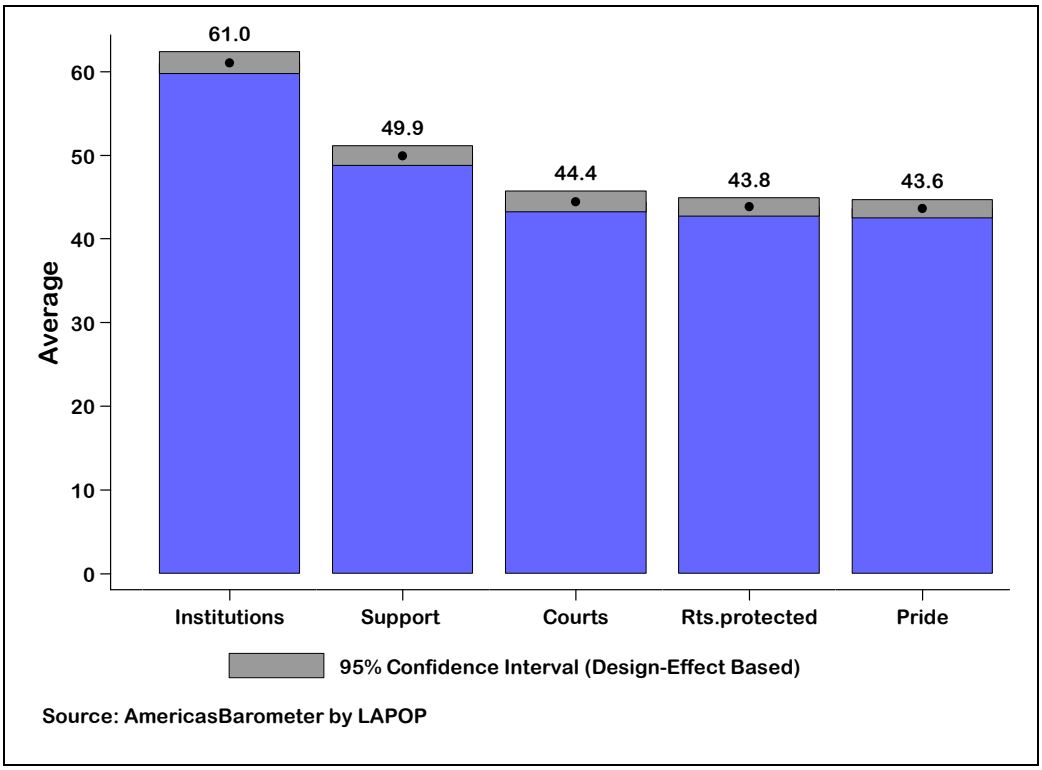


Figure V.1. Components of System Support in Nicaragua (2004-2010)

b) System Support in Comparative Perspective

How does this compare to the rest of the Americas? For 2010 Nicaraguans' scores averaged 51.7 out of 100. As one may see in Figure V.2, that places Nicaraguans slightly below the middle of the range of system support for the region as a whole. Uruguayans in 2010 report the greatest system support using this measure (68), followed by Costa Ricans at 63.2 scale points, and Hondurans at 60.4 despite the political turmoil that took place there related to the 2009 coup. At the lower end of the system support range are Trinidad and Tobago (44), Argentina (45.2) and Paraguay (46.3). Nicaraguans' system support levels are in effect statistically the same as those in countries as diverse as Guatemala, Brazil, the United States, Belize, and the Dominican Republic.

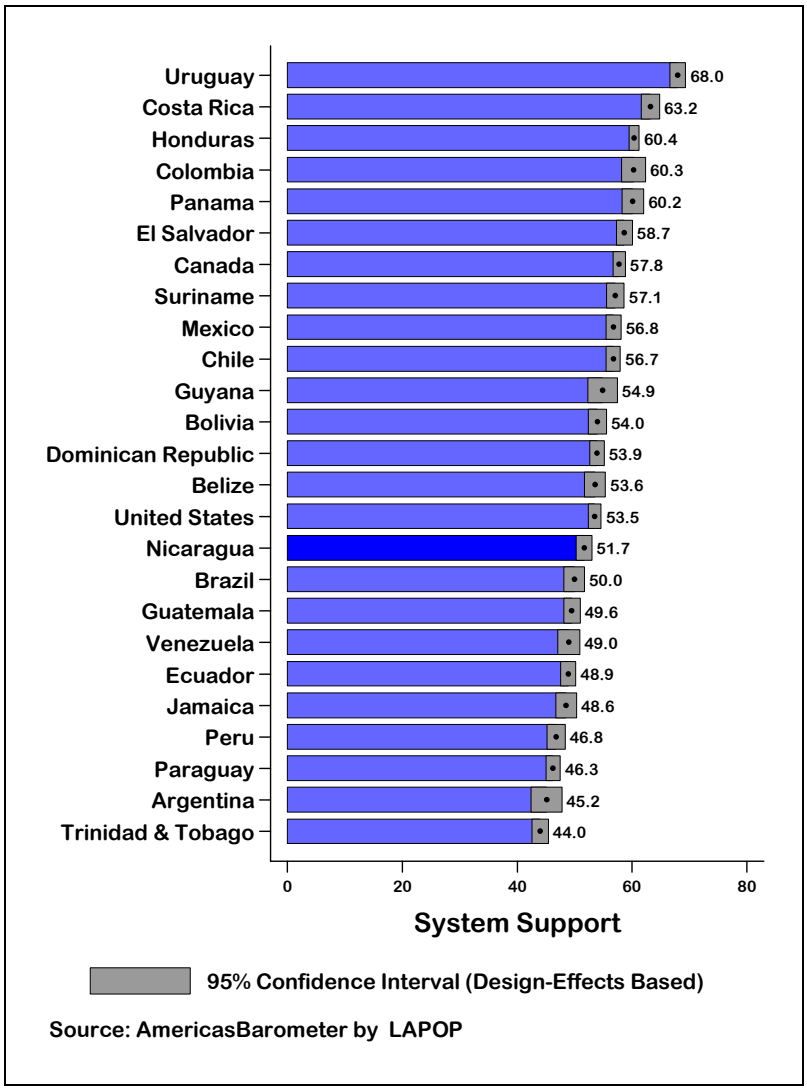


Figure V.2. System Support in Comparative Perspective, 2010

c) System Support Over Time

How has support for Nicaragua's political institutions evolved over time? Figure V.3 presents data revealing that system support fell from 2004 (from 49.9 on the 100 point scale) to a significantly lower 2006 score of 45.3 during the second poll taken during the administration of President Enrique Bolaños. In the 2008 and 2010 surveys, the AmericasBarometer data reveal an increase in each year of the administration of President Daniel Ortega. Nicaraguans in 2010 report a mean system support score of 51.7, which is a statistically significant 6.5 scale points higher than the 2006 score. As we will see elsewhere in this chapter and in other chapters later on, the public evaluation of the political system (which is distinct from the evaluation of presidential performance but to some extent shaped by it) has improved gradually in the last two surveys.

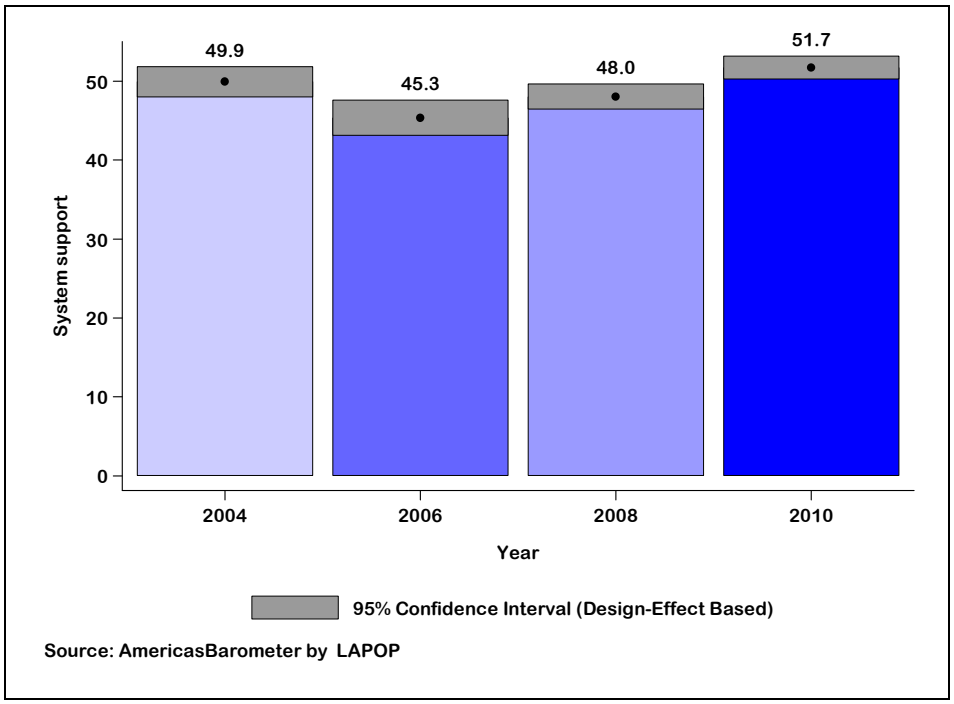


Figure V.3. System Support Over Time, Nicaragua

Political Tolerance

Theoretical Background

We turn now to the second component of the system we are employing to assess the prospects for stable democracy. According to our theory, Nicaragua's citizens must *both* believe in the legitimacy of their political institutions (discussed above) *and* also be willing to tolerate rights, a combination of attributes often viewed as a quintessential definition of democratic culture. We employ a set of four items to measure tolerance. They are designed to assess the willingness to concede to critics of the system basic political participation rights (voting, participating in peaceful demonstrations, running for office, and making a speech on television), i.e. tolerate the views of those with whom they do not agree. We are convinced that tolerance is particularly important in a political system like Nicaragua's which has experienced bitter and violent division in recent history, culminating in the insurrection of the 1970s, the Sandinista revolution (1979-1990), and a contentious post-revolutionary period marked by the emergence of an essentially two-party system dominated by the Sandinistas and (presently divided) Liberals.

D1. There are people who only say bad things about the Nicaraguan form of government, not just the incumbent government but the system of government. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people's **right to vote**? Please read me the number from the scale: ***[Probe: To what degree?]***
D2. How strongly do you approve or disapprove that such people be allowed **to conduct peaceful demonstrations** in order to express their views? Please read me the number.
D3. Still thinking of those who only say bad things about the Nicaraguan form of government, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people being permitted **to run for public office**?
D4. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people appearing on television **to make speeches**?

a) Components of Political Tolerance

Figure V.4 lays out the components of the tolerance indicator, and the mean scores on each of them on a scale of zero (low) to high tolerance (100) for the period 2004 to 2010. We see that, somewhat surprisingly, Nicaraguans score 60.9 on tolerance of peaceful demonstrations. This is surprising because in many political systems protest behavior does not receive much public approval. But a majority of Nicaraguans – irrespective of their attitudes toward specific protests or whether they take part in them or not – approve of the right to protest for system critics. Following closely at an average of 57.1 is support for the right to vote. The right of regime critics to make a speech on television (listed in the graph as "freedom of expression") receives a score of 51.7 – above the scale midpoint -- and running for office a score of 49.8, essentially at the scale midpoint.

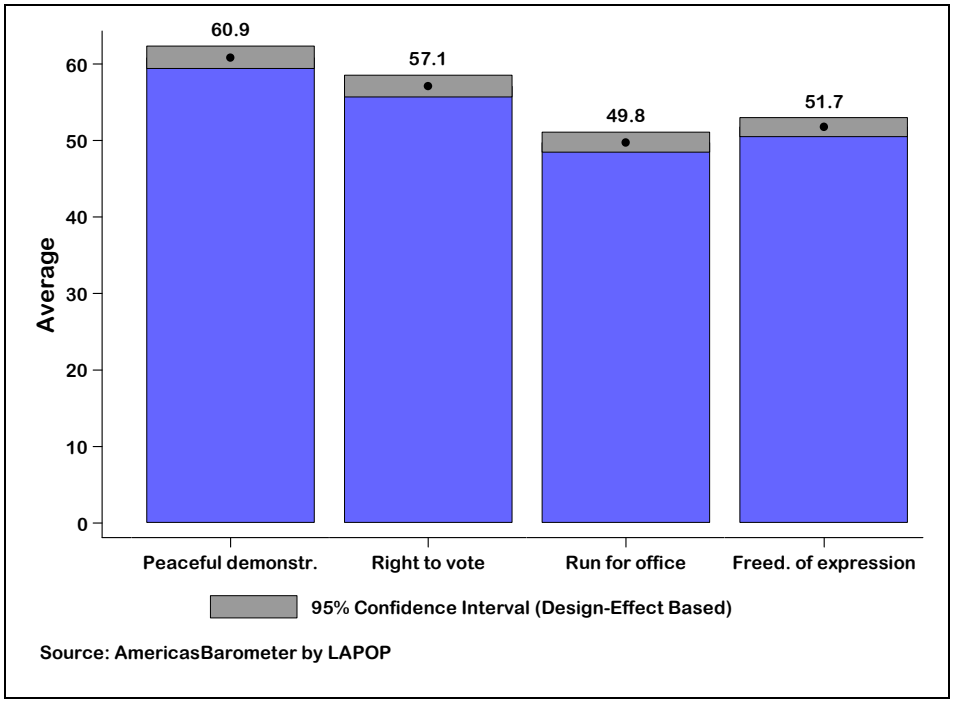


Figure V.4. Components of Political Tolerance in Nicaragua (2004-2010)

b) Political Tolerance Over Time

How has political tolerance in Nicaragua evolved in recent years? Figure V.5 tracks the average tolerance scores for each of the four AmericasBarometer surveys. It reveals that political tolerance in 2010 is at the highest level since 2004, significantly above any level measured in previous surveys. Thus we find Nicaraguans in 2010 to have an average tolerance level of 60 on the 100 point scale, a level 9.4 points above the mean score for 2008.

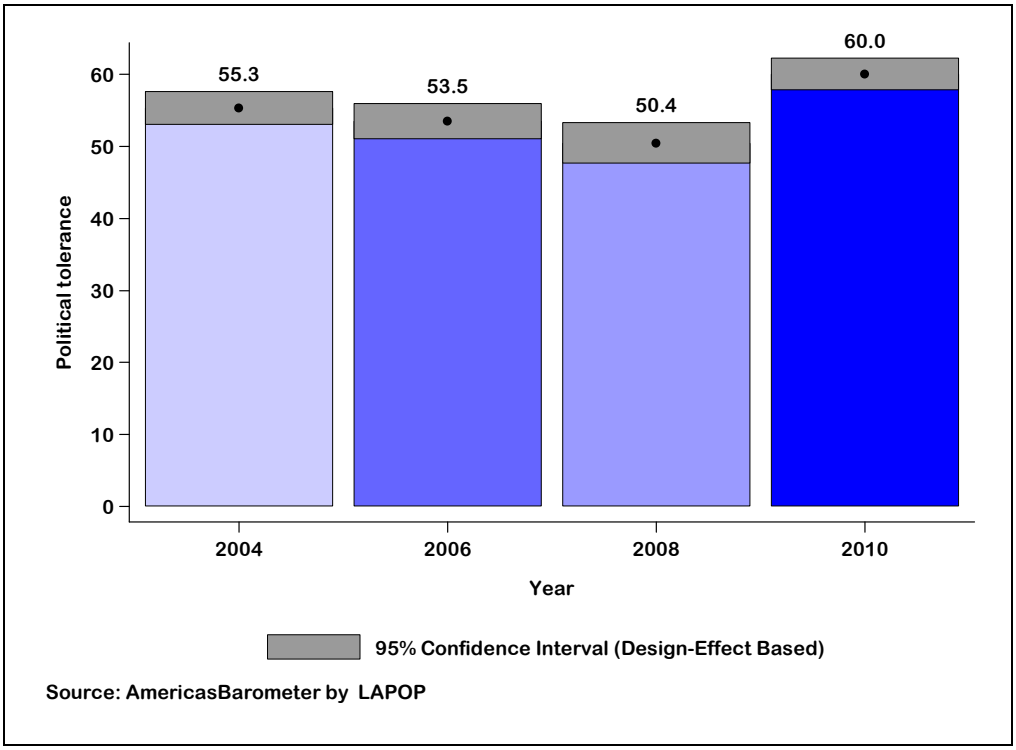


Figure V.5. Political Tolerance over Time, Nicaragua

c) Political Tolerance in Comparative Perspective

Where does Nicaragua fit into the larger frame of political tolerance in the Americas? Tolerance on our 0-100 scale in 2010 ranges from highs of 70.4 in the United States and 67.3 in Argentina, to lows of 45.1 in El Salvador, 47.2 in Bolivia, and 47.5 in Peru and Honduras. Nicaragua's 2010 score of 60 falls just above the midpoint of the range for the Americas. Nicaragua's tolerance score is similar to those of Suriname, Uruguay, Brazil, Belize and Jamaica – several rather different political systems. In summary, Nicaraguans attitudes toward political tolerance place them just above the median level of tolerance for the region as a whole.

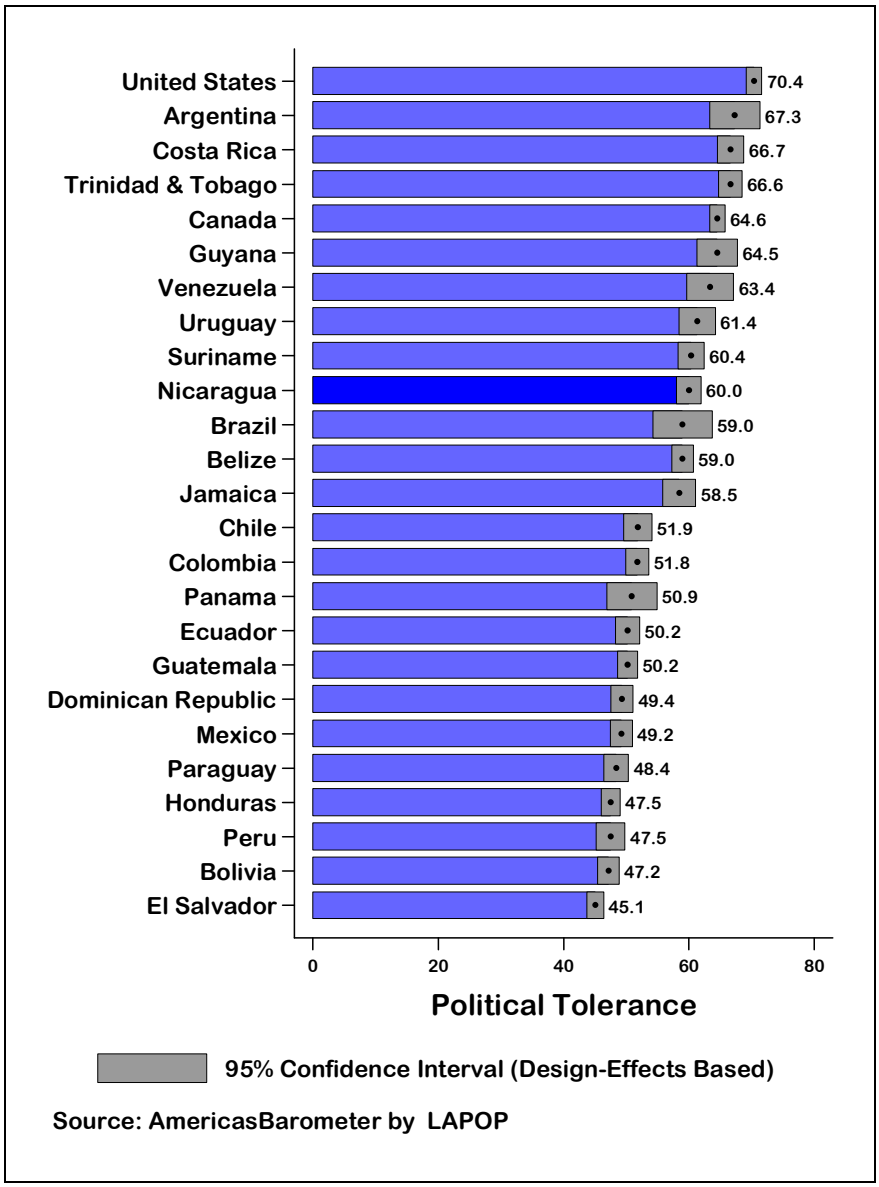


Figure V.6. Political Tolerance in Comparative Perspective

Support for Stable Democracy

Table V.2 shows the cross analysis of theses two variables – tolerance and support for the political system – by assigning Nicaraguans to the categories explained above, we get the following results for the period from 2004 to 2010 inclusive. We can see that just over one in four Nicaraguans (25.7 percent) have been in the "stable democracy" category (high tolerance plus high system support). A few more (27.6 percent) have been in the 'unstable democracy" category signifying high tolerance but low system support. Another similar-sized group is the "democracy at risk" category representing the low tolerance-low system support combination. Only about one fifth of Nicaraguans have fallen in the "authoritarian stability" category, representing those with a combination of low tolerance and low system support. An interesting feature of this distribution of respondents among the four categories is its relative balance between the four attitudinal configurations. Over the longer haul since 2004 there has been no single group that strongly predominates among the citizenry. However, the "stable authoritarian" values configuration has been the least common.

Table V.2 also includes the percentages of Nicaraguans holding each configuration of attitudes for the present survey in early 2010. There we see that the stable democracy (high support-high tolerance configuration) is 29.1 percent. The unstable democracy combination of attitudes (high tolerance-low support) is about the same size (30.1 percent) – not statistically different from each other. The group for "democracy at risk" is smaller at 18.4 percent and that for authoritarian stability up very slightly at 21.5 percent. Thus the balance had shifted for 2010 somewhat more toward the democracy (tolerance) side of things than for the stability side among Nicaraguans.

Table V.2. Theoretical Relationship between System Support and Political Tolerance: The Case of Nicaragua, 2004- 2010 and 2010

	Tolerance	
System Support (i.e., legitimacy)	**High**	**Low**
High	**Stable Democracy** (2004-'10) =25.7 percent **(2010) = 29.1 percent**	**Authoritarian Stability** (2004-'10)=20.2 percent **(2010) = 21.5 percent**
Low	**Unstable Democracy** (2004-'10) 27.6 percent **(2010) = 31.0 percent**	**Democracy at Risk** (2004-'10) 26.6 percent **(2010) = 18.4 percent**

Support for Stable Democracy by Year

A useful way to evaluate what this means is to focus on the combination of attitudes ("stable democracy") that theory suggests is more likely to contribute to positive outcomes for political systems. Table V.2 shows that change has occurred, raising the important question of the directions it has taken. We focus first on how the high tolerance-high stability (stable democracy) segment of the population changed since 2004 when our surveys began. We see in Figure V.7 just how much this share of the population has changed over time. In 2004 its size (28.3 percent of Nicaraguans) was roughly the same as in 2010 (29.1 percent). In between these years, however, the share of citizens in the high support-high tolerance group fell off sharply, reaching a low of only 20.6 percent in 2008) – almost a third less than in

2010. Interestingly this low ebb in the stable democracy values group corresponded to a period of political turmoil in Nicaragua marked in particular by the disputed 2008 municipal elections and protests related to them.

As we have seen in Figures V.3 and V.5, most of the change has come from a sharp (over 9 percent) growth in the expression of political tolerance between 2008 and 2010. In sum, tolerance has been on the rise and so, as a consequence, has the size of the stable democracy segment of Nicaraguans.

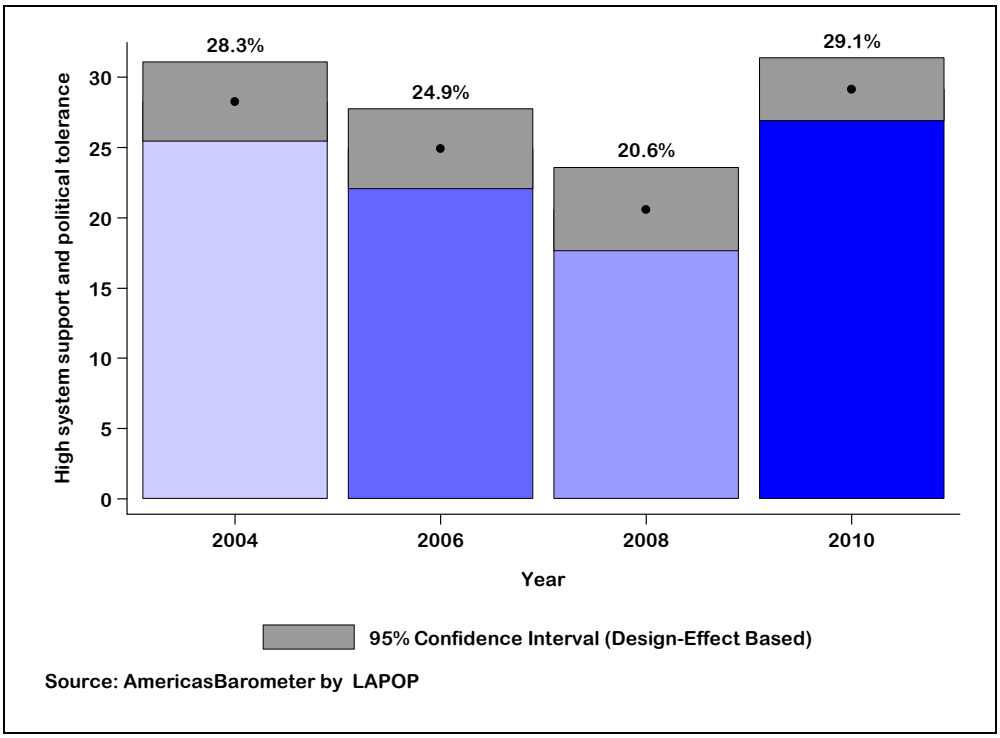


Figure V.7. Support for Stable Democracy by Year, Nicaragua 2004-2010

a) Support for Stable Democracy in Comparative Perspective

Perhaps the best way to evaluate the meaning of these findings is to compare Nicaraguans to other citizens of the Americas. We focus first on the percent of the citizen population that is both system-supporting and politically tolerant (the stable democracy group). Figure V.8 places Nicaragua in the center of the distribution of citizens holding the pro-stable democracy attitude. The countries with the highest percentages of citizens with the stable democracy combination are found in Uruguay (49.1 percent), Costa Rica (46.6 percent) and Suriname (45.6 percent). On the low end we observe that the countries with the smallest percentages of citizens with the stable democracy combination are Paraguay (16.5 percent) and Peru (18.5 percent). Nicaragua's 29.1 percent is most similar to that found in Venezuela and Jamaica. So, as the region goes, Nicaragua has about an average share of high tolerance-high system supporting citizens.

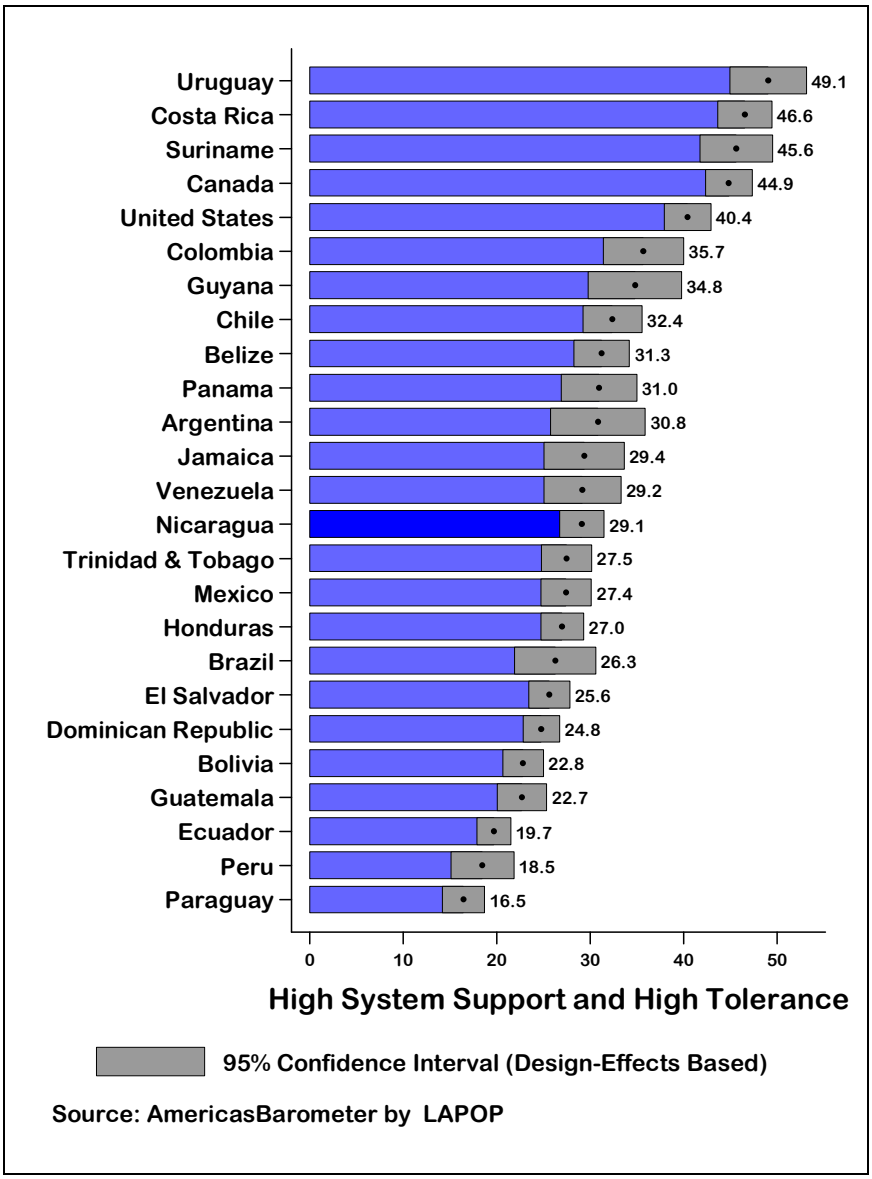


Figure V.8. Support for Stable Democracy in Comparative Perspective

b) Who is more likely to Support Stable Democracy?

What are the factors that best predict that a Nicaraguan will hold this combination of supposedly democracy-enhancing values? We employ logistic regression to analyze various factors that theory suggests should matter. We include the crime and corruption variables already introduced, referencing both personal experience with and the perception of each. We include a number of economic variables concerning an individual's employment status, household employment, and whether one's situation has changed for the worse in the previous year, as well as attribution of responsibility for the economic crisis. We also include measures of Nicaraguans' demographic traits and social geography. Finally, two political attitudes are included. The first is simply the respondent's expressed interest in politics, and the other her view of the incumbent president's performance.

Figure V.9 presents the results of the regression analysis, and demonstrates that very few variables actually affect Nicaraguans' membership in the stable democracy group. Those who perceive high levels of corruption and those who are unemployed are less likely to hold these views. No other crime or

corruption or economic situation or attitude comes into play. In contrast the two political variables, interest in politics (weakly) and approval of the incumbent president's performance (very strongly), elevate the likelihood of being both system-supportive and politically tolerant.

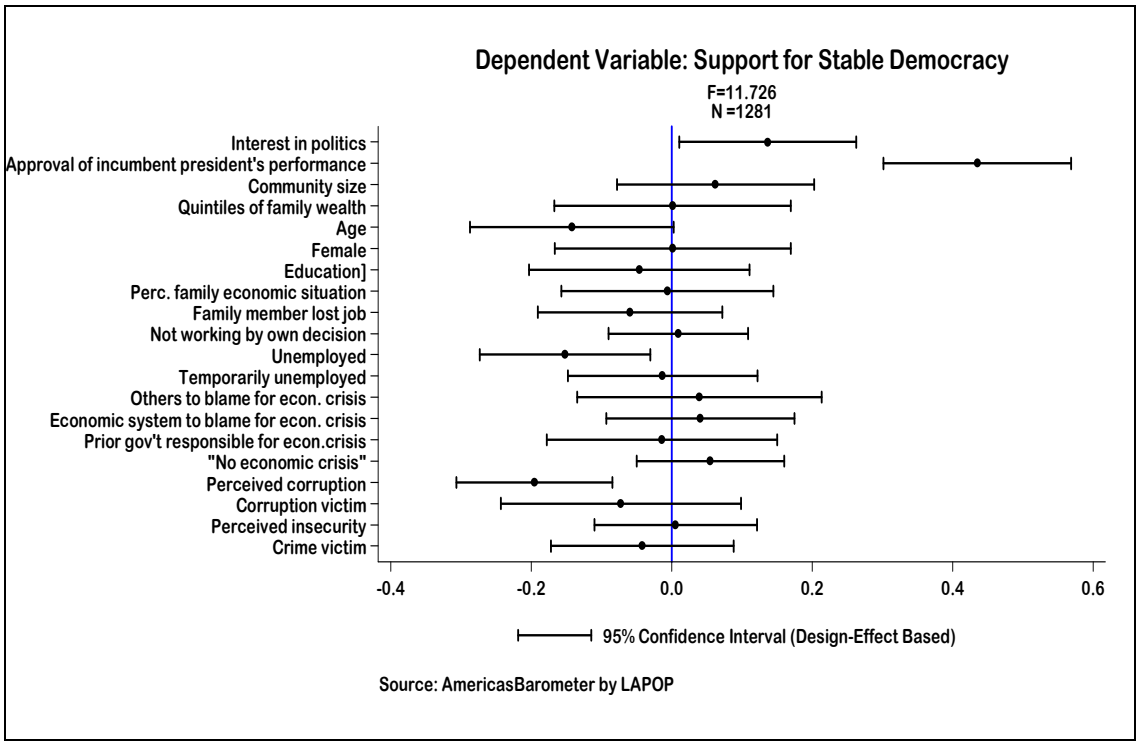


Figure V.9. Who is More Likely to Support Stable Democracy in Nicaragua?

Figures V.10 and V.11 illustrate the impact of these significant variables on the likelihood of holding the stable democracy attitude combination. The unemployed are over 10 percent less likely to be in the stable democracy group than are the employed or those voluntarily not working outside the home (Figure V.10, left hand). Similarly, Figure V.10, right hand, shows that those most interested in politics are over 10 percent more likely to be in this group "Stable Democracy" than are those who are not. Figure V.11 (left hand) shows that perceiving oneself to be very safe increases membership in the high tolerance-high system support group by a modest four percentage points over those who feel very unsafe. In sharp contrast, Figure V.11 (right hand) shows that those who view President Ortega's performance as very good are almost 30 percent more likely to be politically tolerant and system supportive than those who view his performance very negatively.

We are left to conclude that, other than unemployment, economic factors matter rather little in Nicaragua in 2010 in determining the size of the group of citizens most likely to support stable democracy. Nicaraguans' political ideologies are not shaped by economic factors. In contrast, the issue that matters the most is a political one. In Nicaragua in 2010 those who most approve of President Ortega's performance are considerably more likely to support stable democracy than their less-approving fellow citizens. The size of this segment of the population has grown sharply since 2008, mainly driven by an increase in reported political tolerance.

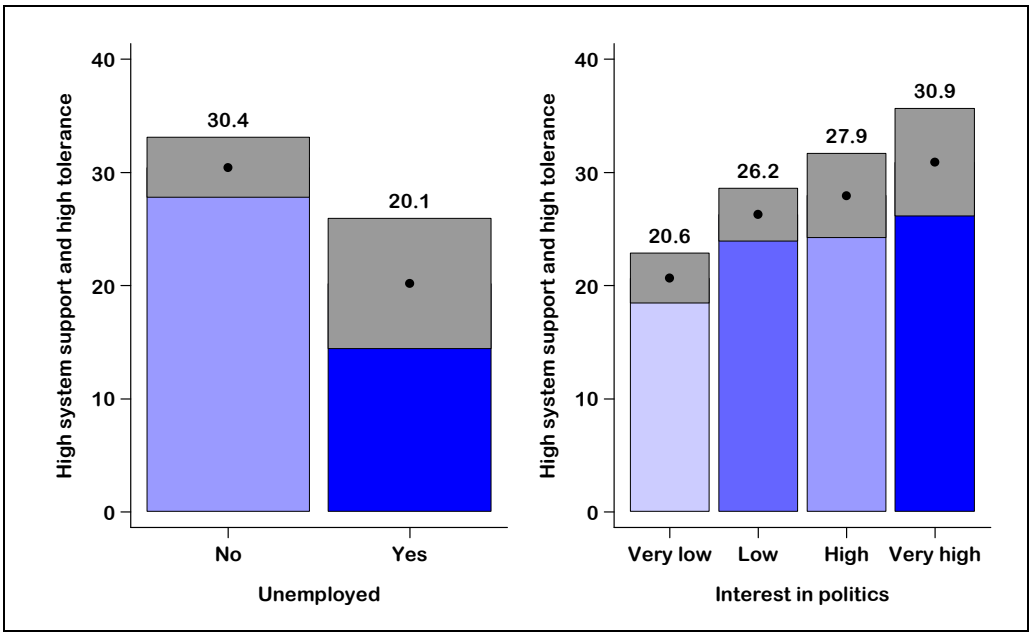


Figure V.10. Effect of Unemployment and Interest in Politics on Support for Stable Democracy in Nicaragua (2010)

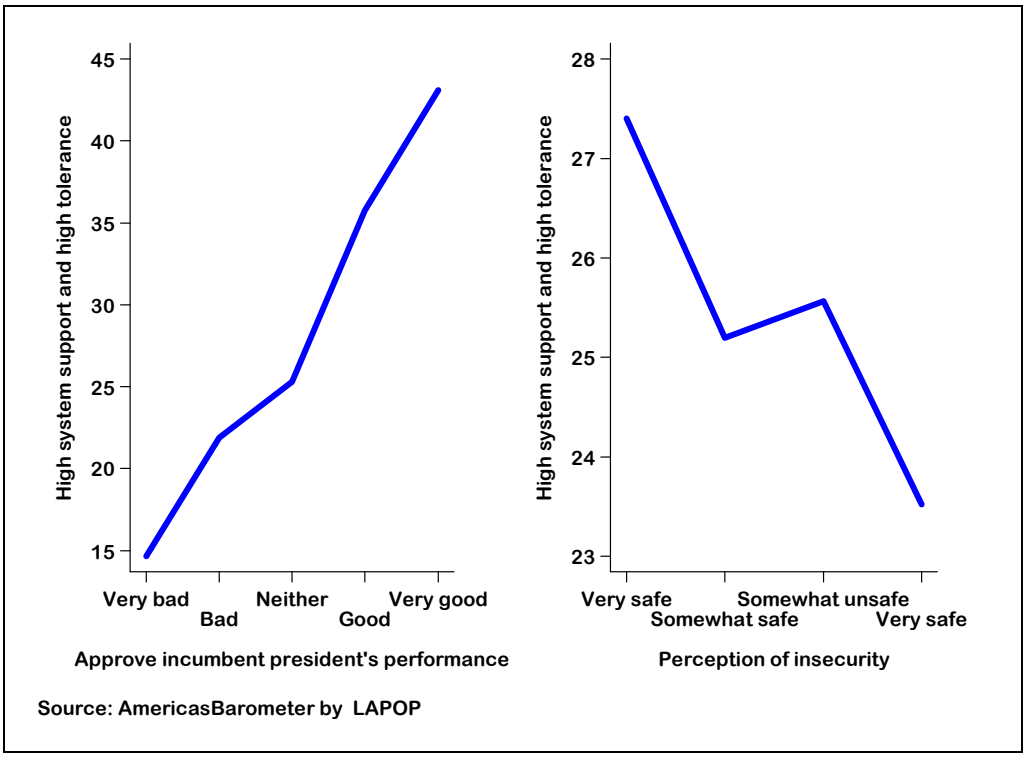


Figure V.11. Effects of Presidential Approval and Perceived Insecurity on Stable Democracy, Nicaragua (2010)

We have so far shown where Nicaraguans stand in 2010 on key attitudes related to the support for stable democracy, namely the combination of support for institutions in general and of political tolerance. The somewhat complicated answer is that in 2010 they are slightly on the plus side of support for their political institutions, and well on the plus side of political tolerance. The places the country in the stable democracy group as of 2010, although there are roughly the same percent of Nicaraguans in the unstable democracy (high tolerance but low system support) category for 2010.

Nicaragua was in the unstable democracy group in 2008 and on the line between unstable democracy and democracy at risk in 2006 and 2004. If one were to imagine a plot of a point representing the mean value of both tolerance and system support on perpendicular axes for Nicaraguans over time, that point would wobble around the system support midpoint and slightly on the plus side of the tolerance midpoint. It essentially moves back and forth between the unstable and stable democracy categories. Between 2008 and 2010 substantial growth in tolerance and modest growth in system support among Nicaraguans accounted for a significant change and thus for the country's moving into the stable democracy category.

On balance, what this reveals is that the political culture of Nicaragua, at least vis-à-vis the scheme based on tolerance and system support, has been somewhat unstable in the mid and later 2000s, but also much of the time has changed within the error margins of our measures. That is, most of the changes between surveys in the stable democracy measure and in its components were not statistically significant from year to year. The notable exception was the 9 percent increase from 2008 to 2010 change. Were this sort of movement (or lack thereof) taking place around a high stable democracy score for the country (such as Costa Rica's scores over time) we might interpret it as indicating a persistent cultural pattern amenable to stable democracy. Nicaragua's scores lie so close to the scale means on both tolerance and system support that we can conclude only that that the stable democracy scheme tells us very little other than that Nicaragua has been (at least until 2010) difficult to characterize clearly in those terms. The most recent movement for 2010 suggests progress toward the stable democracy in Nicaragua as citizens became slightly more system supportive and considerably more tolerant.

We turn now to a more finely grained examination of citizens' views of specific institutions in Nicaragua. The system support measure touches mostly on very general referents (the court system, pride in the system). We now ask about Nicaraguans' trust in a dozen specific institutions.

Legitimacy of Other Democratic Institutions

Figure V.12 presents Nicaraguans' evaluations of ("confidence" or trust in) particular institutions in Nicaragua on a 100 point scale. Ten of the twelve are governmental or government-related institutions, and two others (the media and Catholic Church) lie outside the government arena. Nicaraguans express their greatest trust in the Army. Its evaluation is 66.2 scale points, followed in descending order by the media (65.3), and the Catholic Church (63.2). The National Police ranks in fourth place in 2010 with a score well above the public confidence scale midpoint of 54.7. All the other institutions rated fall below the scale midpoint, indicating a balance of slight to moderate *mistrust*. In the mid to low 40s are "the national Government," the judicial system, the President, and elections. The Supreme Court of Justice and the Supreme Electoral Council are tied in popular confidence with a score of 40.3. The National Assembly ranks next to last with a confidence score of 39.5, and the institutions which the Assembly's delegates represent – political parties -- rank last at 30.3.

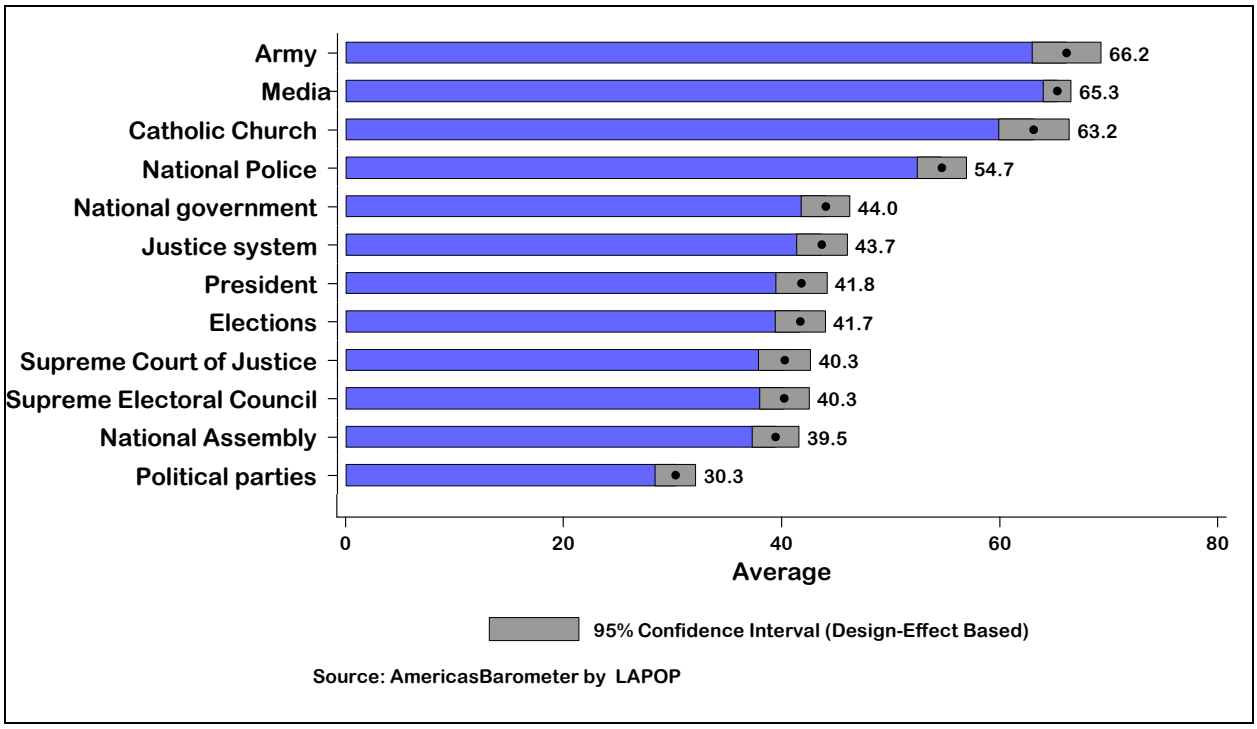


Figure V.12. Trust in Specific Institutions, Nicaragua 2010

How stable are these institutional confidence evaluations by Nicaraguans? Are there institutions that have lost or gained ground meaningfully since the AmericasBarometer surveys began in 2004? Figure V.13 spells out the changes in institutional trust. We see that the highest-evaluated institution has also gained steadily and significantly in citizen trust since 2004, rising 12 scale points. In second place overall in 2010, popular confidence in the Catholic Church remained unchanged from 2008. Media confidence was at its highest during the first survey taken during the Bolaños administration, and then dropped 11 points in 2006 before recovering significantly to present levels. Public trust in the Catholic Church has varied insignificantly around scores in the low 60s over the period. Another institution whose score has remained statistically quite stable over the four surveys is the National Police, with scores in the lower 50s.

Several institutions located below the midpoint on the institutional confidence scale had significant increases (Figure V.13). One was the national government, which rose from a trust score of 37.4 in 2006 to 44 in 2010. The president's evaluation (only available for the Ortega administration) rose from 33.3 to 41.8 between 2008 and 2010. Institutions that clearly lost popular trust over this in period were the Supreme Electoral Council, which declined from 47.3 to 40.3, elections which declined from 48.2 in 2004 to 41.7 in 2010. The Supreme Court of Justice whose evaluation eroded from 43.3 to 36.2 in 2008 before recuperating several points in 2010. The Electoral Council and the Supreme Court have each been at the center of a storm of criticism over their actions and or effectiveness over the last few years, including the much criticized 2008 municipal elections and court rulings vacating the corruption conviction of former president Arnoldo Alemán and another allowing President Daniel Ortega and other incumbent officials to seek reelection despite an apparent constitutional prohibition of self-succession. These likely played a role in eroded popular trust in these institutions.

Finally, Figure V.13 shows that legislatures and parties seem enjoy little trust among Nicaraguans. They have been in the two lowest positions since 2004 (the mid 30s and mid to upper 20s on the confidence scale, respectively). The Assembly, with a majority of opposition votes has been out of

session for extended periods in this term and has been unable to enact reforms to several important laws. Political parties and their spokespeople, of course, reside at the heart of the contentiousness and (in)action of the National Assembly. Parties also continuously jockey for position and to forge alliances with an eye toward the upcoming 2011 national elections. While such maneuvering is typical of legislative bodies and parties in democratic countries, these behaviors nevertheless expose the parties and the Assembly to unfavorable press coverage and, apparently, to popular mistrust.

Two of the four most trusted institutions in Nicaragua – the Catholic Church and the news media -- are not part of the government at all. Indeed it is interesting that the only two governmental institutions in Nicaragua that earn consistent positive trust levels are the army and the police – institutions that, prior to the revolution and transition to democracy, constituted the principal tools of repression of the Somoza dictatorship. One might well expect Nicaraguans to expect the worst of these security institutions, yet the fact that they are held in relatively high regard indicates that they are perceived to be behaving greatly better than the old National Guard. In contrast, Nicaragua's other governmental entities and the political parties earn moderate mistrust from Nicaraguan citizens.

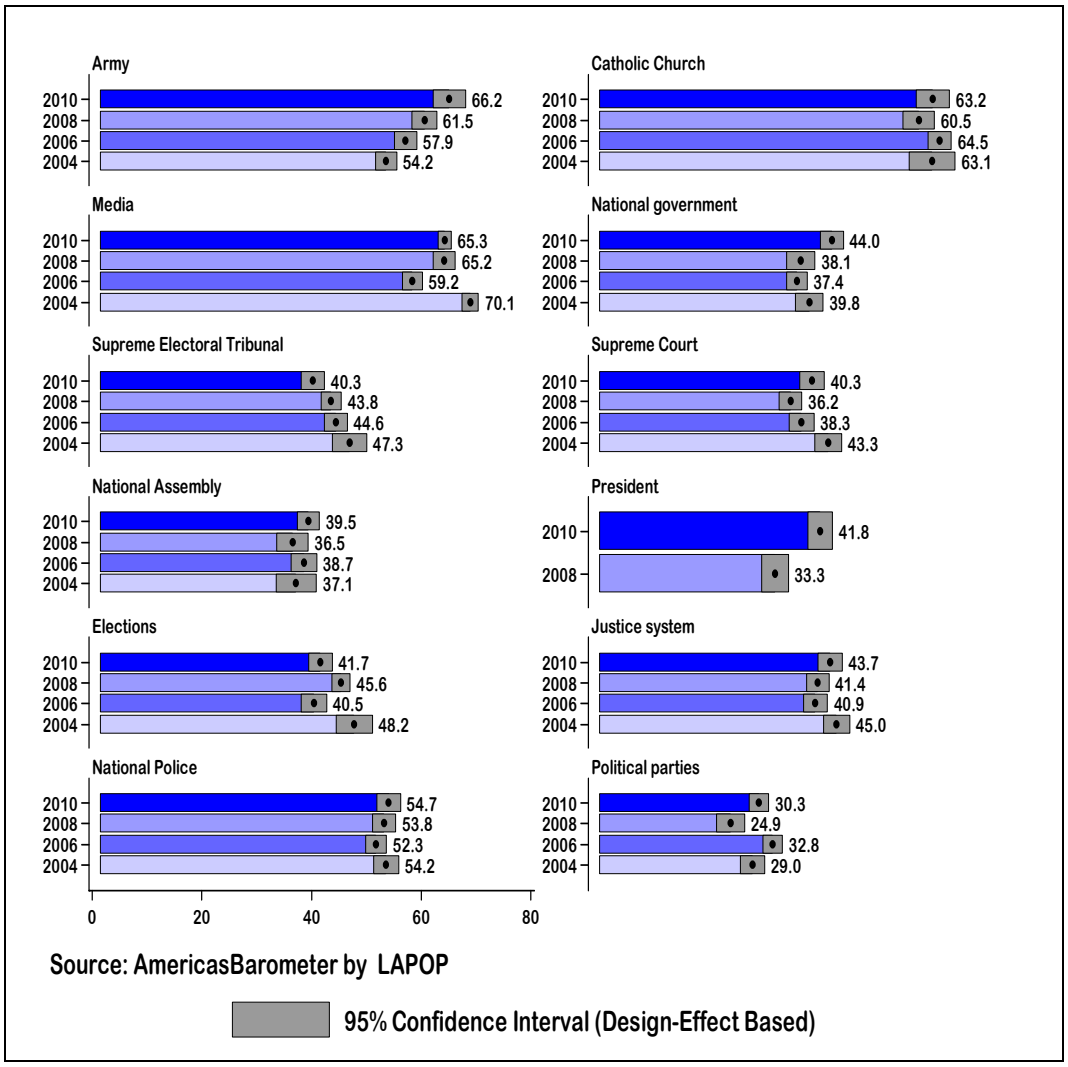


Figure V.13. Trust in Nicaraguan Institutions by Year

Because the analysis so far has revealed that Nicaraguans fall near the middle of the stable democracy components, and because their evaluations of institutions tend to express more institutional

mistrust than trust for eight of twelve institutions, the picture so far remains something of a muddle. It is therefore useful to ask what other indicators might shed further light on Nicaraguan political culture. We turn now to some different attitudes related to democracy itself.

Attitudes toward Democracy

We have shown where Nicaraguans stand in 2010 on key attitudes related to the support for stable democracy, namely the combination of support for institutions in general and of political tolerance. As noted they are slightly on the positive side of support for their political institutions, and well on the positive side of political tolerance. They tend to express, as well, modest mistrust (lack of confidence) in many national institutions except for the Army, Police, Catholic Church and the communications media. What of their beliefs about democracy? Do they prefer democracy over other systems of government? Are they satisfied with democracy as it presents itself in the Nicaraguan case? Can these attitudes tell us anything about where Nicaraguan political culture may be headed?

Support for Democracy

We asked our interviewees to respond to the premise attributed to Winston Churchill that democracy is the best form of government.[73] They were asked: *"Democracy may have some problems, but it is better than any other form of government. To what point do you agree or disagree with this statement?"* Those responding that they completely disagreed with it received scores of zero, those in full agreement got scores of 100.

Figure V.14 presents the average scores of citizens of the Americas on this support for democracy question and locates Nicaraguans in the array. The responses for 2010 vary from a high of 86.2 in Uruguay to a low of 60.1 in Peru. Nicaragua's mean score of 71.3 places the country slightly below the regional mean of 73. Nicaragua is the median case on support for democracy, with half the countries scoring above it and half below. Nicaraguans' score on support for democracy (the belief that it is the best system of government) is not significantly different from that of at least eight other countries, including Canada, Colombia, Bolivia, and Jamaica. Nicaraguans express significantly greater support for democracy than do their regional neighbors in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador (scores in the low 60s), but less than Costa Ricans (80.4).

[73] His actual argument was that "democracy is the worst form of government in the world, except for all the others."

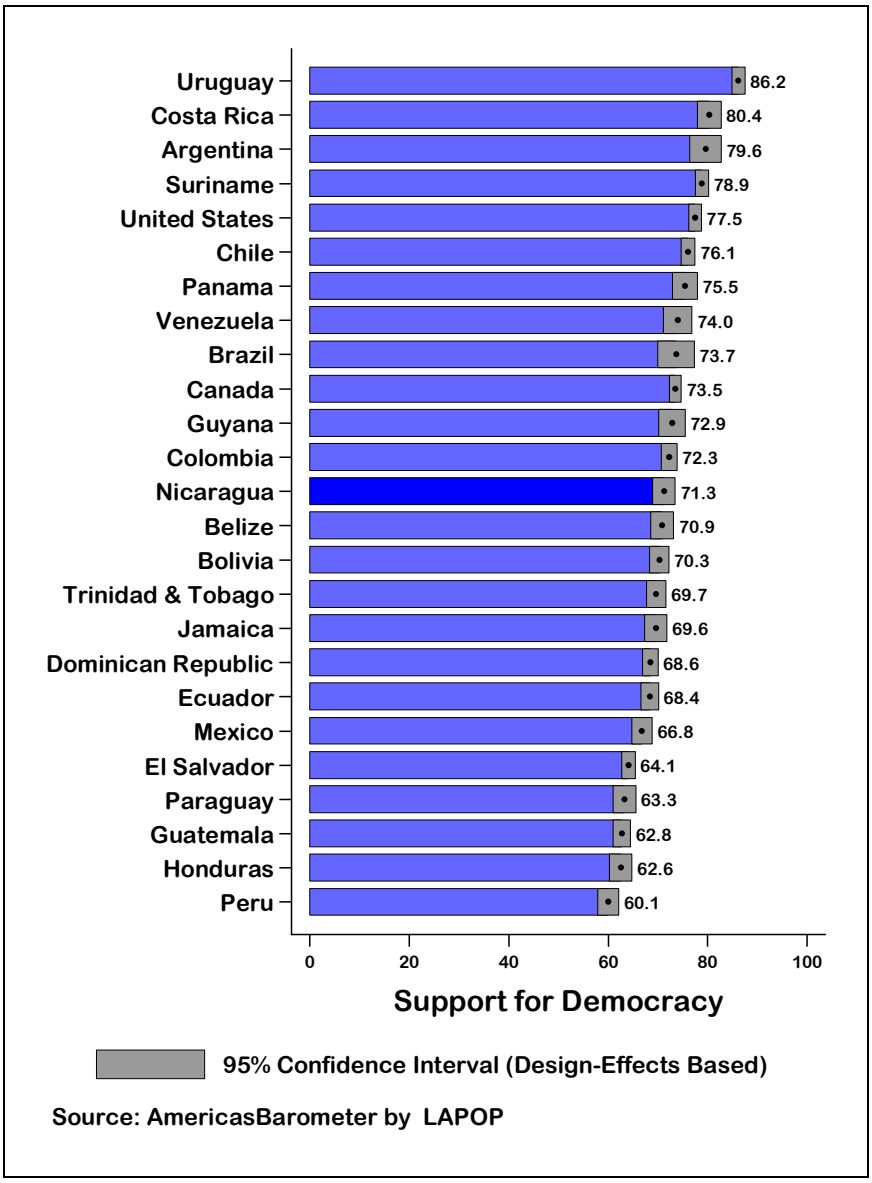


Figure V.14. Support for Democracy in Comparative Perspective

How have Nicaraguans' attitudes supporting democracy evolved since 2004? Have they been stable? Figure V.15 shows the support for democracy measure for each of the four surveys taken by the AmericasBarometer. Support for democracy was lower in 2004 (67.9) and 2006 (60.4) than it has been subsequently. A large increase of 12.5 scale points occurred between 2006 and 2008. The value for 2010 (71.3) is not significantly different from the 2008 score of 72.9. So, Nicaraguans since 2008 express markedly higher explicit support for democracy as the best system of government than they did during the middle years of the decade now ending.

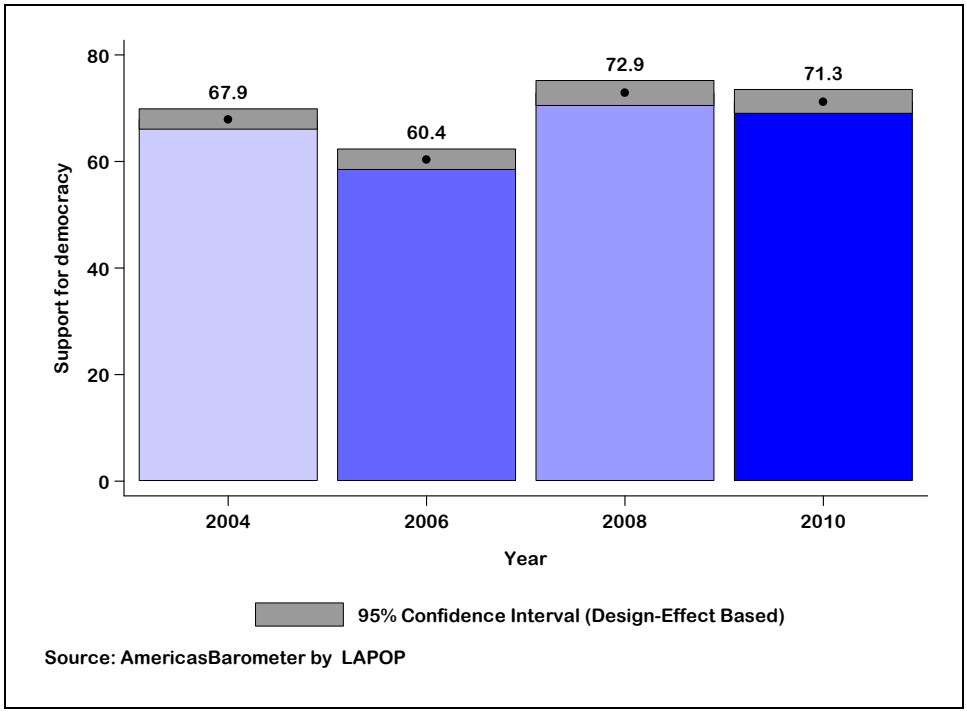


Figure V.15. Support for Democracy Over Time, Nicaragua

In summary, explicit support for democracy reveals some volatility in Nicaragua since 2004, but the trend has been upward. Nicaraguans express strong agreement with democracy as the best system of government. This is an encouraging political development for those who believe that such beliefs undergird democracy and might constrain the inclination of antidemocratic elites to undermine the system. Many observers believe that recent Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ) ruling allowing President Ortega and others to seek immediate reelection to office, although ostensibly prohibited by the constitution which represents just such an action against democratic principles. We asked Nicaraguans *"Do you agree with the decision of the Supreme Court of Justice that permits the reelection of President Ortega?"* Sixty-nine percent of Nicaraguans *disagree* with this decision, and 55 percent say they disagree with it strongly. This indicates some coherence between Nicaraguans' support for democracy and their corresponding view of the behavior of critically important national elite, the Supreme Court.

Figure V.16 pursues the relationship between views on the 2008 CSJ ruling on presidential reelection and democratic/authoritarian values. Nicaraguans who disapprove of the ruling express significantly higher levels of support for democracy and political tolerance, important democratic norms. Further analysis indicates the prevalence of similar patterns for other measures of support for democracy (not represented graphically here to conserve space). Also consistent with the pattern, those who supported the Court's ruling expressed significantly higher levels of approval for certain authoritarian or antidemocratic norms. These included delegative democracy (the notion that the president should be able to rule without checks and balances), approval of a hypothetical executive coup d'état, and approval of the president's being able to govern without the National Assembly or CSJ "should the country confront difficult moments." Overall, support for democratic norms is among Nicaraguans. The expression of antidemocratic norms was much less widespread.

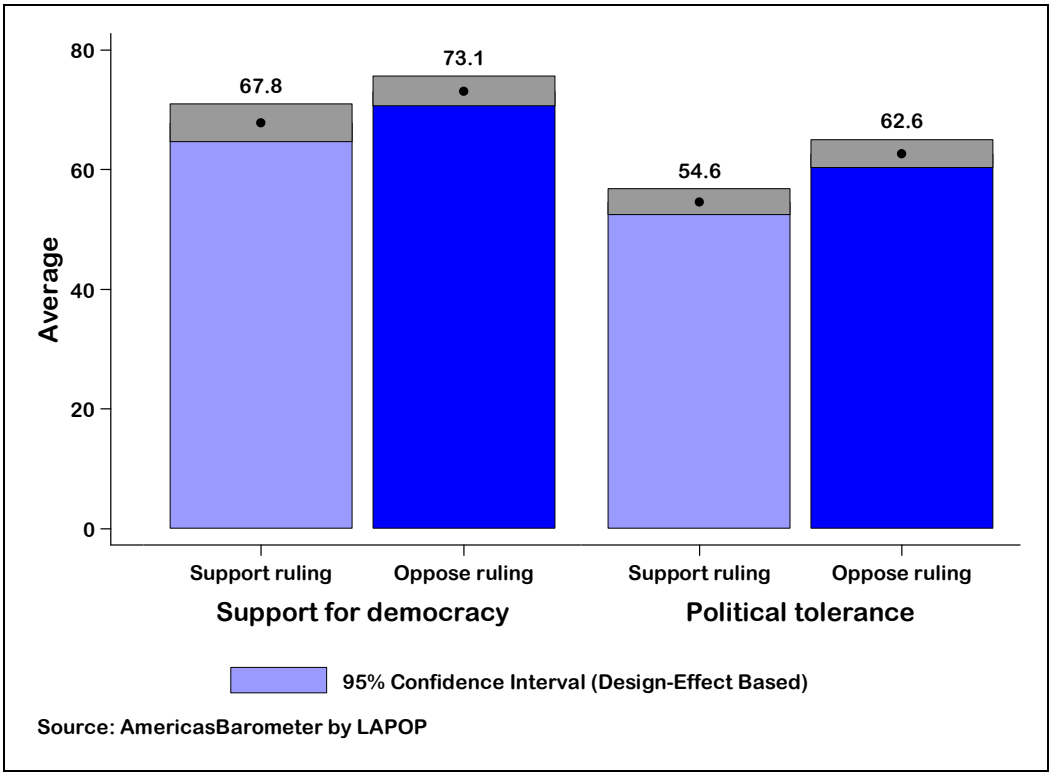


Figure V.16. Agreement with Supreme Court Ruling on Ortega by Tolerance and Support for Democracy

Democratic and Antidemocratic Norms Explored

Because the analysis to this point has left a somewhat incomplete picture of Nicaraguans' political attitudes we shall further explore the cognitive space opened up by the rich data offered in AmericasBarometer surveys. In particular we are interested in whether there are distinctively democratic and antidemocratic dimensions within Nicaragua's political culture. We begin with two fundamental assumptions: that constitutional democracy involves citizen participation in politics and that it requires restraints upon governing institutions to prevent them from abusing or limiting citizens' rights. At the level of the political culture of democracy these principles would be expressed as popular support for fundamental participation rights of citizens (the essence of democracy), a commitment to the idea of democracy as such (embracing democratic rule as "the only game in town"), a belief that officials should obey the law, and support for restraints upon executive authority and the armed forces.

From the panoply of items laid out in the 2010 Nicaragua questionnaire (see the Appendix) we initially selected roughly 40 questions related to these principles. This embarrassment of riches called for some way to map the cognitive space of Nicaraguans and reduce the confusion of too many variables in the analysis. In essence, we needed to determine whether there might be some structure or dimensionality to be found among political attitudes toward democracy. A time-tested technique available and the one employed here to undertake this effort of discerning structure is known as exploratory factor analysis, developed and widely employed by psychologists to explore the structure of human attitudes. Factor analysis works by intercorrelating large numbers of variables and seeking patterns among them based on how interrelated they are. The co varying variable clusters are identified as dimensions or factors can then be summarized as distinct indexes or summary measures of a collection of related attitudes. This allows

reducing many variables to a few. We began with the initial set of many items and winnowed them to a smaller set, which allowed us to employ factor analysis to identify four clear and distinct dimensions of attitudes related to democracy among Nicaraguans in 2010.[74] These are identified and summarized in Table V.3.

There are four factors related to democratic/antidemocratic norms; two are clearly democratic norms, and two antidemocratic or authoritarian norms. The first factor is the support for participation rights and for restraints on presidential power. The second one is an expressed preference for democracy over other systems of rule. The third and fourth factors are support for executive (presidential) authoritarianism, and military authoritarianism/rejection of the rule of law. The contributing variables to each factor form a distinct cluster. For each of the dimensions we constructed an index (Table V.3) ranging from zero (lowest level of the norm) to 100 (the highest level of the norm). The table presents each dimension's means and standard deviations, and the simple bivariate correlations among the four indexes.

Nicaraguans manifest strong support for both democratic norms dimension. Their mean score on explicit preference for democracy is 85.7 out of 100. Support for participation rights/executive restraints averages 70.1. In short, both of these average scores place Nicaraguans firmly in the democratic end of these norms. These democratic attitude factors are not identical, although they are related to each other. The simple correlation between them is .133, indicating a modest but significant tendency for those who hold one set of attitudes also to hold the other set. Thus Nicaraguans who express a preference for democracy as the best form of government also somewhat tend to favor extensive participation rights for ordinary citizens, for regime critics, and to favor constitutional restraints on presidential power.

Turning to the antidemocratic attitudinal dimensions in Table V.3 we see that support for executive authoritarianism is very low – a Nicaraguans strong position of support for democracy. On this dimension (agreeing that the president should be able to close the Supreme Court of Justice or National Assembly during difficult times or should not be subjected to other institutional checks and balances) the mean score is 11 out of 100. The fourth dimension – military authoritarianism-rejection of the rule of law – has a much higher average level of acceptance among Nicaraguans at 40.9 out of 100. While this is not the majority opinion, many Nicaraguans still hold beliefs that allow them to justify a military coup under certain circumstances and that officials do not always need to follow the law. These items are related to each other (their correlation is a moderate and significant 0.121) but not identical. Finally, as one would expect executive authoritarianism relates negatively and significantly to both of the democratic norms dimensions.

[74] The technique used was principle components analysis with *oblimin* rotation. From a final set of variables four factors emerged with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. The bottom half of Table V.3 presents the factor correlations among these four dimensions.

Table V.3. Democratic and Antidemocratic Attitudes among Nicaraguans, 2010

Political Culture Indexes	Democratic norms		Antidemocratic norms	
	Supports participation rights and executive restraints[a]	Prefers democracy over alternative systems[b]	Support for executive authori-tarianism[c]	Military authoritarian-ism and rejection of rule of law[d]
Mean score on index	70.1	85.7	11.0	40.9
Standard deviation of index	19.2	23.3	27.9	32.7
	Inter-item Correlations (Pearson's r)			
Prefers democracy over alternatives	.133**			
Executive authoritarianism	-.215**	-.146**		
Military authoritarianism-rejection of rule of law	-.145**	-.065*	.121**	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

[a] Index combines support for basic participation rights, support for participation rights for regime critics, and opposition to unrestricted executive power.
[b]Index combines three items in which respondents explicitly state their preference for democracy as a system of government.
[c]Index combines items in which respondents endorse presidential actions that violate constitutional checks on executive power.
[d]Index combines support for coups d' etat and rejection of the rule of law.

To sum up, on one of four democratic/antidemocratic norms dimensions (support for coups) Nicaraguans weigh in only moderately on the democratic side, but on the other three they are strongly within democratic territory. They embrace democracy as a system of government, support participation by all including regime critics, and strongly reject executive authoritarianism. However, many citizens (a large minority but not a majority) also hold a view that police and justice officials need not obey the law when pursuing criminals and that military coups may sometimes be justifiable. While on several dimensions Nicaraguans express aspects of their democratic culture strongly, in another there persists a relatively weak belief that officials should respect the rule of law and that the military should abstain from intervening unconstitutionally in national politics.

What are we to make of this pattern? It could be interpreted as revealing a lack of full consolidation of democratic values in this country. This seems somewhat counterintuitive because for decades the military of the Somozas, the National Guard, was an instrument of extensive harm to the polity. However, we also recall that the Army and National Police of 2010, now separate entities, are by some distance the most trusted of Nicaragua's formal political institutions. That security forces can be thought of as possible solutions to grave national problems speaks well of the institutional development of the Army and Police in recent decades. By implication, however, these facts also emphasize how poorly the people believe other public sector institutions perform in contemporary Nicaragua. The persistence of coup justification and acceptance of lawbreaking by the police at such levels reveals that

Nicaragua still has some political cultural norms in which large minorities hold antidemocratic attitudes, despite holding many other strongly democratic norms. Thus it appears that the consolidation of a coherent, consistent culture of values supportive of democracy remains a work in progress in Nicaragua.

Satisfaction with Democracy

We turn now to how Nicaraguans assess the actual amount of democracy their system has achieved. As we can see in Figure V.17 Nicaraguans are almost evenly divided over whether they are satisfied or not satisfied with "how democracy works." Just over 51 percent are dissatisfied, and just fewer than 49 percent are satisfied. Nicaraguans, we may surmise, thus see room for improvement in the performance of their now 20 year old democracy. What we learned above about the lack of trust in a majority of national institutions may help explain this statistically even division on satisfaction with Nicaraguan democracy.

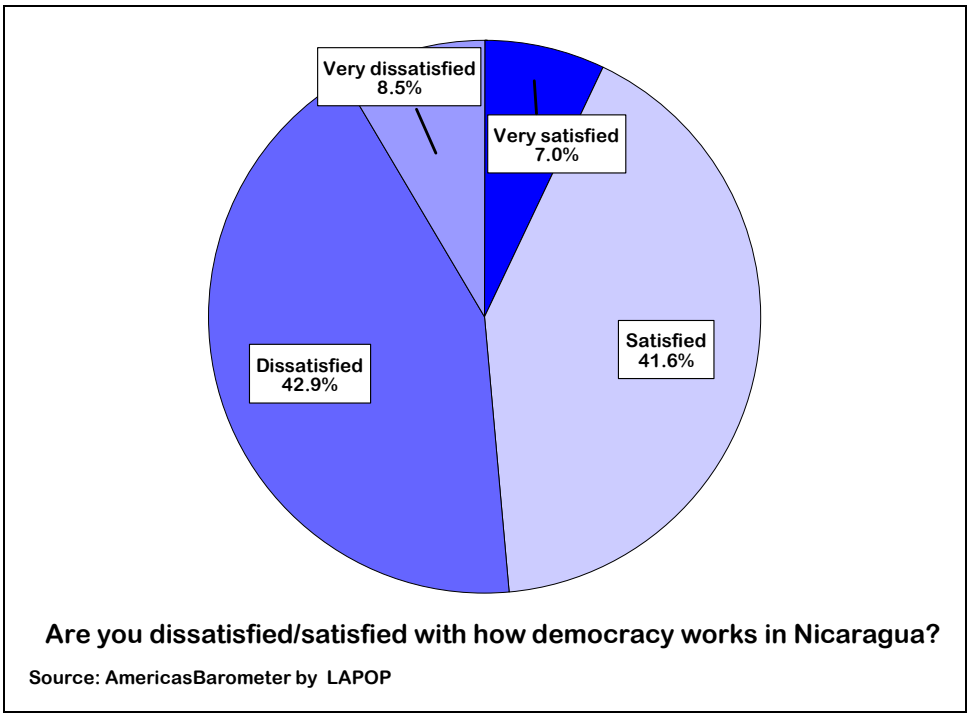


Figure V.17. Satisfaction with Democracy, Nicaragua (2010)

How do Nicaraguans compare to others in the Americas on satisfaction with their democracy? Figure V.18 reveals that Nicaraguans rank ninth from the bottom in satisfaction with their democracy, with 48.6 percent expressing satisfaction. That is almost 19 percent fewer people than are satisfied with democracy in Uruguay (the highest-ranked country), and 14 percent fewer than in Central American isthmus neighbors Panama and Costa Rica (each with 62.5 percent satisfied). Only six percent more Nicaraguans express satisfaction with democracy than Guyana's, who occupy the bottom end of the distribution of satisfaction with their democracy's performance.

Of particular interest in the regional distribution shown in Figure V.18 is the company Nicaragua keeps in the middle third of the distribution. Nicaraguans' level of satisfaction with the performance of their political system in 2010 was not statistically different from those of Venezuelans, Guatemalans, or Paraguayans. Most interesting of all, perhaps, is that citizens of Nicaragua are not statistically different

from those of the United States in their satisfaction with how democracy works in their respective countries.

Indeed, what strikes one about the evidence in Figure V.18 is how low overall is satisfaction with democracy in the Americas. The median level of satisfaction with how democracy works is only 50.6 percent. Democracy is still young and developing in many of the low-satisfaction countries, but that does nothing to explain the very low satisfaction level for the United States, the oldest democracy in the survey.

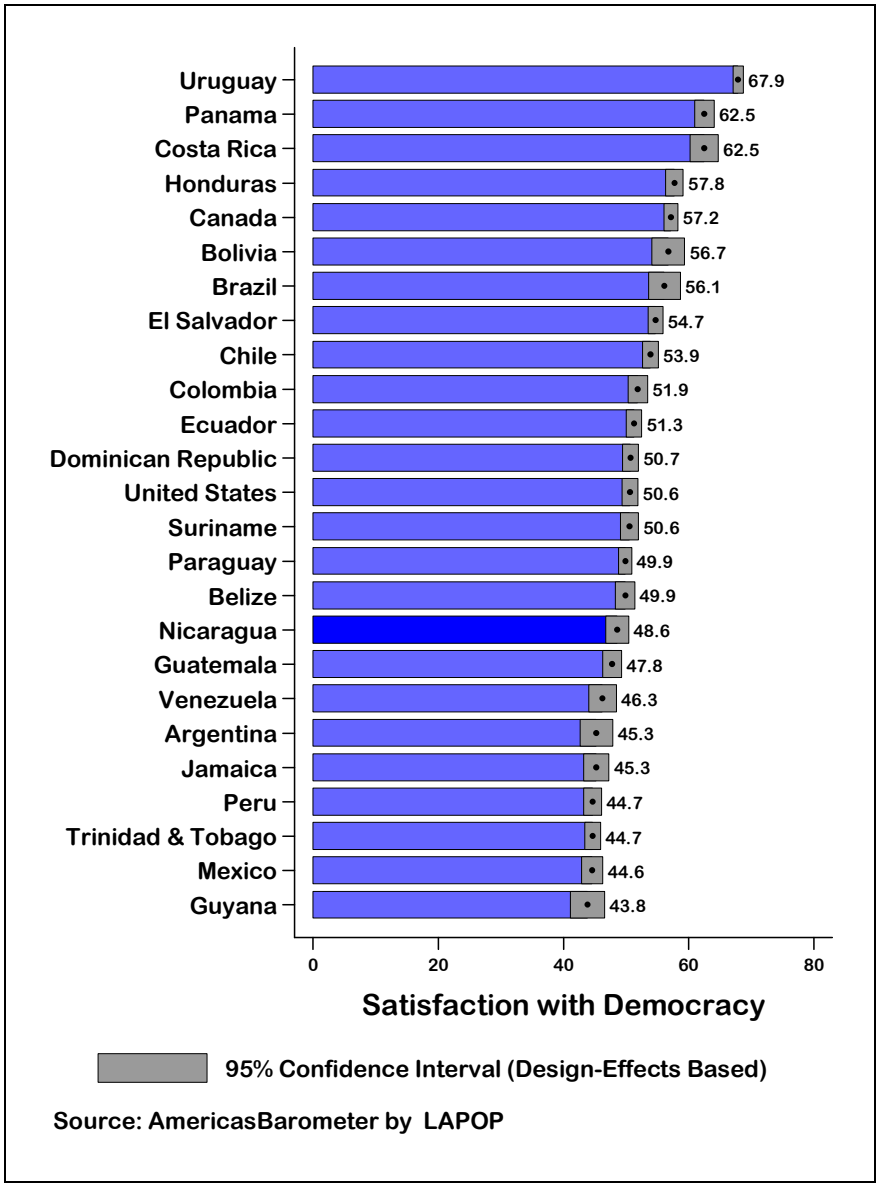


Figure V.18. Satisfaction with Democracy in Comparative Perspective (2010)

How has satisfaction with democracy changed over time in recent Nicaraguan history? Figure V.19 graphs the percent satisfied with how democracy is working. Nicaraguans were happiest with their democracy's performance in 2004 (51 percent). This level then declined significantly to 45.7 percent in 2006. The satisfaction level has increased gradually to 48.6 percent in 2010.

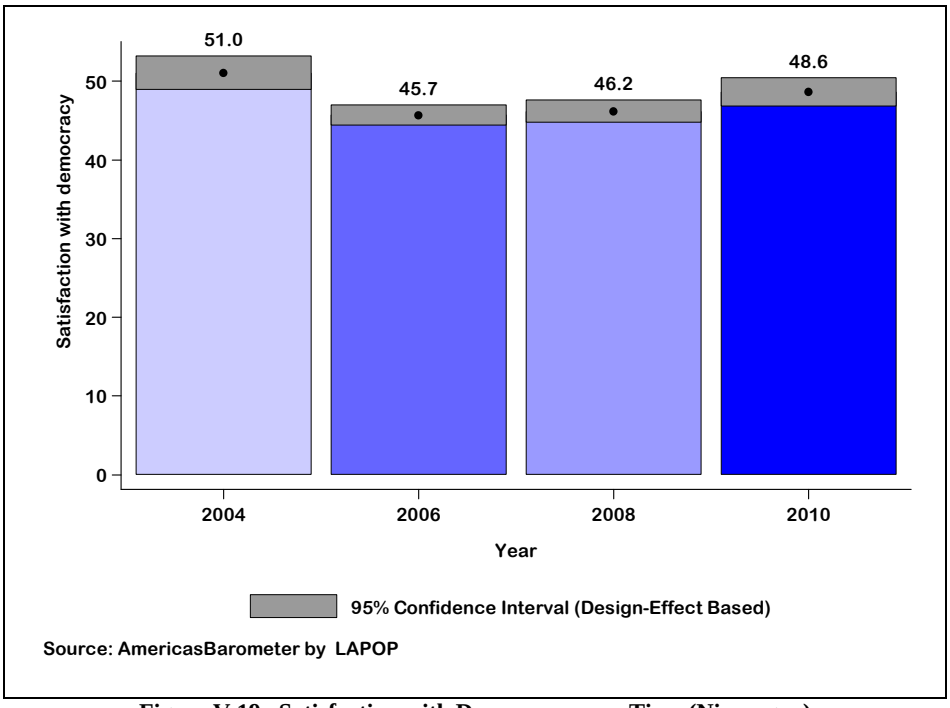


Figure V.19. Satisfaction with Democracy over Time (Nicaragua)

Sources of Satisfaction with How Democracy Works in Nicaragua

Why do some Nicaraguans feel satisfied and some dissatisfied with how they believe democracy to be working in their countries? We have considered a number of variables in this chapter that should be considered theoretically relevant – demographics, social geography, economic experiences, perception of the severity of the economic crisis and attribution of blame for it, political factors such as party identification, approval of presidential performance, and the various democratic/antidemocratic norms considered in previous sections. An initial logistic regression of satisfaction with democracy on 31 other variables was performed. It allowed the trimming of the model to 18 variables, the results of which are seen in Figure V.20.

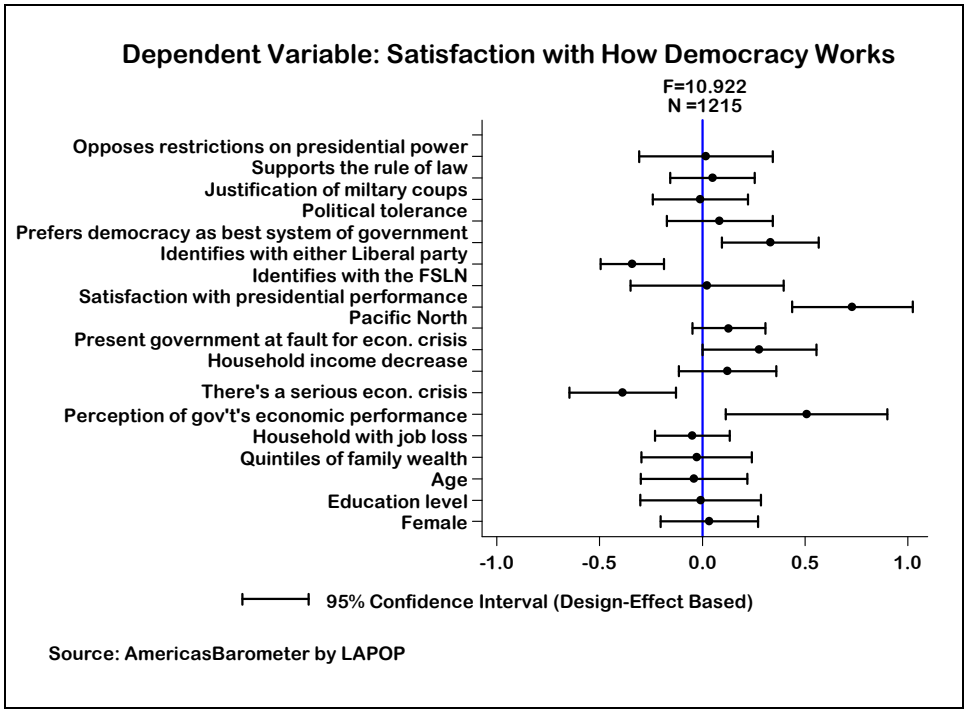


Figure V.20. Determinants of Satisfaction with How Democracy Works, Nicaragua (2010)

These results are surprising in several ways. First, no demographic or social geography traits have any influence on satisfaction with democracy. Democratic satisfaction, in essence, distributes itself evenly among Nicaraguans with respect to class, education, wealth, age and where they live. Second only two matters among the economic experience and perception variables: People who perceive that there is a serious economic crisis are significantly less satisfied with democracy. Independently of that, those who are happy with the government's economic performance are satisfied with how Nicaragua's democracy works.

Democratic/antidemocratic attitudes do not affect satisfaction with democracy, with one exception. That is that citizens who prefer democracy as a political system are more satisfied with how democracy works. And turning finally to political factors, we find two influential variables. Those who approve of President Ortega's performance also strongly tend to be happy with how Nicaraguan democracy works. And not at all surprisingly given that finding, those who identify with either of the opposition Liberal parties tend to express dissatisfaction with Nicaraguan democracy.

In the end, then, economic factors and political culture explain little about approval or disapproval with how democracy works in Nicaragua. What matters on the plus side are a basic preference for democracy as a system of government, approval of the president's performance, and approval of the government's economic stewardship. On the negative side, perceiving a serious economic crisis and identifying with the opposition Liberals drive dissatisfaction with how democracy works.

Conclusions

The theory guiding this chapter is that citizens' attitudes matter for the survival of democracy. They are not the only thing that matters, but they place important constraints on leaders. The first half of the chapter proposes a now well-tested scheme arguing that democratic stability is best served by a configuration of citizen values that combines system support with tolerance of political participation by regime critics. The more citizens there are with high tolerance and high system support, the more likely stable democracy is.

On the system support component of the scheme, Nicaraguans proved to be at the midpoint of the 100 point scale, and slightly below the median for the Americas. In 2010 system support has risen since a low in 2006. On the tolerance component, Nicaraguans proved to be more tolerant than they are system supportive. While Nicaraguans' average score for 2010 falls in the middle of the range for the Americas in 2010, their expressed tolerance has risen markedly in recent years. The analysis then paid special attention to the most theoretically important group according to the theory – those Nicaraguans who combine both high tolerance and system support. The percentage distributions of respondents among the four categories has tended since 2004 to be relative equal though the "democracy at risk" (low support-low tolerance) group has consistently had the smallest share of Nicaraguans. But in 2010 the stable democracy group grew to rough parity with the unstable democracy configuration (low support-high tolerance) at around 30 percent of the population in each. The growth in the percentage of Nicaraguans with the stable democracy attitudes combination has grown is encouraging. However, the instability of this position in previous years suggests that Nicaraguan political culture is still in flux for both tolerance and system support. This indicated a need to delve further into democratic norms in Nicaragua.

Two further empirical investigations were conducted, one of Nicaraguans' evaluations of (trust in) twelve specific institutions, the other of a broader view of political culture norms. Analysis of institutional trust found that Nicaraguans rank the Army and the National Police higher than any other public sector institutions and are on balance positive about them. They rate all other public institutions as moderately untrustworthy or worse. Among institutions gaining in trust are the Army and the president. Several others suffer eroding trust, including elections and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal.

Additional probing of Nicaraguans' political attitudes also uncovered four major dimensions related to basic assumptions about how democracy must function. Two of these dimensions are democratic norms (a preference for democracy over other systems of governance, and support for participation rights-support for restraints on the executive). Nicaraguans scored strongly in the democratic end of the scales constructed to measure each of these. Two other dimensions represent essentially antidemocratic values (military authoritarianism-rejection of the rule of law, and support for executive authoritarianism). Nicaraguans' average scores on both of these were in the pro-democracy (anti-authoritarian) end of the range (below 50 on a 0-100 scale). Nicaraguans registered very low support for executive authoritarianism (11 on the scale), but they were higher on the military authoritarianism index (41 out of 100). Taken together with the findings about Nicaraguans trending toward the stable democracy configuration and holding predominantly democratic values on most key democratic norms, we get a clearer picture of Nicaraguan democratic political culture. Nicaraguans on average embrace democracy and values that lend themselves to democratic stability. Nevertheless, democratic political culture remains not fully consolidated because of persistent (albeit minority) support for military coups and rejection of the rule of law.

Finally, in this chapter we analyzed the distribution of satisfaction with how democracy works. We found Nicaraguans to be fairly evenly divided on whether they were satisfied with their democracy or not. An analysis of many potential sources for these orientations revealed several things that *do not matter* at all for satisfaction with democracy -- demographics, most economic conditions and perceptions, and most political culture values. However, perception of a really bad economic crisis does lower satisfaction with democracy. In contrast, the factors that matter most for satisfaction with democracy in this still highly polarized society are mainly political attitudes. Satisfaction with presidential performance and government economic performance, as well as a stated preference for democracy, all elevate democratic satisfaction. Identification with the opposition Liberals, on the other hand, diminishes satisfaction with democracy. This pattern highlights that Nicaragua remains quite politically polarized 31 years after the insurrection of 1979 ousted the Somoza regime from power and two decades after the establishment of constitutional, electoral democracy in 1990. Despite recent measureable movement toward stronger democratic norms and system support, democratic values remain in flux. How happy Nicaraguans are about their own democracy depends more than anything on whether they prefer democracy as such, and whether they are happy or unhappy with who is in power.

Chapter VI. Civil Society and Civic participation

Introduction

For almost two decades social scientists and policy makers have focused attention on civil society – citizen involvement in non-state organizations -- and social capital. Their central and most influential "grand hypothesis" is that connections among individuals, especially membership in organizations constitute an essential form of social capital which facilitates trust and cooperation among citizens[75] and thereby fosters democracy.[76] Civil society researchers and theorists argue that this happens because membership in organizations generates other types of social capital that have beneficial or valuable effects for democratization and for the survival of democracies.[77] Rotberg summarizes the central argument well: "Societies work best, and have always worked best, where citizens trust their fellow citizens, work cooperatively with them for common goals, and thus share a civic culture."[78] Gibson sees in the literature a consensus that "civil society seems to be an essential condition for successful democratization."[79]

Such claims raise the question of how civil society and social capital affect Latin America's and the Caribbean's developing and relatively young democracies. Does civic engagement contribute to the consolidation of democracy in the region? Do social capital and its component civil society contribute to a habituation of its citizens to democratic institutions, practices and attitudes – in short, to democracy's entrenchment in national political culture and behavior?[80] If social capital contributes to the development and survival of democracy, it stands to reason that it would have special importance in newly formed democracies such as those in many developing nations. Researchers have found mixed results. Booth and Richard reported on several Latin American countries for the mid 2000s that civil society and community networks affected democratic norms and political participation far more than did interpersonal trust, and that the politico-economic context also affected political capital.[81] Córdova

[75] Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).
[76] IMF, *World Economic Outlook 2009: Crisis and Recovery* (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2009).
[77] John Brehm and Wendy Rahn, "Individual-Level Evidence for the Causes and Consequences of Social Capital," *American Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 3 (1997); Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1997); Pamela Paxton, "Is Social Capital Declining in the United States? A Multiple Indictor Assessment," *American Journal of Sociology* 105(1999).
[78] Robert I. Rotberg, "Social Capital and Political Culture in Africa, America, Australasia, and Europe.," in *Patterns of Social Capital: Stability and Change in Historical Perspective*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[79] James L. Gibson, "Social Networks, Civil Society, and the Prospects for Consolidating Russia's Democratic Transition," *American Journal of Political Science* 45, no. 1 (2001).
[80] Dankwart Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model," *Comparative Politics* 2, no. April (1970); Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).
[81] John A. Booth and Patricia Bayer Richard, "Social and Political Capital in Latin American Democracies," in *Midwest Political Science Association* (Chicago, IL2007); John A. Booth and Patricia Bayer Richard, "Civil Society, Political Capital, and Democratization in Central America," *Journal of Politics* 60, no. 3 (1998); John A. Booth and Patricia Bayer Richard, "Civil Society and Political Context in Central America," *American Behavioral Scientist* 42, no. September (1998); John A. Booth and Patricia Bayer Richard, "A Formaçaõ Do Capital Social Na América Central: Violencia Política, Repressaõ, Dor E Perda " *Opiniaõ Pública* 7, no. 1 (2001).

Guillén found that for 21 countries in the Americas in the mid-2000s social trust was more important than civil society engagement in promoting support for democracy and tolerance.[82]

We investigate these issues in the Nicaraguan context in this chapter, beginning with the social capital norm of interpersonal trust and then turning to civil society engagement and political participation.

Theoretical Background

We begin with interpersonal trust, which civil society theory argues arises from civil society engagement and which plays an important role in the development of other democracy-promoting and democracy-sustaining attitudes and behaviors. Previous AmericasBarometer studies[83] report that interpersonal trust levels among Nicaraguans are at about the median for the Americas.[84]

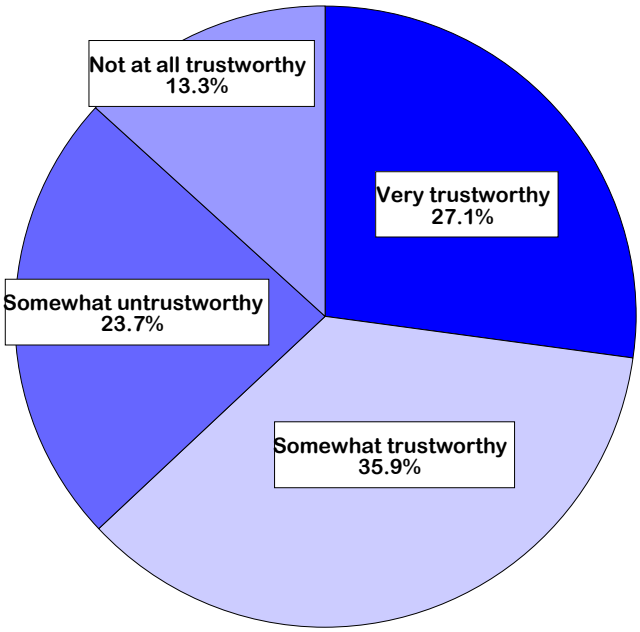
Interpersonal Trust

We measure interpersonal trust using the following item that asks people how trustworthy they believe the members of their community are:

IT1. Now, speaking of the people from around here, would you say that people in this community are very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy or untrustworthy...? **[Read options]**
(1) Very trustworthy (2) Somewhat trustworthy (3) Not very trustworthy
(4) Untrustworthy (88) DK (98)DA

Figure VI.1 reveals that among Nicaraguans 63 percent regards the people in their community to be either trustworthy (35.9 percent) or very trustworthy (27.1 percent). Slightly more than one third regards their neighbors as untrustworthy.

[82] Abby B. Córdova Guillén, *Social Trust, Economic Inequality, and Democracy in the Americas* ed. Mitchell A. Seligson, Challenges to Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean: Evidence from the Americasbarometer 2006-07 (Vanderbilt University, 2008).
[83] See, for example, Perez and Seligson, *Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua: The Impact of Governance*.
[84] *Ibid*.



How trustworthy are the people of this community?

Source: AmericasBarometer by LAPOP

Figure VI.1. Interpersonal Trust, Nicaragua 2010

a) Interpersonal Trust in Comparative Perspective

As Figure VI.2 makes evident, this level of trust places Nicaraguans in the middle of the range for the Americas. Costa Ricans place the most trust in their neighbors (70.2 percent) followed by citizens of the U.S. and Canada. Peruvians and Belizeans express the least trust in their neighbors at around 46 percent. The common trend for the Americas is strong; Nicaraguans are not significantly different from citizens of 16 other countries of the 25.

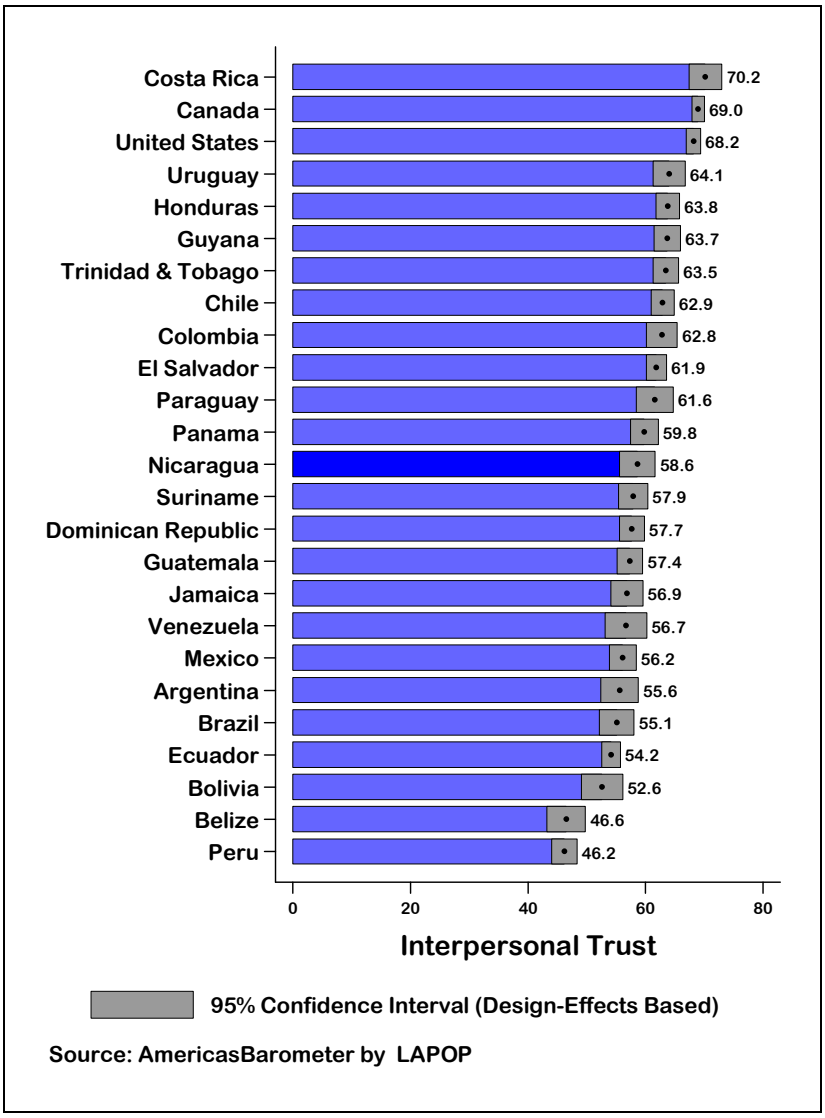


Figure VI.2. Interpersonal Trust in Comparative Perspective

b) Interpersonal Trust Over Time

We have identified a strong regional tendency in the previous figure, with about 58 percent of citizens in 17 countries expressing trust in their neighbors. How stable is interpersonal trust in Nicaragua over time? Figure VI.3 demonstrates that trust levels do not change much. Our LAPOP surveys since 2004 are marked by the absence of any statistically significant difference among the four survey means. This trust level, therefore, seems to be a stable cultural characteristic of Nicaraguans.

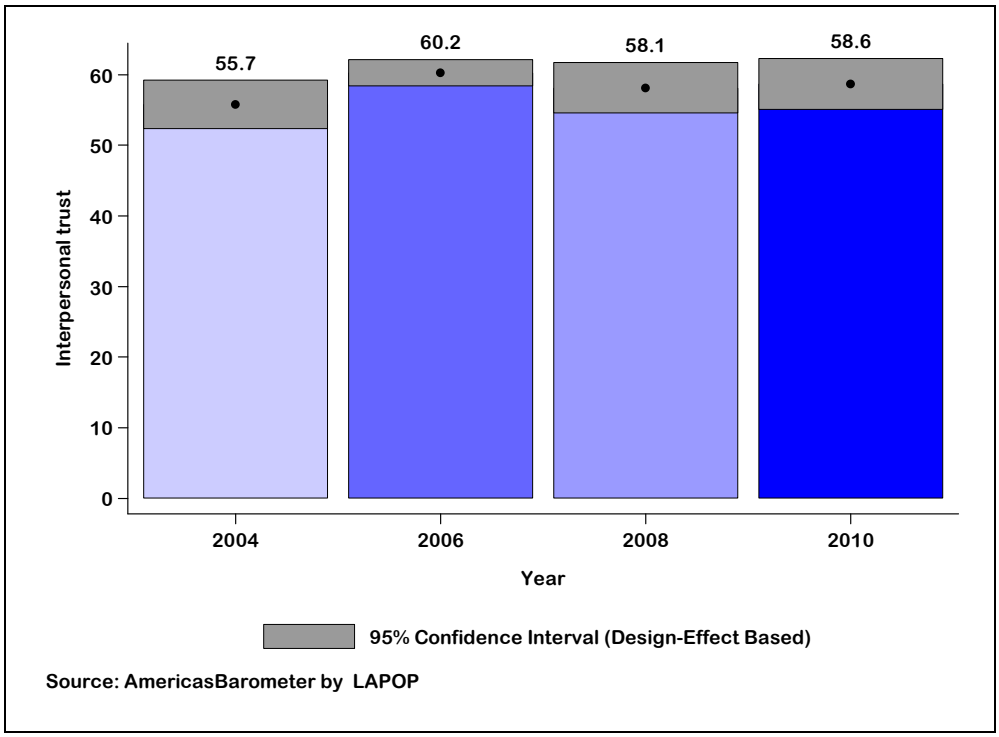


Figure VI.3. Interpersonal Trust over Time in Nicaragua

c) Determinants of Interpersonal Trust

What are the sources of interpersonal trust? If the civil society theorists are correct, trust should arise in part from participation in organizations. If victimization by crime or corruption influences trust, the effect of experiencing these should be negative. And if trust is a widely dispersed cultural artifact among Nicaraguans it should not be strongly correlated with class, gender, or education, but shared among much of the population irrespective of status or position. Figure VI.4 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis of trust. We included demographics, social geography, crime and corruption victimization and perceptions of crime and corruption, economic situation status and perceptions, and civil society engagement.

Moving from the bottom of the effects laid out in Figure VI.4, we see that experiencing crime does not undermine interpersonal trust, but perceiving oneself to be insecure in one's neighborhood strongly undermines trust. Corruption victimization slightly undermines social trust, but perceived corruption does not. Economic situation and the perception of economic issues have little impact on interpersonal trust. Among demographic factors, older Nicaraguans are more trusting, as are those with more education (the latter only modestly so). Neither gender nor wealth affects interpersonal trust. So, there is some evidence that Nicaraguans' tendency to trust their neighbors is a broadly distributed cultural trait that is little or not at all affected by their standing in the community other than slightly by their age and education. Experiencing corruption undermines trust, as does the perception of personal insecurity. Geographic location has no discernible effect on trust, nor does community size.[85]

[85] Size of one's community of residence was eliminated from this regression model after a previous analysis (not shown to save space) revealed it to have no impact.

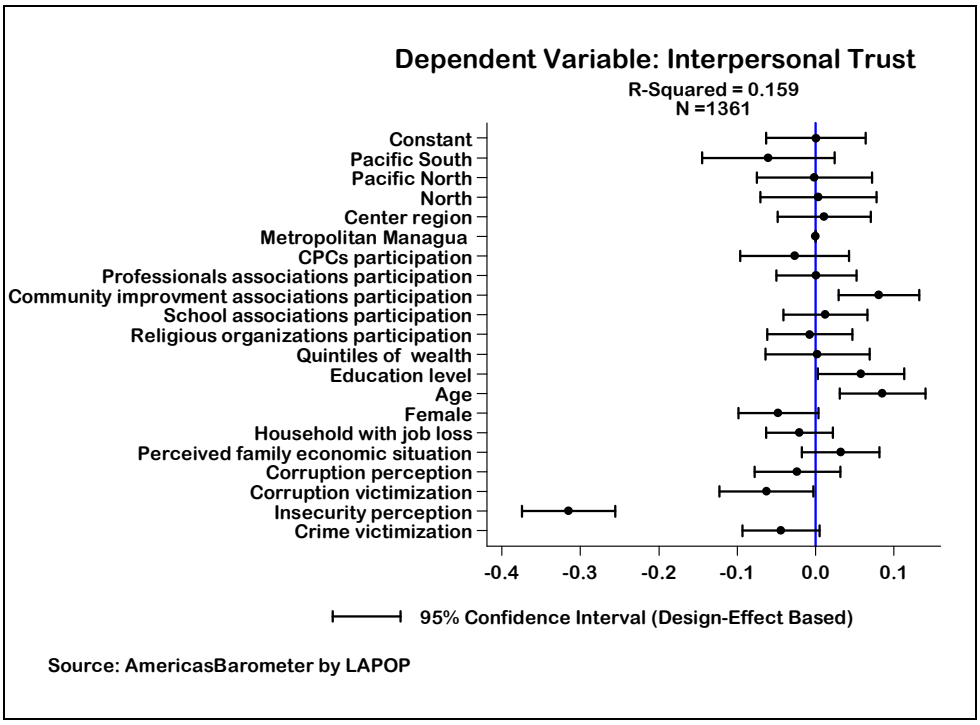


Figure VI.4. Determinants of Interpersonal Trust in Nicaragua (2010)

Of considerable theoretical interest in Figure VI.4 is the potential impact of civil society on interpersonal trust levels. The grand hypothesis of the literature is that social trust is a product of civil society engagement. We see to the contrary, however, that among the five types of civil society engagement measured among Nicaraguans, only one of them significantly increases interpersonal trust – engagement in community improvement groups. Cooperation on improving one's community does correlate with higher social trust levels, but engaging in school, church, and business-professional organizations do not. Even more interesting is that Citizen Power Councils (CPCs), promoted by the Ortega administration, do not generate trust, despite the fact that they occupy some of the same social space as traditional community improvement organizations. Sympathizers of the ruling Sandinista party dominate membership in CPCs; well over half the respondents who are actively engaged in CPCs report themselves to be FSLN sympathizers, compared to around 40 percent Sandinista sympathizers in community improvement organizations (CIGs). There are roughly four times as many Liberal sympathizers in traditional community improvement groups as there are in CPCs, but that fact notwithstanding there are also even more Sandinistas the Liberals active in the CIGs.[86] (See Chapter X for a more detailed analysis.) Civil society was highly contested space in Nicaragua during the years of the revolution, when many types of interest areas were represented by pro- and anti-FSLN civil society groups. The CPCs, despite considerable overlap in their goals with other communal organizations, constitute something of a throwback to those days and represent a party-linked communal organization. They thus appear likely to generate more "bonding" or exclusive social capital among their members than they contribute to "bridging" social capital such as interpersonal trust.

Figure VI.5 illustrates the relationship of perceived insecurity to interpersonal trust among Nicaraguans which, as we have just seen, exercises more influence than does the actual experience of crime itself. Indeed, perceived insecurity in one's own neighborhood is the strongest influence on trust.

[86] Community improvement groups were also promoted during the administration of Enrique Bolaños, but as we will see below their membership has a somewhat less party-linked distribution.

Those who feel very safe average 73 on the 100-point trust scale, in sharp contrast to those who feel very unsafe at 40 points.

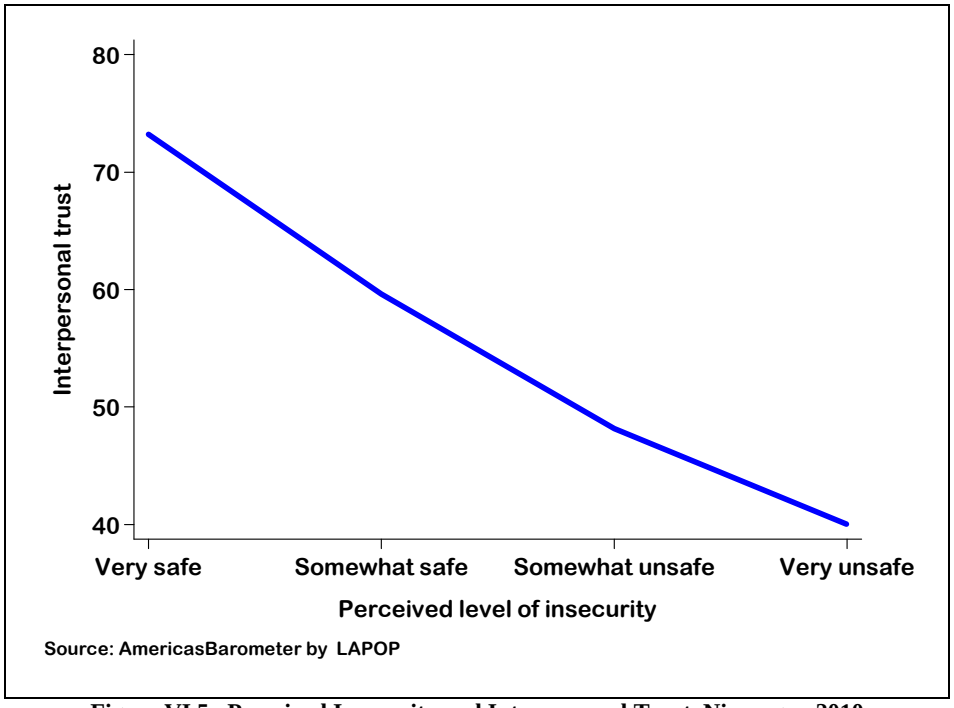


Figure VI.5. Perceived Insecurity and Interpersonal Trust, Nicaragua 2010

The left hand graph in Figure VI.6 illustrates the impact of involvement in a community improvement organization on interpersonal trust. What is revealed is a ten scale-point rise in interpersonal trust between those who are uninvolved in community improvement organizations and those who attend meetings as often as weekly. The effect grows with increasing levels of involvement, suggesting that it is not merely being in an organization that matters, but the actual amount of engagement that influences trust levels. The more one attends meetings and socializes with others in the group, the greater is the trust-building effect.[87] The right hand graph in Figure VI.6 presents the relationship between interpersonal trust and age. There we see that Nicaraguans 61 and older are 13 scale points more trusting than those aged 16 to 20.

[87] The causality in this relationship, it is possible, may run the other direction – those who are more trusting may be more active in organizations.

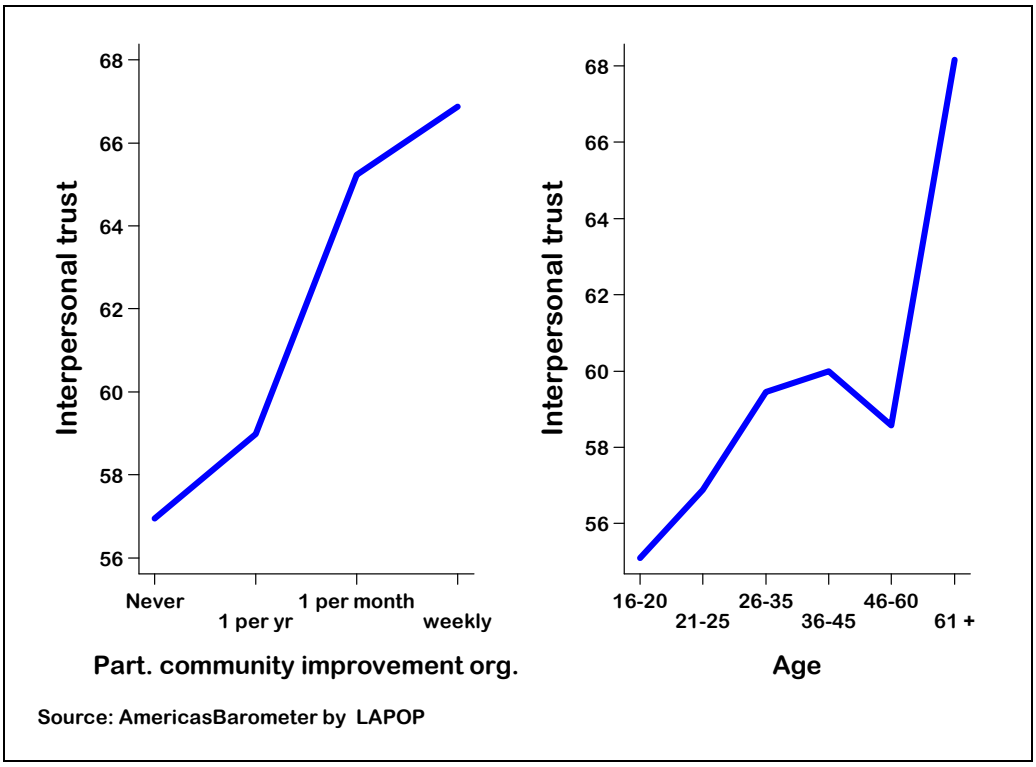


Figure VI.6. Effects of Community Improvement Group Activism and Age on Interpersonal Trust, Nicaragua 2010

Civic Participation

The Measurement of Participation in Civil Society

LAPOP and the AmericasBarometer have been recording the levels of involvement of citizens in civic organizations of various types for many years and across many countries. This allows a rich opportunity to compare civil society activism across organization types within countries, and to assess civic engagement levels among citizens.[88] The items used measure the intensity of participation by having respondents indicate how frequently they attend meetings of different types of voluntary associations. These are not specific organizations (e.g., a Rotary Club or particular elementary school group) but attendance at types of organizations – school-related, church-related, community improvement, and so on.

[88] John A. Booth, "Civil Society in Space and Recent Time: Central America and Mexico," in *Sociedad Civil en Centroamerica y Cuba, Retos y Perspectivas* (Valle de Bravo, Mexico2010). Córdova Guillén, *Social Trust, Economic Inequality, and Democracy in the Americas.*

I am going to read a list of groups and organizations. Please tell me if you attend their meetings at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never. **[Repeat for each question "once a week," "once or twice a month," "once or twice a year" or "never" to help the respondent]**							
	Once a week	**Once or twice a month**	**Once or twice a year**	**Never**	**DK**	**DA**	
CP6. Meetings of any religious organization? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP7. Meetings of a parents' association at school? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP8. Meetings of a community improvement committee or association? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP9. Meetings of an association of professionals, merchants, manufacturers or farmers? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP13. Meetings of a political party or political organization? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
NCICP14. Meetings of a Citizen Power Council…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP20. [Women only] Meetings of associations or groups of women or home makers. Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	DA 98	N/A 99

a) Participation in Meetings of Civic Organizations

Figure VI.7 graphs the intensity of participation in civil society organizations among Nicaraguans in 2010. The values in the figure refer to our standard scoring of responses in a zero to 100 scale. Zero indicates never attending and so on across intermediate values up to 100 for attending weekly. Nicaraguans are most involved in church-related groups (48.9 scale points), followed by school-related groups (29.2), community improvement organizations (16.7), and Citizen Power Councils (10.1). Further, Nicaraguans report scores for business-professional-farm organizations of 8.4 scale points and for women's organizations (asked of women only) of 6.7. Although specific levels varied by country, this ordering by types of the four main groups (church-related, school-related, communal, and professional-business-farmers) resembles that observed all of Central America and Mexico in recent years.[89]

[89] John A. Booth, Christine J. Wade, and Thomas W. Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2010); Booth, "Civil Society in Space and Recent Time: Central America and Mexico."

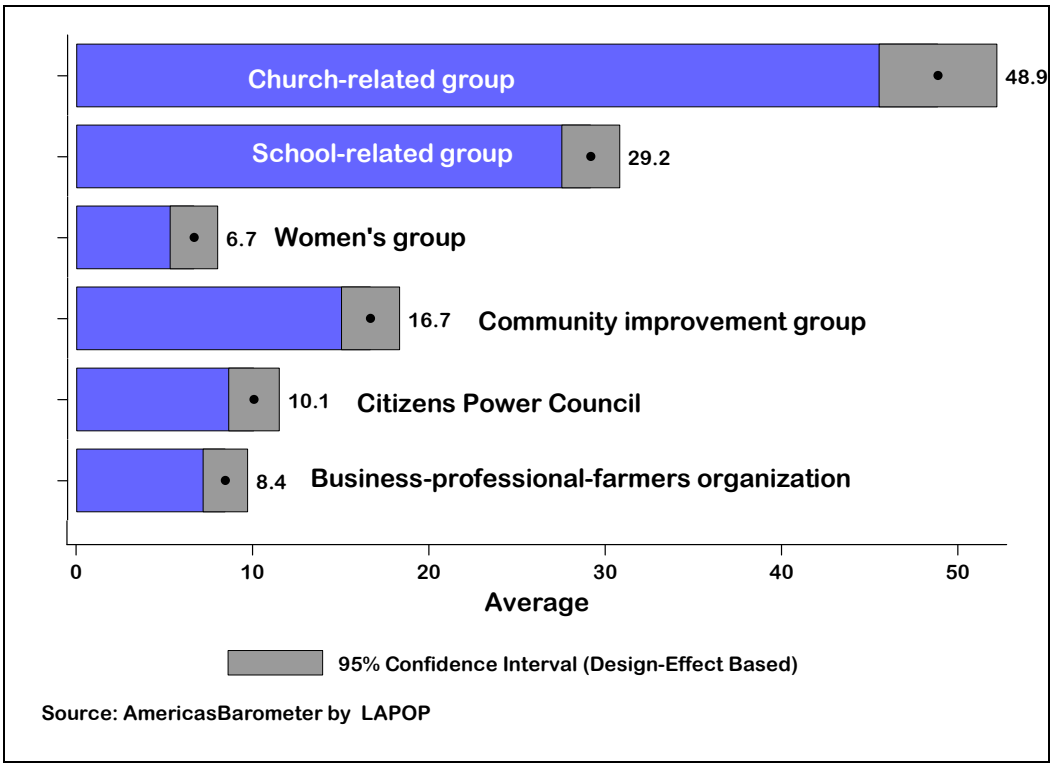


Figure VI.7. Participation in Meetings of Civic Organizations in Nicaragua, 2010

b) Participation in Meetings of Civic Organizations Over Time

Figure VI.8 displays the variation in group activism among Nicaraguans in recent years. Observers have reported a widespread cooling down or diminution of of interest group activity among Nicaraguans since the end of the revolution in 1990, an impression confirmed to some extent by available empirical data.[90] AmericasBarometer polling since 2004 reveals that five of the six types of groups have suffered small but statistically insignificant declines in activism levels. Only one type of group, the CPCs created by the Ortega administration to promote citizen engagement with regional and local government, shows a significant change. CPCs increased in reported citizen involvement from 5.2 scale points to 10.1 from 2008 to 2010.

[90] Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*.

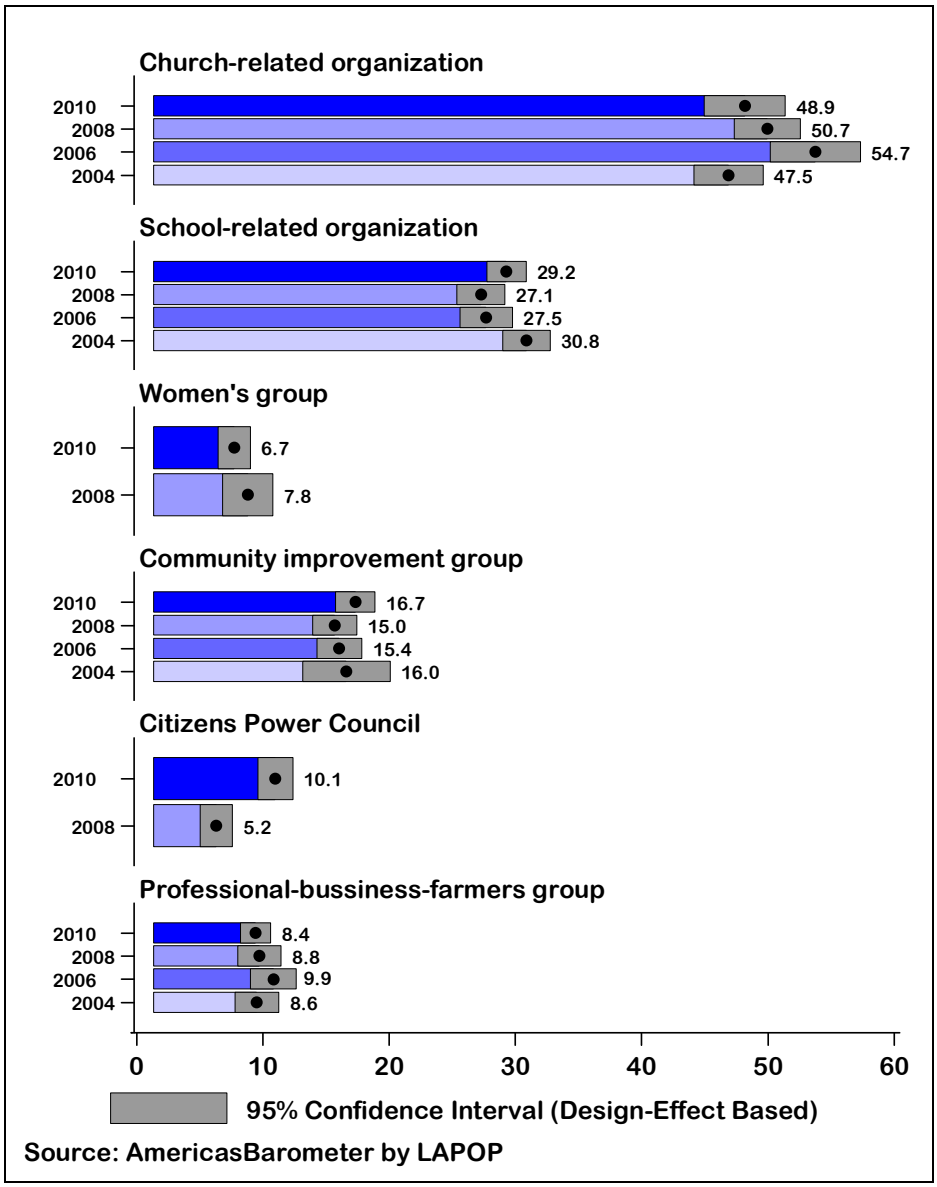


Figure VI.8. Participation in Meetings of Civic Organizations by Year, Nicaragua

In summary, citizen involvement in Nicaragua resembles in its broad structure that observed elsewhere in the northern parts of Latin America. Engagement with church-related organizations is by far the most common form, followed by school-related groups and community improvement organizations. In Nicaragua Citizens' Power Councils, professional-business groups, and women's organizations follow in descending order of involvement. The most dynamic of these groups types in Nicaragua is the CPCs, which have roughly doubled in reported citizen engagement in the last two years although they remain one of the lower-engagement groups overall.

Protest Participation

The Measurement of Protest Participation

The AmericasBarometer asks respondents how active they have been in protest behavior. The following item is employed, and is recoded into a zero (did not protest) to 100 (protested) scale. In this case the value of the index is equivalent to the percent of the population reporting protesting.

PROT3. In the last 12 months, have you participated in a demonstration or protest march?
(1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Go to JC1]** (88) DK **[Go to JC1]** (98) DA **[Go to JC1]**

a) Participation in a Demonstration or Protest March in Comparative Perspective

Protest behavior in the Americas has a narrow range, which is demonstrated in Figure VI.9.

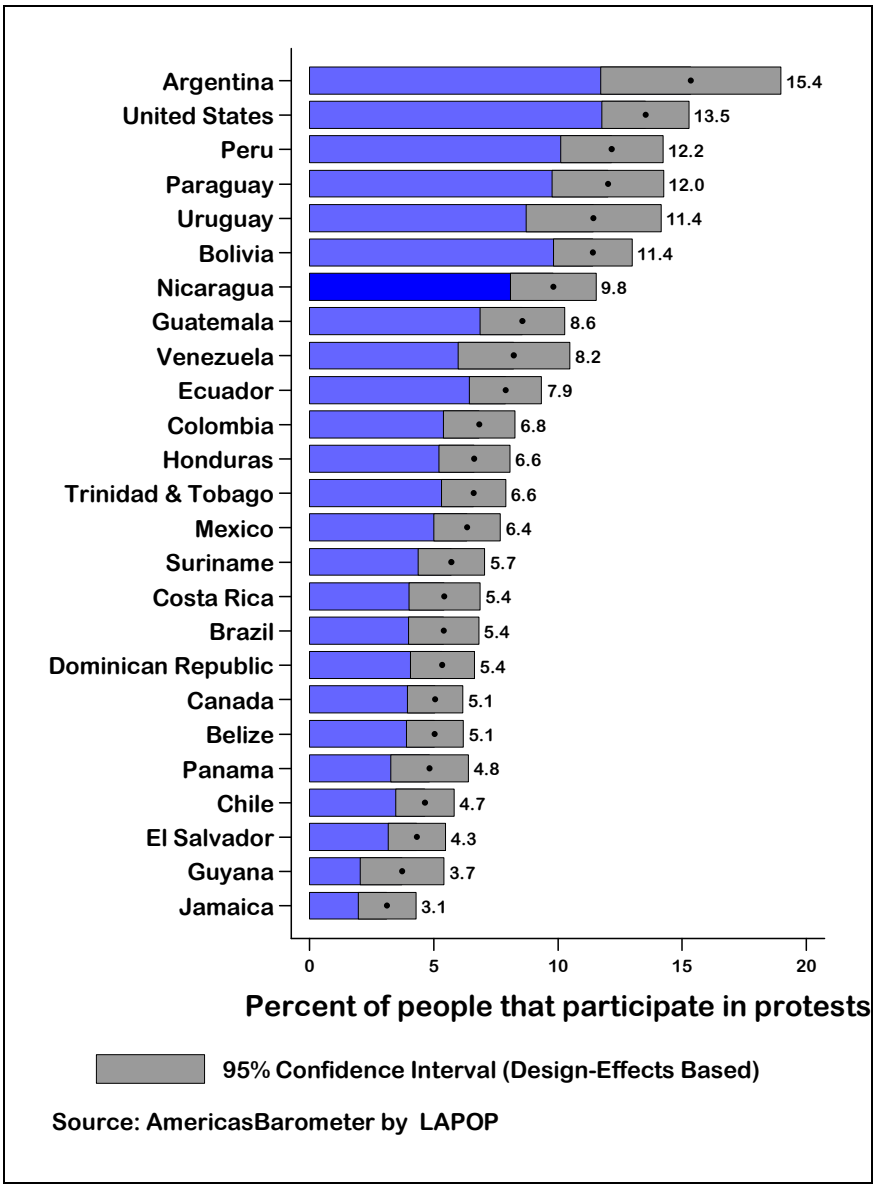


Figure VI.9. Participation in a Demonstration or Protest in Comparative Perspective

Figure VI.9 reveals the two highest levels of self-reported protest involvement in the Americas to be those of Argentina (15.4 percent) and the United States (13.5 percent). At the low end of protest participation are Jamaica (3.1 percent) and Guyana (3.7 percent). Nicaragua's position is in the top third of the array for the hemisphere; with 9.8 percent of the 2010 AmericasBarometer responding indicating they had taken part in a protest or demonstration within the previous year.

What factors contributed to protest among Nicaraguans in 2010? We wondered in particular whether demographics, social geography, economic factors, political sympathy, or civil society engagement influence protest participation. Numerous prior studies have linked protest engagement to membership in organizations, including studies from Central America and including Nicaragua, so we expected to find something similar here.[91] We conducted a series of logistic multiple regression analyses to explore this question, using an extensive array of items related to these issues. (The analyses are not shown here to conserve space). In a final trimmed model we found that only five variables significantly contribute to protest engagement among Nicaraguans. Women are less likely than men to protest and demonstrate. In contrast, age, household income and geography have no effect on protest participation. The educated are more likely to protest. Particularly interesting is what we *did not find to affect protest*, which was the economic factors (income decline, job loss, and perceptions of the national and personal economies). In 2010 Nicaraguans with such experiences and perceptions did not protest more.

Sympathizers of the FSLN (a large influence in the model) or of either of mayor political party (a small but significant influence) are more likely to protest or demonstrate. The most interesting finding related to civil society, however, is that only involvement in a Citizen Power Council contributes to increased protest participation. No other type of group exerts significant influence on protesting. In other countries in the region communal organizations and business-professional-farmer groups have been found to mobilize protest,[92] but that is not true of Nicaragua in 2010. In sum, civil society does not lead many Nicaraguans to protest. The exception to this pattern is that of politically charged civil society – the CPCs. Independently of CPC engagement, sympathizers of the major political parties also mobilize their supporters to protest or demonstrate. Protest is clearly a tool of partisan political mobilization in contemporary Nicaragua.

Electoral Participation

We turn now to voting. We have asked respondents in several rounds of the surveys of AmericasBarometer whether they voted in the most recent presidential election held in their countries.

VB2. Did you vote in the last **presidential elections** of 2006?
(1) Voted **[Continue]**
(2) Did not vote **[Go to VB10]**
(88) DK**[Go to VB10]** (98) DA**[Go to VB10]**

[91] Verba and Nie, *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*; Booth and Richard, "Social and Political Capital in Latin American Democracies."; Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*.
[92] Booth, "Civil Society in Space and Recent Time: Central America and Mexico."

a) Electoral Turnout in Comparative Perspective

Voting in presidential elections (Figure VI.10) is but one type of political participation, but because it involves the citizen in choosing the national leader it is widely reported for comparative purposes. As we will see below, however, it presents some difficulties for analysis.

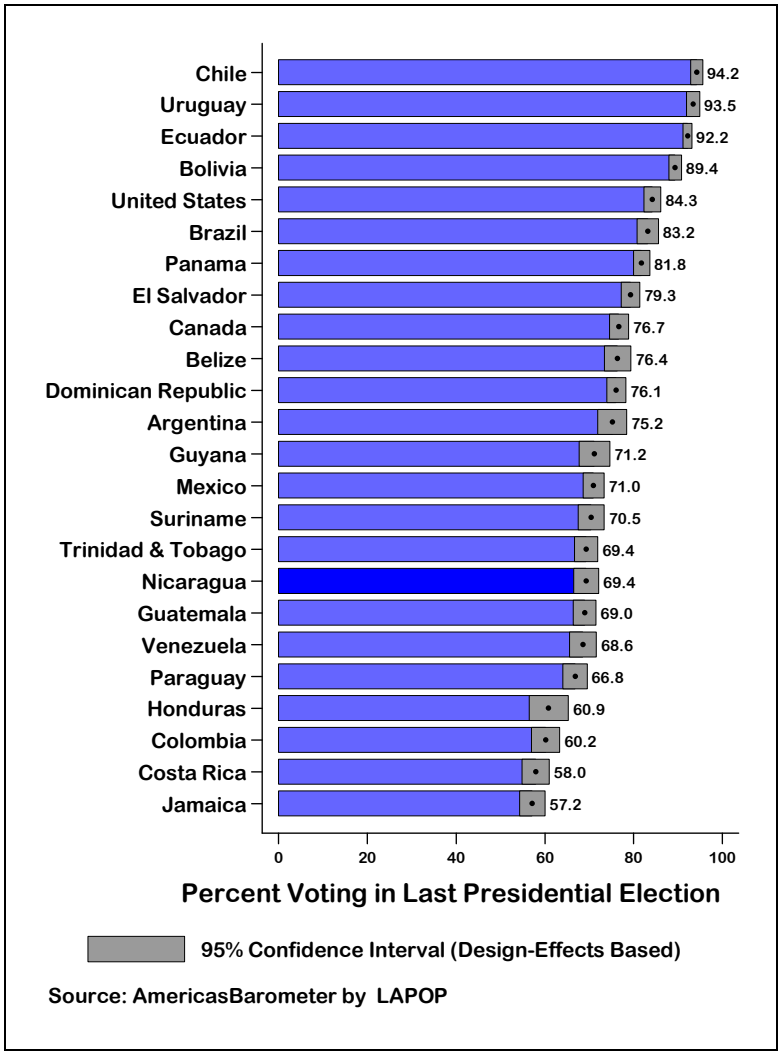


Figure VI.10. Percentage of Citizens Who Voted in the Last Election

Voting turnout in the most recent presidential election (or parliamentary election in such systems) in the Americas as reported by the respondents to the AmericasBarometer surveys ranges from a high of 94.2 percent in Chile and 93.5 percent in Uruguay down to 57.2 percent in Jamaica and 58 percent in Costa Rica.[93]

[93] A discrepancy typically occurs between survey respondents' self-reported voting among the population of citizens currently of voting age and the actual voter turnout figures as a percent of the registered voters reported by national election authorities. The discrepancy is normally that the survey results overstate actual turnout figures calculated by election authorities. One theory about why this might occur is as a result of social acceptability response bias, in which a survey respondent seeks to give a socially acceptable response to a prompt rather than a more accurate one that would possibly be less socially acceptable. Voting tends to be over-reported. For instance in the case of these high-turnout countries in the Americas, in the last presidential election in Chile actual turnout was 84.4 percent of registered voters, which is 9.8 percent below the turnout reported in our survey. In Uruguay, the survey respondents over-reported less – only 5.3 percent above the actual rate. (All actual turnout data reported come from country reports of turnout by IDEA, "Voter Turnout" (International Institute for

Our survey respondents in Nicaragua, all voting aged citizens (16 or older) at the time of the survey, reported a 69.4 percent turnout in the 2006 presidential election (Figure VI.10). This places Nicaragua near the top of the bottom third of reported turnout in the Americas. Nicaragua's actual turnout figures (61.2 percent of registered voters) were, as is often the case, somewhat lower than the reported turnout in the survey.[94] Over-reporting among Nicaraguans appears to have been about 8.2 percent. Other countries with similar reported turnout rates were Trinidad and Tobago (also 69.4 percent) and Guatemala (69 percent).[95]

b) Electoral Turnout Over Time

Are Nicaraguans voting for president more or less than they have in previous presidential elections? In terms of the official national voting statistics reporting turnout as a percent of registered voters, turnout peaked in Nicaragua in 1990 at 86.2 percent and declined to 61.2 percent in the 2006 presidential election. This is a substantial 25 percent drop in the official turnout rate.[96]

Figure VI.11 reveals a reported election turnout rate among Nicaraguans that is significantly lower in surveys conducted after 2004. This roughly tracks the trends reported above in the official voter turnout statistics for the 2001 and 2006 presidential elections. (The reader should recall that the 2004 and 2006 surveys refer to having voted in the 2001 election in which Enrique Bolaños won, and the 2008 and 2010 surveys refer to the 2006 election won by Daniel Ortega.) We suspect that the large reported decline in turnout for the 2001 election (from 75.3 to 61.3 percent) may stem in part from the long time (four years) that had elapsed since the 2001 vote. During that time a substantial number of voters would have come of age to vote at age 16 (and thus be included in the survey) who were ineligible to vote at the time of the election. For example roughly 17 percent of the 2006 survey's voters would have been ineligible to vote in 2001, which would substantially lower the reported turnout rate. A similar but smaller effect would have occurred for the 2008 and 2010 elections.

In summary, tracking specific election turnout by using survey data, as we do here, is problematic for several reasons, of which two stand out. The inclusion of a previously ineligible population of young Nicaraguans conducted several years after the election in question (as in both the 2006 and 2010 surveys) will lower the reported turnout. Working in the other direction is the widely observed tendency to over-report having voted. Finally, the reader should recall that the surveys and the actual official election data measure two different things. Officials have a precise percentage of those who voted versus those who were registered. Meanwhile the survey should include a sample of all who were in the voting age population at the time of the survey, but that also includes those who were previously ineligible but have become eligible.

Democacy and Electoral Assistance, 2010). Interestingly for Jamaica, the actual turnout as a percent of registered voters was 60.4 percent, 3.2 percent *greater than* the survey respondents' reports. Something similar occurs among Costa Ricans, who appear to have underreported their turnout by 7.2 percent.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Trinidad and Tobago reported a 66 percent actual turnout rate ibid. at a rate only 3.4 percent below the survey's report and one of the actual rates most similar to the survey results. In contrast Guatemala experienced an officially reported turnout rate of 48.1 percent, which is 20.9 percent below the AmericasBarometer survey's self-reported turnout rate and one of the greatest discrepancies observed in this analysis.

[96] Ibid.

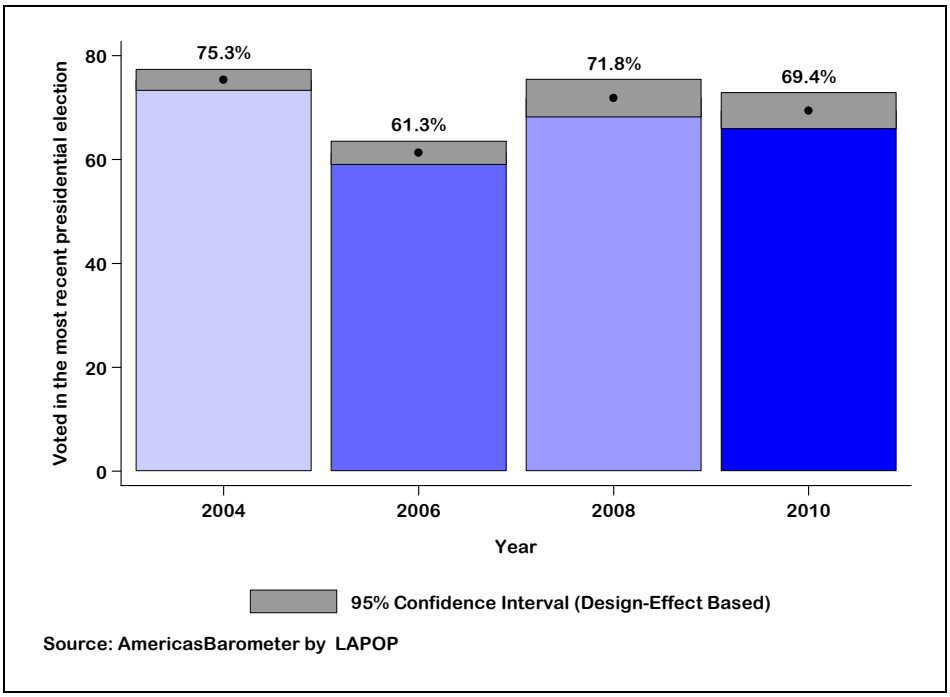


Figure VI.11. Percentage of People Who Voted in the Last Presidential Election over Time

In summary, by the time we amalgamate all these sources of error working in different directions, there is little left of the turnout trends in Figure VI.11 that inspires confidence as to the precision of the numbers. However, we can focus on what might have influenced Nicaraguans to vote or not vote with somewhat greater confidence. We do know that officially 61.2 percent of those registered in 2006 voted in the presidential election. Some 69.4 percent of our respondents say they voted. While some obviously did not do so, most of them actually did vote. We do not need to know with precision exactly how many of our respondents actually voted to determine roughly what factors might have motivated their voting in that election, over-reporting notwithstanding. Thus we move on to the predictors of turnout.

c) Predictors of Turnout

We anticipated that voter turnout would be driven by several factors, including the resources of Nicaraguan citizens and their social standing (demographics), their context within in the country's social geography (region and community size), their involvement in civil society, and their personal levels of political interest and partisan identification. We conducted a logistic multiple regression analysis which included many variables related to these factors. We found that many of the originally modeled items made no contribution to reported presidential election turnout. Figure VI.12 presents the results of a more parsimonious trimmed logistic model of the determinants of voting in the 2006 presidential election. As in other instances, what does not influence voting is almost as interesting as what does influence it.

We see in Figure VI.12 that economic factors matter little for voter turnout in Nicaragua. Neither perceived family economic situation nor family wealth have any effect. Men and women vote at the same rates. The earlier models (not shown) tested for the influence of geographic locale and community size and found that Nicaraguans turn out to vote at very similar rates throughout the nation. The two demographic variables that do in fact elevate turnout are education (a modest effect) and age (a very large

impact). Nicaragua shares these age- and education-related effects on voting turnout with most other nations.[97]

Figure VI.12 demonstrates that only two of five civil society organizations motivate presidential election turnout – engagement in community improvement and in school-related groups. This is quite distinct from protest behavior, for which only Citizen Power Councils (CPCs) had any influence. Note that this influence is independent of party sympathies, the effects of which are held constant in this model. This suggests two closely related possibilities concerning involvement in these groups and voting. One is that the parties and candidates mobilize votes by offering assistance to groups that support/promote community facilities and schools and that these encourage voter turnout. The other possibility is the reciprocal of the first -- those activists in groups supporting local schools and community projects mobilize votes to encourage attention from elected officials or candidates. What is particularly interesting, given this finding, is that involvement in CPCs does not have any turnout mobilizing effect despite the CPCs' creation and endorsement by the incumbent government and despite the prevalence of FSLN sympathizers among CPC activists.

The final influence shown in Figure VI.12 is that for political factors. Not at all surprisingly, interest in politics and identification with the Frente Sandinista or either of the Liberal parties' increases reported presidential election voting among Nicaraguans.

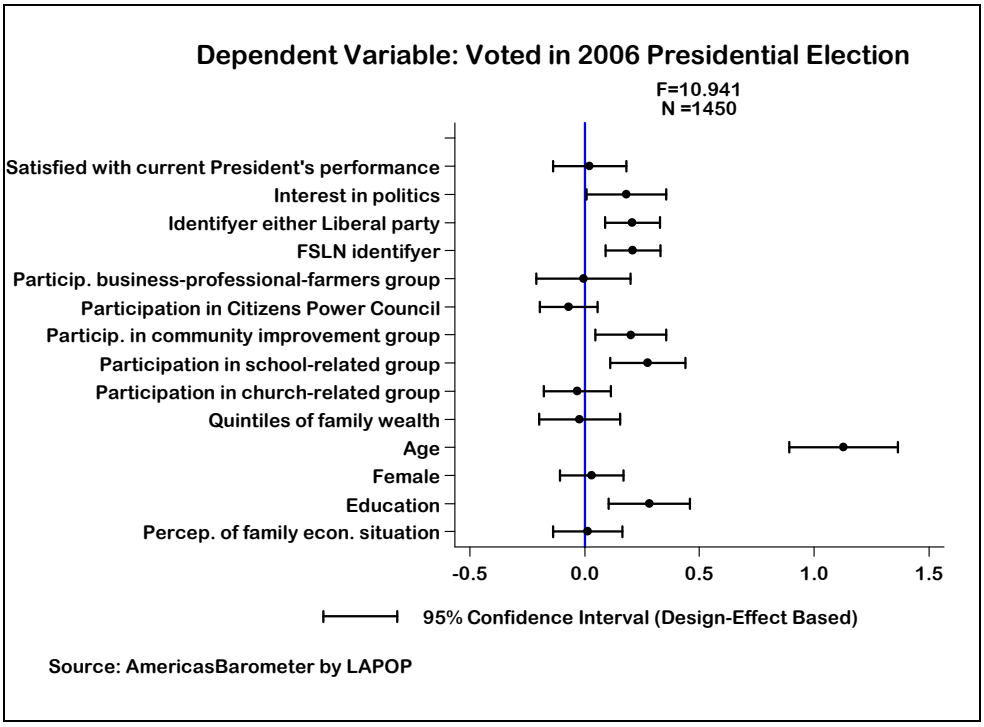


Figure VI.12. Predictors of Turnout in Nicaragua, 2010

The left hand graph is Figure VI.13 illustrates the impact of education and age on reported presidential voting. Looking first at voting, one may clearly see the impact of age on voting levels in the 16 to 20 cohort. As noted above, many of these respondents in the 2010 survey were old enough to have been surveyed but not old enough to have voted in 2010. Thus much of the large impact identified in

[97] Margaret Conway, *Political Participation in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2000); Steven J. Rosenstone and Mark Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1993); Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*.

Figure VI.12 stems from the large ineligible population in the youngest cohort of Nicaraguans. However, looking at the population aged 21 and older, all of whom would have been of voting age for the 2006 presidential election, there remains a positive link of age to turnout. There is a statistically significant 10.3 percent greater turnout among 46 to 60 year olds than among 21 to 25 year olds.

Figure VI.13's right hand graph reveals the voter turnout-education relationship to be complex. The relationship is U-shaped, with turnout significantly (at least 15 percent) higher among the least educated (primary school or none) and among university-educated Nicaraguans than it is among those with a secondary education. With the controls for the influence of other variables in the model (Figure VI.12) education is a significant positive influence on turnout.

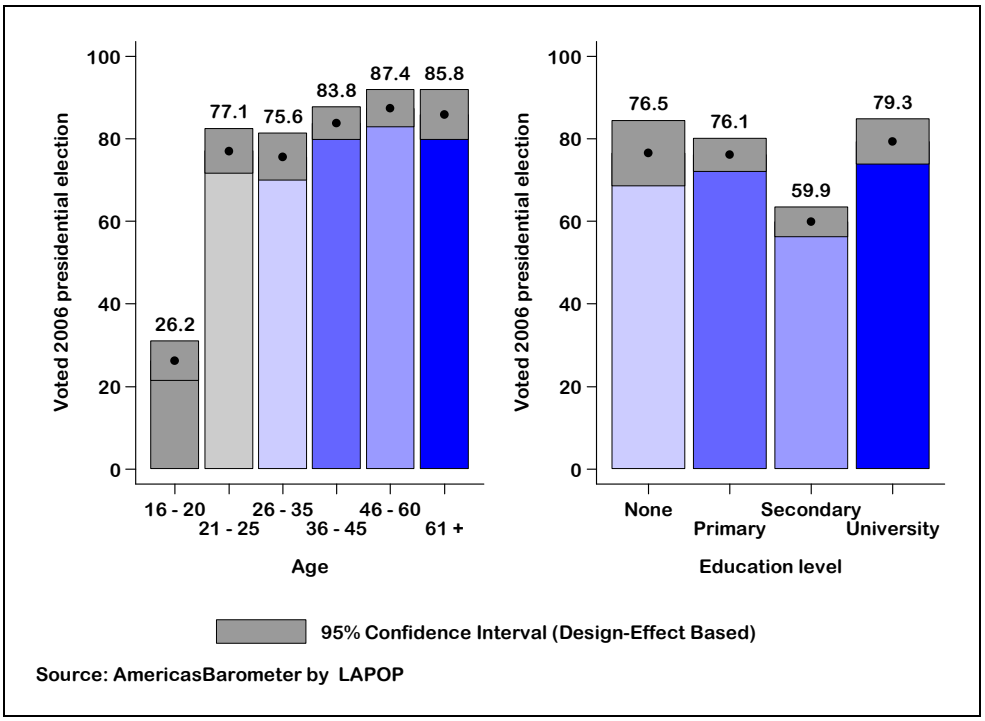


Figure VI.13. Influence of Age and Education on Voting, Nicaragua 2010

Figure VI.14 continues the illustration of significant effects on self-reported voter turnout in the 2006 presidential election by Nicaraguans. In the upper left hand section we see that a 15 percent increase in voting is associated with involvement at any level in a community betterment organization. Civil society activism of these two types clearly results in mobilization of voter turnout. The reason, we believe, is that people working for the improvement of their communities or their children's schools vote more in an effort to influence elected politicians whose programs might appear to offer resources of benefit.

On the bottom row Figure VI.14 illustrates the impact of party identification (self-designation as a "sympathizer" of either the FSLN or either of the Liberal parties). In the lower left hand graph we see that a 13 percent increase in voting is associated with self-identification as a sympathizer of the FSLN in comparison to anyone who does not declare such identification. The lower right hand section reveals 11 percent higher voting among Nicaraguans who identify themselves as sympathizers of either of the Liberal parties.

In summary, the factors among Nicaraguans that most strongly and clearly associate with reporting having voted in the 2006 presidential race are two types of civil society groups (school-related

and community improvement associations) and identification as a partisan or sympathizer of any of the three main political parties extant in 2010. Other than their education and age (whose associations are on balance positive but complexly related to turnout), not much about Nicaraguans' gender, resources, geographic location, wealth, or perception of the economy influenced whether they voted or not.

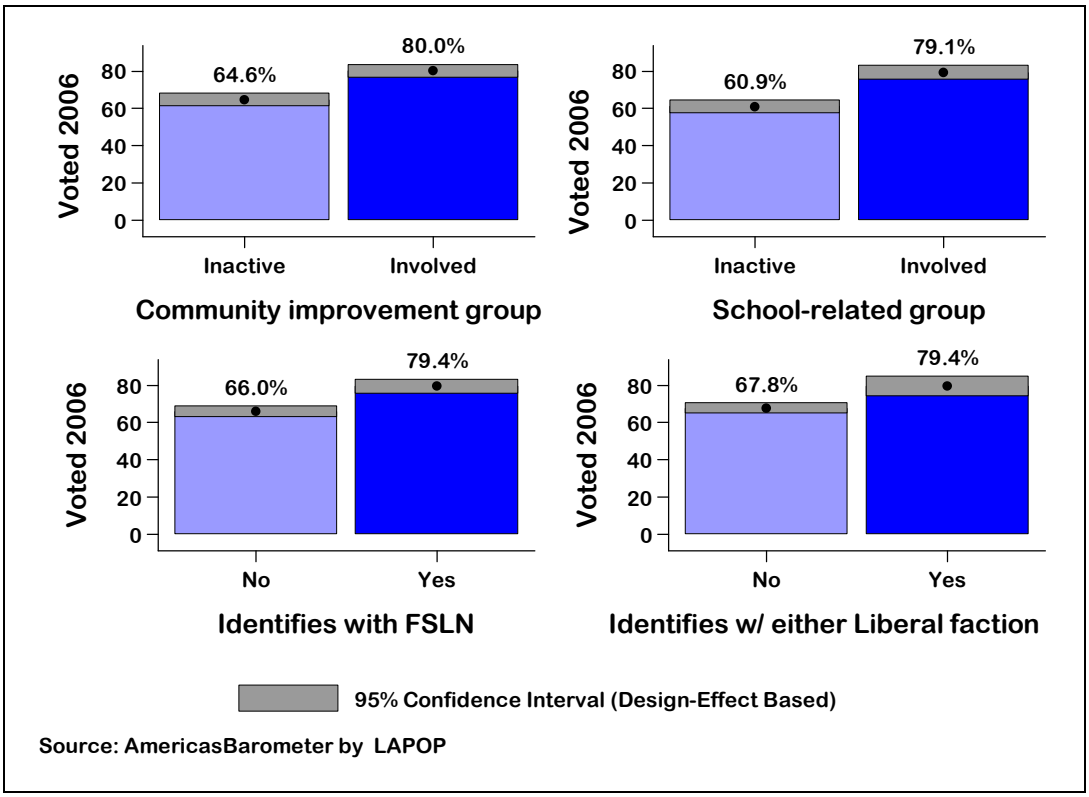


Figure VI.14. Influence of Civil Society and Party Identification on Voting, Nicaragua 2010

d) Ideological Self-Placement of the Voters and Voting Preferences

Analysts of politics have long found it useful to think of ideologies within a political system as a spectrum ranging from left to right. Persons and parties on the left, according to the conventional understanding, tend to support a greater role for the state in economic and regulatory affairs. Parties and individuals on the right side of this spectrum tend to prefer a smaller state economic and regulatory role.[98] While this might be a sterile exercise if such orientations had no effect on human behavior, evidence suggests that people tend to vote and to hold differing levels of democratic norms according to their left-right orientations.[99] For instance, Nicaraguans who reported voting for Daniel Ortega, candidate of the leftist FLSN in the 2001 election had an average score of 4.3 on the left-right scale. That placed FSLN voters 1.2 points below the 10 point scale's 5.5 midpoint and on the left end of the spectrum as Nicaraguans define it. Meanwhile those voting for Liberal party candidate Enrique Bolaños had an average score of 6.0, which placed them on the right end of the spectrum and 0.5 above the midpoint.[100]

[98] This scheme as it stands fails to account for much when mapped onto the political-ideological space of particular countries. Contradictory elements often arise within the scheme of a particular country.
[99] Mitchell A. Seligson, "The Rise of Populism and the Left in Latin America," *Journal of Democracy* (2007).
[100] Mitchell A. Seligson, *The Rise of Populism and the Left: Challenge to Democratic Consolidation?*, ed. Mitchell A. Seligson, Challenges to Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean: Evidence from the Americasbarometer 2006-07 (Vanderbilt University, 2008).

Diamond has argued that having a political system with two dominant and centrist parties, as opposed to ideologically polarized and more numerous parties, is a condition that supports stable democracy.[101] To the extent that citizens orient themselves toward the center of the ideological spectrum, one may assume they will tend to draw their parties toward the center to compete for their votes. To the extent that citizens are polarized ideologically they will tend to exert pressure on the parties to move their ideological positions toward larger concentrations of voters. Thus the ideological distribution of citizens and voters can contribute to political instability if polarized, or to instability if more centrist.

Where do Nicaraguans stand with respect to the left-right political continuum? The answer is a bit complicated when we turn to the 2010 AmericasBarometer survey results. First, 350 (22.7 percent) of our 1540 respondents in the 2010 survey declined to answer our question asking them to "locate themselves" on the ten point left-right scale "according to their understanding of the terms." It is difficult to know whether this high rate of refusal to answer this query stems from some political discomfort on the part of respondents, or perhaps from a simple inability to think of political orientations in such an abstract way.[102] That said, of course, Nicaraguan political discourse has been rife with labels of "left/leftist" and "right/rightist" for so many decades that the idea is hardly a novel one to anyone attentive to politics. We hesitate to attribute reasons to those refusing to answer. The following analysis refers to the 77.3 percent of respondents who placed themselves on the scale.

A first finding is that the average left-right scale score among Nicaraguan was 5.7. This is slightly but significantly above the scale mean of 5.5 and in thus the right side of the spectrum. However, the median Nicaraguan locates herself on the left side of the spectrum. That is, 55.4 percent of the respondents place themselves on the left, while only 44.6 locate themselves on the right. The discrepancy between the broad distribution (a 11 percent majority of left leaners) and the mean (slightly to the right of center) arises because there are many more Nicaraguans (21.7 percent) who place themselves on the extreme right end of the scale with a score of 10 than who position themselves on the extreme left end of the scale (15.8 percent) with a score of 1. In other words, more Nicaraguans are self-identified as leftist than right-wing, but there are more extreme right-wing citizens than extreme left.

The distribution of Nicaraguans by left and right according to party identification is interesting in that most Nicaraguans decline to name a party they prefer. Over six in ten deny they sympathize with any party, while 25.3 percent state their sympathy with the FSLN and 13.6 percent with either of the two Liberal parties. Among that large majority of Nicaraguans declining to express any party identification, the average left-right spectrum score is 5.7 (identical to the national average). The average left-right score of FSLN identifiers in 2010 is 4.6 (0.9 scale points below the midpoint). The average left-right score of sympathizers with either of the Liberal parties is 7.7 (2.2 scale points to the right of center). The average Liberal identifier, therefore, stands farther toward the right of the scale than the average FLSN identifier stands to the left of it.

Of course at election time Nicaraguans must choose among candidates of one party or another whether or not they hold a party sympathy. Figure VI.15 reveals where Nicaraguans surveyed in 2010 stand according to left-right ideology and their reported presidential vote in 2006. Because for the 2006

[101] Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*; Larry Diamond, "Introduction: Political Culture and Democracy," in *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, ed. Larry Diamond (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994).

[102] As noted above, the matter is not a simple one. A leftist might, for instance, favor greater state involvement in the economy but also greater individual freedom and less state interference in matters of sexual orientation. A rightist might take the opposite stances. This hypothetical pattern, of course, presents a conundrum – such a leftist would be freedom oriented on individual matters but state-control oriented on the economic system, thus having contradictory freedom orientations. We finesse this problem by simply letting Nicaraguans define the scale as they see it.

election the Liberal movement could not agree on a single candidate, there were two Liberal parties and candidates challenging the FSLN. Those who voted for Liberal Constitutional (PLC) candidate José Rizo Castellón place themselves at an average score 7.3 (1.8 points to the right of center) on the left-right scale. Voters for Liberal Alliance (ALN) candidate Eduardo Montealegre place themselves at an average of 6.9 on the left-right spectrum – not significantly different from voters for their erstwhile correligionaries in the PLC. In contrast, those who voted for Daniel Ortega Saavedra of the Frente Sandinista average 4.7 on the left-right continuum, thus positioning themselves .8 scale points to the left of the midpoint.

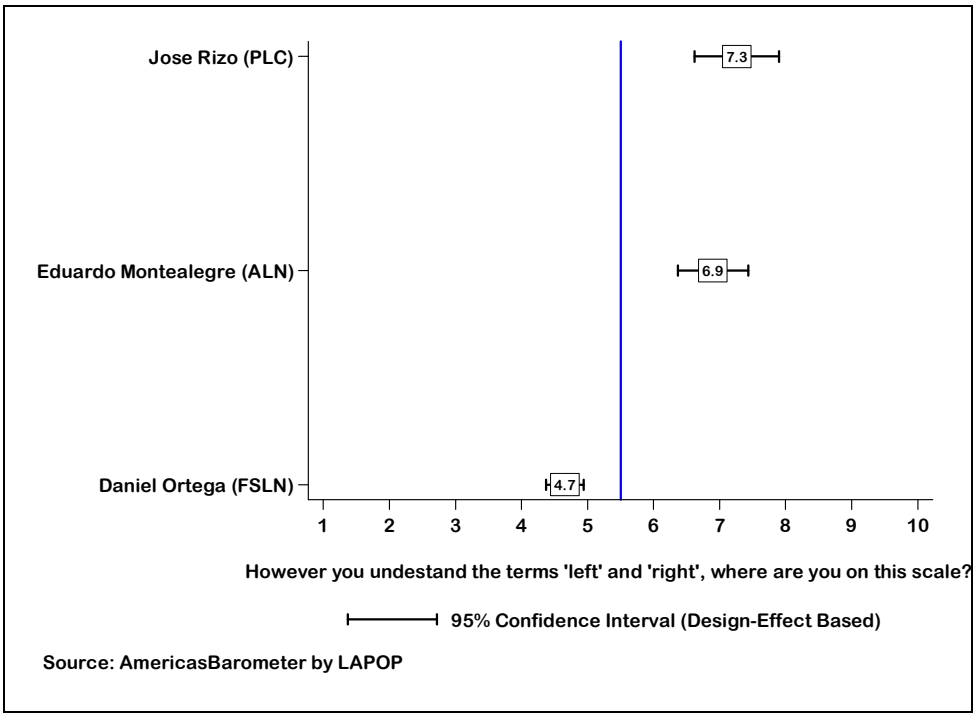


Figure VI.15. Ideological Self-Placement of Voters by Candidate Preference

Up to this point the evidence suggests that Nicaragua's parties, sympathizers, and voters are trending toward the center of the political spectrum. Sandinista sympathizers and 2006 FSLN voters average slightly left of the continuum's center at roughly 4.7. Nicaraguans who identify with the Liberals average 7.7 on the left-right scale, 2.2 points to the right of center. Nicaraguans who report voting for either Liberal candidate in the 2006 election are positioned slightly more toward the scale's midpoint than Liberal sympathizers.

But we must not be hasty, especially recalling the large percentage of individuals we found at the extremes of the left-right continuum mentioned above. Thus we must examine the underlying distribution of ideological orientations more carefully concluding that the left-right distribution of Nicaraguans truly trends toward the center. Optimally, a bell-shaped (normal) distribution pattern with one main mode containing most Nicaraguans arrayed around or near the ideological center would constitute the ideal pattern in which citizens' values might tend to draw the major parties toward shared common ground. But the left hand graph in Figure VI.16 reveals that Nicaraguans are not at all distributed unimodally. On the contrary, the histogram revealing the left-right ideological distribution is tri-modal. Almost 16 percent of Nicaraguans place themselves on the far left end of the scale while almost 22 percent position themselves on the far right end. Indeed, 35 percent of Nicaraguans place themselves in the 5 and 6 positions flanking the scale midpoint. But 38 percent of Nicaraguans divide themselves between the polar opposite positions of far left and far right. This is not, we believe, a distribution of citizens' ideologies

that will pull the major parties and political elites strongly toward common political and policy ground. Rather, in 2010 Nicaraguans reveal very centrifugal rather than consensual ideological views, with large fractions of the population holding extreme positions. Thus cues from the mass public to political elites appear likely to exert pressure away from the center.

But left-right ideology alone is not the whole picture concerning the potential for polarization. We must also know what impact left-right ideology has on other attitudes related to stable democracy. If left-right polarization does not also promote extremism of other sorts, it stands to reason that the observed ideological divergence would matter somewhat less for the prospects of democratic stability. In the right hand graph in Figure VI.16 we plot levels of several attitudes by Nicaraguans' left-right ideology positions. On further inspection of these data the situation appears less troubling than one might have expected given the ideological polarization observed. Executive coup justification (supporting the president in closing and governing without the National Assembly and Supreme Court) is very low (8 to 18 out of 100) across the ideological spectrum. Average military coup justification varies only from 30 to 40 on our 100 point scale. Mean institutional support and tolerance are in the positive end of the scale across all left-right ideological positions. There are some differences by ideology worthy of mention. Leftists are more supportive of a hypothetical executive coup than rightists, but the opposite pattern prevails for a hypothetical military coup. Rightists are more politically tolerant but less system-supportive than leftists, for whom the opposite pattern is true. These patterns seem to balance each other out. Further, the range of variation across these four indexes – roughly ten scale points of 100 possible in each case – are not extreme. Irrespective of left-right ideology, most Nicaraguans oppose both kinds of coups and are institutionally loyal and tolerant.

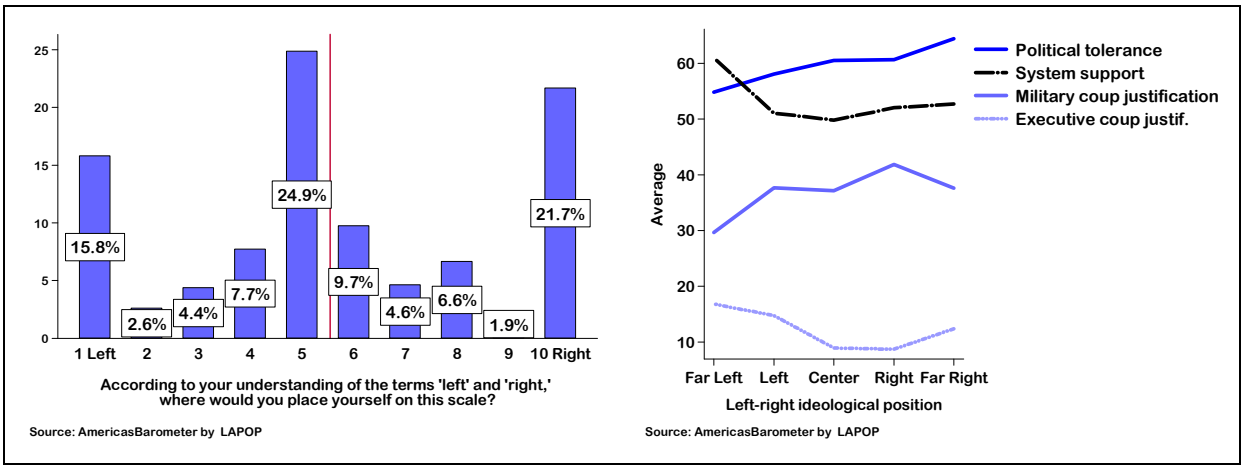


Figure VI.16. Left-Right Attitudes among Nicaraguans and Their Effects on Democracy-Related Attitudes, 2010

In summary, almost four of five Nicaraguans in 2010 can locate themselves on a left-right ideological scale. Sixty percent of them eschew party sympathy and fall at or near the national average on the left-right array. The mean ideological positions of both party identifiers and voters in the 2006 elections are more moderate than extreme. However, the left-right orientations of voters are trimodally distributed with a sixth of the respondents on the far left and more than a fifth on the far right. This clearly indicates that the average ideological positions near the center among the voters (see Figure VI.15) derive in part from the large middle mode of centrists voting in the election (see Figure VI.16). Despite this fact of ideological polarization among Nicaraguans in 2010, the further analysis of how this affected other attitudes related to support for stable democracy were somewhat reassuring. In spite of their ideological divides, across the spectrum Nicaraguans still on average embrace key attitudes supportive of democracy.

How does this evidence address the basic theoretical questions raised at the beginning of this section? On average Nicaraguans are centrists. The parties attract centrist voters in elections. But these averages obscure real polarization by ideology. Nicaraguans are in fact ideologically divided among three camps -- distinct clusters of citizens who describe themselves as occupying either the ideological far left (16 percent), center (35 percent), and far right (22 percent). This pattern would tend to arouse worry that instability might ensue should party elites follow the large numbers of their fellow citizens out to the extremes of the spectrum on policy and politics. On the other hand, even among these more extreme and polarized Nicaraguans on the very left and very right, ideological positions do not correspond with worryingly antidemocratic attitudes.

In conclusion, as of 2010 the sky in Nicaragua is not falling because of ideological polarization. That said it might be a good idea to keep an eye on the ideological weather.

Interest in Politics and Activism

a) Interest in Politics

Politics, like techno-pop music and *mondongo*, does not equally appeal to all. Political conflict and its clashing personalities and organizations are not every citizen's cup of tea. Some, like the authors of this report, find the stuff of politics almost endlessly fascinating and worthy of attention. Others are not so interested. Some theorists have argued that this difference in one's interest in politics as well as certain other attitudes and behaviors may have their origins in human genetics.[103] Others attribute political interest to socialization.[104] But the environment itself can stimulate interest. Electoral competition and larger clashes over how systems should be governed can stimulate interest. Indeed, Nicaragua is a country whose entire national history has been marked by events and processes that called people's attention to political affairs.

We believe that some combination of these factors shapes interest in politics. Whatever the sources of interest in politics, there is no dispute that it varies and that it affects the propensity to become involved – to discuss political matters and try to persuade others of a point of view, to vote, engage in party activity, work for candidates, contact public officials, and protest. Our question here is how much interest in politics Nicaraguans actually have. Or stated more precisely, how is interest in politics distributed? Is it stable, or does it rise and fall over time? In order to seek answers to these questions the AmericasBarometer 2010 survey asked Nicaraguans following question:

POL1. How much interest do you have in politics: a lot, some, little or none?
(1) A lot (2) Some (3) Little (4) None (88) DK (98) DA

Figure VI.17 provides a breakdown of levels of political interest among Nicaraguans. Almost 7 of 10 Nicaraguans register at least minimal interest in politics. The higher levels of interest are much less common -- "some interest" is cited by 19.9 percent, and "much" by 9.3 percent. Factors that motivate interest in politics (not shown to conserve space) include being a female (strongly negative), education

[103] John R. Alford, Carolyn L. Funk, and John R. Hibbing, "Are Political Orientations Genertically Transmitted?," *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 2 (2005); Bertram F. Malle et al., "Social Dominance Orientation: A Personality Variable Predicting Social and Political Attitudes," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 67, no. 4 (1994); John R. Alford and John R. Hibbing, "The Origins of Politics: An Evolutionary Theory of Political Behavior," *Perspectives on Politics* 2, no. 4 (2004); James H. Fowler, Laura A. Baker, and Christopher T. Dawes, "Genetic Variation in Political Participation," *American Political Science Review* 102(2008).
[104] Fred I. Greenstein, *Children and Politics* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1965).

(strongly positive), wealth, and having a either a balanced or a negative personality.[105] These suggest that a mixture of inherent traits, socialization, and resources influence interest in politics. Unfortunately space does not allow further analysis.

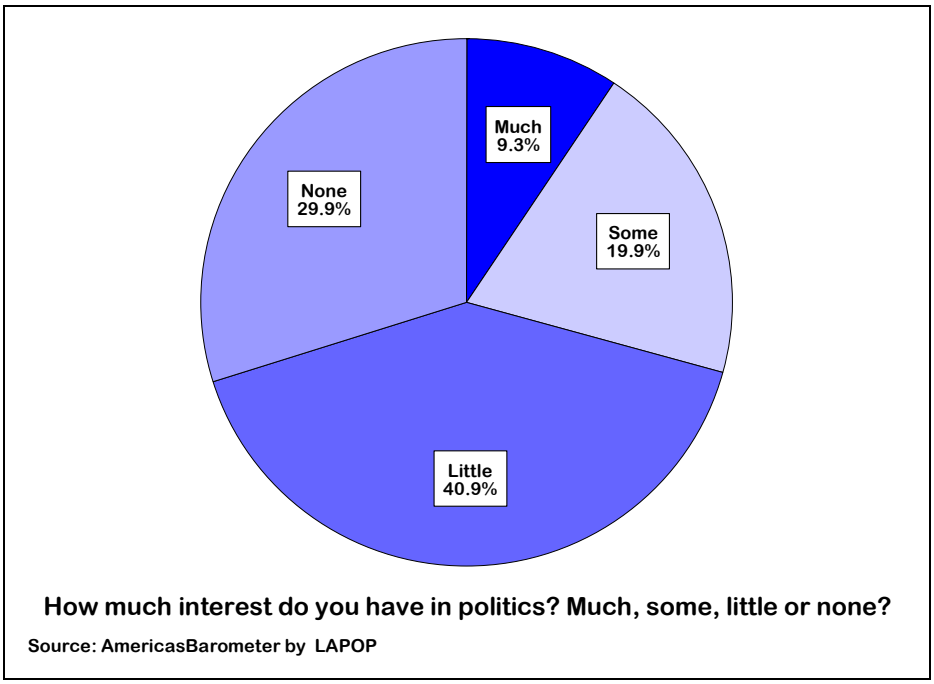


Figure VI.17. Interest in Politics in Nicaragua, 2010

b) Interest in Politics Over Time

How much does interest in politics vary over time in Nicaragua? It would be fascinating to track this item back to the 1960s and follow it through Nicaragua's great defining political periods and watershed events – dictatorship, insurrection, revolution and democratization. Alas, the data do not exist. We can only go back five years to 2006 for a benchmark. We have constructed an index of political interest assigning scores of zero to those with no interest, 33 to those with "little," and 67 and 100 respectively to those expressing "some" and "much." Figure VI.18 tracks the levels of the resulting 0 to 100 point index. The graph reveals a fair amount of variation over these three surveys. The average level of interest in politics was 32.1 in 2006, declined to 27.2 in 2008, and then rose sharply to 36 for the 2010 survey. This average level over time varies around the scale value for "a little" interest, so Nicaraguans do not appear to be consumed with politics. On the other hand, the variation is significant between the surveys, suggesting that the political environment matters. The 2006 survey was conducted roughly nine months before that year's national election with Daniel Ortega seeking reelection and a deep divide in the Liberal camp. The 2008 AmericasBarometer survey was held at a time when the main issue before the nation was municipal elections to be held 9 months later. This context in 2008 was arguably less compelling than that in 2006, and was thus likely to have provoked less interest in politics than the context for the earlier survey.

[105] These results are drawn from a multiple regression analysis of political interest levels (2010 data) regressed on demographic factors, community size, and self-assigned personality traits (PER1 to PER10 series – see the Appendix). The latter were detected by a factor analysis of 10 variables asking individuals to rate themselves in terms of being sociable, critical/argumentative, anxious/touchy, open to new ideas and experiences, timidity, generous/affectionate, disorganized/careless, calm, and unimaginative. Among Nicaraguans three distinct factors were identified highlighting balanced, negative, and introverted personality orientations. Indexes embodying each were created from the variables related to those factors.

What might account for the rise in interest in politics in early 2010? The political parties have begun maneuvering for position for the impending 2011 presidential election. There has been considerable conflict between President Ortega and the National Assembly as well as related popular protests (some violent) by Sandinista elements. These could account for the nearly 9 point rise in interest in politics between early 2008 and early 2010.

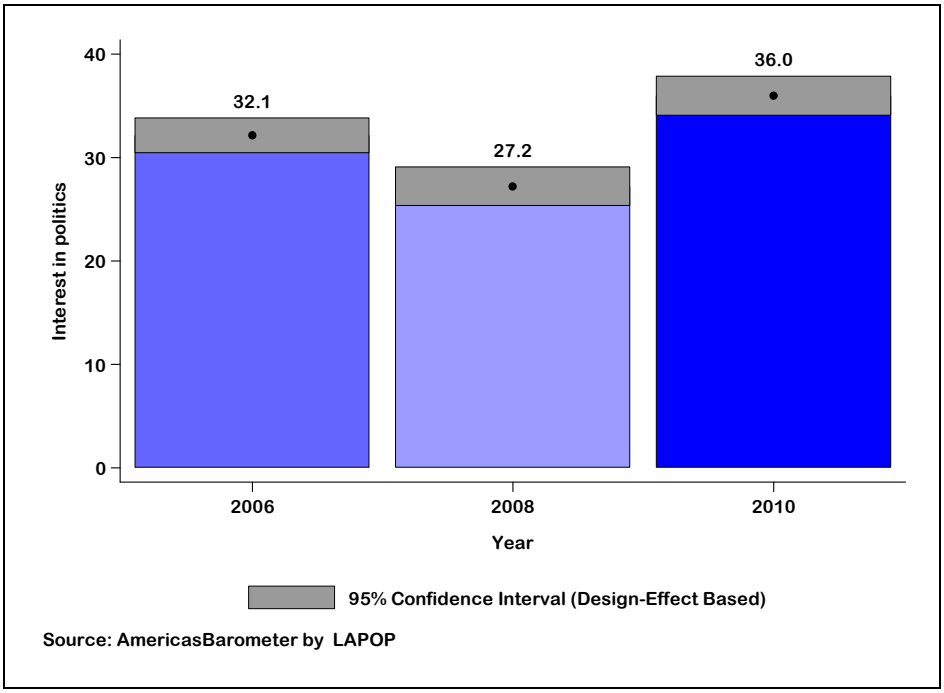


Figure VI.18. Interest in Politics by Year in Nicaragua

In conclusion, political interest among Nicaraguans seems to be relatively low in the early 2000s, but it is also rather changeable over our short span of five years. The variation we observe in the short term suggests that contextual factors do indeed influence citizens' interest in politics. Unfortunately we are unable to track this attitude back through history to help us identify what events might coincide with rising and falling interest.

Political Activism

An additional type of political engagement is what in this chapter we label "political activism."[106] This is involvement in election-related activity such as working for a party or candidate or trying to persuade someone else how to vote. Voting is a private act and costs relatively little of one's time and effort. In contrast, persuading others how to vote and election campaign-related work is public (i.e., it reveals one's political biases to others) and takes more time than voting. This is especially true for campaigning. We asked two questions in the 2010 survey that tap into such activities:

[106] See Chapter IX for a more extensive discussion of political participation among Nicaraguans.

PP1. During election time, some people try to convince others to vote for a party or candidate. How often have you tried to convince others to vote for a party or candidate? **[Read the options]** (1) Frequently (2) Occasionally (3) Rarely (4) Never (88) DK (98)DA
PP2. There are people who work for parties or candidates during electoral campaigns. Did you work for any candidate or party in the last general elections of 2006? (1) Yes, worked (2) Did not work (88) DK (98)DA

Figures VI.19 and VI.20 detail levels of involvement in each of these activities among Nicaraguans in 2010. Turning first to persuading others how to vote, the left hand graph indicates that only about one in six Nicaraguans did this in 2010. Some 7.1 percent report vote-persuading "rarely." Six percent say they do so "from time to time" and 2.7 percent report "frequently" trying to convince others how to vote. The total for any level of vote-persuading is 15.8 percent (Figure VI.20).

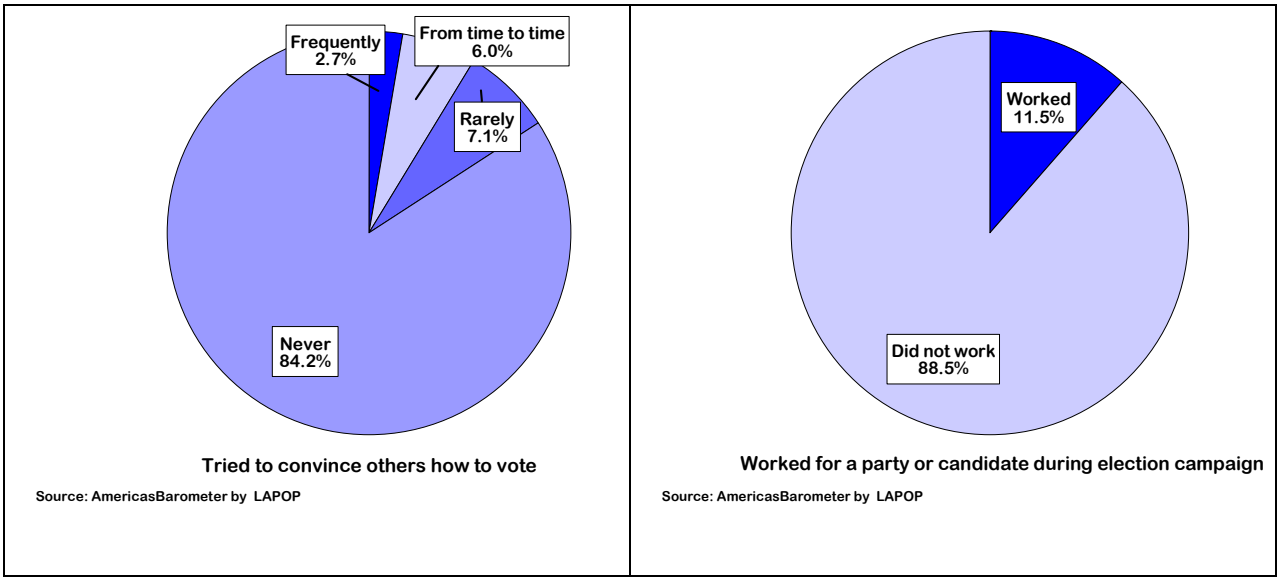


Figure VI.19. Political Activism in Nicaragua, 2010

On balance, then, vote-persuading involves only a small minority of Nicaraguans in 2010. However, in the 2008 survey 31 percent of Nicaraguans reported trying to convince others how to vote, just about double the 2010 level.[107] We suspect that this large difference from 2008 to 2010 occurs because of the presence (2008) or absence of an election (2010). After all, why would Nicaraguans engage in much effort to convince others how to vote when an election was several years in the future? Indeed, that suspicion is reinforced when we look ahead to Figure VI.21 which shows that an index based on this item was much higher in 2006 and 2008, both election years, than in either nonelection year of 2004 or 2010.

[107] Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*.

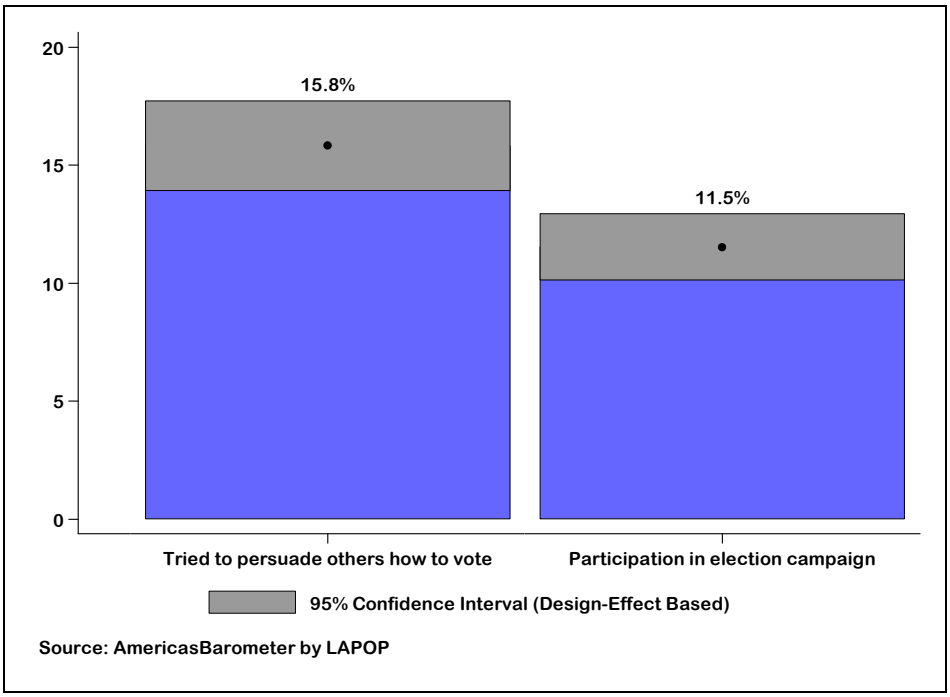


Figure VI.20. Nicaraguans' Involvement in Election Campaigning, 2010

Turning to working for a candidate or party during an election campaign, we see in Figures VI.19 and VI.20 that 11.5 percent of Nicaraguans report having engaged in this activity. Because this electioneering is both public and more time-consuming, and therefore more costly to the citizen who engages in it, it is not surprising that fewer Nicaraguans take part in politics this way. In the 2008 survey only 5 percent of Nicaraguans reported working for a candidate or party, the lowest level observed in Central America that year.[108] When we convert this item into an index based on zero for no activity and 100 for being involved, it provides an index of campaign-related participation. In Figure VI.21 we see that self-reported campaign activism fluctuates up and down over time but that the range is not very great – between 11 and 14 on the 100 point scale.

[108] *Ibid*.

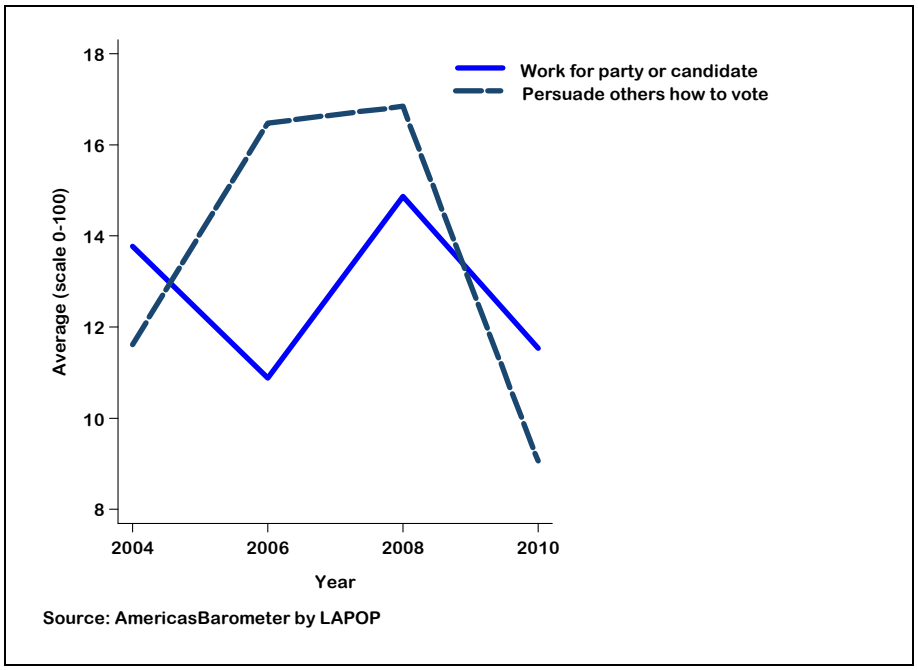


Figure VI.21. Nicaraguans' Campaign-Related Participation over Time

Conclusions

In this chapter we have reviewed evidence related to social capital theory. We expected to find that interpersonal trust would arise from participation in civil society and would in turn contribute to certain attitudes and behaviors supportive of democracy. Our empirical findings revealed that Nicaragua is a country with intermediate levels of interpersonal trust compared to other countries in the Americas, with six in ten respondents expressing a belief that their neighbors are trustworthy. We found that trust levels are stable over time, indicating that this is a strong cultural norm rather than an attitude that fluctuates quickly.

We found that Nicaraguans' trust in their neighbors increases with education and age but that it suffers from a perception of personal insecurity. Contrary to expectation, civil society activity in Nicaragua has little effect on developing trust. One exception to this is engagement in community improvement organizations, which lived up to the social capital literature's predictions. When Nicaraguans organize to collaborate with one another to better the community they live in it improves their trust in their neighbors.

Levels of involvement in civil society organizations vary widely across group types. On our 100 point index for level of engagement, the scores range from a high of 49 for taking part in church-related groups down to 10 scale points or less for CPCs, business-professional-farmer groups, and women's groups. Despite some differences in specific scores cross-nationally, the overall pattern of civil society engagement in Nicaragua is very similar to that in other neighboring countries. The only type of Nicaraguan organization that experienced a significant increase in participation since 2004 has been CPCs.

Nicaraguans are among the most active third of protest participants in the Americas, with about one in ten respondents having protested or demonstrated in the year before the 2010 survey. Protesters tend to be better educated, male, members of CPCs and to identify with either the FSLN or one of the

Liberal parties. In contrast to being relatively active in protests, Nicaraguans rank among the bottom third in terms of their voting turnout with almost 7 of 10 reporting having voting in 2010. Factors contributing to higher reported turnout to vote in the last presidential election (2006) are age, education, identification with either the FSLN or one of the Liberal parties, and interest in politics. Based on official Nicaraguan election data for the 2006 presidential election we find that our survey respondents apparently considerably over-report their voting in that election. Over-reporting of having voted is a commonplace among survey respondents in many settings. Several likely limitations affect the accuracy of our respondents' claim to have voted in 2006. Among these are the vicissitudes of memory, social desirability response set (a tendency to agree to having done something when one has not actually done so based on the expectation that the survey taker or others would approve), shifting sample populations of age to have voted in 2006, and a tendency for people to over-recall having voted for winners. Thus we conclude that it is very difficult to assess the actual evolution of voting turnout using our survey-based measures.

Almost four out of five Nicaraguans are able to place themselves along a left-right ideology scale. Their distribution along the spectrum is striking – trimodal, with almost a sixth placing themselves on the extreme left with a score of 1, and a bit more than a fifth positioning themselves in the complete opposite position on the extreme right with a score of 10. Roughly a third of the respondents located themselves in one of the two middle values (5 and 6) of the left-right continuum. The average ideological positions of voters for each party in the 2006 election were considerably closer to the center than one would expect with such a distribution. Voters for the FSLN on the left averaged 4.7 in 2006. They came closer to the scale midpoint of 5.5 by about a half a scale point than did Liberal voters on the right, who averaged 7.2. Despite the polarization, Nicaraguans' political attitudes did not vary greatly across the left-right spectrum, a finding that allayed somewhat a concern that ideology might undermine democratic norms among those at the extremes.

We briefly examined Nicaraguans' involvement in electoral politics beyond voting, by trying to persuade others how to vote and by taking part in election campaigns for a candidate or party. Persuading others how to vote appears to fluctuate considerably with the proximity of our surveys to past or upcoming elections.

Chapter IX will return to the analysis of political participation in Nicaragua more depth and breadth.

Chapter VII. Local Government

Introduction

This chapter explores Nicaraguans' participation in municipal government, their experiences with and satisfaction with local government services, and the effects of these on other attitudes including system support. It is important to bear in mind the general context of local government in the Spanish-American world and in Nicaragua in particular. Most Latin American governments are unitary (i.e., not federal), so that local governments are legally creatures of the national government. As in Nicaragua, local governments are typically called municipalities (*municipios*). They are most similar to county governments in the United States in that they provide some governance and services to extended geographical areas. Separate governments (incorporated cities or towns) do not exist in such systems, so municipalities are the level of government closest to the people. Municipal governments depend heavily upon national governments for their resources (in Nicaragua 10 percent of the national budget), and they operate with constrained authority, revenue sources and budgets.[109] The region has a history of arguments over whether to decentralize power to local governments, an idea that scholars and development advocates have debated recently while international assistance programs have promoted greater municipal power and resources.[110]

Nicaragua has in recent years decentralized some power to municipal governments, and even created two federated autonomous zones on the Atlantic Coast.

> *Local government has become more important that it was before… However, decentralization has had many obstacles: budget problems… [,] the lack of authority over the use of resources; the centralist and bureaucratic tendencies of the national government; and the lack of capacity and experience of municipal governments.*[111]

Theoretical Background

Theorists from Aristotle to Tocqueville to Mill have argued that participation in local governance contributes to building democratic norms and political system stability.[112] Engagement with local government is a distinct mode of political participation in Latin America, with important connections to attitudes related to democracy.[113] Earlier AmericasBarometer reports and other studies have hypothesized that citizens who participate in and who positively evaluate local government and the services it provides will be more likely to support national political institutions and to hold other values supportive of

[109] R. Andrew Nickson, *Local Government in Latin America* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1995); Bay, Kelly. "The Return of the Left in Nicaragua: Citizen Power Councils, Pro-Poor Social Services, and Regime Consolidation." Paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 5 September 2010.
[110] For literature on this discussion see Perez and Seligson, *Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua: The Impact of Governance*.
[111] Ibid. (p.88).
[112] Aristotle, *Politics (Aristotle's Politics)*, trans. Richard Robinson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962); Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, New ed. (London: Longmans Green, 1875); John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958).
[113] Booth and Seligson, *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Democracy and Political Support in Eight Nations*.

democracy.[114] Empirical evidence has borne this out for Nicaragua. For instance, Perez and Seligson reported that among Nicaraguans satisfaction with local services correlated positively with interpersonal trust and with the legitimacy of national institutions.[115] They also reported that trust in local government was higher than trust for national government. Montalvo found that Nicaraguans, along with the citizens of a few other countries in the Americas, supported decentralization of more budgetary resources to local governments.[116]

Within the context of municipal government one must also consider civil society that operates at a local level. There are many types of organizations that pursue diverse goals for their members. Nicaragua has a distinctive tradition of partisan division of civil society. Parallel and antagonistic structures of interest groups (e.g., pro- and anti-Sandinista unions, professional associations, and human rights groups) developed during the insurrection and revolution. After 1990 this competitive civil society and citizen participation in it waned as the intensity of revolutionary-era politics gradually diminished, and citizen involvement in groups diminished.[117]

Nicaragua's community-level civil society has become newly contested since the early 2000s. The Liberal Bolaños administration in 2003 established a new set of organizations, nominally nonpartisan, to promote local betterment. These were Community Development Committees and Municipal Development Committees.[118] These and other community betterment organizations we will label "community improvement groups" (CIGs). Soon after taking office in January 2007 President Ortega issued decree 03-2007 establishing the Department of Communication and Citizenship. The decree provided for local Citizen Power Councils (CPCs) – also nominally nonpartisan -- to promote citizenship and direct democracy through popular involvement in government.[119] According to many observers the

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[114] Amber L. Seligson, "Civic Association and Democratic Participation in Central America: A Cross National Test of the Putnam Thesis," *Comparative Political Studies* 32(1999); Ricardo M. Córdova and Mitchell A. Seligson, *Cultura Política, Gobierno Local Y Descentralización: I. Centroamérica* (San Salvador: FLASCO, 2001); Ricardo Córdova Macías and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Participación Ciudadana En Los Gobiernos Locales En América Central," in *Participación Ciudadana Y Desarrollo Local En Centroamérica*, ed. Ricardo Córdova Macías and Leslie Quiñónez Basagoitia (San Salvador: FUNDAUNGO, 2003).

[115] Perez and Seligson, *Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua: The Impact of Governance*.

[116] Daniel Montalvo, *Decentralize or Centralize? Challenges for Reform of the State and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. Mitchell A. Seligson, Challenges to Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean: Evidence from the Americasbarometer 2006-07 (Vanderbilt University, 2008).

[117] John A. Booth, *The End and the Beginning: The Nicaraguan Revolution* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985); Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*; Pierre M. La Ramee and Erica G. Polakoff, "The Evolution of the Popular Organizations in Nicaragua," in *The Undermining of the Sandinista Revolution*, ed. Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Kalowatie Deonandan, "The Assault on Pluralism," in *Undoing Democracy: The Politics of Electoral Caudillismo*, ed. David Close and Kalowatie Deonandan (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004).

[118] Bay, Kelly. "The Return of the Left in Nicaragua: Citizen Power Councils, Pro-Poor Social Services, and Regime Consolidation." Paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 5 September 2010.

[119] In November 2007 President Ortega issued decree 112-2007 laying out the CPCs organizational structure (layers of representatives elected directly by citizens beginning at the base level of neighborhoods and up to municipal, departmental/regional, and a national cabinet). The CPCs would, at least in part, assist in the distribution of development assistance and support the president's programs. The program received external funding from Venezuela's Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA) to distribute through diverse programs including small loans, food, animals, and materials and in infrastructure construction. A third purpose of the program was to enhance the influence of the president over other parts of the government by use of the CPCs which would be heavily influenced by Sandinistas and, in the views of some observers, mainly the Ortega supporters among them. See Stuart Almendarez, Roberto. Consejos de Poder Ciudadano y gestión publica en Nicaragua. Managua: Centro de Estudios y Análisis Político, 2009; Murillo, Rosario. *Esquema organizativo del Poder Ciudadano (Primer Borrador)* (11) *El 19 Digital*, 2008 [cited May 2009. Available from http://ww.el19digital.com; Nicaragua. "Decreto Ejecutivo 03-2007 del 10 de enero de 2007 reforma y adiciona al Decreto 71-98 de la Ley 290, conocida

CIGs are strongly influenced by Liberals, the CPCs by Sandinistas. Contested and party-linked civil society at the local level has thus arisen at the local government level. We are particularly interested in how this phenomenon affects engagement with local government.

Participation in Local Government Meetings

We asked respondents to the AmericasBarometer surveys in 2010 the following question in order to gauge their engagement with the formal meetings of municipalities:

NP1. Have you attended a town meeting, city council meeting or village meeting in the past 12 months?
(1) Yes (2) No (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer

a) Participation at the Local Level in Comparative Perspective

Figure VII.1 presents affirmative responses to this question for the countries in the Americas. The highest levels of attendance by far appear in the Dominican Republic (27.3 percent) and the United States (24.9 percent). At the bottom end fall Panama and Chile with 4 percent or less of voting age citizens reporting have attended municipal meetings. Nicaragua lies in the middle of the array, with 11.8 percent having attended. Indeed, Figure VII.1 reveals that fifteen other countries in the Americas report average municipal meeting attendance levels that are not significantly different statistically from Nicaragua's.

como la Ley de Organización, Competencia y Procedimientos del Poder Ejecutivo y su reforma al Decreto 25-2006, sobre la estructura de la Presidencia de la República y creación de varios concejos nacionales (las Secretarías Técnicas y Consejo de Políticas Nacionales, Consejo de Seguridad y Soberanía Alimentaría, Consejo de Comunicación y Ciudadanía, y Consejo de Costa Caribe). Reforma al Decreto 71-98 y se derogan los artículos 13 y 14 del Titulo II, Ley 290 y su reforma, Decreto 25-2006." In *La Gaceta (Nicaragua), Diario Oficial*, edited by Asamblea Legislativa. Managua: La Gaceta (Nicaragua): Diario Oficial, 2007; Nicaragua. "Reformas al decreto No. 03-2007, reformas y adiciones al Decreto no 71=98, reglamento de la Ley de Organización, Competencia y Procedimientos del Poder Ejecutivo y su Reforma Decreto No. 25-2006; Decreto No. 21-2007." edited by Asamblea Nacional: La Gaceta (Nicaragua): Diario Oficial, 2007; Bay, Kelly. "The Return of the Left in Nicaragua: Citizen Power Councils, Pro-Poor Social Services, and Regime Consolidation." Paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 5 September 2010; Murillo, Rosario. Esquema organizativo del Poder Ciudadano (Primer Borrador) (11) El 19 Digital, 2008 [cited May 2009. Available from http://ww.el19digital.com.

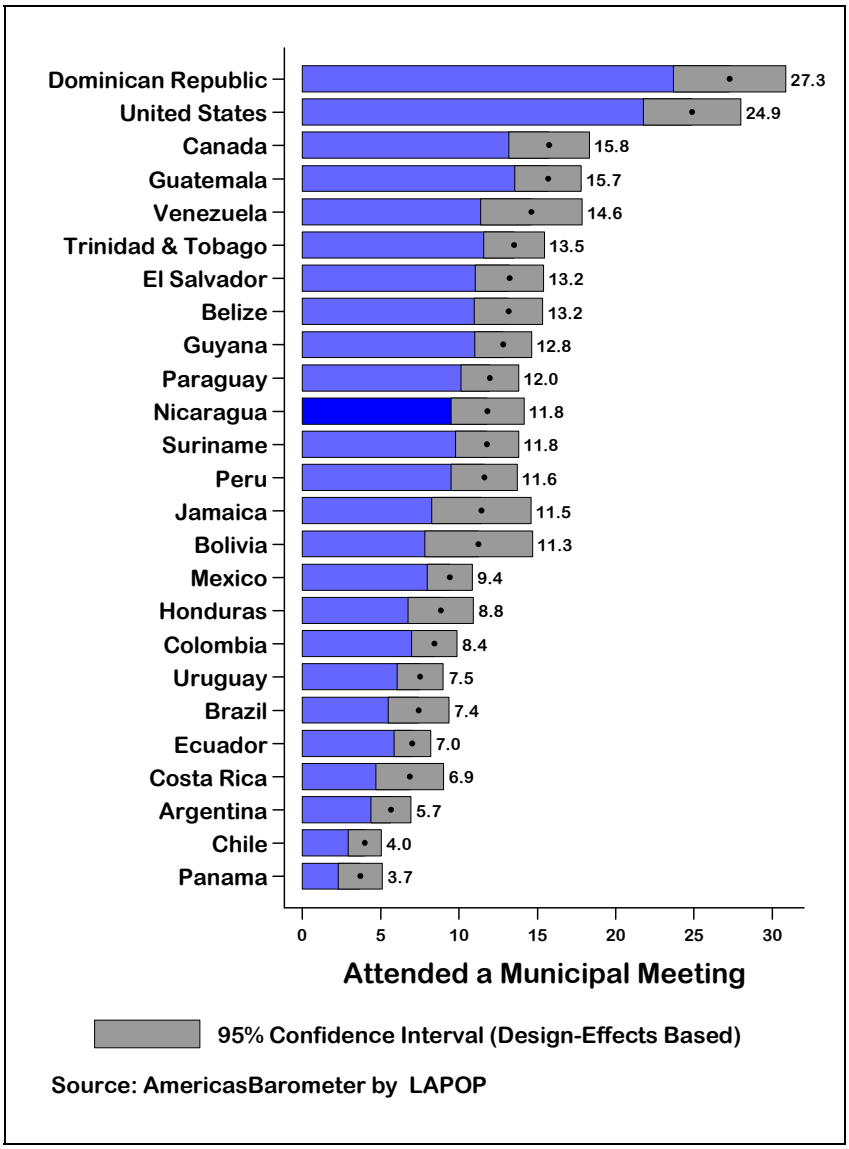

Figure VII.1. Participation in Local Meetings in Comparative Perspective

b) Participation at the Local Level Over Time

How much has attendance at municipal meetings changed in recent years in Nicaragua? Has the development of CIGs or CPCs (or any other factor) driven an increase in citizen attendance at municipal council meetings? Figure VII.2 reveals a slight rise in attendance between 2008 and 2010, but one that is not statistically significant. Indeed, there are no significant differences in attendance at meetings of the municipal councils since 2004.

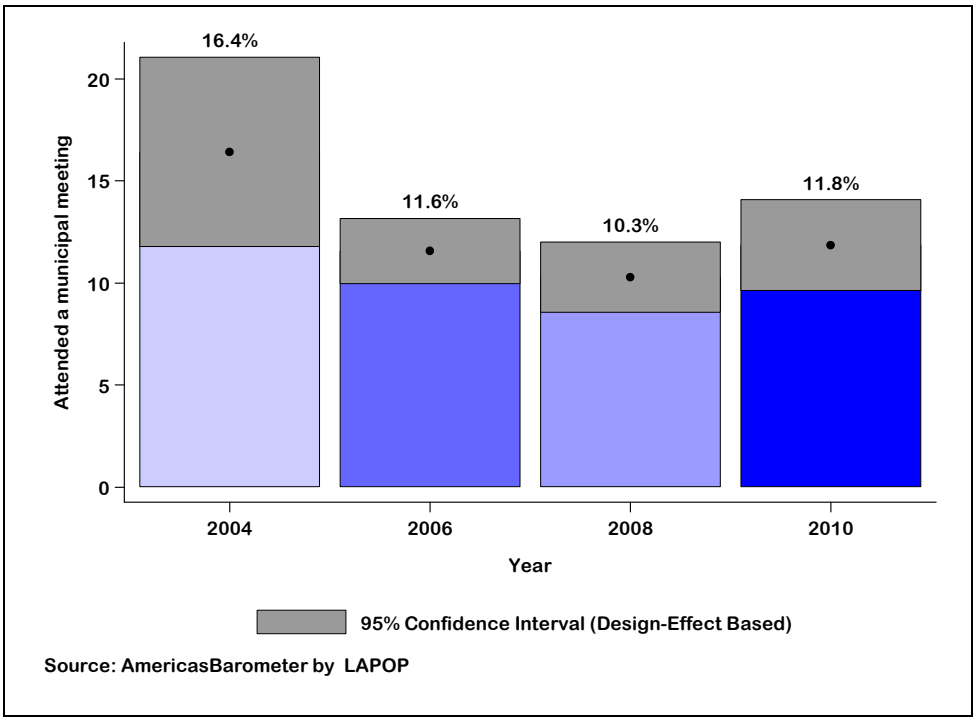

Figure VII.2. Participation in Local Meetings in Nicaragua by Year

Demand-Making on Municipal Government

Attendance at municipal council meetings in itself signifies a level of involvement, but it does not necessarily convey Nicaraguan citizens' preferences to council members. To pursue whether citizens actually make demands on local governments, the Americas Barometer surveys have asked two questions about petitioning (seeking something from) local government and whether or not the respondent perceived the petition, once made, whether the person who made the demand believed that the issue had been resolved in some way. (Note that petitioning government was not contingent upon attending municipal meetings. Note also that the surveys did not seek to identify specific kinds of requests. Nor did the surveys seek to determine whether the resolution was satisfactory to the respondent or not.) The items were:

NP2. Have you sought assistance from or presented a request to any office, official or councilman of the city/town/village within the past 12 months? (1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Go to SGL1]** (88) Doesn't know **[Go to SGL1]** (98) Doesn't answer **[Go to SGL1]**
MUNI10. Did they resolve your issue or request? (1) Yes (0) No (88) DK (98) DA (99) N/A

Figure VII.3 presents the distribution of Nicaraguans' answers to these questions in 2010. The top half of the graph reveals that one in seven Nicaraguans (14.8 percent) report having conveyed some sort of demand or petition to municipal government within the year before the survey. This is three percent more than attended municipal meetings, which clearly indicates that meeting attendance was not the only channel used to seek assistance from the local government.

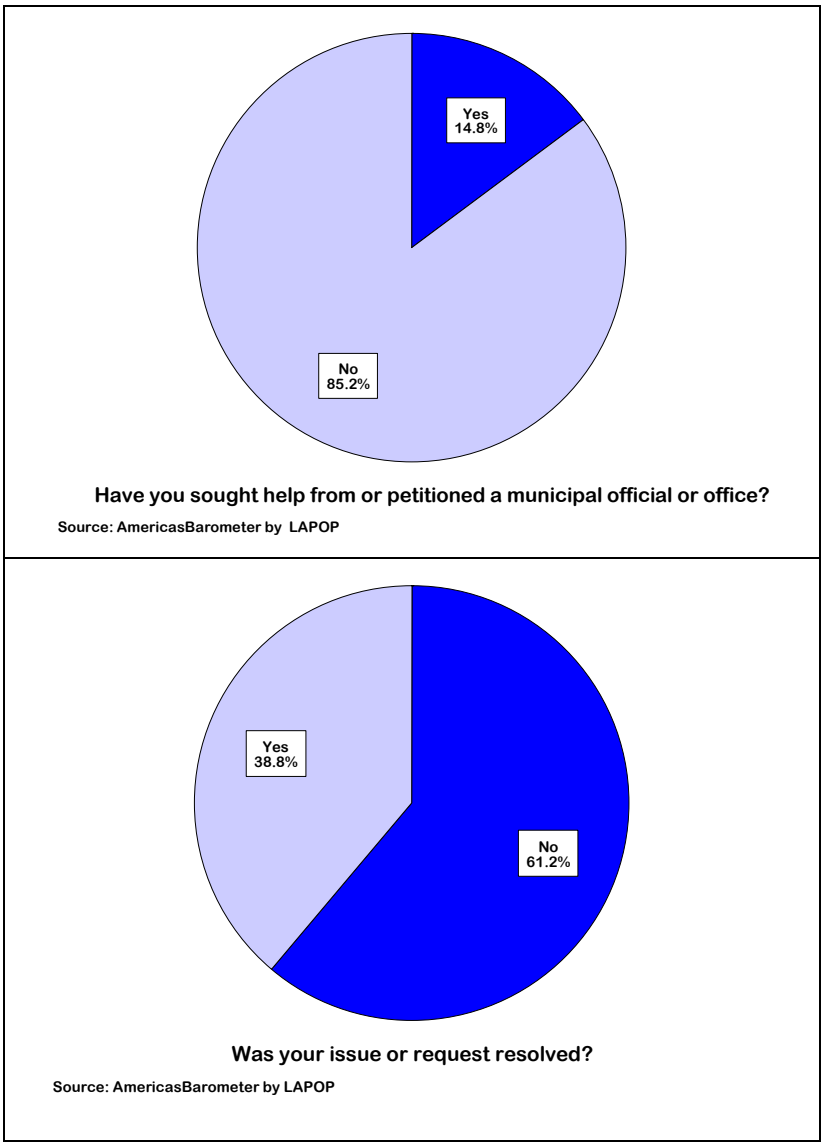

Figure VII.3. Demand-Making on Municipal Government in Nicaragua (2010)

The bottom half of Figure VII.3 takes the question further by asking the 228 people who had petitioned the local government in some way whether they believed their concern had been resolved. Only 39 percent of the petitioners believed the issue to have been resolved.

a) Demand-Making on Municipal Government in Comparative Perspective

How does Nicaragua compare to other countries with respect to petitioning local government? Figure VII.4 provides the answers.

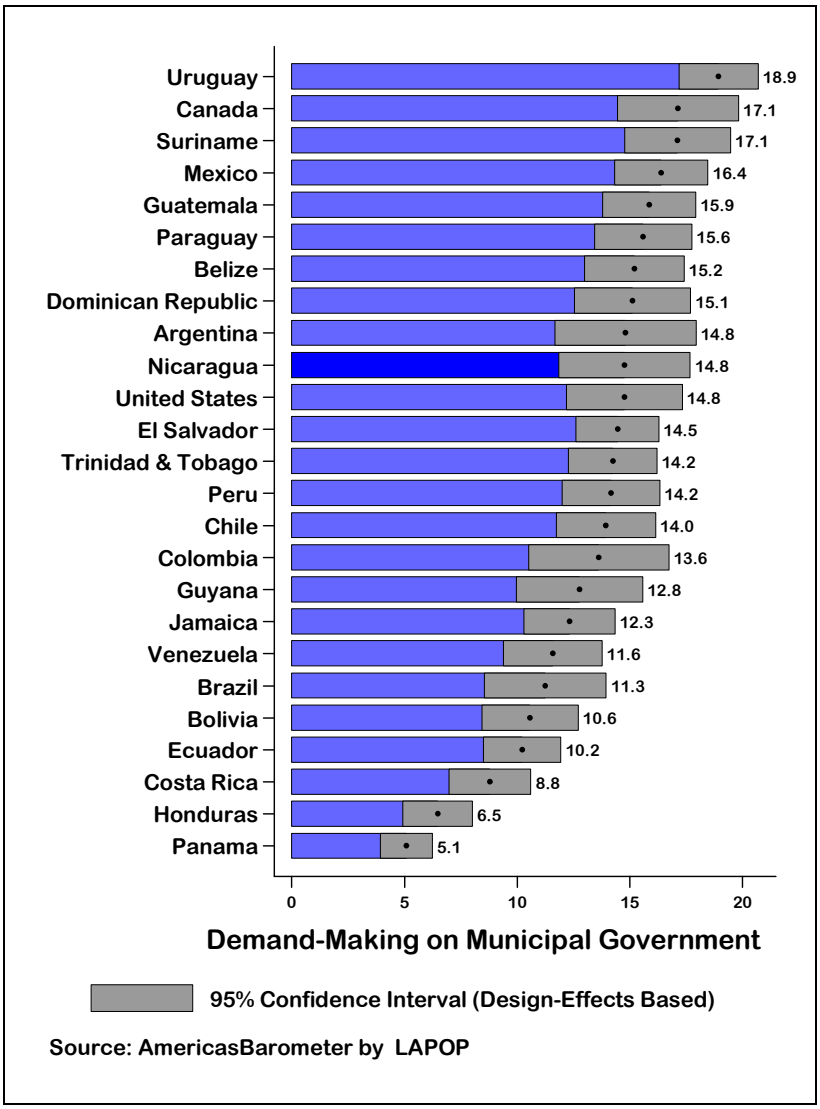

Figure VII.4. Demand-Making on Municipal Government in Comparative Perspective

Others have observed that the amount of contacting public officials reported in previous AmericasBarometer surveys in Central America varied markedly within that smaller region and was even more diverse across the Americas.[120] Figure VII.4 indicates that, at 14.8 percent making demands on local government, Nicaraguans fall roughly in the middle of the array of other citizens of the Americas. The most active municipal demand makers are Uruguayans (18.9 percent), and the least active are Panamanians at 5.1 percent. This level of petitioning local government in Nicaragua, about one person in seven, is roughly the same in almost a dozen other countries in the region.

b) Demand-Making on Municipal Government Over Time

Over time Nicaraguans' petitioning of local government has changed substantially. It declined from 18.3 percent reporting the activity in 2004 to 12.9 percent in 2006, and went down a bit more to

[120] Perez and Seligson, *Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua: The Impact of Governance*; John A. Booth, Christine J. Wade, and Thomas W. Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2006); Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*.

11.1 percent in 2008, both significantly lower than in the 2004. The increase to 14.8 percent observed in 2010 does not reach the level of a statistically significant rise over the prior two surveys.

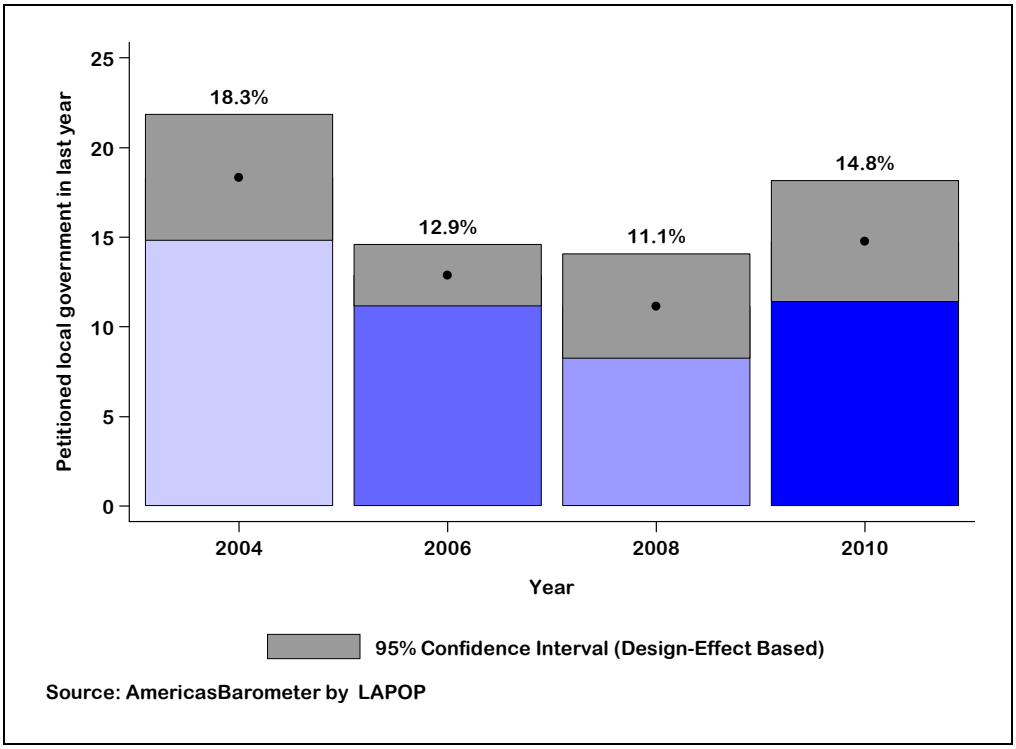

Figure VII.5. Demand-Making on Municipal Government in Nicaragua Over Time

The increased level of demand making observed in 2010 immediately raises the question of whether involvement in community improvement groups (CIGs) or CPCs might have contributed to higher levels of petitioning local government. Because the CPC sector has been the most dynamic of the civil society groups were are studying (roughly doubling in membership and participation intensity from 2008 to 2010), we expected that CPC involvement might contribute to higher levels of demand making. This leads us to the central question of the next section. But community improvement organizations of any type commonly seek governmental assistance, so we expected CIG involvement also to contribute to higher levels of demand making.

c) Who is more likely to seek assistance or Present a Request to the Local Government?

We have analyzed the factors that might contribute to Nicaraguans' petitioning of local government using logistic multiple regression analysis. We included as possible predictors demographic factors, perceived family economic situation, trust in local government, attendance at municipal meetings, and the respondent's level of involvement in Citizen Power Councils and other community improvement organizations (CIGs). Figure VII.6 reveals the results of this analysis. The best predictor of petitioning local government is whether one attends municipal government meetings. People who perceived their economic situations as poor are less likely to petition a local official or agency than those who are better off. Demographics have no significant impact, nor does the size of one's community.

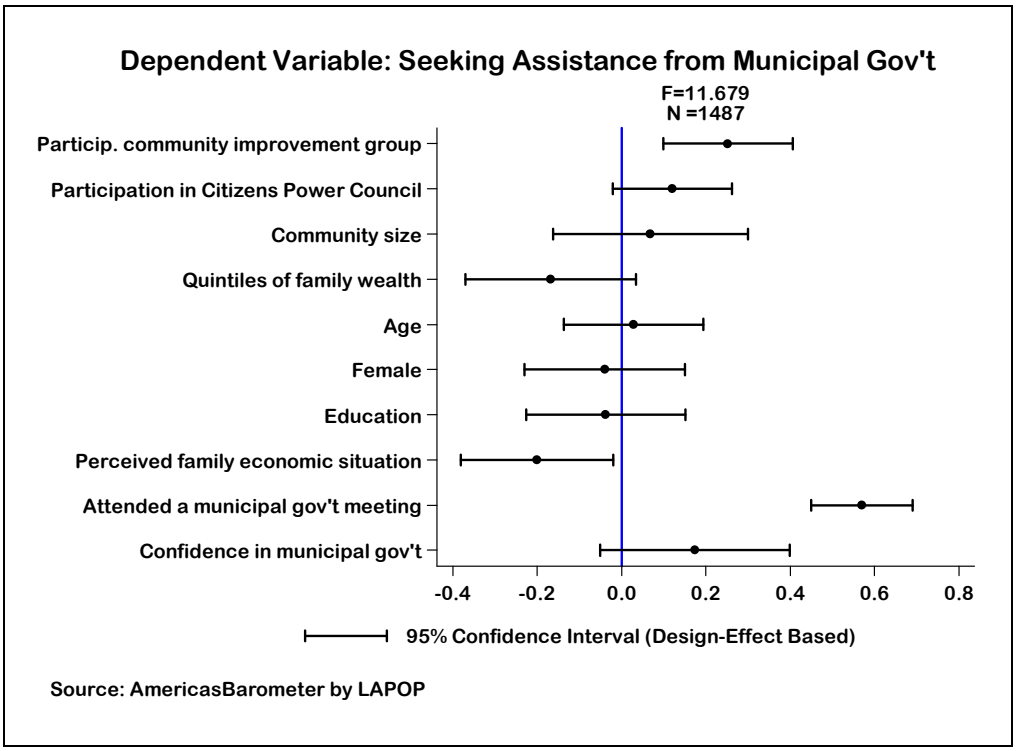

Figure VII.6. Who is More Likely to Seek Assistance or Present a Request to the Local Government? Nicaragua 2010

Figure VII.6 reveals that involvement in community betterment organizations (CIGs) has a significant and positive effect on seeking local government assistance. This stands to reason if for no other reason that that the goals of such groups makes local government a logical target for them. That is, municipalities have responsibility for the maintenance of local infrastructure, and have resources – albeit often limited -- in the form of funds, workers, and equipment. It is also likely that mayors and local council members would seek to mobilize potential future political support by attending to the expressed concerns of community development groups, thus encouraging demand-making. What we did not expect was to find that there is no significant impact of CPC membership on municipal level demand making. The effect detected is in the expected direction (positive) but not quite strong enough to reach a meaningful level statistically. This finding seems somewhat surprising when we consider that the explicit purpose of the CPCs was to engage citizens more with local officials. CPCs do not so far seem to be as effective as the more traditional community organizations in mobilizing citizen demand making.

Figure VII.7 illustrates the effects of several factors that we have identified as contributing to higher levels of petitioning local government. In the upper left hand corner we see the very large effect of attendance at municipal meetings on petitioning local government. Nicaraguans who report attending also report almost five times more petitioning of local officials. Whether attendance itself is the specific means for demand-making (i.e., by speaking at meetings or contacting officials while at municipal council meetings) it clearly has a strong impact on the likelihood of a demand being made.

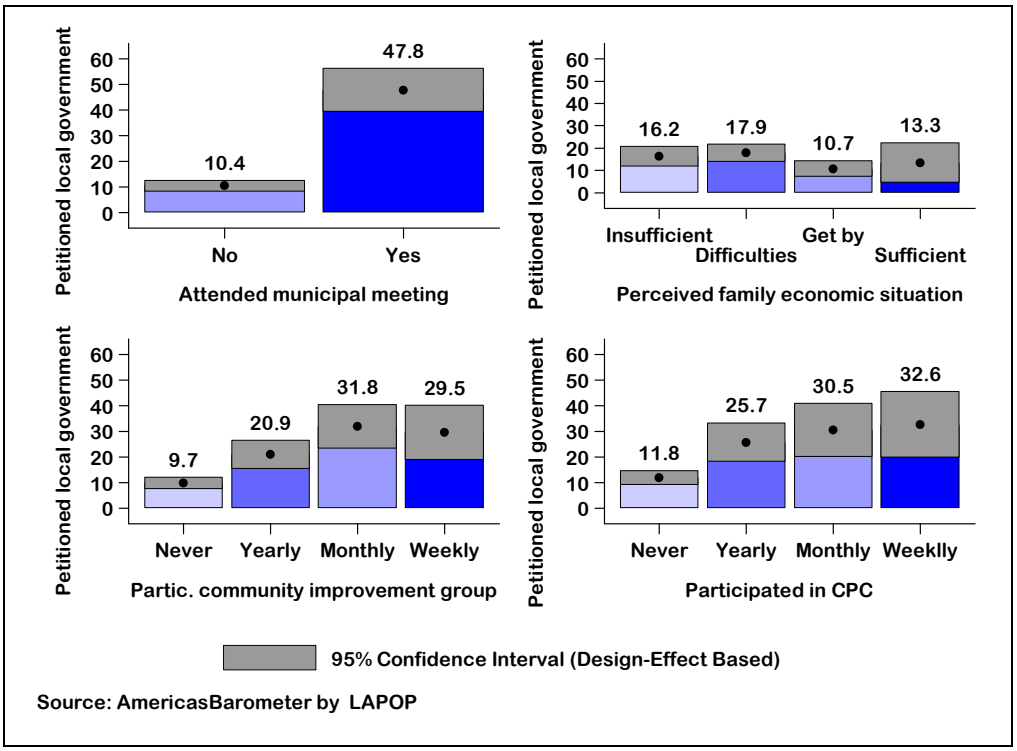

Figure VII.7. Influences on Petitioning Local Government, Nicaragua 2010

In the upper right hand graph in Figure VII.7 we see that the two groups who view their family economic situations as insufficient or as leaving them with difficulties in making ends meet are slightly more likely to seek assistance from Nicaragua's municipal governments than those who are better off. Local government appears to be viewed as a potential source of assistance by the poor.

Turning to civil society engagement, we see in the two lower graphs in Figure VII.7 that greater group involvement leads to sharply more demand making for both (though the reader should recall that, with other factors held constant, CPC's impact is not significant – see below). In CIGs and in CPCs, Nicaraguans more intensely involved in each group report from two to three times as much petitioning of local government. The deeper their involvement, the stronger is the effect. At this level (uncorrected for other factors) CPCs also increase local government demand-making, as they were intended to do.

The observed discrepancy between the bivariate analysis in Figure VII.7 and the multiple regression model in Figure VII.6 above warrants an explanation. The effects illustrated here in Figure VII.7 are simple bivariate relationships and do not control for the impact of any other variables on the relationship. When analyzed using multiple regression, the results report the *independent* effect of each variable modeled on the dependent variable, thus eliminating spurious relationships. In effect, what Figure VII.6 indicates is that, with all the other influences in the model controlled, the CPC-demand making relationship is somewhat weaker than it appears. However, digging a bit deeper we find that the simple bivariate correlation between CPC and community development group membership among Nicaraguans is .44, which means that 20 percent of the variation in CPC and other development association membership occurs in common. Thus many people who are involved in one are also involved in the other type of organization. Thus their effect on demand-making is shared. When parsed by the regression analysis CIGs have a significant effect while CPCs do not -- but just barely not. However, it is evident from Figure VII.7 that both types of organizations exercise similar influences on the petitioning behavior of their patterns. It would be hasty to conclude that CPCs do not generate petitioning of local government.

Satisfaction with Local Government Services

The next step in the logical chain that connects contacting and petitioning local government to the formal institutions of government is to examine whether Nicaraguans are satisfied with the services municipalities receive. The AmericasBarometer surveys included the following item that asked citizens to evaluate local government services:

SGL1. Would you say that the services the city/town/village is providing to the people are…? **[Read options]**
(1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer

Figure VII.8 presents a breakdown of the answers given by Nicaraguans to this question. We see that 40 percent of Nicaraguans give positive responses. Almost 5 percent give "very good" evaluations of local government services, and just over 35 percent give "good" as their evaluation. The largest share of the population falls in the indifferent middle. ("neither good nor bad"). Just less than 19 percent combined rate their municipal governments' services as bad or very bad.

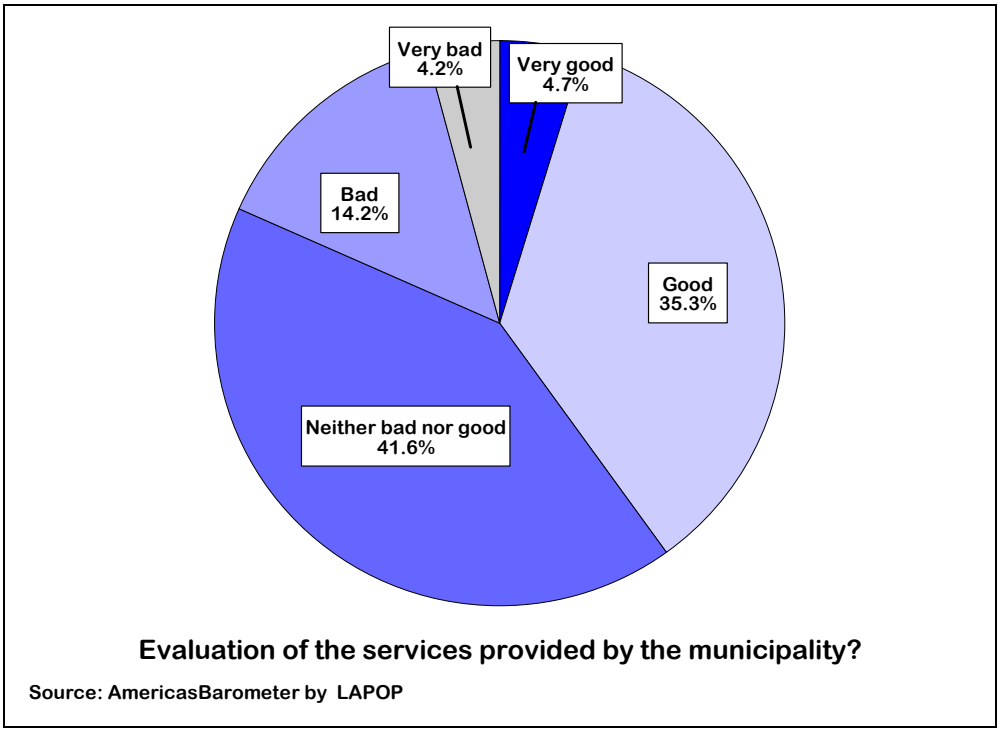

Figure VII.8. Satisfaction with Local Government Services in Nicaragua (2010)

a) Satisfaction with Local Government Services in Comparative Perspective

For the next phase of the analysis we converted the item evaluating municipal government services into an index ranging from zero (very bad) to 100 (very good). Figure VII.9 places Nicaragua in comparative context throughout the Americas on evaluations of local government services. Nicaragua stands out in this array because it is very near the top of the hemispheric rankings on evaluation of municipal services by its citizens. Its 55.6 score (fourth highest) is not significantly lower than those of the three nations ranked above Nicaragua – Colombia, Canada and Uruguay.[121] The countries at the

[121] The reader should note that the value of the index of satisfaction with municipal government services utilized in Figure VII.9 does not represent the percentages of satisfaction reported in Figure VII.8, but instead an index number resulting from

bottom of the rankings – Suriname, Jamaica, and Belize – have mean municipal service evaluation scores from their citizens between 37.2 and 39.4, roughly 18 or 19 scale points below the countries whose citizens are most satisfied, including Nicaragua.

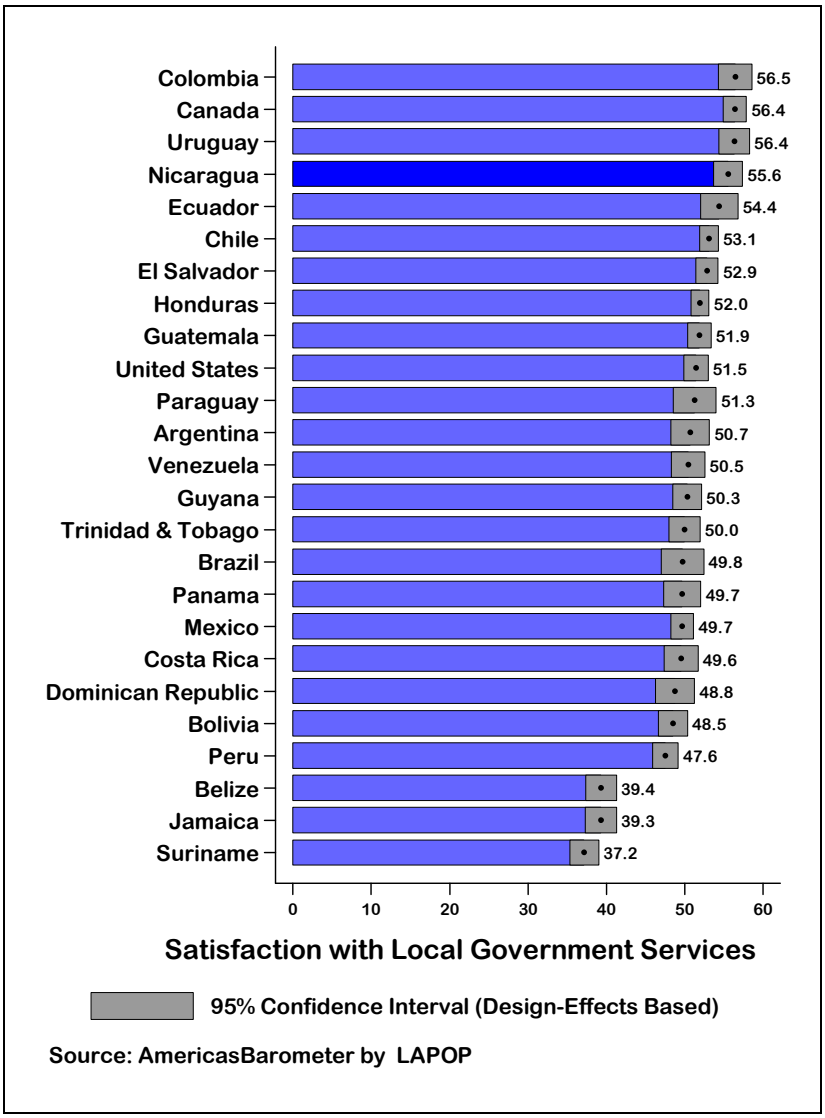

Figure VII.9. Satisfaction with Local Government Services in Comparative Perspective

Nicaraguans' average score places them significantly higher than citizens of the United States on this item, a fact worthy of comment. While U.S. citizens almost certainly enjoy higher quality municipal services than Nicaraguans, this comparison ranks *satisfaction with services*, not service quality. Such rankings tend to be contextually bound, so that Nicaraguans evaluate the quality of their municipal services within the expectation parameters they hold for such services, while U.S. residents do the same within their respective contexts. Thus Americans may be relatively unhappy with reportedly eroding local infrastructures of recent years, while Nicaraguans may be pleased with expanded municipal authority and services.

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the conversion of the scores used to generate Figure VII.8 into a 0 to 100 scale. The score appears a bit higher than one might expect with respect to the percentages because there are more Nicaraguans who approve of municipal services than who disapprove of them, a fact that elevates the average score. The important thing about this measure in Figure VII.9 is that it is comparable between countries.

b) Satisfaction with Local Government Services Over Time

How has satisfaction with service provided by local government evolved in recent years? The answer is that Nicaraguans' views of municipal services fluctuated within a rather narrow range from 2004 through 2008, the changes insignificant from survey to survey. There was a 5.4 scale point increase between 2008 and 2010, leaving the respondents of 2010 with the highest level (55.6) since 2004.

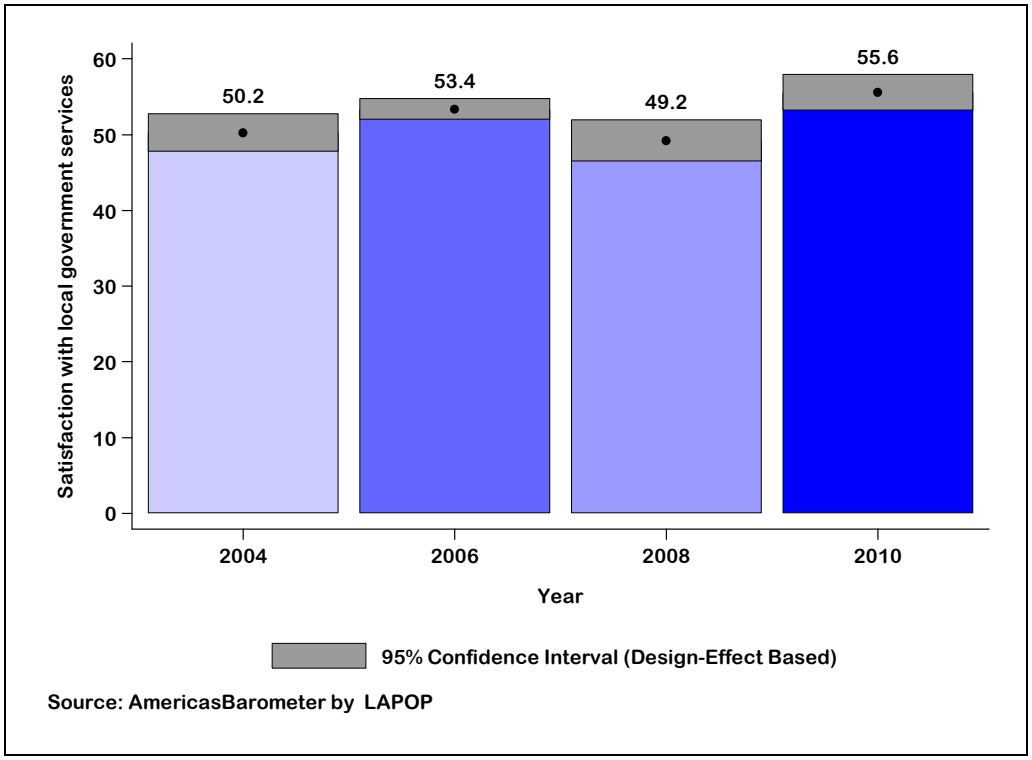

Figure VII.10. Satisfaction with Local Government Services over Time, Nicaragua

c) Determinants of Satisfaction with Local Government Services

What factors contribute to higher levels of satisfaction with municipal government services? Because service quality might vary by region (indeed, as might expectations about them) we considered whether satisfaction might be related to region or community size? We also considered the usual demographic factors, trust in local government, involvement in locally oriented civil society organizations, and contact with municipal government. We analyzed an array of these using multiple regression analysis. The results of a trimmed regression analysis (dropping out many originally modeled but unrelated variables such as many regions, some civil society groups, and community size) are presented in Figure VII.11. The results are simple. Only three factors affect satisfaction with municipal services: age and residence in the Pacific South (both slightly negative) and trust in municipal government (very strongly positive). There is a problem of identifying the direction of causality in the association between trust in the municipality and satisfaction with local government services. Those satisfied may have higher levels of confidence, or vice versa. Either interpretation seems plausible. We cannot resolve this conundrum with the resources available here.

On balance, then, the prevailing factor in determining how citizens view the quality of municipal services is simply whether they have confidence in the municipality. What is missing – that is, links not found – is also interesting. Attending municipal meetings and petitioning local government do not elevate

satisfaction with local services. Further, involvement in key civil society organizations has no impact – even ones that may be assumed on their face to be concerned about the quality of municipal services, such as community improvement groups and CPCs. Attending the meetings of a CPC almost reaches statistical significance in the positive direction (this positive association makes sense), but fails to be sufficiently strong when other factors are accounted for.

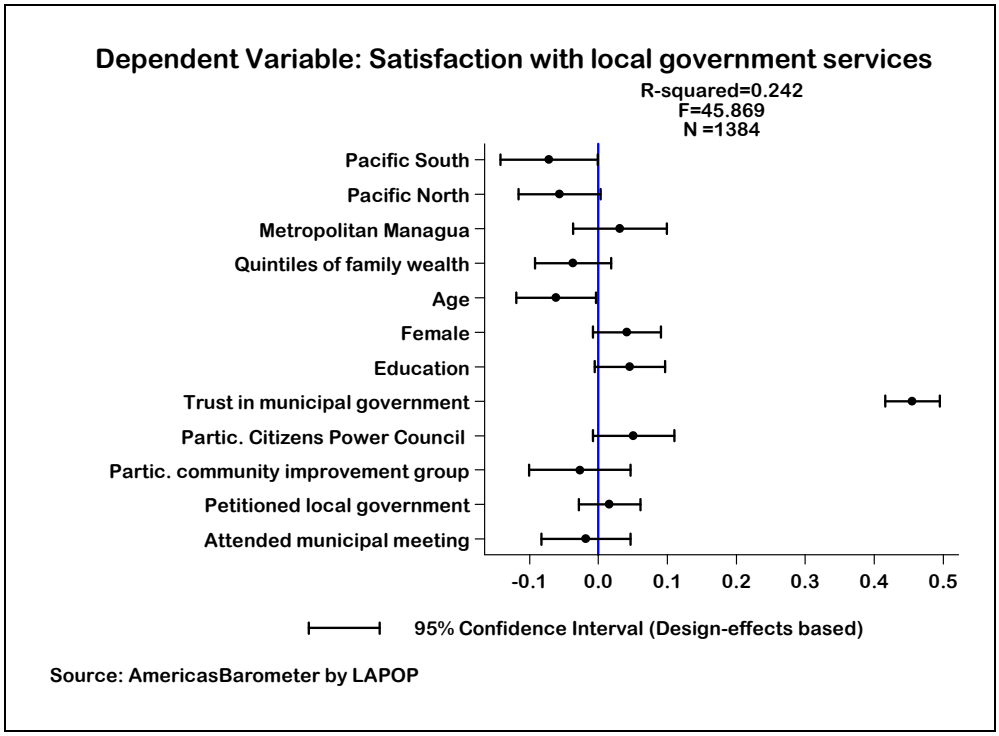

Figure VII.11. Satisfaction with Local Government Services in Nicaragua, 2010

In the end we are left with something of a mystery. Those who trust municipal government are satisfied with local government services. Which causes which – or whether some other factor causes both – cannot be easily determined.

Impact of Satisfaction with Local Government Services on System Support

We return now to the big question with which this chapter began -- whether being satisfied with municipal government services might positively affect support for national political institutions. The argument with which we introduced the chapter was that if the level of government closest to the Nicaraguan people were performing at satisfactory levels, then some of that approval should rub off on the national system as well. It turns out that, as in 2008, Nicaraguans trust their local governments almost seven scale points more than they do the national government, so the two evaluations are not the same thing. And we have found that Nicaraguans in 2010 are a bit more satisfied with local government services than in 2008, and that the municipal service evaluation score is actually somewhat in the positive end of the evaluation scale. Where does all this leave us with regard to the system support hypothesis?

Is there continuing evidence that satisfaction with municipal government services increases support for the national political system? In a word, yes. Figure VII.12 identifies three variables affecting levels of support for the national political system. Satisfaction with local government contributes

positively, as it did in Nicaragua in 2008.[122] The variable with the strongest effect on national system support is approval of the president's performance. Finally, age is slightly negative related to system support. Otherwise, demographic factors make no significant difference in system support, nor does perceived family economic situation.

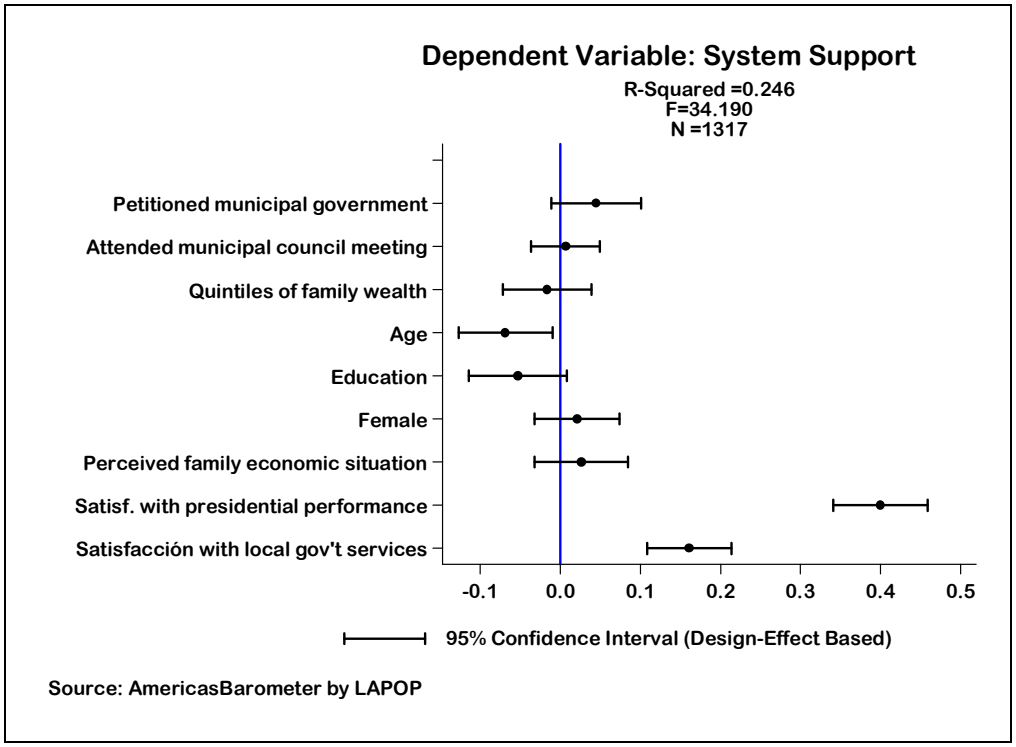

Figure VII.12. Impact of Satisfaction with Local Government Services on System Support in Nicaragua (2010)

It is worth emphasizing that many variables (some shown but others not shown in the trimmed model in Figure VII.12) have no effect on system support – demographics including poverty, one's perceived family economic situation, community size, and region. Attending municipal meetings and petitioning local government has no effect on national system support. Most interestingly for the social capital theory discussed at length in the previous chapter, again we see that engaging in civil society activism directly related to municipal government not only has no effect on satisfaction with municipal services, but also has no effect on system support.

To illustrate the magnitude of the effects we may examine the results in Figure VII.13. There we see that the impact of satisfaction with local government services has a large effect on system support. Those most satisfied with local government service average 28 scale point higher out of 100 on national political system support than those who are most dissatisfied with them. In the right hand graph we see the effect for satisfaction with presidential performance is even bigger, a 33 point increase in support as one moves from those least happy to those most happy about President Ortega's performance.

[122] Perez and Seligson, *Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua: The Impact of Governance*.

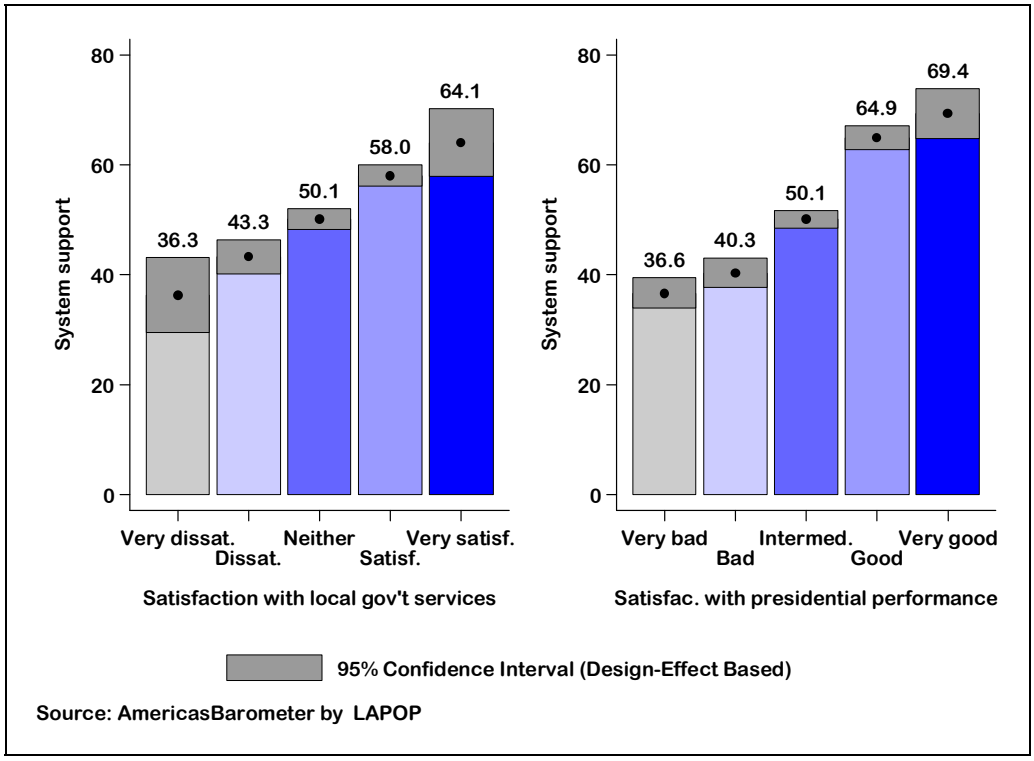

Figure VII.13. Effects of Satisfaction with Municipal Services and Presidential Performance on System Support

Conclusion

Proponents of enhancing municipal government argue that local institutions are more accessible and potentially more subject to popular influence than are distant and complex national political institutions. Those who participate in this arena, their argument goes, may gain experiences that ultimately increase their support for national institutions. This should increase democratic stability. Nicaragua has put some effort in recent years into giving its municipal governments more resources, and toward empowering citizens to influence them by creating and encouraging both CIGs and CPCs. Evidence from Nicaragua in this and the previous AmericasBarometer surveys support the theoretical argument that satisfaction with municipal government services bolsters national system support.

One in ten Nicaraguans in 2010 report having attended a municipal meeting in the past year, a level that is roughly average for the Americas. One person in fourteen reports asking the local government for something, and about four in ten of those believed their issue or request was resolved. Nicaraguans were also in the middle of the pack within the Americas in terms of petitioning local government for assistance. Those who made demands on local government tended to view their family economic situation negatively, to be involved in a traditional community improvement group, and to have attended a municipal government meeting.

Despite the nation's relative poverty, Nicaraguans rank near the top of residents of the Americas in their satisfaction with local government services. In 2010 they also express significantly higher satisfaction with local government services than in 2008. Nicaraguans in 2010 also express greater confidence in their local governments than they do with the national government. Satisfaction with local

government services is driven by trust in local government, but not by having attended meetings, petitioning the municipality or its officials, or engaging in civil society activity.

One must conclude that the efforts of the Nicaraguan government to increase municipal government resources have borne fruit, at least in the levels of satisfaction with local government services. This, in turn, is associated with citizens' stronger evaluations of national institutions, thus tending to reinforce the stability of the Nicaraguan political system.

Part III: Beyond the Economic Crisis

Chapter VIII. Nicaragua's Youth

Introduction

Because of its high fertility rate of 2.8 births per female,[123] Nicaragua has a very young population that continues to grow at a rapid pace despite a notable recent decrease in the rate of population increase. This large proportion of young people has, at least potentially, important implications for the political system because of the large share of young people and because Nicaragua allows its citizens to vote at age 16. Thus the political attitudes and behaviors of the young may affect the political system both in the present and over time as the large cohort of young citizen's ages. This chapter explores the population of younger Nicaraguans in comparison to older citizens with particular attention to their political values and behaviors.

Because young Nicaraguans can begin to vote at age 16 and because nearly forty percent of the citizen population surveyed was 25 or younger, we have divided the age cohorts breaking the youngest Nicaraguans into age cohorts of 16 to 20 and 21 to 25.[124] The distribution of population by age is illustrated in Figure VIII.1, which includes all four survey rounds since 2004. The group aged 16 to 20, the newest voters, workers, and in some cases family heads, constitute 20.2 percent of respondents. Those aged 21 to 25 make up 28.3 percent of those surveyed. In 2010, our survey found that 40.1 percent of the population was under age 25.

[123] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2009* (Nicaragua), accessed May21, 2010 at http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_NIC.html. The statistic is for 2005-1020. Nicaragua's fertility rate declined markedly from the 1990-1995 period rate of 4.5 births per woman. The natural population increase in percent declined from 2.9 percent for the earlier period to 2.0 percent.

[124] The reader should be aware that the report here and in certain other parts employs different age cohorts than those that are the LAPOP standard (16-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65, 66+). In this chapter we employ these cohorts: 16-20, 21-30, 31-45, 46-60, 61+. The cohorts used here were adopted because of the central theme of this chapter, which is Nicaraguan youth. Nicaraguans can vote at age 16. Those aged 16-25 constitute almost 40 percent of the surveyed population. Thus it is useful to divide the younger segment into two groups:16 to 20 and 21 to 25 years of age. The divisions employed in the remaining cohorts was adopted in order to provide groups of roughly the same number of respondents. In the standard cohort division used by LAPOP the group of Nicaraguans 65 and older is very small. Using a 61 and older cohort instead provides more cases, which is useful and simpler for inter-group comparisons and for tests of statistical significance.

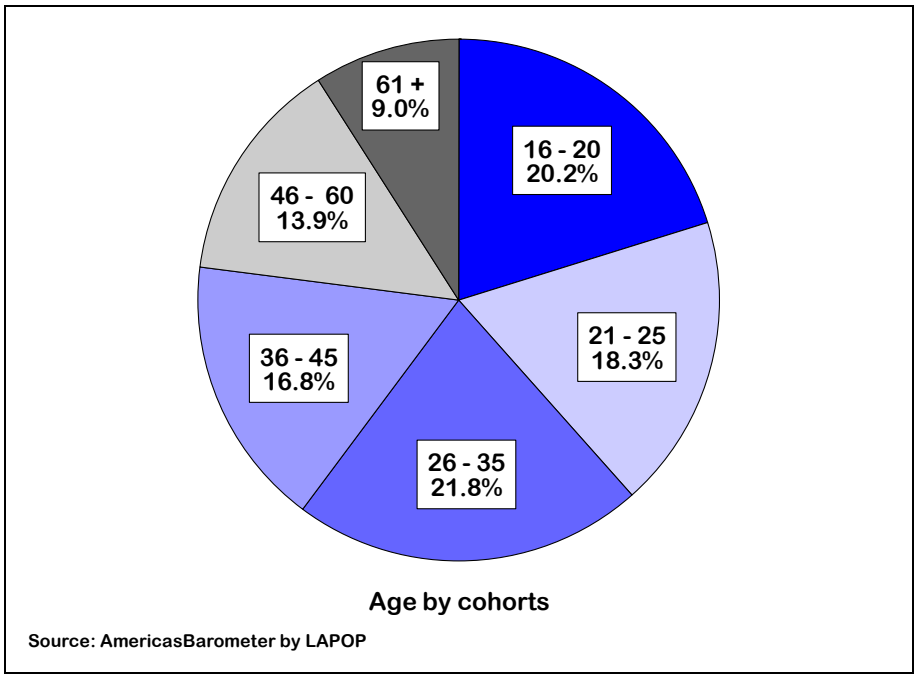

Figure VIII.1. Age Distribution among Nicaraguans

Characteristics of Young Nicaraguans

Education

Because of the increase in educational opportunity in recent decades, Nicaragua's youth have more years of schooling than their older fellow citizens. Overall, the average reported educational attainment of the two cohorts of younger Nicaraguans is roughly 9 years, while that of persons 61 or older is less than 3 years (Figure VIII.2). As one would expect with the increase in education over time, the discrepancy between the education of the young and older Nicaraguans tends to be greater for the 2010 survey than for the 2004 survey.

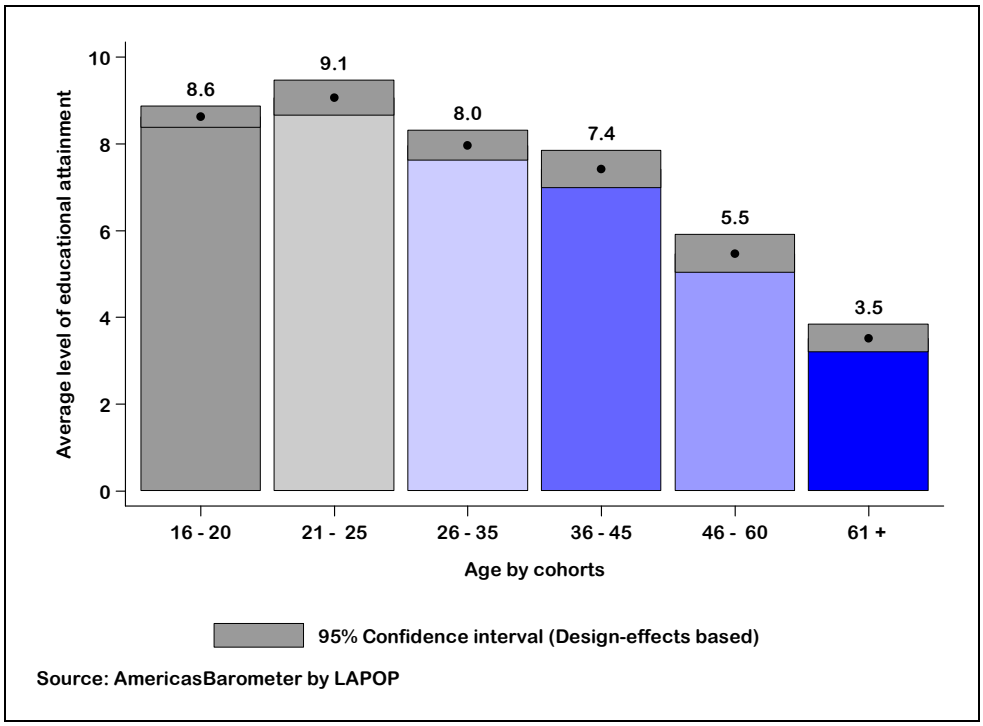

Figure VIII.2. Educational Attainment by Age, Nicaragua (2004-2010)

The distribution of education by age in Figure VIII.2 demonstrates clearly that Nicaragua in recent decades has been building human capital through schooling its younger citizens. Other indicators of such progress may be found in the adult literacy level (for those above 15), which was below 40 percent in the 1960s but had risen to 78 percent by 2007 according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The UNDP also reported a 72 percent combined gross enrolment ratio in education (meaning the percent of school-aged citizens actually enrolled in school in 2007).[125]

Wealth and Location

There are very modest differences in wealth across age cohorts, with young Nicaraguans slightly more prosperous (by a few tenths of a point) than older groups (Figure VIII.3). The differences are statistically significant only when the young are compared to the 61 + cohort. Younger Nicaraguans are also slightly more prone to live in rural areas than urban ones. This occurs because rural families tend to have more children than urban families.[126]

[125]John A. Booth, Christine J. Wade, and Thomas W. Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion, and* Change (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2009, p. 270 report Nicaragua's literacy rate in 1960 to have been 32 percent. Data for 2007 from the UNDP, *Human Development Report 2009* (Nicaragua), accessed May21, 2010. F S at http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_NIC.html.

[126] Our survey's urban respondents report having 2.2 children, while rural respondents report having 2.8 children.

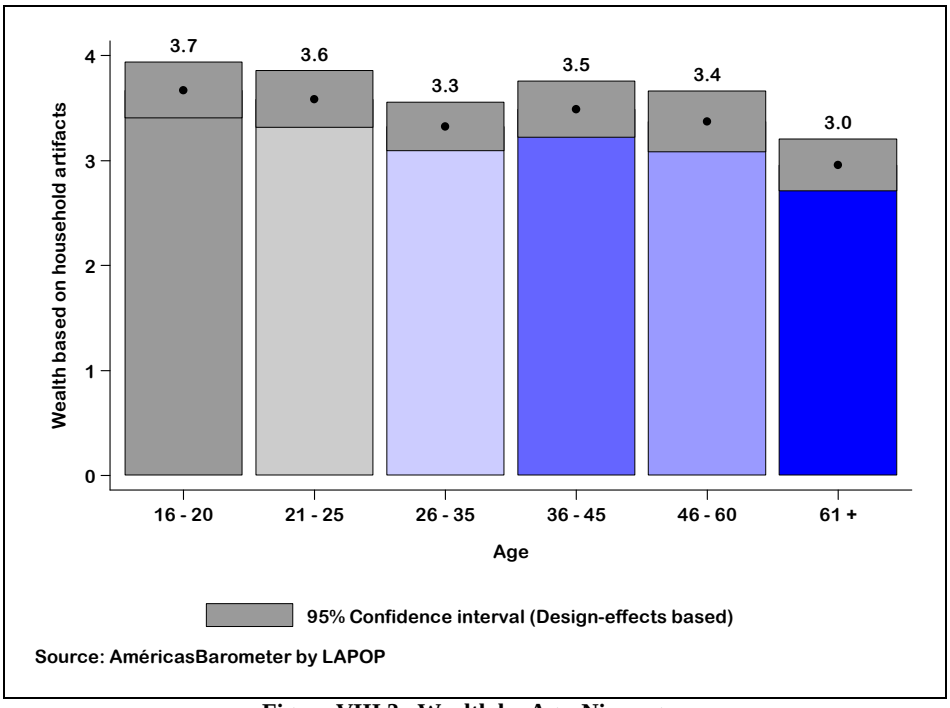

Figure VIII.3. Wealth by Age, Nicaragua

Marital Status and Children

Nicaraguans begin having children, and many of them forming families of their own, at a young age. Among the two younger age cohorts (16 to 25), 65.7 percent are single, 12.8 percent married, and 19.9 percent living in a free union. Many of these young Nicaraguans (33.9 percent) have children themselves. Women under the age of 26 report having an average of .77 children, men an average of .35 children. By marital status, the mean number of children rises from 0.14 for singles to 1.42 for married respondents, and 1.26 for those in free unions. When broken down by gender and by marital status (not shown to conserve space), one finds that for all marital statuses women report having more children and more children living at home than do men.

Employment and the Impact of the Recession

Slightly more of the 617 Nicaraguan young people (ages 16 to 25) surveyed in 2010 reported their principle activity as working (36.6 percent) than as being a student (33.2 percent). Some 9.1 percent reported actively seeking work. Among the 378 youth not working, 14 percent were looking for work and 52.1 percent were students. Of the young Nicaraguans who described themselves as mainly working, 85.4 percent retained their jobs in the last two years. Meanwhile 12.6 percent of this working group reported having lost a job in the last two years but found another. Success at finding another job after losing one was not significantly lower for younger Nicaraguans than those in older cohorts.

Figure VIII.4 shows that the share of younger Nicaraguans reporting declines in family income over the last two years (roughly 29 percent for those 25 or under) is lower than for older cohorts. The advantage to young Nicaraguans is statistically significant when compared to the group aged between 46 and 60 years of age, but not significantly different from other cohorts.

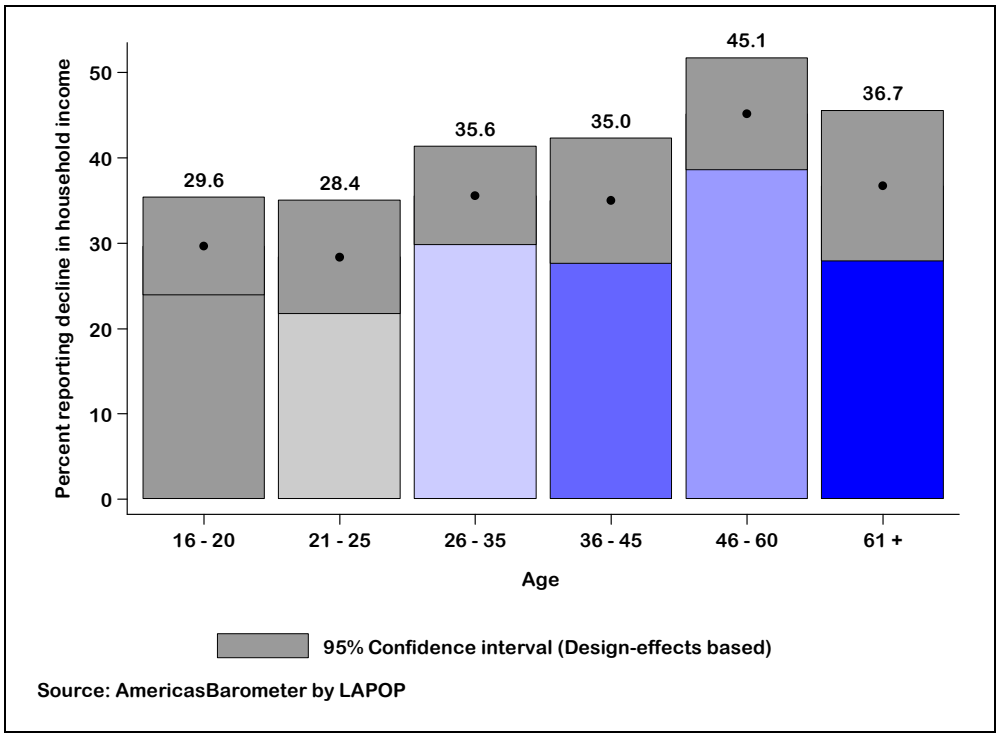

Figure VIII.4. Declining Income by Age Group

How well do younger Nicaraguans perceive their personal economies and the national economy? Are they more or less optimistic than older citizens? Our survey asked Nicaraguans questions about how they perceived both the general economy of the country, and their own personal economies, both in the present and how they perceive them to have changed in the previous 12 months. These items were combined to form two scales ranging from 0 to 100 with a zero representing a very poor assessment of the personal or national economy up to 100 for a very good assessment.

- Now, speaking of the economy, how would you characterize the economic situation of the country? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad, or very bad?
- Do you believe that the current economic situation of the country is better, the same, or worse than twelve months ago?
- How would you generally describe your own economic situation? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad, or very bad?
- Do you believe that your current economic situation is better, the same, or worse than that of twelve months ago?

We see in Figure VIII.5 that most Nicaraguans are pessimistic about economic conditions in 2010. Nicaraguans view their own personal economic situations as better than the national average by from 6 to 16 points on the zero to 100 scale. However, evaluations of both personal and national economies fall almost completely on the pessimistic end (below the midpoint) of the scale except for youths' perceptions of their personal economies. Interestingly, younger Nicaraguans are significantly more positive about their personal economies than are older Nicaraguans. This optimism of youth may stem in part from the higher level of education of younger Nicaraguans, which may give them greater confidence about economic conditions and about their personal economic than their elders. Younger Nicaraguans are more optimistic about the national economy than all other age groups except for the 61 and older cohort.

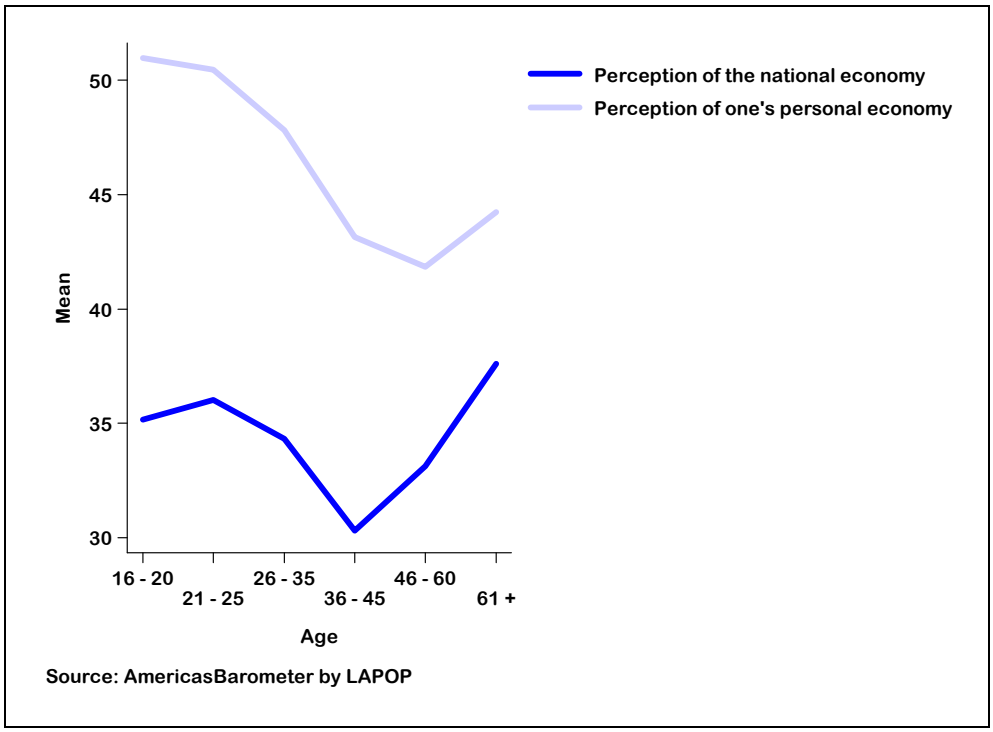

Figure VIII.5. Perception of the National Economy and the Personal Economy by Age (2010)

When one considers the evolution of economic perceptions over time (Figure VIII.6), we find that Nicaraguans were the most pessimistic about their personal and the national economies not presently in 2010, but in 2008. By 2010 there is an across the board increase for all age groups of optimism about the economy. In their evaluations of the national economy in 2010, Nicaraguans average ten points higher than they had in 2008 (except for those 61 and older for whom the gap was considerably wider). In 2010 younger Nicaraguans are a bit less optimistic about the national economy than are those 61 and older, while the younger groups had been the most optimistic cohorts in 2006 and 2008. In their evaluations of their personal economies in 2010 the two younger cohorts of Nicaraguans attain the scale midpoint of 50 for the evaluation of their personal economies, almost ten points better than the highest scores for 2006 and 13 points above 2008.

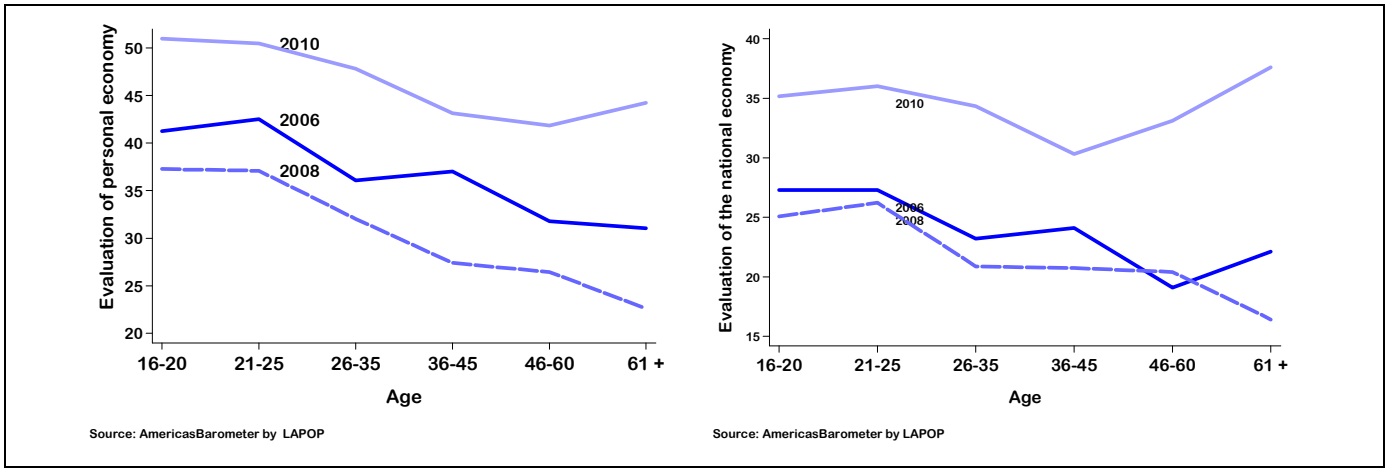

Figure VIII.6. Evaluation of the Personal and National Economy, by Age and Year

Information and News Media Contact

How informed are younger Nicaraguans, and how much do they report engaging with the mainstream news media? How much do they make use of the internet? Young Nicaraguans predominantly report that they *"inform themselves about the situation of the country"* primarily from television (82 percent), followed at a distant second by the radio (10.5 percent), and the newspaper (4 percent). Internet use for this purpose is reported by only 0.8 percent of the young respondents. However, 56 percent of younger Nicaraguans report using the internet at least occasionally. Figure VIII.7 reveals that reported internet use (measured on a scale of zero to 100) falls off dramatically among older Nicaraguans. These patterns notwithstanding, internet use among Nicaraguan young people is low.

Figure VIII.7 also graphs the reported frequency of following the news (a scale ranging from zero for "never" to 100 for "every day"). It reveals that frequency of news following is rather high (averaging around 80 on a 100 point scale), and that this practices does not vary significantly by age group. In terms of their political information (basic knowledge),[127] young Nicaraguans are not particularly better informed than most of the older age cohorts. All age groups vary slightly and insignificantly around a score of 60 out of 100, as one may see in Figure VIII.7.

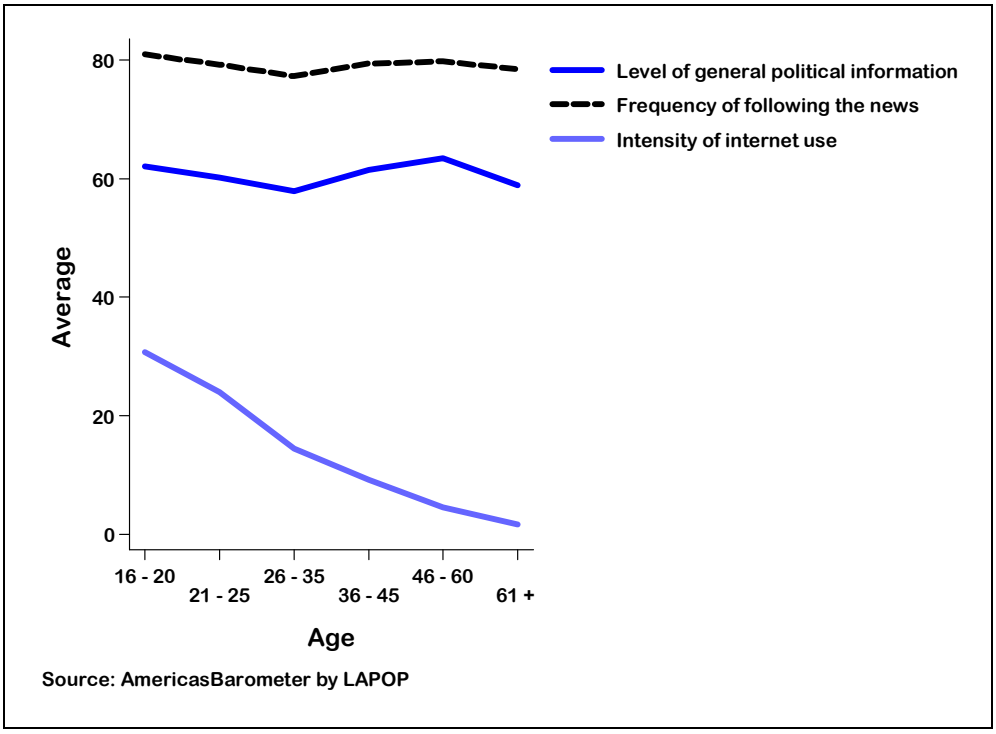

Figure VIII.7. News Media Contact, Information and Internet Use by Age

Experiences with Crime and Corruption

As noted in Chapter IV, a citizen's experiences with crime and corruption may have implications for their attitudes of political legitimacy and for political tolerance. Compared to older Nicaraguans, how

[127] This index was constructed from three items, asking respondents to correctly name the president of the United States, tell how long the presidential term of Nicaragua is, and how many departments Nicaragua has (either with or without special regions).

much experience do the young have with crime and corruption? The 2010 survey asked respondents whether in the past 12 months they had been the victim of a crime, to which 19.2 percent respond affirmatively. Of that group, the mean number of crimes experienced is two apiece. Figure VIII.8 (top graph) presents the percentages of this rate of crime victimization by age group. Nicaraguan youth are slightly more likely to be crime victims than older citizens, but the differences fail to reach the level of statistical significance. A separate analysis revealed that younger Nicaraguans do not perceive themselves to live in significantly less secure neighborhoods than older citizens (analysis not shown).

For all Nicaraguans and irrespective of age, the experience of corruption is very low. By type of institution, the following percentages of respondents reported having been solicited to pay a bribe: the police, 7.5 percent; a public official, 2.7 percent; the municipality, 6.6 percent; at work, 0 percent; the courts, 5.1 percent; a medical clinic or hospital, 1.8 percent; and a school, 3.7 percent.

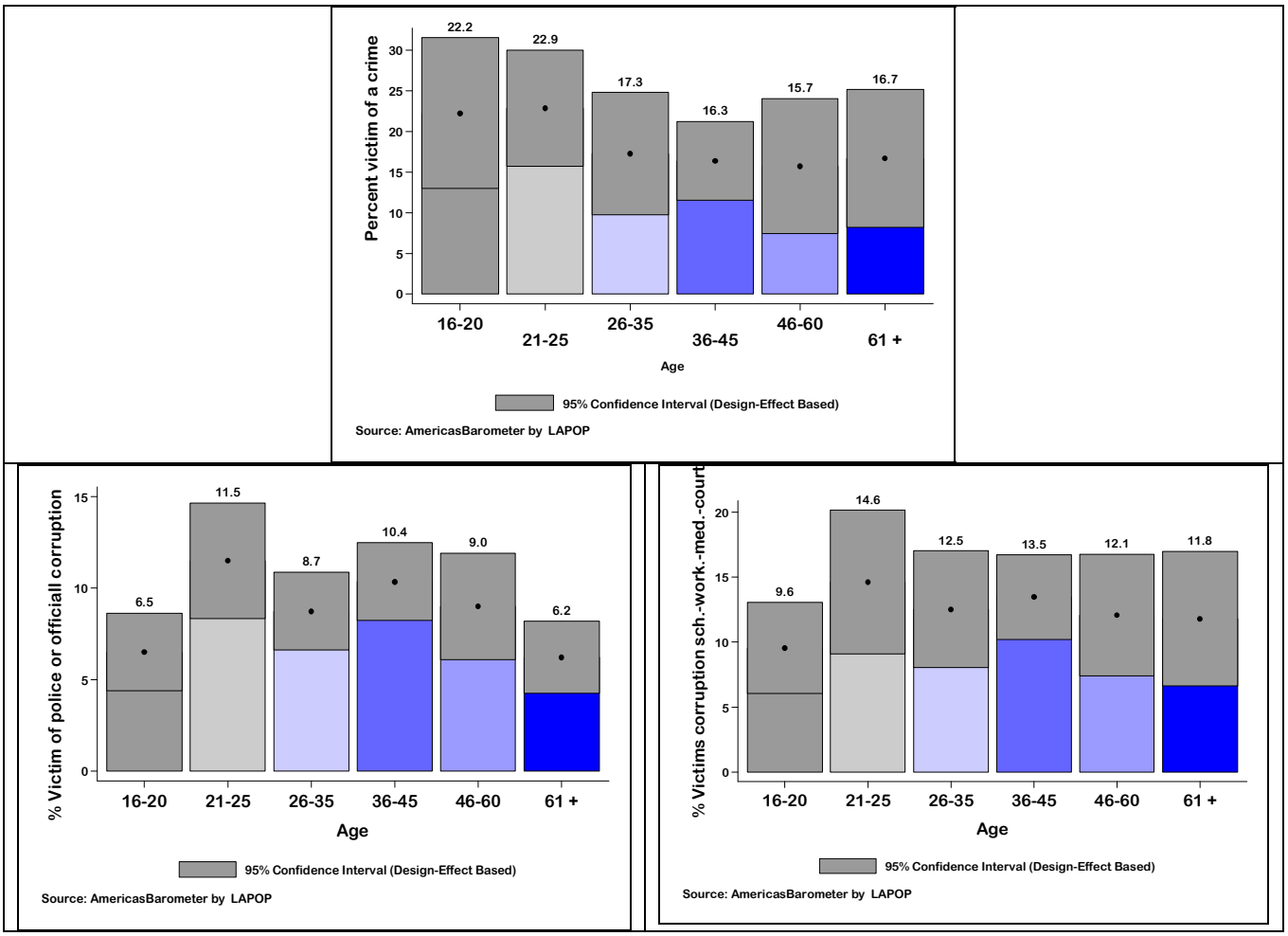

Figure VIII.8. Crime and Corruption Experience by Age (2004-2010)

Turning to the question of corruption, respondents generally report a low incidence of official corruption (see also the discussion in Chapter IV). In all four rounds of the survey since 2004 we asked about having been solicited for a bribe (*mordida*) within the last 12 months in several contexts: the police, a public official, the municipality, work, the courts, public medical services, and public schools. Factor analyzing these items revealed two distinct corruption dimensions, one related to core government agencies (the police, public employees, and the municipality) and another concerning other areas of citizens lives and government services (courts, work, medical services, and school). We have thus here

constructed two indices of corruption in Nicaragua based on these clearly identified patterns, and in this chapter analyze them separately.[128] Figure VIII.8 shows that corruption experience is lowest among both the youngest and oldest citizens (albeit not significantly so in statistical terms). This makes sense on its face as one's exposure to institutions and public services is likely to be most intense during the years of working and shouldering family responsibilities, but less intense among those who remain dependent on parents, are students, have no children of their own, or are not in the workforce. Another general pattern is that experiencing corruption on the core municipal-public official-police dimension is roughly half again as common among Nicaraguans as experiencing corruption in courts, work, medical service and schools. In summary, Nicaraguan youth ages 16 to 20 are less likely to experience corruption of either kind (bottom row of Figure VIII.8), but the difference across age groups fail to achieve statistically significance.

Political Legitimacy

To what extent do younger Nicaraguans view the political system as legitimate and how do their perceptions and evaluations compare with those of older Nicaraguans? The political legitimacy of the system in Nicaragua takes on a similar multidimensional form to that identified using 2004 data by Booth and Seligson (2009). Four legitimacy dimensions appeared in the four surveys conducted since 2004: regime principles legitimacy (agreement with basic democratic norms), support for national political institutions, evaluation of regime economic performance, and evaluation of political actors (the president). (See also Chapter V for an extended discussion of one of these, support for national institutions).

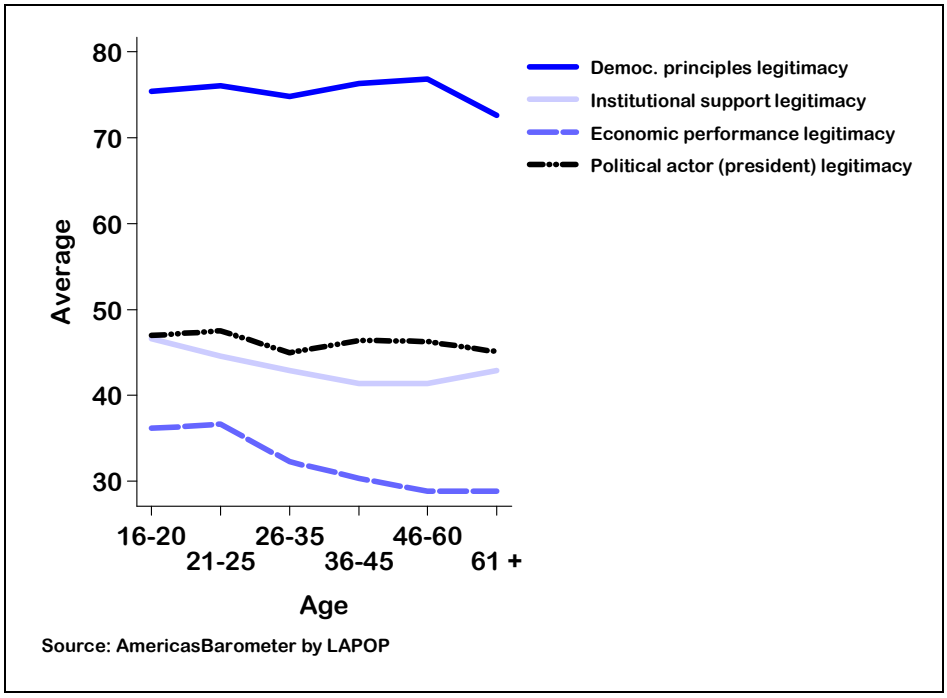

Figure VIII.9. Legitimacy norms by age (2004-2010)

Nicaraguans express strong agreement with basic regime (democratic) principles of inclusive political participation rights. As Figure VIII.9 reveals, all age cohorts express high commitment to these

[128] These two indices correlated with each other at the .169, indicating only a very small overlap between them.

principles, with a pooled average across all four surveys of 75.5 out of 100 scale points. Young Nicaraguans fall at the mean of agreement with this fundamental legitimacy norm for a democratic regime.

Institutional legitimacy fares considerably worse in the opinion of Nicaraguans, with a mean score of 43.6 out of 100. Younger Nicaraguans express significantly more faith in the country's institutions (a mean score of 45.6 for the two younger cohorts) than older groups do. Evaluation of the performance of political actors (in particular, the presidents) has an even lower mean score of 37.4 out of 100 overall. Younger Nicaraguans again express significantly greater approval (40.3 among the two younger cohorts) than their older fellow citizens. And finally, evaluation of economic performance is lowest of all, with a mean score of 32.8 across all four surveys. Once again, younger Nicaraguans are significantly more positive (36.5 out of 100 among the two younger cohorts combined) than are their older fellow citizens.[129] While low in absolute terms, this relatively higher legitimacy of regime economic performance among Nicaragua's youth corresponds to their better perceptions of both the national and personal economies.

Democratic Norms

To what extent do younger Nicaraguans support democracy? Are they more or less inclined to prefer democracy, to be tolerant, to support confrontational or violent political methods or disruptions of the constitutional political order? There are several attitudinal variables available to help gauge democratic norms among Nicaraguans.

Preference for Democracy

To begin, the 2008 and 2010 surveys asked an item indicative of a preference for democracy:

> "Do you believe that our country needs a government with a strong hand (*mano dura*), or do you believe that problems can work themselves out with the participation of everyone?"

This item can be interpreted on its face as measuring disapproval of strongman rule. Eighty-two percent of Nicaraguans disapprove of strongman rule. We also asked the following item:

> "There are people who say we need a strong leader who does not have to be elected by popular vote. Others say that although thing don't work, electoral democracy or the popular vote is always the best. Which do you believe?"

Eighty-eight percent of Nicaraguans prefer electoral democracy to unelected leadership. Members of the youngest two age cohorts are slightly less favorable than older Nicaraguans toward elected government, but with 84.2 percent of the young favoring elected government over unelected government, the difference by age grouping has little substantive meaning. Similarly, 82.1 percent of younger Nicaraguans oppose strongman rule, rendering the very slight difference by age groups substantively unimportant. Clearly, both young and old Nicaraguans explicitly embrace electoral democracy and reject strongman rule.

[129] Our four surveys were taken two during the Bolaños administration (2004 and 2006) and two during the Ortega administration (2008 and 2010). They reveal a general pattern of declining legitimacy during the Bolaños administration, followed by increasing legitimacy during the Ortega administration.

Political Tolerance

The two previous items, indicative of a preference for elected government and repudiation of strongman rule are relatively "easy" or soft tests of democratic norms. While not everyone embraces them, they approach a Nicaraguan national consensus with agreement at well over the 80 percent mark. Another relatively easy democratic norm to agree with is the embrace of inclusive citizenship – general participation rights for citizens. These are the items that define the regime principles legitimacy item already reported above. This index has a strongly positive mean support level of about 75 on a 100 point scale.

The second variable, political tolerance is a harder or more stringent democratic norm. The items and construction of a 0-100 tolerance index is explicated in Chapter V. Nicaraguans overall are slightly on the positive end of the democratic (tolerant) end of this scale, averaging 54.8 on the 100 point scale. Thus political tolerance for regime critics is 10 to 20 points lower than the means for the democracy preference and inclusive participation rights scales discussed above, but still in the prodemocracy range. Age had no significant effect on political tolerance.

Justification of a Coup d'État

Respondents were asked whether there might be certain circumstances that could justify a coup by the military.

> "Some people say that under certain circumstances it would be justified for the military of this country to take power by a coup d'état. In your opinion, would such a military coup be justified under the following circumstances? [high unemployment, corruption, and crime]"

Their answers were compiled into an index with a range of 0 to 100 indicating the level of potential support for a military coup under such hypothesized circumstances. Similarly, two items concerning the possibility of an executive coup d' etat (by the president) were asked:

- "Do you believe that when the country encounters very difficult moments, the president of the country is justified to close the National Assembly [the legislature] and govern without [it]?"
- "Do you believe that when the country encounters very difficult moments, the president of the country is justified to dissolve the Supreme Court of Justice and govern without [it]?"

These two items were combined into a scale with a range from zero (executive coup not justified) to 100 (executive coup justified). Figure VIII.10 reveals that in 2010 Nicaraguans do not generally favor a military coup, with a mean score of 37.8. Younger Nicaraguans (the two younger cohorts) report significantly higher military coup support levels than do older Nicaraguans. It is worth noting that anyone in either of the two younger cohorts would have been born no earlier than 1985, and thus would not even have begun elementary school until after the 1990 election ended the Sandinista revolution. One may speculate that older Nicaraguans might thus support a military coup significantly less than younger ones because they have experienced Nicaragua's violent political turmoil of the 1970s at least during adolescence, an age when lived political experience may have begun to shape individuals' world views.

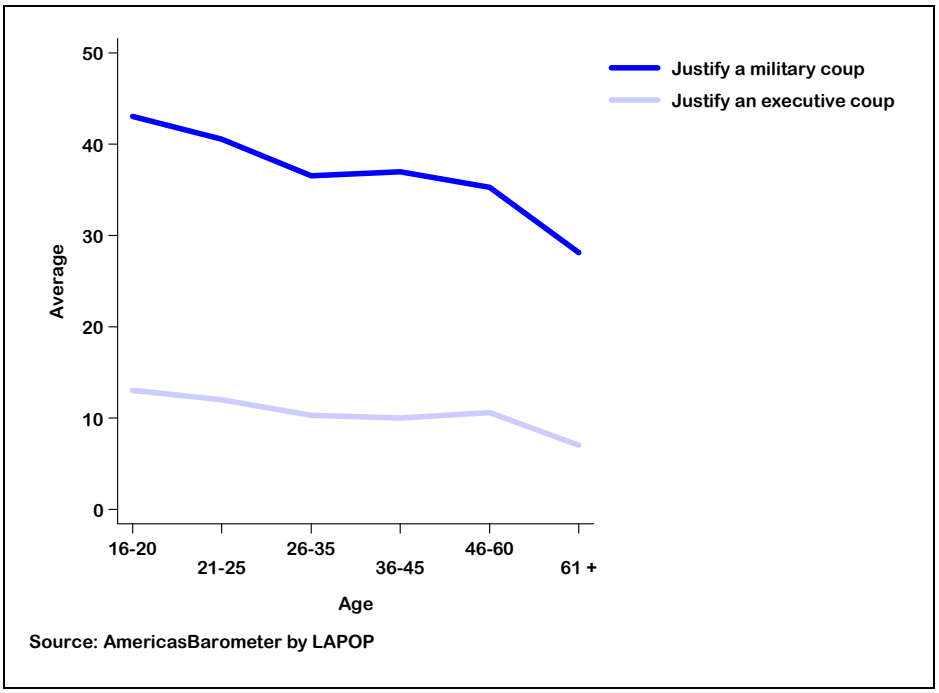

Figure VIII.10. Support for Military and Executive Coups by Age (2010)

We turn to citizen support for a hypothetical executive coup – a situation in which the president might close the National Assembly and Supreme Court of Justice and govern without them. Figure VIII.10 (data for 2010) shows that support is considerably lower for an executive coup than for a military coup. The whole-sample average is 11 out of 100. Young Nicaraguans report slightly more support (a mean of 12.1 out of 100 for the two youngest cohorts combined), than do older citizens, but the difference by age is statistically insignificant.

Populism

Populism is concept that is somewhat difficult to define, but typically involves at the political system level a relationship between an elected leader and the public that is unmediated or unrestrained by other institutions. Populist attitudes often include binary black/white thinking and analysis of political situations. They also tend to embrace the idea of an executive who should not defer to the legislature or the courts in pursuit of policies on behalf of "the people."[130]

In Nicaragua populist attitudes presents themselves in these two dimensions rather clearly.[131] The first is an attitude of *Manichean* or *black/white thinking*. In this world view citizens see the political world in terms of dualistic categories – good versus evil, wrong versus right, the "correct" majority versus the "wrong" minority, and so on. Our survey included three items that capture this attitude, and

[130] Kirk A. Hawkins, *Venezuela's Chavismo and Populism in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Kirk A. Hawkins, "Populism in Venezuela: The Rise of Chavismo," *Third World Quarterly* 24, no. 6 (2003); Paul Cammack, "The Resurgence of Populism in Latin America," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 19, no. 2 (2000); Mitchell A. Seligson, "The Rise of Populism and the Left in Latin America," *Journal of Democracy* 18, no. 3 (2007); Kurt Weyland, "Clarifying a Confused Concept: Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics," *Comparative Politics* 34, no. 1 (2001); Kenneth M. Roberts, *Changing Course: Parties, Populism, and Political Representation in Latin America's Neoliberal Era* (Cambridge: Cambridget University Press, forthcoming).

[131] Exploratory factor analysis revealed that the battery of populism items generated two distinct clusters or dimensions of populism.

they strongly correlate with each other to form a single index. Respondents were asked to what extent the agreed with or disagreed with the following statements, which were combined and coded into a single measure ranging from zero (completely disagree with) to 100 (completely agree with):

- Presidents have to follow the will of the people, because the people are always right.
- In today's world there is a struggle between good and evil, and the people have to choose between one of the two.
- Once the people decide what is correct, we should prevent a minority from opposing it.

The second type of populism is a view sometimes referred to as a *preference for delegative democracy*. Those who embrace this view believe that the people elect the president who should then be entitled to override opposing parties and constitutional limits on executive authority in order to carry out the people's will. This is an understanding of democracy led by a president who may act without meaningful executive restraints. Our survey included three items that capture this attitude, and they strongly correlate with each other to form a single index: Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following statements, which were combined and coded into a single measure ranging from zero (completely disagree with) to 100 (completely agree with):

- For the progress of the country, it is necessary that the president limit the voice and vote of the opposition parties.
- When the National Assembly disturbs [blocks] the work of the government, our presidents should govern without the National Assembly.
- When the Supreme Court of Justice disturbs [blocks] the work of the government, our presidents should ignore [not pay attention to the rulings of] the Supreme Court of Justice.

To what extent do Nicaraguans, and particularly younger Nicaraguans, hold populist views? In neither type of populism is the difference between younger and older Nicaraguans statistically significant. Figure VIII.11 demonstrates that Nicaraguans tend toward a Manichean view of politics, with a whole-sample mean score of 64 out of 100. In contrast, the other type of delegative democracy populism is not nearly so common; its mean is only 30.

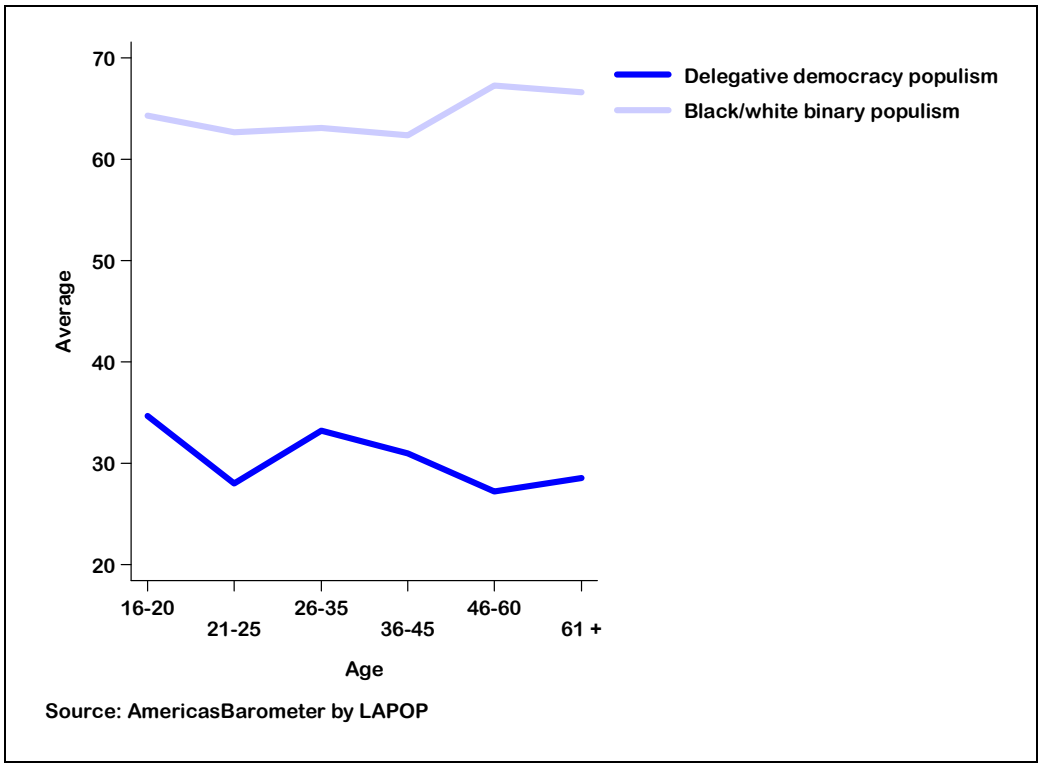

Figure VIII.11. Support for Two Types of Populism by Age

Other Political Attitudes

How different are other political attitudes of younger Nicaraguans when compared to the attitudes of their older fellow citizens? In what ways do they distinguish themselves in addition to the cultural norms and social capital attitudes mentioned in the previous section? Several attitudes may be considered. Where are young people with regard to interpersonal trust? Are they more or less interested in politics than Older Nicaraguans? Is their political orientation predominantly oriented toward the left, center or right? How tolerant are they of homosexuals and of gay marriage?

Interpersonal Trust

Interpersonal (social) trust is cited by Robert Putnam and others as a critical form of social capital.[132] As we discussed in Chapter VI the argument often made is that an attitude of generalized trust toward others facilitates cooperation and collaboration, thus lowering the cost of working with others. Putnam and others believe it to be important to the development of democracy. Our survey asked Nicaraguans the following question:

> "Now speaking of the people from here, would you say that the people of your community are very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, little trustworthy, or not at all trustworthy?" Respondents' answers were coded into a scale ranging from zero (not at all trustworthy) to 100 (very trustworthy).

[132] Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*; Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*; Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory*; Bourdieu, "The Forms of Social Capital."

Figure VIII.12 breaks down Nicaraguans' levels of trust in their neighbors by age.

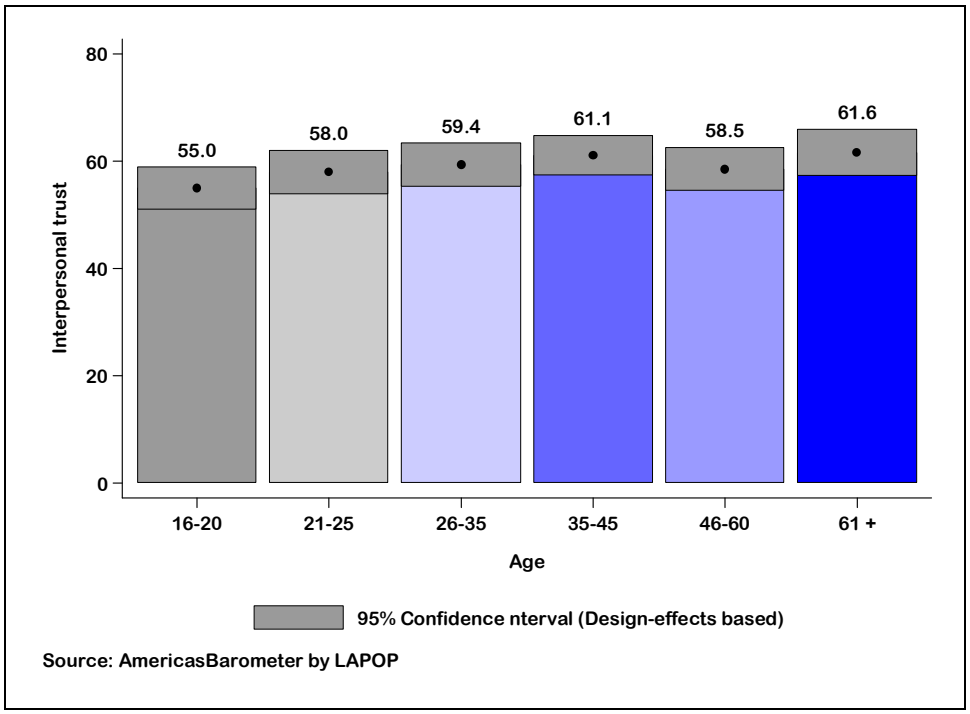

Figure VIII.12. Interpersonal Trust by Age (2004-2010)

In Figure VIII.12 we see that younger Nicaraguans are slightly less prone to trust others in their communities than are older Nicaraguans. Overall, the relationship between age and social trust is significant, but the differences between the two younger cohorts and the next (age 26 to 35) are not significant. In Chapter VI we saw that interpersonal trust among Nicaraguans is almost invariant over time, suggesting that it is a strong cultural norm not particularly subject to influence by larger social forces. Our findings here suggest that Nicaraguans tend to become very slightly more trusting with advancing age. However, once again the differences between age cohorts are statistically insignificant.

Interest in Politics

The AmericasBarometer survey asked respondents this item:

"How much interest do you have in politics? Much, some, little, or none?"

We coded the answers on a 100 point scale ranging from zero (none) to 100 (much). The average Nicaraguan only scores 32.2 on this 100 point scale – the equivalent of "a little" interest. Figure VIII.13 (left hand graph) shows that there is no significant difference in interest in politics by age. Levels of political interest in general were higher in 2006 than in 2008, but then rose substantially in 2010 (see the discussion of political interest levels in Chapter VI). For respondents in the 2010 survey only, the mean interest in politics score overall is 36.5. The average score for 16 to 20 year olds is 36.3, and that for 21 to 25 year olds is 40.5, the highest level observed by cohort and year.

However, overall, the differences by age in means remained statistically insignificant. Thus, as of 2010 there appeared to be no "youthquake" in the offing that might bring a sudden upsurge in youth involvement in Nicaraguan politics.

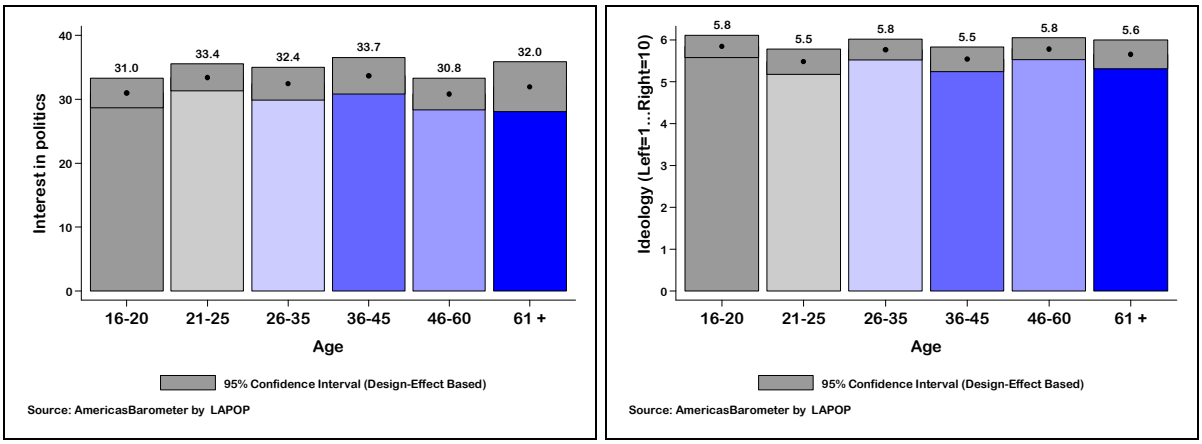

Figure VIII.13. Interest in Politics and Left-Right Orientation by Age (2010)

Left-Right Orientation

The AmericasBarometer 2010 survey asked respondents to indicate where they would place themselves on a left-right ideology scale. (For an extended discussion of this variable see Chapter VI.) The question was:

> "Today when speaking of politics, many people talk about those who sympathize with the left or with the right. According to your understanding of the terms "left" and "right," when you think about your own political point of view, where are you on this scale?" (Answers ranged from 1-5 on the left end, and 6 to 10 on the right end.)

Figure VIII.13 (right hand graph) shows the self-located ideology by age groups. This continuous goes from extreme left (1 point) to extreme right (10 points), with an average of 5.5 points in the scale (Chapter VI explains in detail the ideological continuous). As we have seen before, Nicaraguans' average left-right position across age groups is 5.7 points out of 10 it falls slightly to the right of the scale center. This average left-right position does not vary significantly with respect to age. Once again the data show the little difference between young and older people in terms of ideology. There is nothing that shows that this cohort of young people brings something different to the Nicaragua politics ideology.[133]

Pursuing the matter of age and ideology further, Figure VIII.14 breaks down self-located ideology by age cohorts. In order to highlight and examine more closely the extremes of left-right ideology as well as the size of the center, we have recoded our ten point ideological scale presented in the figure into a five point scale.[134] Recall from the discussion in Chapter VI that the distribution of Nicaraguans by ideology revealed a tri-modal distribution, with about a sixth of those responding placing themselves on the far left, a fifth on the far right, and one third in the middle.

[133] Additional analysis (not shown) demonstrates that left-right orientation remained stable at 5.7 on a 1 to 10 scale in 2008 and 2010, but that in 2006 prior to the election of Daniel Ortega the score was a significantly more left-oriented value of 5.3.

[134] The recoded categories from the original 10 point ideological self-classification are as follows: 1=1 for far left, 2-4=2 for left, 5-6=3 for center, 7-9=4 for right, and 10=5 for far right.

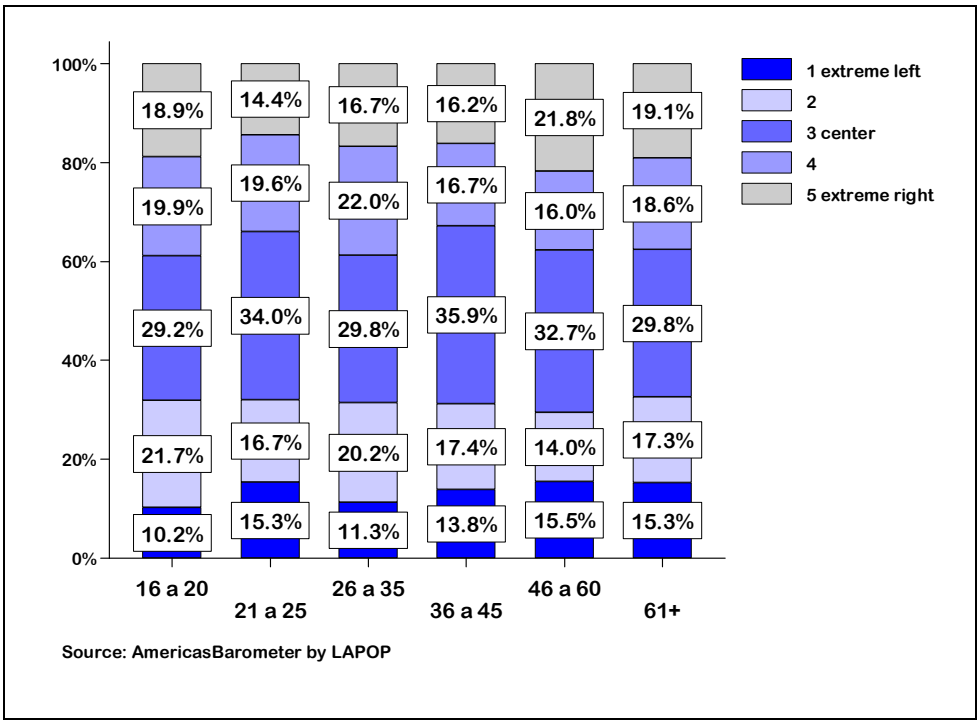

Figure VIII.14. Left-Right Ideological Distribution by Age, 2004-2010

Figure VIII.14 confirms that a similar pattern of ideological distribution prevails across all age cohorts. Sixteen to twenty year olds place themselves more on the far right (18.9 percent) than do their immediately older 21 to 25 year cohort (14.4 percent). However, fewer sixteen to twenty year olds locate themselves on the far left (10.2 percent) than do 21 to 25 year olds (15.3 percent), so there appears to be a slight drift toward the far left and away from the far right between the youngest cohort and their immediately older fellow Nicaraguans. Overall, the distribution of Nicaraguans on these three modes of left, center and right varies a few percentage points across the cohorts, but it does not show any striking pattern of change among generations. Figure III.14 also reveals that the large center group (the five and six categories combined) of about a third of respondents is present for all age levels. This center cluster expands a bit from the 16-20 year olds to the 21-24 year olds.

In the final analysis, the major impression left by the patterns of ideology by age among Nicaraguans is a notable tendency of substantial minorities – irrespective of their age -- to place themselves at the political extremes of left and right. This pattern similarly affects all age groups. There is a segment in the ideological center that may exercise a moderating effect on those at Nicaragua's ideological extremes by encouraging the political parties to adopt moderate policies in order to campaign for the center vote, which is crucial in Nicaraguan elections.

Tolerance of Homosexuals

How tolerant are young Nicaraguans of homosexuals, in particular of gays seeking public office? How much do they support or oppose gay marriage? We asked these questions and coded them on a 0 to 100 scale with zero representing the least tolerant answer, and 100 the most tolerant position:

- And now, changing the subject, and thinking of homosexuals, how firmly do you approve or disapprove of [homosexuals] being able to run for public office?
- How firmly do you approve or disapprove of couples of the same sex having the right to marry?

Nicaraguans are more tolerant of homosexuals running for office than they are toward gay couples marrying, but reaction to both propositions falls in the disapproving end of the scale. Younger Nicaraguans however are significantly more tolerant than older cohorts on these items as revealed in Figure VIII.15.

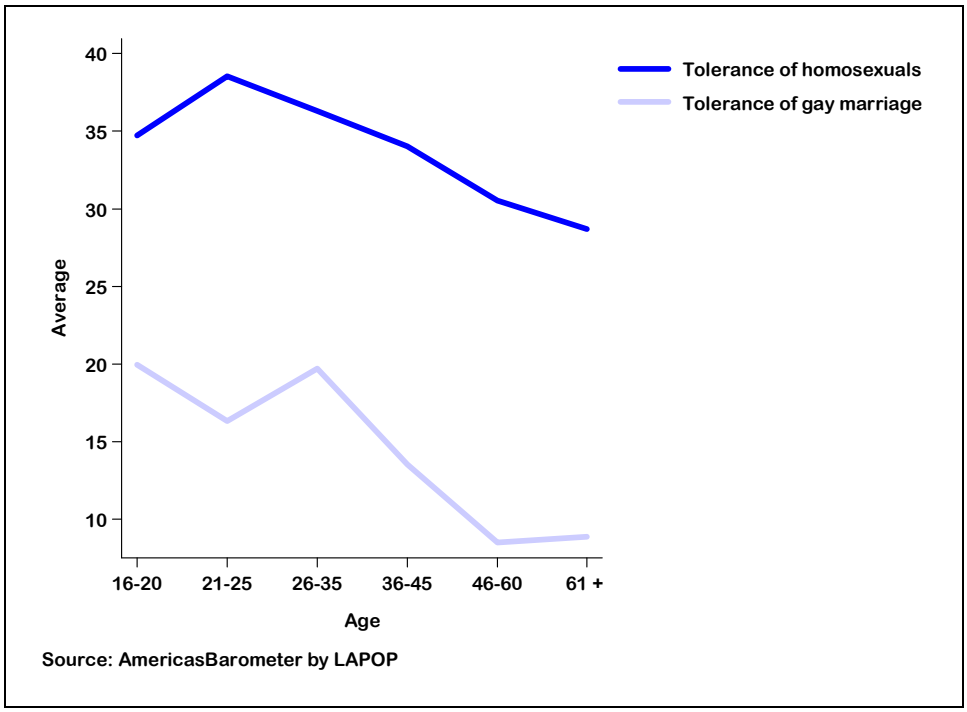

Figure VIII.15. Tolerance of Homosexuals and Gay Marriage by Age

The Role of the State

A final set of attitudes concerns young Nicaraguans' expectations from the government. Are younger Nicaraguans strongly oriented away from or toward the government assuming a strong economic role and supplying many services? Disproportionately strongly state-oriented youth might foretell a future of greater pressure on government for services and economic management. In contrast, a libertarian inclination among the young might signal a future move toward a more circumspect state role. The surveys for 2008 and 2010 included questions designed to tap attitudes toward the role of the state. One item posed the following question:

"To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? 'The Nicaraguan state, instead of the private sector, should be the owner of the most important industries of the country.'"

Five other items sought levels of agreement/disagreement with the following statements:

- "The Nicaraguan state, more than individuals, should be the principal responsible party for assuring the wellbeing of the people."
- "The Nicaraguan state, more than the private sector, should be the principal responsible party for creating jobs."
- "The Nicaraguan state should implement firm policies to reduce the inequality of income between the rich and the poor."
- "The Nicaraguan state, more than the private sector, should be the main responsible party for providing retirement pensions."
- "The Nicaraguan state, more than the private sector, should be the main responsible party for providing health services."

These six items form two distinct attitudinal dimensions concerning the role of the state in Nicaragua. The first item, concerning ownership of major industries, defines one dimension related to government ownership of the means of production in the form of major enterprises.[135] The remaining five items form another closely related cluster concerning the responsibility of the state to provide for general social welfare. We converted each into a scale ranging from zero (no agreement) to 100 (full agreement), with the results graphed in Figure VIII.16. The state ownership of major enterprises item has a mean of 50.4 on the 100 point scale, indicating that Nicaraguans are evenly divided on the matter in 2010. The age of the respondents has no significant impact on the tendency to hold this point of view.

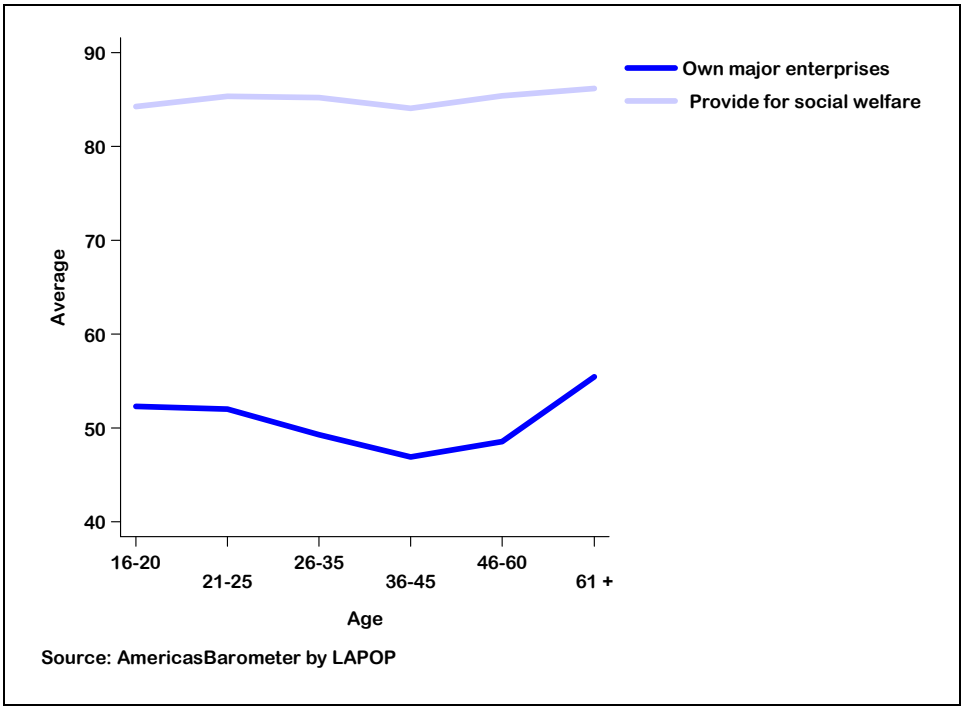

Figure VIII.16. Attitudes on the Role of the State by Age

A belief that that the state has a major responsibility for promoting social welfare, in sharp contrast to the attitude toward state ownership of industries, has an average level of agreement of 85 on the 100 point scale. Nicaraguans strongly endorse the notion that the government holds the major responsibility for promoting the welfare of citizens and taking care of individuals by reducing inequality, promoting employment, and providing pensions and health care. Age is not significantly related to

[135] In Nicaragua this item is far from hypothetical because during the Sandinista revolution the government seized large amounts of property. Some of it was distributed to various non-state actors through the agrarian reform program and other programs, but some remained in government hands. Property disputes have been a critical issue since the days of the revolution.

holding these beliefs, nor is party identification (analyses not shown to conserve space). In essence, then, this welfare-promotion view of the state is what political scientists call a "valence issue," or point of virtual consensus among Nicaraguans irrespective of their age or party identification.

Evaluation of Governmental Performance

To what extent are younger Nicaraguans content or discontent with the performance of the president and the National Assembly? The AmericasBarometer survey asked respondents to evaluate both. Replies for each were coded into a scale ranging from the worst performance at zero, to the best at 100. Turning first to evaluation of the National Assembly, Nicaraguans score the Assembly at about 44.5 out of 100 in 2008, and the same in 2010. Age does not significantly affect evaluation of the performance of the Assembly in either year. As to evaluation of the president's performance, the whole-sample mean is 46.3, slightly in the disapproving end of the scale. Again age does not affect this attitude significantly.

In summary, none of the evidence found here suggests prospects for a tidal wave of change in Nicaraguans' attitudes toward the role and responsibility of the state based on age cohort analysis. Older and younger generations view the state's role in much the same way.

Political Engagement

Political Participation

How engaged are Nicaraguan youth in politics compared to other age cohorts? Are they less likely to take part in politics, as much of the research done previously in many countries demonstrates, or are they more likely to engage? And what are their party orientations and patterns of party voting in presidential races?

The AmericasBarometer surveys provide several measures of political participation – whether citizens have a *cédula de identidad* (national civil registry card which allows them to vote), voted in the last presidential election, tried to convince someone else how to vote, attended political party meetings, took part in an election campaign, contacted a legislative deputy, public official, or municipal official, or took part in a political protest within the last 2 years. Exploratory factor analysis (not shown here to conserve space) demonstrates that among Nicaraguans these participation variables cluster into four modes of participation – voting, contacting public officials, party-campaign activism, and protest. Each of these four clusters was operationalized as an index ranging from zero (no activity reported) to 100 (participated in all mode activities at the highest level the item measured).[136]

Figure VIII.17 reveals, as found nearly universally in studies of political activism, a classic pattern of an inverted U-shaped relationship between age and participation, with the young and the old less involved in politics than those in the middle of the age range. The theory explaining this is that the young still have a low stake in participation to protect family, work or property interests, while the elderly suffer declining incomes and reduced capability to take part. In Nicaragua we see that young people engage less in politics than their older fellow citizens. The two younger cohorts vote less, though in the youngest

[136] Chapter VI explored voting. What is labeled "political activism" in that chapter is made up of two of the three components of the party-campaigning mode detected and operationalized here.

group this occurs because many were not yet of the legal age to have voted (16 years) in the 2006 election. Among those 21 and older election participation as measured here (having a *cédula* and voting for president in 2006) surpasses a scale score of 80 out of 100.

As is common across most political systems, Nicaraguans' overall engagement in other political activities is much lower than in voting. Younger Nicaraguans (16 to 25) are also significantly less involved in party-campaign activism, engaging local government and contacting public officials.[137] The only type of political participation in which there is no significant difference between younger and older voters is protest participation.

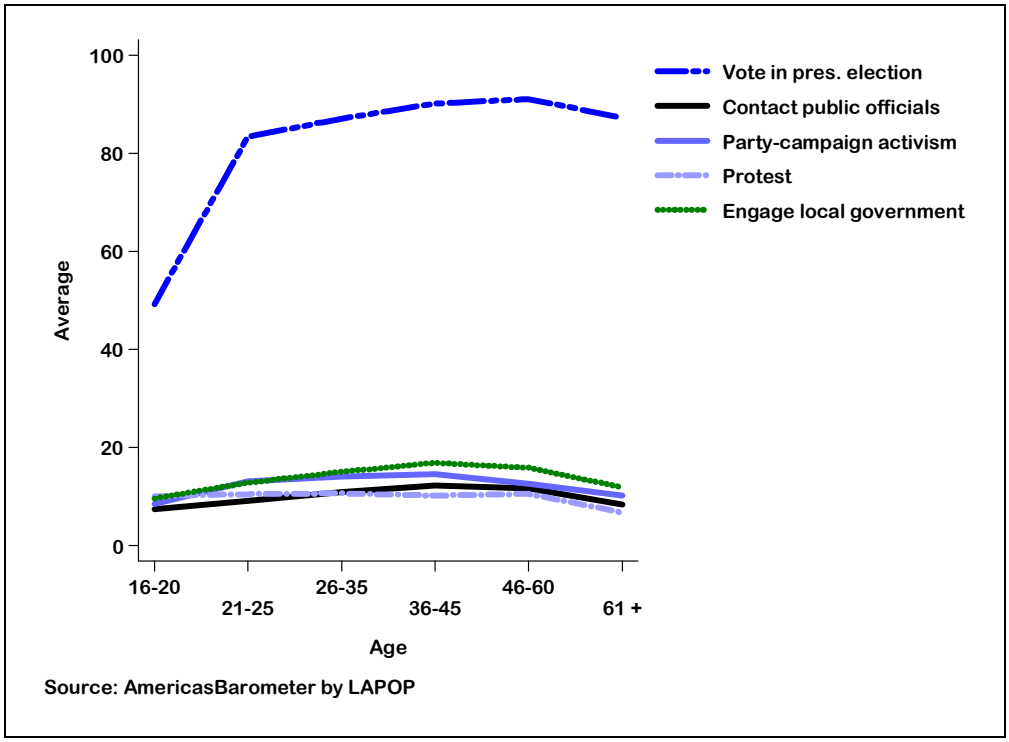

Figure VIII.17. Political Participation Modes by Age

As noted, theorists generally attribute the lower political participation of the young to their lower "stake in the community." There is a tendency for members of a society as they age to marry, have children, and to acquire employment and possessions. Our findings clearly confirm that tendency. While the data cited at the beginning of this chapter on marital status and number of children indicate that many Nicaraguans begin to develop such family obligations when they are young, the younger respondents have fewer children and children living at home than all the older cohorts and so their "stake" is just beginning to build.

In sum, while these general patterns of lower political participation by the young are true for Nicaragua, the variation across age groups is modest (although statistically significant). Young Nicaraguans tend to be somewhat less politically active than older Nicaraguans, but not dramatically so.

[137] Note that for all five modes of political participation examined, there is a decline among all forms of participation among citizens who surpass the age of 60.

Civil Society and Citizen Power Councils

To what extent are younger Nicaraguans engaged in civil society? Figure VIII.18 indicates that, for most types of organizations, youth are somewhat to considerably less engaged than their older fellow citizens. The difference by age is significant for all forms of civil society engagement except for the Citizen Power Councils (CPCs). Young Nicaraguans are less active than older citizens in school-related, community-related and church-related organizations, and in CPCs.

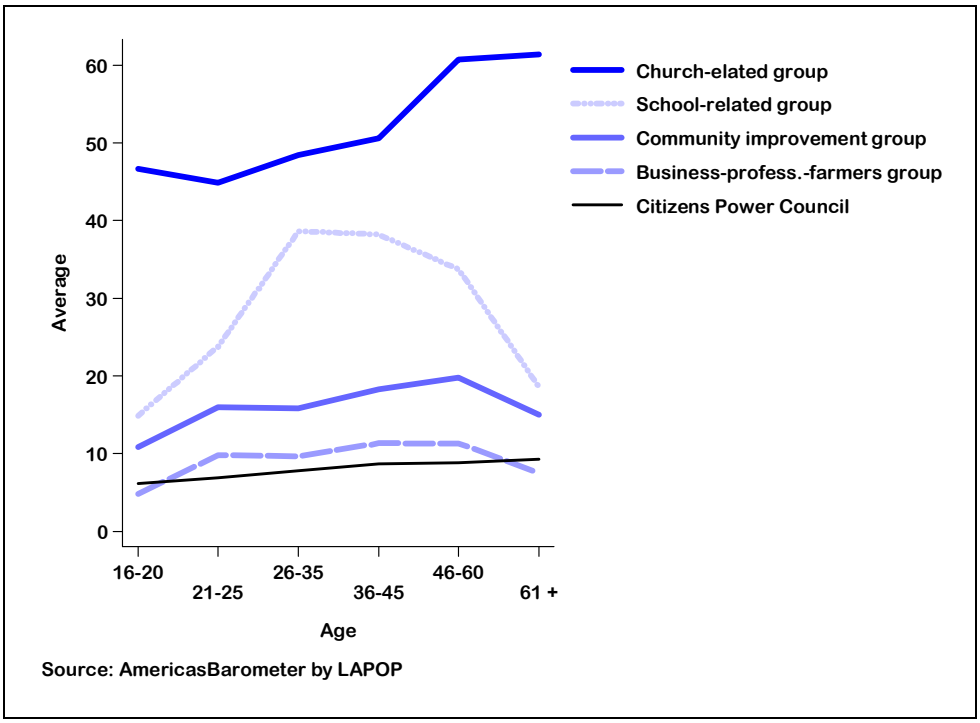

Figure VIII.18. Civil Society and CPC Activism by Age

Turning to the CPCs for a deeper analysis, the Ortega government established these entities to engage citizen participation in local affairs and policy making (see Chapter VII). Participation in them is low; only 12.4 percent of the voting age population reports any involvement. On a scale of intensity of participation ranging from zero to 100, the average is only 7.7 scale points among all Nicaraguans for 2008-2010 combined. Young Nicaraguans participate fractionally less in CPCs than older ones, but not to a degree that reaches statistical significance.

Partisan identification plays a major role in determining who takes part in CPCs. More detailed analysis (not shown to conserve space) reveals that among all citizens FSLN sympathizers are three times more intensely involved in CPCs than those who identify with no party. Sandinista identifiers are four and a half times more engaged in CPCs than Liberal Constitutionalists.

Voting and Party Identification

Other forms of political engagement are voting for a party's candidates and identification with a political party. The AmericasBarometer asked Nicaraguans for whom they voted for president in the 2006 election. Figure VIII.19 shows that the tendency to vote for all three major parties in the 2006 election increases with age. (Note that the very low values for voting by 16 to 20 year olds stems from

the fact that many of these respondents could not yet vote in the 2006 election.) Increased voting for a party with greater age is stronger among FSLN voters. Figure VIII.19 also reveals that the Liberal Alliance and Liberal Constitutionalist votes, while rising with age, also tend to vary up and down across them.

We asked whether the failure to deliver *cédulas de identidad* (a national identity card required in order to vote) affected the young. We found that, among persons less than 26 years of age, among those who were old enough to vote in the 2006 election 48 percent reported not having received the *cédula* at the time of the elections. For the 2008 municipal elections this figure declined to 42 percent. The breakdown by party identification among the young who did not vote because of a lack a lack of the *cédula* in 2006 was 38 percent of young Liberal Constitutionalists, 44 percent of young Sandinistas, and 80 percent of the sympathizers of other parties. It is important to emphasize that there were only 5 persons in this last category of young nonpartisans who were non-voters owing to a lack of documentation, so that one may not reach any meaningful conclusions about this group. Finally, 50 percent of the young who did not sympathize with any party did not vote because of the lack of a *cédula.*

Even excluding the 16 to 20 year olds, the pattern revealed in Figure VIII.19 shows weaker Sandinista voting among younger voters than among older voters. To confirm that this is not an artifact of the year surveyed, we reexamined the trend separating 2008 data from 2010 data and the result was virtually identical. Although the combined vote for the Liberals also increases across the age cohorts, the gap between the Liberals and Sandinistas widens in the FSLN's favor among the older cohorts.

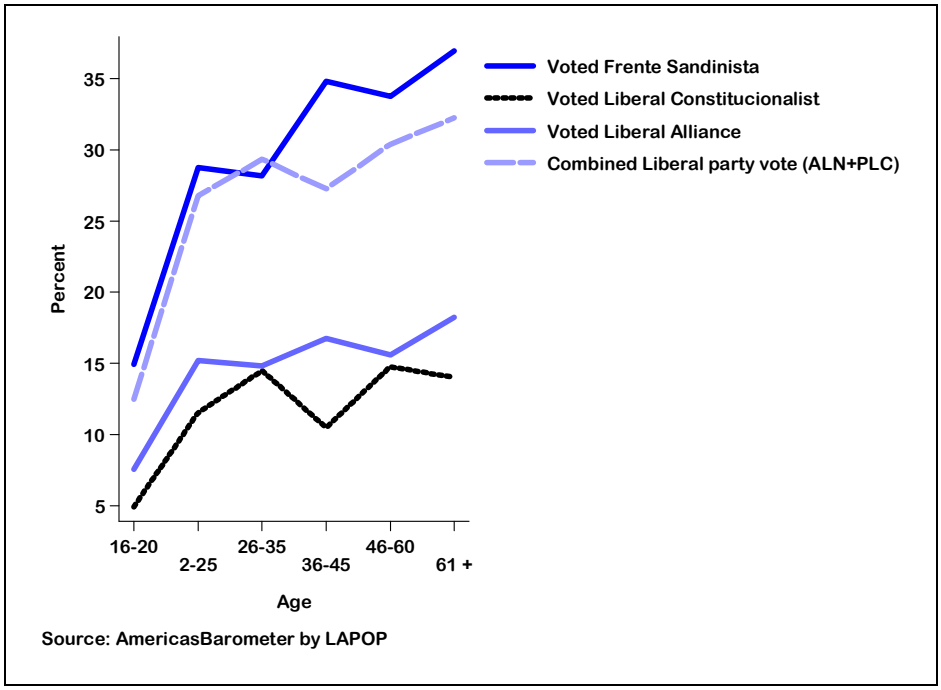

Figure VIII.19. Party Voting Patterns by Age

Another way of examining party allegiance is to examine expressed sympathy for or identification with the parties. What are the self-declared party sympathies of young Nicaraguans and how do they compare with those of their older fellow citizens? Respondents were asked *"With which political party do you sympathize?"* This indicator does not depend on having been old enough to vote, nor is it restricted to the population of those who actually cast a ballot. It thus indicates the level of self-professed support for Nicaraguan political parties.

To the extent that the age cohorts we employ may serve as a surrogate for the aging process, growing older appears to lead a portion of Nicaraguans toward higher party identification, as we can see in the Figure VIII.20. Each of the three major parties (FSLN, PLC, and ALN) gained in the percentage of sympathizers as respondent age rose. The increase in FSLN sympathy across age groups is statistically significant. The percentage of Nicaraguans who identify with no party at all correspondingly declined across increasing age cohorts, a trend that is also statistically significant.

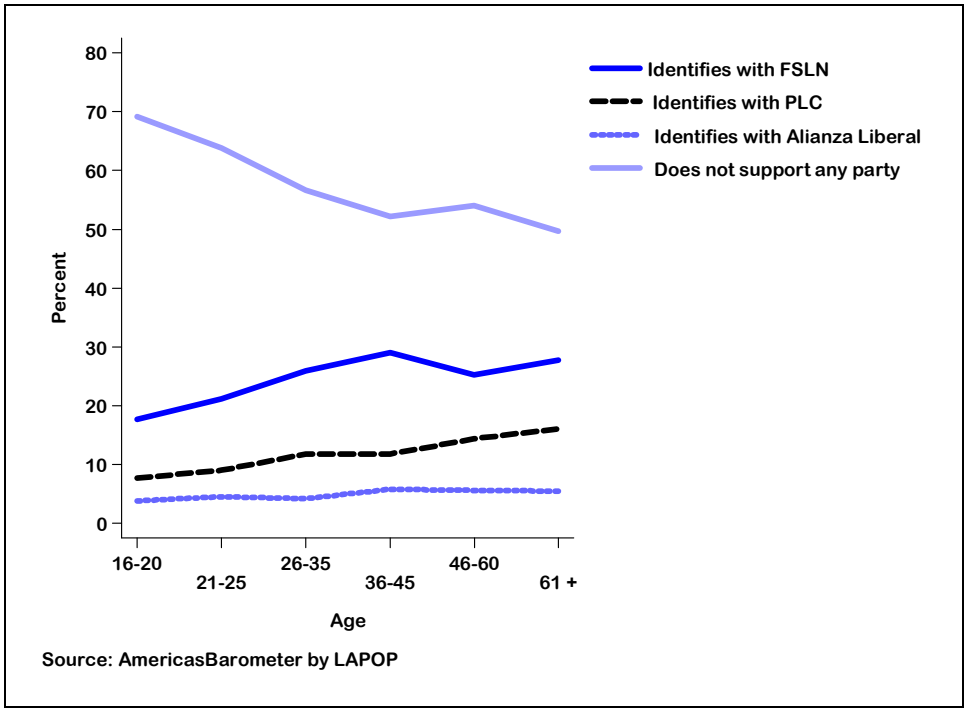

Figure VIII.20. Nicaraguans' Party Identification by Age

In 2010, we may consider Nicaraguans older than 35 to be members of the "revolutionary generation." This is because those born before 1975 resided in Nicaragua during the Sandinista insurrection and revolutionary government era (1979-1990) and thus would have experienced the Sandinista insurrection and revolutionary years as children or adolescents.[138] One would logically expect citizens who experienced those events to have been affected by them differently than the younger Nicaraguans who have not lived through that highly contentious era. Indeed, the data show that among Nicaraguans 36 or older identification with the FSLN is almost 6 points higher (a statistically significant difference) for this revolutionary generation (27.3 percent) than for the post-revolutionary generation (21.7 percent). Interestingly, identification with the combined broader Liberal movement (measured as identification with either of the two Liberal factions that emerged in 2006) follows the same pattern as identification with the FSLN, rising across the age cohorts. The revolutionary generation of Liberals is also about 6 percent more party-identified than the post-revolutionary generation. So the effect of the lived insurrection-revolution experience, if that is indeed what this variable isolates, was to intensify party identification for the Liberals and the Sandinistas alike.

[138] The label "revolutionary generation" is does not necessarily designate sympathy with the revolution or the FSLN, merely lived experience during the era in which it occurred.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has found young Nicaraguans (aged 16 to 25) to be better educated, slightly wealthier, and less likely to have experienced a decline in family income than older Nicaraguans. They have a correspondingly more positive view of the economies (personal and national) than older citizens, although all groups evaluate the economy poorly. Young Nicaraguans are infrequent internet users, but are much more engaged with the internet than older Nicaraguans. There is no age difference in the levels of political information or news media consumption between the age groups. Younger Nicaraguans and older Nicaraguans have about the same level of crime victimization, but the young experience less corruption. The young manifest significantly higher legitimacy evaluations than older citizens on regime economic performance, actors, and institutions. Nevertheless, their legitimacy levels on all three dimensions are low or moderately low.

Young Nicaraguans, like their older fellow citizens, generally express democratic norms and a clear preference for democracy. One exception to this pattern is that younger Nicaraguans are somewhat more coup-supporting than their older compatriots. Age makes very little difference in average levels of interest in politics (low), left-right orientation (middle of the spectrum), or interpersonal trust (also middling). There is also no age difference in attitudes concerning the welfare responsibilities of the state (very high) and belief in state ownership of major enterprises (also near the middle of the scale), or on the evaluation of the president or National Assembly (both moderately low). The young are more tolerant than older Nicaraguans of homosexuals running for office and more tolerant of gay marriage, but nevertheless remain in the disapproving end of the scale on both items. Younger Nicaraguans participate less in politics than older Nicaraguans in many ways, including civil society activism. In terms of their engagement with the major parties by voting or by expressed sympathy, younger Nicaraguans also tend to be less engaged than their older fellow citizens.

In conclusion, because they tend to be somewhat more satisfied with the performance of the regime and economy, predominantly democratic, and also less politically engaged than older Nicaraguans, younger Nicaraguans appear to pose little threat to political stability. Because the young resemble their older fellow citizens in far more respects than they differ from them, Nicaragua's youth appear quite unlikely to alter the nation's style of politics, party identification or ideological patterns, or behavior.

Chapter IX. Political Participation: A Closer Look

Introduction

Citizen participation plays a critical role in political systems. Participation conveys the demands and preferences of the citizenry to government. While citizens' attitudes and culture matter in politics in many ways, participation serves as what may be described as a conveyor belt in politics. It carries the ideas, preferences, and demands of the population to those who govern them. Citizens who desire political outcomes but do not act to bring them to life tend not get what they want. Do citizens wish to change the party or personnel who rule them? In a democracy they can make that change, but only if enough of them act by casting their vote for a different party or an opposition candidate. Business and professional groups and unions meet to discuss their interests, but they remain only interests until political action takes place. Those with preferences must convey them to the political system and bureaucracy by contacting officials, or by taking part in elections and campaigns. Individual citizens, too, must act by contacting officials, participating in campaigns and party activity, and protesting for or against policies they prefer.

Considerable prior research has revealed several axioms about political participation. First, it is much broader than merely voting, involving many types of behavior beyond exercising the franchise. Second, everywhere scholars have studied political participation including Latin America, they have found "modes" or patterns of co-occurring similar activities such as partisan and campaign activism, contacting public officials, voting, protest, and so on. Participation modes often resemble each other across national boundaries, but the rules and structure of particular political systems shape them according to context.[139] As an example of the importance of the particular political context, there can be no voting or partisan and campaign activism in a country that suppresses parties or holds no elections. Third, certain factors and characteristics of individuals tend to shape their participation rates and styles, including sex, age, education, income, the type of community within which they reside, personal experiences with crime, corruption or clientelism, and certain attitudes. Fourth, involvement in organizations (civil society) often increases political participation.

This chapter explores political participation among Nicaraguans beyond voting by seeking to answer several general questions: What are the means Nicaraguans use to communicate with their government? How engaged are Nicaraguans in politics, and how has that changed over time? How does political participation by Nicaraguans compare to that of citizens of other countries? What are the main demographic, experiential, cognitive, attitudinal, and political factors that shape their political involvement? How does civil society shape political participation?

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[139]Verba and Nie, *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*; Sidney Verba, Norman H. Nie, and Jae-On Kim, *The Modes of Democratic Participation: A Cross-National Comparison*, vol. 1, Comparative Politics Series (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1971); Sidney Verba, Norman H. Nie, and Jae-On Kim, *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Study* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Rosenstone and Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America*; Conway, *Political Participation in the United States*; John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, eds., *Citizen and State: Political Participation in Latin America*, 2 vols., vol. I (New York: Holmes and Meier,1978); Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, eds., *Politics and the Poor: Political Participation in Latin America*, 2 vols., vol. II (New York Holmes and Meier Publishers,1979); Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Booth and Richard, "Civil Society, Political Capital, and Democratization in Central America."; Booth and Richard, "Civil Society and Political Context in Central America."; John A. Booth, "Political Participation in Latin America: Levels, Structure, Context, Concentration, and Rationality," *Latin American Research Review* 14, no. Fall (1979).

Modes of Political Participation

The AmericasBarometer surveys have included various items that identify ways in which citizens engage in politics. It has asked whether Nicaraguans voted in the most recent presidential election, contacted various types of public officials, attended meetings of political parties, sought to influence the vote of others, worked on an election campaign, attended local government meetings, petitioned local government, contacted local or regional officials, and participated in protests. Exploratory factor analysis of these items revealed that, as expected, they formed five basic modes of participation among Nicaraguans: voting (having a *cédula de identidad* and voting in the last presidential election), contacting officials (an assembly deputy, regional government official, or other government official), engaging local government (attending a local government meeting, petitioning local government, or contacting a local official), party-campaign activity (attending political party meetings, attempting to persuade someone how to vote and working on a campaign), and protesting. Each of these indices was coded into a scale of intensity ranging from zero (no involvement in the activity) to 100 (involvement at the highest level measured).

Figure IX.1 presents the levels of participation in these five activities – electoral participation (having a *cédula de identidad* and voting), contacting public officials, engaging local government, party and campaign activism, and protest. The most common mode of engagement is voting with 79.9 percent of the respondents reporting participating. The next most common, at a much lower rate, is engaging local government (13.7 percent), followed by party/campaign activism (12.3 percent), protest (10.0 percent), and contacting public officials (9.9 percent).

Figure IX.2 graphs Nicaraguans' participation in these five modes across the four AmericasBarometer surveys since 2004. Most modes of participation show a decline over time. Voting levels declined by 4.6 scale points from 2004 to 2010. Protesting was down by half for the same period. Contacting public officials declined 5.4 scale points and local government engagement by 6.4 points between 2004 and 2010. Only party and campaign activism was not statistically different between 2004 and 2010.[140]

[140] This "cooling" of participation in Nicaraguan politics was noted in Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*. Comparisons to a 1992 urban-only survey of Nicaraguans were made by ibid. in Chapter 9. Other trend references also refer to Booth, Wade and Walker's Chapter 9. See also contributors to Gary Prevost and Harry E. Vanden, eds., *The Undermining of the Sandinista Revolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press,1997). See also contributors to David Close, ed. *Nicaragua: The Chamorro Years* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers,1999); David Close and Kilowatie Deonandan, eds., *Undoing Democracy: The Politics of Electoral Caudillismo* (Lahham, Maryland: Lexington Books,2004).

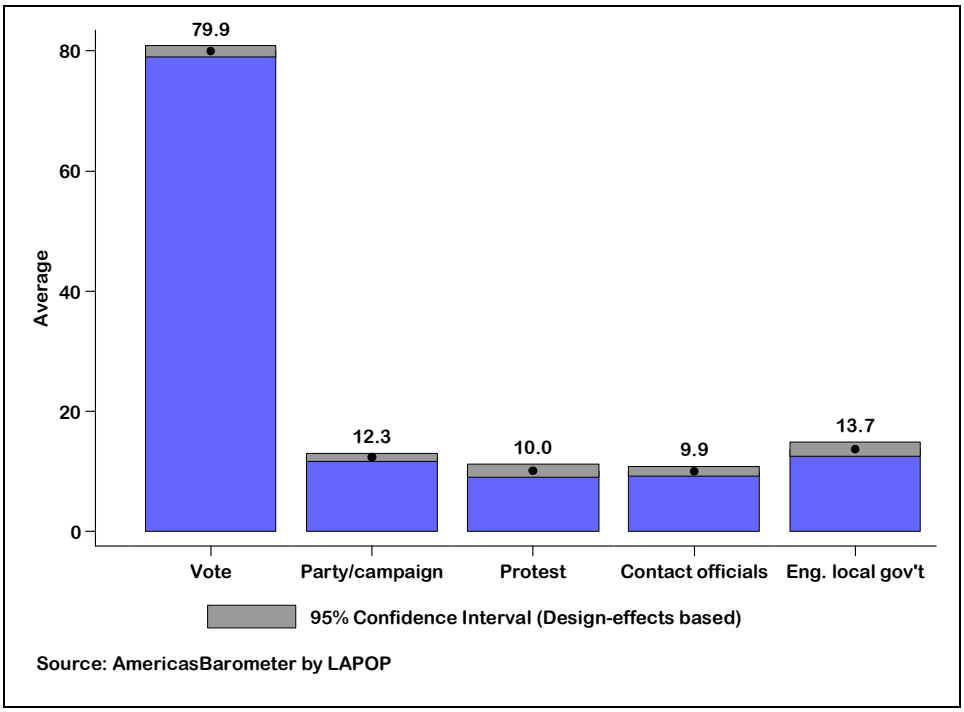

Figure IX.1. Political Participation in Nicaragua (2004-2010)

In comparative terms, Nicaraguans participated in party and campaign activities somewhat more than other Latin Americans in 2008, protested at the regional average, voted at slightly below the regional mean, and contacted officials at well below the Latin American mean. Within Central America, Nicaraguans have a middling range of participation.[141] As we saw in Chapter VI, Nicaraguans in 2010 are among the more active of citizens of the Americas in participating in protests and demonstrations. In contrast, Nicaragua ranks in the lower third of hemispheric countries in voter turnout.

There is nothing particularly distinctive about this profile of Nicaraguans' political participation. It is quite common for voting to be by far the most widely practiced participation mode, and for the other modes to be much less frequently engaged in. This almost certainly occurs because voting is both an activity intensely encouraged by the state and political parties, and because it is one of the lower cost types of participation in terms of the time and energy needed to do it. Working on a campaign, contacting officials, and protest all require considerable energy and effort compared to voting. Voting among Nicaraguans scores around 80 on the 0 to 100 intensity scale, and is practiced some 6 to 8 times more than any other participation modes – the others vary at from 10 to 14 scale points.

[141] Comparison analysis to 2008 is for 22 countries and data are from LAPOP. A comparison to Nicaragua's Central American neighbors over several years may be found in Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*.

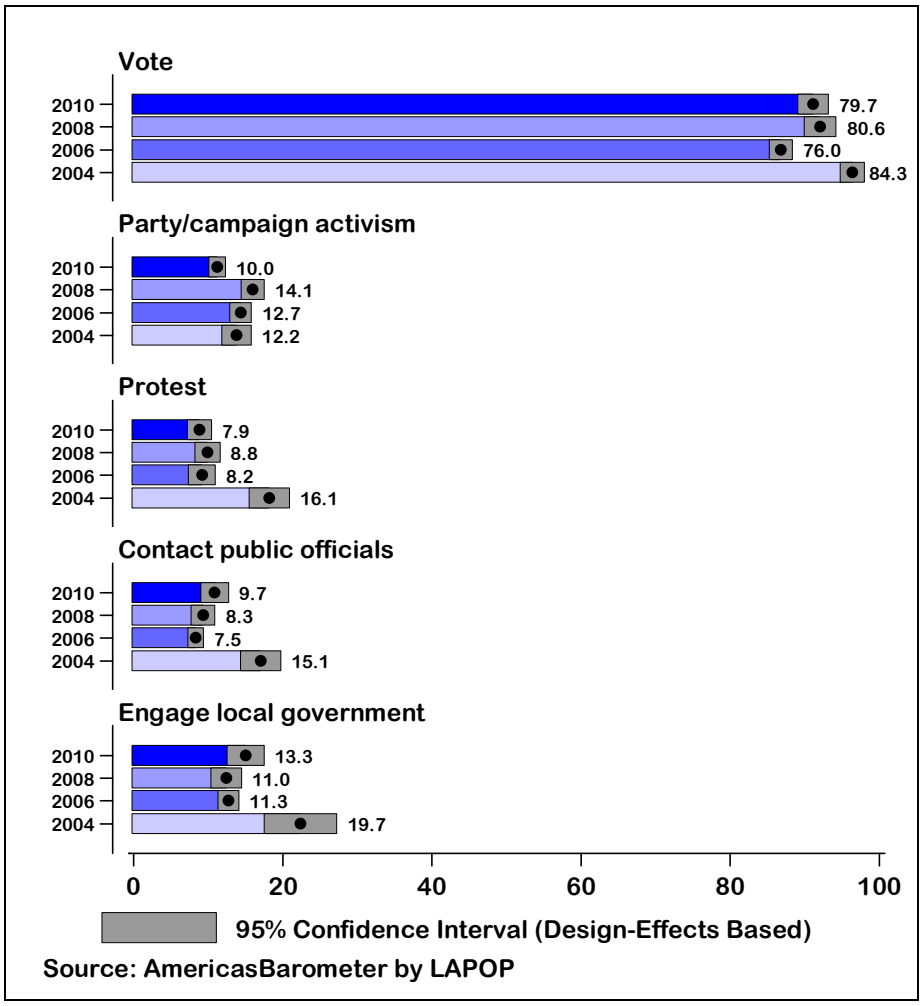

Figure IX.2. Nicaraguan Political Participation over Time

Turning to civil society activism, Figure IX.3 graphs the intensity of engagement in six types of civil society organizations – church-related, school-related, communal improvement, business-professional-farmer, and women's groups as well as CPCs. Nicaraguans are most engaged in church-related groups, with an intensity scale varying around 50 out of 100. Church-related group activism peaks in 2006 at 54.7 in 2006 and declines to around 50 afterwards (a significant variation). School-related groups have the second most intense participation. It varies over time between 27 and 31 out of 100, but the differences are statistically insignificant. Community improvement groups (CIGs) attract the participation of around 16 percent of the adult citizenry, and business-professional-*campesino* organizations about 8 percent. On none of these latter three are the differences over time significant. Data on two types of organizations is only available for 2008 and 2010: Women's groups engage the fewest people (around 7 percent). Citizen engagement in CPCs rose from 5.2 to 10.1 on the 100 point scale from 2008 to 2010, a significant change.

In summary, there exists a hierarchy of civil society engagement in Nicaragua which is stable over the period studied. Church-related organizations garner the greatest involvement and women's organizations the least. We reported in Chapter VI that involvement in community improvement and school-related organizations had a mobilizing effect on voting. In the next section we will see that civil society activity influences other forms of political participation as well. The effects of group activism are not uniform, however. Involvement in different types of organizations affects different modes of participation.

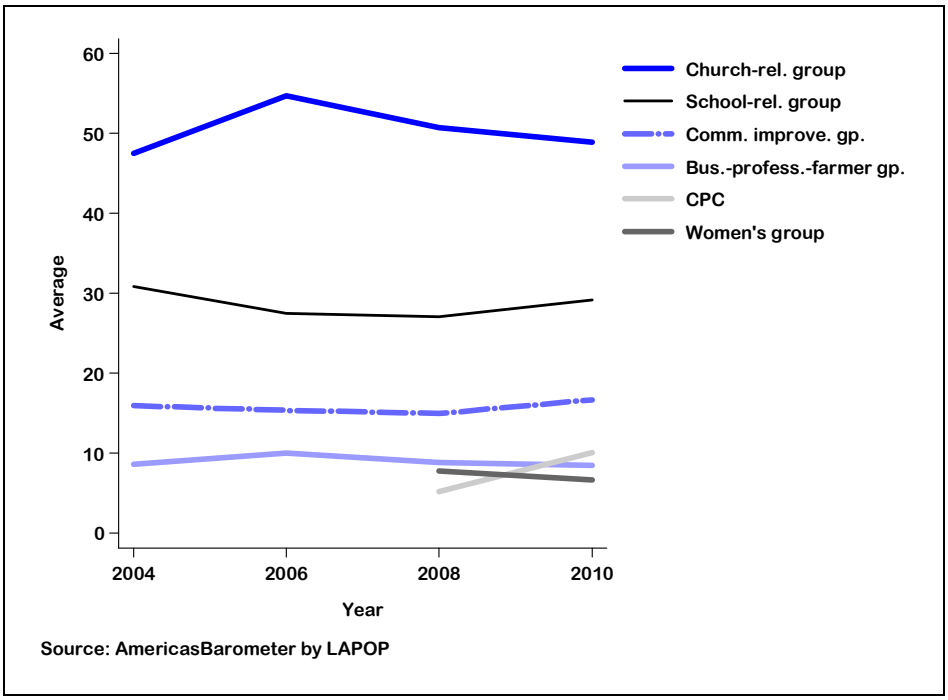

Figure IX.3. Nicaraguans' Civil Society Engagement over Time

Sources of Political Participation

Political participation may be shaped by many factors identified as important in previous research. For each of these five participation modes identified we analyze the influence of basic demographics, civil society activity, different attitudes including legitimacy and democratic norms, and personal experience and community size. Demographic traits of individuals (for example age, gender, education and wealth) indicate vital information about one's resources, social roles, and standing within the community. Civil society engagement (participation in formal organizations) reflects the interests of individuals indicated by their association with others in pursuit of those interests.

Civil society groups are known to shape the attitudes and values of their members, and to promote their action into the political arena in pursuit of shared interests and many others. Attitudes range across a broad spectrum, from holding basic democratic norms or legitimacy attitudes, which may shape the behavior of the citizen in the political arena by increasing or diminishing it, by encouraging certain types of actions and discouraging others, and so on. The experiences of individuals may serve as goads to action or inaction. For example, experiencing crime or corruption may move citizens to act or to withdraw from the political system, and receiving inducements from candidates or parties may shape electoral behavior. The size of one's community of residence provides a context for participation, making seats of power and government closer or farther away, concentrating problems or spreading them out, offering an environment of familiar face-to-face relationships or one more alienating.

Voting

What shapes voter turnout among Nicaraguans? What demographic factors, civil society activism, attitudes, and experiences actually influence citizens' to go to the polls on election day? Voting was examined by employing a multiple regression analysis on a list of 31 items including basic

demographics, community size, involvement in six different types of organizations, experiencing crime and corruption, employment status, sympathy with the Liberal movement (both parties combined) and with the FSLN, clientelism,[142] legitimacy norms, attitudes toward the role of the state, tolerance, interpersonal trust, populism, interest in politics, two types of political efficacy for the national system, political information, and media contact.[143] When most of these proved to exercise no influence, the model was trimmed to include only 14 variables -- the eight significant in the first analysis, items plus demographics, party sympathy (FSLN and Liberal), engagement in civil society, and trust.

Figure IX.4 illustrates the effect of these factors on voting. Age is a strong predictor of voting, followed by education. Involvement in school-related groups and community improvement groups increases voting, but with other things controlled involvement in the other types of groups including CPCs is not statistically significant. Logically, sympathy for either the Liberal party or the FSLN increases voting. Finally, those who express the type of populism that opposes constitutional restraints on the president (the delegative democracy orientation discussed in Chapter VIII) are more likely to vote than others.

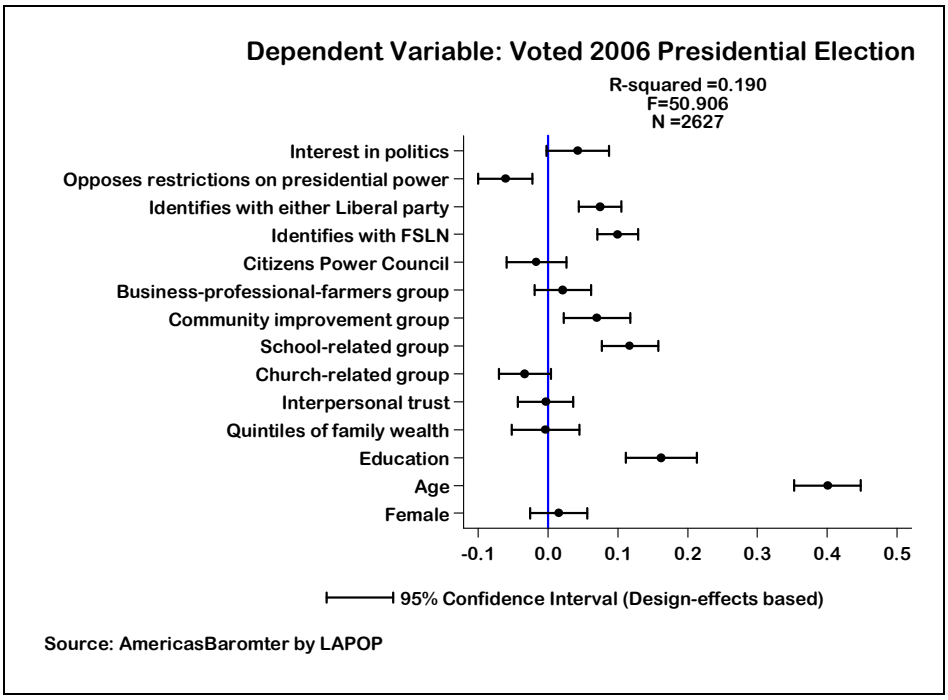

Figure IX.4. Influences on Voting

In addition to the reasons for voting, we asked why Nicaraguans said they did not vote in the 2006 presidential election. The reasons mentioned are, in descending order of frequency (followed by the respective percentage): being newly of voting age and having not received a *cédula de identidad* which is needed to vote (34 percent), being not old enough to vote (22 percent), lack of interest (16 percent), did not like any of the candidates (5 percent), had to work (5 percent), illness (4 percent), did not believe in the system (3 percent), was not on the electoral roll (2 percent), and lack of transportation (1 percent). We

[142] Clientelism is measured by how frequently citizens report being offered some benefit by a candidate or party during an election. Bay discusses at some length the influence structure designed by the government through the CPCs and how it might channel inducements, if not to vote then to support President Ortega. These results suggest that, no matter the extent of such an apparatus, it has little effect on voting.

[143] Explanations for the sources and construction of all of these variables have been laid out in previous chapters. Detail will be offered here only as required for clarity.

asked the same question with respect to the municipal election of 2008 and the replies were almost the same with three exceptions. In the 2008 municipal elections 8 percent more non-voters expressed a lack of interest (24 percent) compared to 2006. In 2008 7 percent fewer reported not having a *cédula* (27 percent) than in 2006, and eight percent fewer reported hot being old enough to vote (24 percent). Among the non-voters in 2006 because of the lack of a *cédula*, when separated by party identification 40 percent were FSLN sympathizers, 32 percent Liberal Constitutionalist sympathizers, 60 percent identified with other parties, and 33 percent expressed no party sympathy. The numbers of non-voters because of the lack of a *cédula* among the small party sympathizers is so low (8 persons in total out of a sample of 1540) that one may not draw meaningful conclusions about them.

Party and Camping Activism

This mode of participation is measured by an index constructed from three activities, trying to persuade others how to vote, working on a campaign or election, and attendance at meetings of a political party. What factors shape party and campaign activism among Nicaraguans? As for voting, party and campaign activism was examined employing a multiple regression analysis on a list of 32 items including basic demographics, community size, involvement in six different types of organizations, experiencing crime and corruption, employment status, sympathy with the Liberal movement (both parties combined) and with the FSLN, clientelism,[144] legitimacy norms, attitudes toward the role of the state, tolerance, trust, populism, interest in politics, two types of political efficacy for the national system, political information, and media contact. When most of these proved to have no influence, the model was trimmed to include only 18 variables -- the 12 significant items in the first analysis, plus all the remaining demographics and engagement in civil society variables, party sympathy (FSLN and Liberal), clientelism, and trust.

Figure IX.5 illustrates the effects of these factors on party and campaign activism from the trimmed model. Ten variables have significant impact. Women are less active than men in party-campaign activism. Age and education contribute to higher party-campaign activism, as does engagement in community improvement groups and CPCs. Support for basic democratic norms elevate party and campaign activity. Identification with the FSLN or either of the Liberal factions increase participation. Respondents with high levels of interest in politics report much more campaign and party activism.

A further examination of clientelism and its relationship to party and campaign activism is in order. In 2010 only 4.1 percent of Nicaraguans report being offered any inducement to influence their vote during an election. Among those, 24 percent of them say they would have been more likely to vote

[144] In many political systems political parties and officials develop organizations and bases of support by offering benefits of some sort in exchange for votes. To gauge this we asked Nicaraguans *"In recent years and thinking about election campaigns, did some candidate or someone from a political party offer you anything, such as a favor, meal, or something else of benefit in exchange for you voting for that candidate or party?"* Those who said "frequently" received a score of 1, those responding "occasionally" a score of 2, and those saying "never" a score of 1. (Note that a high score indicates low experience with clientelistic electoral politics.) At least at the level discernible with surveys, such clientelistic voter persuasion appears rare in Nicaragua. Only 4.1 percent of all respondents report any such offers having occurred. Of the 95 respondents in 2010 who reported such experiences, 36 percent said they would be less likely to vote for the candidate making the offer, 24 percent said more likely, and 40 percent said it made no difference in their vote intention. Thus, though Bay and Stuart Almendarez describe the large influence system erected through and with the CPCs under the Ortega administration evidence of its efficacy remains elusive. See Bay, Kelly. "The Return of the Left in Nicaragua: Citizen Power Councils, Pro-Poor Social Services, and Regime Consolidation." Paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 5 September 2010 and Stuart Almendarez, Roberto. Concejos de Poder Ciudadano y gestión pública en Nicaragua. Managua: Centro de Estudios y Análisis Político, 2009.

for the candidate or party making the offer while 36 percent say less likely. The question here is what effect such clientelism, limited as it appears to be in our data, may have on party and campaign involvement, which is a much more intensive engagement in the political system than voting. One would expect that an offer of a benefit might induce more people to work for a party or candidate than in the case of voting. Indeed, Figure IX.5 reveals that *clientelist inducements significantly affect partisan-campaign participation*, while they have no significant effect on voting.

Does party identification or party voting patterns have links to clientelism? The data reveal no significant difference in citizens reporting promises or gifts according to their party identification. When crossed with reported presidential votes in the 2006 presidential election, sampled voters for the very smallest parties are so few (6) that no conclusion can be reached for such parties. No Renovación Sandinista (MRS) voter reports such an inducement, significantly fewer than those for either Liberal candidate or the Sandinista candidate. In ascending order of reported incidences, Liberal Constitutionalist voters report significantly fewer offers than Sandinista voters, who in turn report significantly fewer than Liberal Alliance voters. The reader should bear in mind that the differences among the three largest vote getters are very small and the overall number of voters reporting such attempts to influence them are tiny, so that that these patterns should be regarded with considerable skepticism.

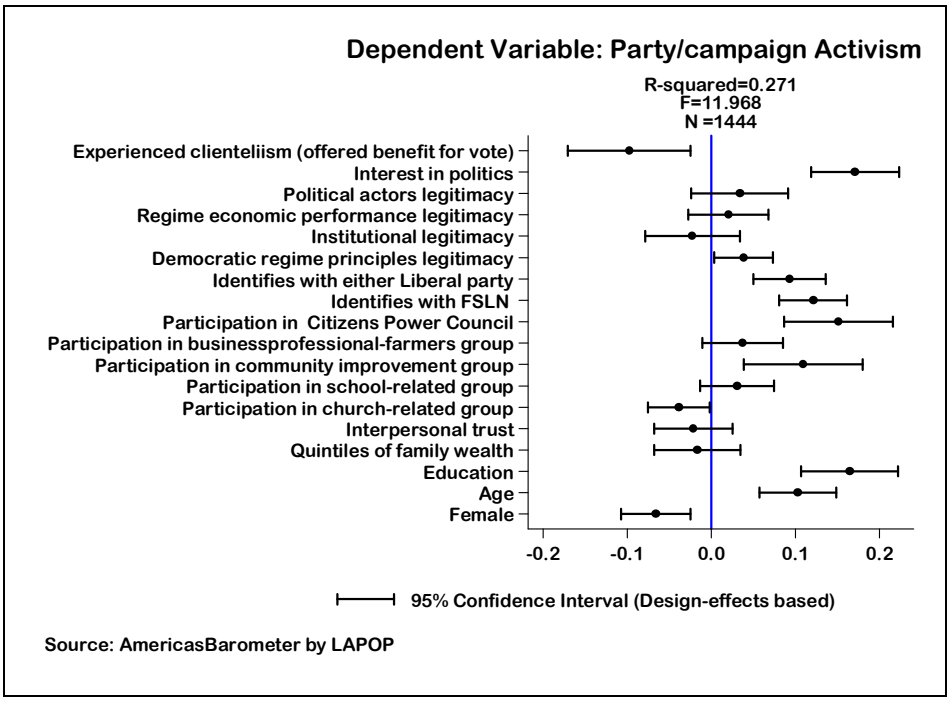

Figure IX.5. Influences on Party-Campaign Activism

Finally, does party voting interact with clientelism and party-campaign activism? It seems logical that active partisans and campaigners would not only reflect party voting patterns but that they might experience clientelism. Indeed, the data reveal that Sandinista voters reporting high levels of clientelist inducements are the Nicaraguans most active in party and campaign activity in the 2010 survey. Liberal Alliance voters follow a similar pattern – those reporting more inducements come in second to Sandinistas in party-campaign activism. This pattern, however, does not appear for the MRS or PLC voters. The fact that the number of Nicaraguans reporting clientelist inducements barely tops 4 percent of the sample requires us to proceed with considerable caution. However, our data indicate that some clientelism exists within the FSLN and the Alianza Liberal and that it links inducements to campaign activism and voting. Our data do not allow clear inference about the causal direction. That is, it may be

that party voting causes clientelism and campaign activism, or that clientelism causes both of the others, or alternatively that campaign and party activism contribute to both receiving inducements and casting a vote for one of these parties. But the 2010 survey reveals positive associations among clientelism, party voting, and party-campaign activity for those who voted for both the FSLN and AL.

Contacting Public Officials

This mode of participation is measured by an index constructed from three activities, contacting a National Assembly deputy, a regional government official, or another government official. What shapes contacting behavior among Nicaraguans? How much evidence is there, if any, that clientelism might affect contacting behavior? Does involvement in CPCs or other communal organizations (CIGs) increase contacting? Contacting was examined employing a multiple regression analysis on a list of 31 items including basic demographics, community size, involvement in six different types of organizations, experiencing crime and corruption, employment status, sympathy with the Liberal movement (both parties combined) and with the FSLN, legitimacy norms, attitudes toward the role of the state, tolerance, trust, populism, interest in politics, two types of political efficacy for the national system, political information, and media contact. When most of these proved to exercise no influence, the model was trimmed to include 16 variables -- the 11 significant items in the first analysis, plus all the demographics, party sympathy (FSLN and Liberal), engagement in civil society, and trust.

Figure IX.6 illustrates factors influencing contacting. Activism in school-related groups, CIGs, professional-business-farmer groups, and CPCs promote more contacting of public officials. Organized Nicaraguan citizens clearly seek to advance their interests by soliciting assistance or conveying their opinions to public officials.

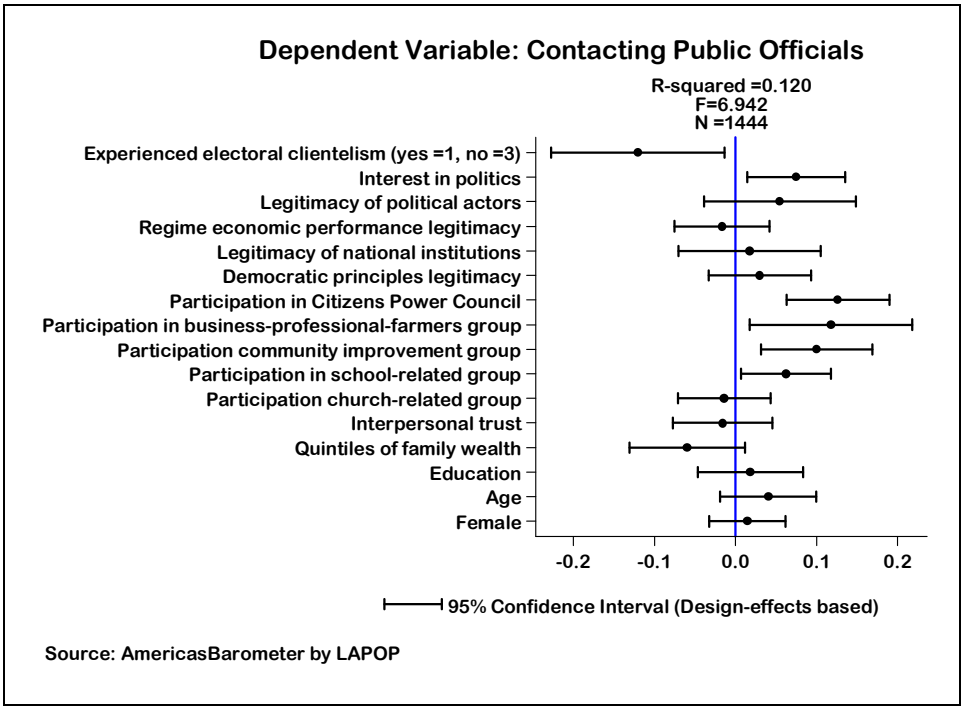

Figure IX.6. Factors Influencing Contacting Public Officials

As noted above, in many political systems political parties and officials offer inducements to voters in exchange for hoped for votes. (Our measure of clientelism assigns a higher numeric value to low

experience with clientelistic electoral politics, and vice versa, so a lower score indicates higher levels of experiencing inducements.) At least at the level discernible with surveys and as we have already noted, such clientelist voter persuasion is rare in Nicaragua (only 4.1 percent).

This low level of overall clientelism notwithstanding, Figure IX.6 demonstrates that citizens who report having received promises or benefits from candidates or party officials also report significantly more contacting of officials (expressed as a negative coefficient). Thus the practice of seeking to influence votes with gifts and promises is apparently rare in Nicaragua (as far as we can measure it) and is apparently not very effective in shaping votes. However, these clientelistic inducements nevertheless significantly correlate with higher contacting among those to whom inducements are offered. This likely occurs because a politician making such an offer signals a willingness to act on behalf of potential voters if approached. This signal may attract contacting by citizens who seek the aid of officials outside the electoral context. A final question to ask is whether the contacting-clientelism linkage is the same among those voting for each of the parties. Detailed analysis, not shown to conserve space, indicates that high contacting among those who report frequently experiencing clientelist inducement is most common among Liberal Alliance voters. In fact, AL voters account for most of the covariation found between contacting and clientelism.

Engaging with Local Government

What are the sources of engagement with local government? What demographic factors, civil society activism, attitudes, and experiences actually shape citizens' contacting local officials, attending local government meetings, and petitioning local government?

Engaging with local government was examined with multiple regression analysis on a list of 32 items including basic demographics, community size, involvement in six different types of organizations, experiencing crime and corruption, employment status, sympathy with the Liberal movement (both parties combined) and the FSLN, exposure to clientelist inducements, legitimacy norms, attitudes toward the role of the state, tolerance, trust, populism, interest in politics, two types of political efficacy for the national system, political information, media contact, confidence in the wise use of local government funds, and two items measuring trust in local government. When most of these proved to exercise no influence, the model was trimmed to include only 15 variables -- the significant items in the first analysis, plus other demographic and civil society variables, interpersonal trust and attitudes toward local government.

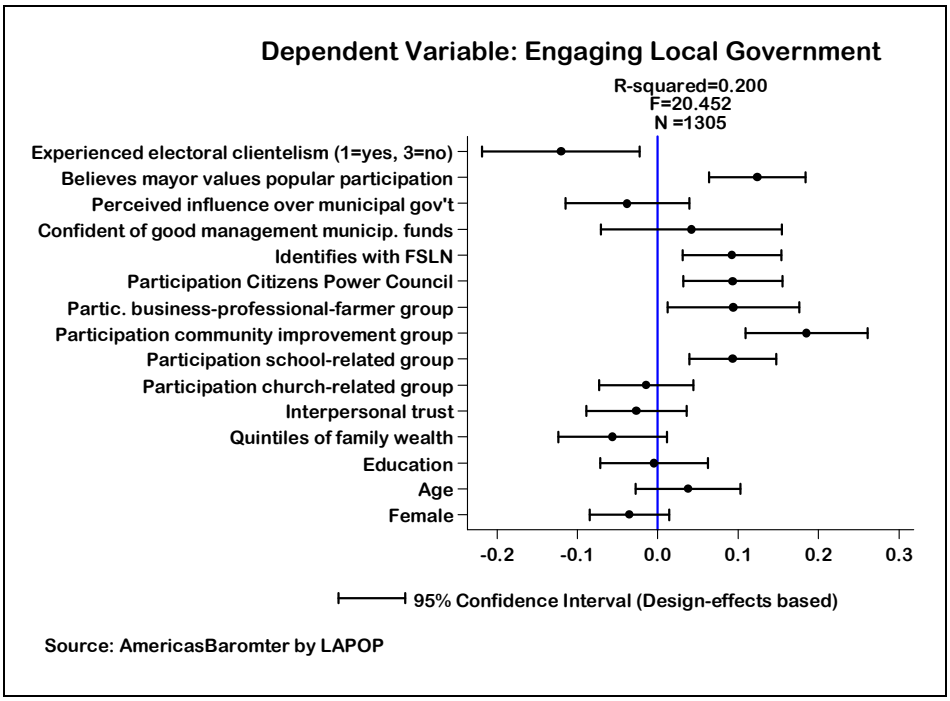

Figure IX.7. Factors Influencing Engaging Local Government

Figure IX.7 reveals that the influences on engaging local government in Nicaragua are simple. Demographics have no significant impact, nor (somewhat surprisingly) do either trust or a sense that municipal funds are being well managed. The important influences are participation in CPCs, CIGs, business-professional-farmer and school-related groups, expressed sympathy for the FSLN, experiencing clientist inducements, and a belief that the mayor of one's municipality values the participation of the citizenry. Although CPCs membership and activism involve fewer citizens than most other types of civil society engagement, it nevertheless does mobilize local government engagement – an effect independent of other group membership and of Sandinista sympathy. As found above for contacting and party-campaign activism, receiving inducements (offers of benefits) from parties or candidates interacts with party voting to elevate engaging local government.

Figure IX.8 illustrates how several civil society variables influence engagement with local government. Except for church-related groups, civil society activity mobilizes citizens to engage with local government. Not shown in the regression model, but also a significant mobilizer of local government participation among women, is participation in women's groups. What stands out here is that in Nicaragua civil society activism mobilizes people to engage the local government (by contacting officials, petitioning, attending meetings) more than other factors.

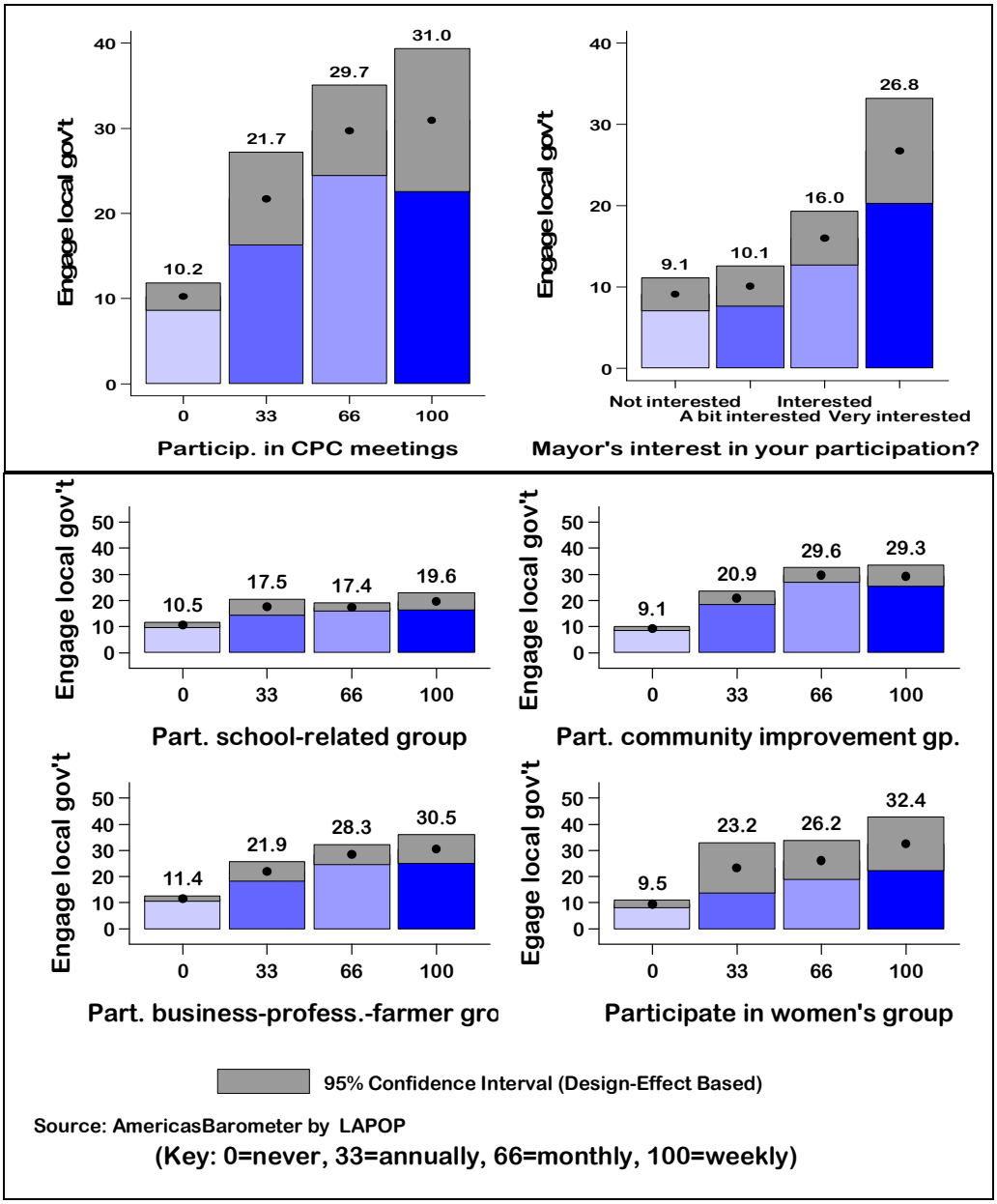

Figure IX.8. Influences on Engaging Local Government

Protests

Recent research has shown that protest behavior often provides another ordinary form of political participation in Latin America. Rather than constituting an anti-system approach to politics, aimed at undermining democratic systems or rejecting democratic politics, protest participation correlates with other forms of within-system activism and is often practiced by citizens with higher than average democratic norms. As such, protest behavior constitutes an additional tool with which to gain the attention of government or to express opposition toward or support for a public policy initiative.[145] Do

[145] Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*; Booth and Seligson, *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Democracy and Political Support in Eight Nations* (Cambridge, 2009).

these patterns hold in Nicaragua? And what are the sources of protest involvement? What demographic factors, civil society activism, attitudes, and experiences actually shape citizens' protest behavior?

To measure protest the AmericasBarometer surveys asked the following questions:

- "In the last 12 months have you participated in a demonstration or a public protest?"
- "How many times have you participated in a demonstration or public protest?"

These were combined and rescaled to a 0-100 scale with 100 representing the highest level of protest participation and zero the lowest. In 2010 we find that 9.8 percent of Nicaraguans report having taken part in a protest within the previous 12 months, which was 2 percent less than in the 2008 survey.[146] Protest participation in 2010 is indeed positively related to several other forms of political participation in Nicaragua, as expected. Although it is uncorrelated with voting, protest correlates at .31 with party and campaign activism, .21 with contacting public officials, and .20 with engaging local government. These are moderate rather than strong associations, but each is statistically significant and positive. This indicates that protest is not necessarily anti-system activity; if it were, voting and engaging in party and campaign activism might have a negative association with protest. But instead, protest's positive relationship to other participation that takes place within channels shows it to be a normal way for many Nicaraguans to engage in politics.

We may now turn to the determinants of protesting. Protest behavior in 2010 was analyzed with multiple regression analysis on a list of 35 items including basic demographics, community size, involvement in six different types of organizations, experiencing crime and corruption, employment status, sympathy with the Liberal movement (both parties combined) and the FSLN, exposure to clientelist inducements, legitimacy norms, attitudes toward the role of the state, tolerance, trust, populism, interest in politics, two types of political efficacy for the national system, political information, media contact, confidence in the wise use of local government funds, and two items measuring trust in local government, contacting, party-campaign activism, and engaging local government. When most of these proved to exercise no influence, the model was trimmed to include 19 variables -- the significant items in the first analysis, plus other demographic and civil society variables as well as trust, party sympathy for the FSLN and Liberals, clientelism, contacting, engaging local government, and party-campaign activity.

Figure IX.9 presents the results of this analysis, and in it we find some surprises. In the only case among the participation modes, Nicaraguans' wealth influences their propensity to protest. Yet it was not the poor who are protesting, as one might expect, but those who are better off. Another surprise is that civil society mobilizes little protest among Nicaraguans. Indeed, participating in school-related organizations associates with lower protest. The exception to this tendency is participation in CPCs, which elevates protest. Crime victims protest more. The largest single impact on protest participation is party and campaign activity. This made sense considering that a wave of protests and counter-protests took place following the troubled municipal elections of 2008. Partisans and campaign activists, those most directly involved in the elections, likely protest more.

[146] This participation rate for 2008 was about three percentage points higher than the mean for all five Central American countries, but well below that for Honduras at 18 percent. See Chapter 9 of Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change*.

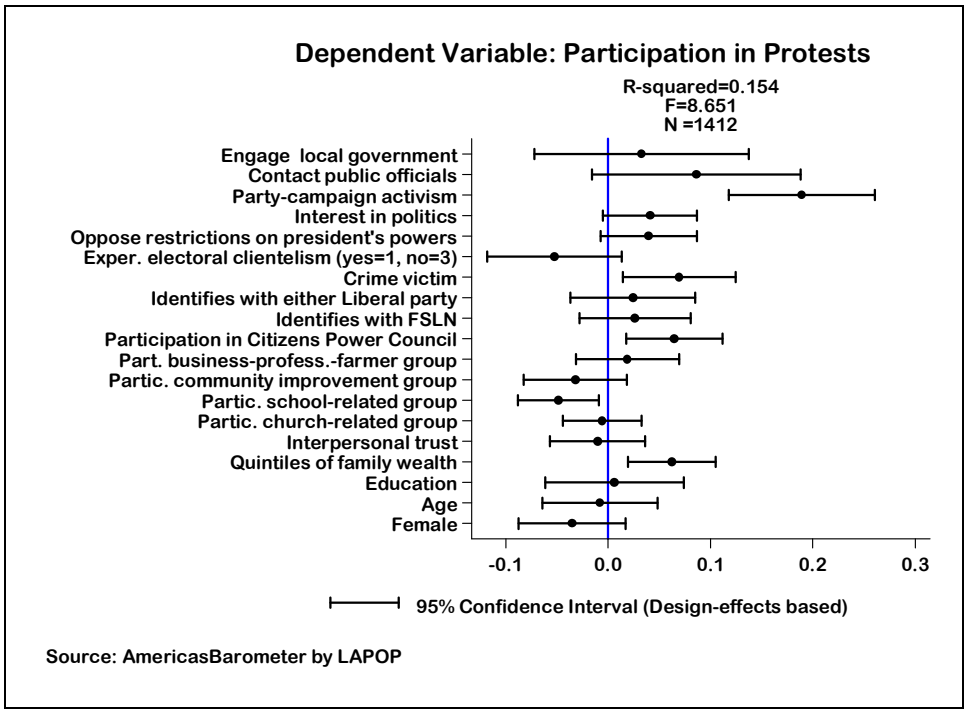

Figure IX.9. Influence on Protest Participation

Summary and Conclusions

Several important patterns emerge from these findings. The first concerns the levels and trends of participation, which are summarized in Figure IX.10. On the 0-100 intensity of involvement scales, Nicaraguans are six times more likely to have voted than to have engaged in local government. They are as much as eight times more likely to have voted than to have taken part in campaigns and elections, contacted officials or protested. In between these poles of highest involvement (voting) and least (protesting and contacting) was their civil society activity. As shown in Figure IX.3, Nicaraguans averaged roughly 50 on the 100 point scale for church-related organizations, around 30 of 100 for school-related groups, 15 of 100 for community improvement organizations, and 10 or less of 100 for other types of groups.

Trends in political participation over time appear to have stabilized after 2006. Prior to 2006 participation appears to have declined during the 1990s and early 2000s. Thus there exists evidence from these and other surveys of Nicaraguans for a cooling down of political participation and of civil society activism after the revolution. Our findings suggest the cooling process had likely ended as participation levels stabilized and fluctuated within a narrower range since 2006.

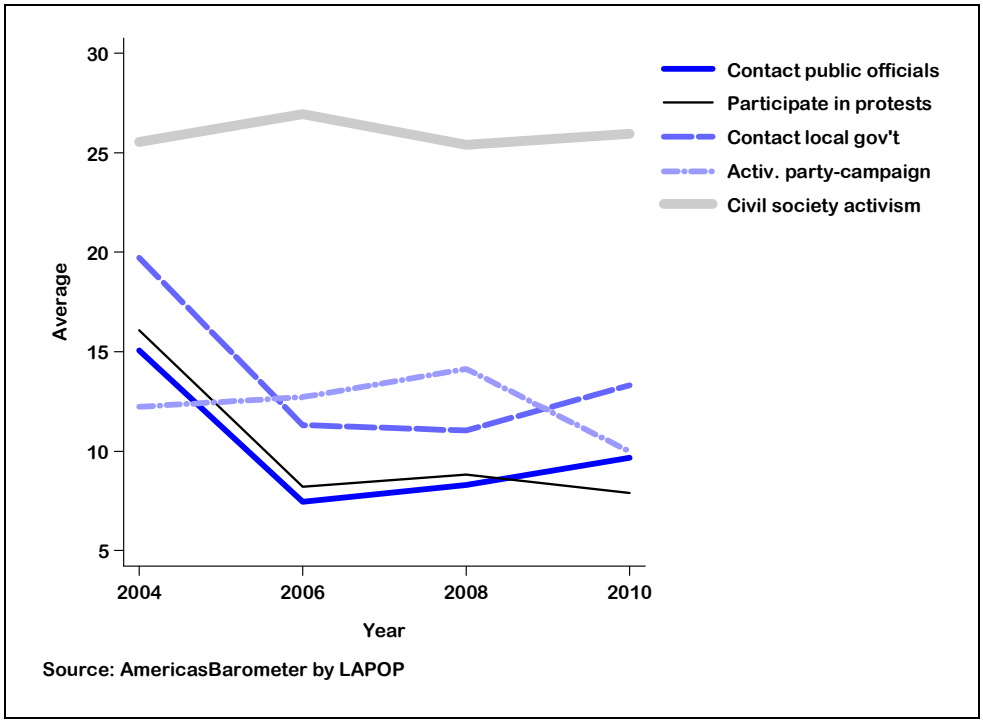

Figure IX.10. Levels and Trends of Citizen Participation

The second important pattern revealed is that Nicaraguans' civil society engagement contributes greatly to mobilize their political participation. Up to two different types of civil society engagement are associated with higher levels of each mode of citizen political action. The one exception to this pattern is a negative association between school-related group engagement and protest. Involvement in community improvement groups and in Citizen Power Councils each contributes to four of five modes of political participation. Involvement in school groups increases three modes, and activism within business-professional-farmer organizations increases two modes. CPC involvement alone is associated with greater protesting.

Levels of civil society engagement overall appear essentially static since 2006 (see the average for civil society groups in Figure IX.10). But in contrast, citizens' engagement in community improvement organizations, and especially in CPCs, has risen in recent years. This elevated CPC and CIG involvement in turn likely account for the recent upturns in contacting public officials and in engaging local government recorded in the AmericasBarometer surveys.

Another broad pattern revealed in the analysis involves party identification and its influence on political participation. Party identification (sympathy for either of the two Liberal parties or for the Frente Sandinista) motivates Nicaraguans to vote and to engage in campaign and party activism. Identification with the FSLN also encourages more engagement with local government. Although only one in 25 people reports experiencing an offer of some sort of benefit by a party or candidate, experiencing such clientelist inducements nevertheless is associated with higher levels of reported party and campaign activism, contacting public officials, and local government engagement. Although clientelist inducements are uncommon, their effect nonetheless boosts participation and does so in targeted ways. For example, reporting having voted for either the FSLN or the AL in the 2006 election is associated with both clientelist inducements on the one hand and elevated party-campaign, contacting and local government activity on the other.

One's position in society and personal resources play a surprisingly small role in shaping political participation. Older and better educated Nicaraguans vote and take part in more campaign-partisan activities. Women engage in less party and campaign activity than men. In a surprising finding, the wealthy protest more than the poor. Far more remarkable than these patterns, however, are the demographic effects that do not exist. The size of one's community of residence, one's wealth, and one's gender have little effect on participation. This demonstrates that political participation, and especially contacting, engaging local government, and protest, are broadly diffused among Nicaraguans of all walks of life. Residents of large cities and rural areas, women and men, the rich and the poor, the educated and uneducated all take part in politics at levels not very different from each other. The two types of participation most shaped by age and by education involve formal electoral politics – voting and party and campaign activism.

There are other noteworthy patterns of missing effects – influences we expected to detect but did not. Except for interest in politics, which elevates three participation modes, populism (negatively related to voting), and democratic norms (positively associated with campaign and party engagement), almost no attitudes significantly associate with political participation. Neither does news media exposure, political knowledge, or being a corruption victim or a crime victim. (Crime victimization does contribute to higher protest participation.) As noted in Chapter IV, Nicaragua has an intermediate crime rate among Latin American and Caribbean countries, and a lower crime rate than most of its neighbors to the north. Nicaragua's corruption rate and its citizens' perception of corruption levels are both low for Latin America. These factors account for the low impact of experienced crime and corruption on political participation.

Chapter X. Citizen Power Councils

Introduction

Nicaragua has two types of community organizations as noted in Chapters VII and IX. The first is a traditional "community improvement" group (CIG), which is actually a rather vague description of varied associations that have arisen to promote the vision of a community (or part of it) for needed local improvements. The origin of some such organizations is diverse, arising spontaneously among residents, as spin-offs of political organizations, promoted by the Catholic Church, and so on. In 2003 the administration of then-president Enrique Bolaños established a network of municipal development organizations to promote citizen involvement in community improvement.[147] In 2007 President Daniel Ortega issued a series of executive decrees that established a new type of community organizations, the Citizen Power Councils (CPCs). The ostensible purpose of CPCs was to decentralize government by promoting citizen involvement in the proposal, formulation and execution of public policy at the local level and higher levels of government as well. As noted in chapters VII and IX, the government also simultaneously established a related structure for the distribution of development and basic economic assistance to individuals, financed heavily with funds from Venezuela and distributed through a new government agency. CPCs have been controversial. They have been criticized in part for stepping on the authority of officials constitutionally established municipal and regional governments. Others have viewed them as instruments of control of communities or local government by the party of President Ortega, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).[148]

The purpose of this chapter is to examine CPCs in greater detail and to compare them and their participants and to other community groups (CIGs). The recent interest in civil society and social capital holds that membership in voluntary associations plays a critical role in the establishment of democracy by promoting democratic norms.[149] It has been well established in the literature on political participation that engagement in organizations promotes various modes of political participation from voting to contacting officials to protest behavior.[150] The AmericasBarometer surveys provide valuable data with which to investigate such questions for Nicaragua. There have been two rounds of data on the CPCs (2008 and 2010), compared to four for other community improvement organizations (also 2004 and 2006). Our

[147] As in previous chapters, the term "community improvement group" (CIG) is used to refer to any type of community betterment organization that is not a Citizen Power Council.

[148] For extensive studies of the CPC program see Bay, Kelly. "The Return of the Left in Nicaragua: Citizen Power Councils, Pro-Poor Social Services, and Regime Consolidation." Paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 5 September 2010 and Stuart Almendarez, Roberto. Concejos de Poder Ciudadano y gestión pública en Nicaragua. Managua: Centro de Estudios y Análisis Político, 2009.

[149] Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina, "Making Sense of the Civic Engagement Debate," in *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, ed. Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina (Washington, D.C. and New York: Brookings Institution Press and Russell Sage Foundation 1999); Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*; Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*; Bob Edwards, Michael W. Foley, and Mario Diani, eds., *Beyond Tocqueville: Civil Society and the Social Capital Debate in Comparative Perspective* (Hanover: Tufts University-University Press of New England,2001).

[150] Verba and Nie, *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*; Verba, Nie, and Kim, *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Study*; Conway, *Political Participation in the United States*; Rosenstone and Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America*; Booth, "Political Participation in Latin America: Levels, Structure, Context, Concentration, and Rationality"; Booth and Seligson, eds., *Citizen and State: Political Participation in Latin America*; Seligson and Booth, eds., *Politics and the Poor: Political Participation in Latin America*; John A. Booth and Patricia Bayer Richard, "Revolution's Legacy: Residual Effects on Nicaraguan Participation and Attitudes in Comparative Context," *Latin American Politics and Society* 48, no. 2 (2006).

working hypothesis for this chapter is that membership in CPCs and other community improvement groups (CIGs) should promote increased political participation and shape certain attitudes.

CPCs and Other Community Organizations Compared

A first question to consider is the membership in these types of organizations, and to the extent to which participation in each type of group may overlap. Figure X.1 compares levels of involvement in CPCs and other community organizations for the 2008 and 2010 surveys. Two thirds of Nicaraguans (67.2 percent) reported not participating in either CPCs or CIGs. Some 20.4 percent reported involvement in a communal group but not in a CPC, 3.8 percent were in a CPC but not in another communal group, and 8.6 percent were in both types of organizations. In sum, one in three Nicaraguans reported engaging in some sort of communal organization by attending its meetings at least once a year. Thus three in ten Nicaraguans were involved in CIG, one in eight in a CPC, and one person in twelve in both.[151]

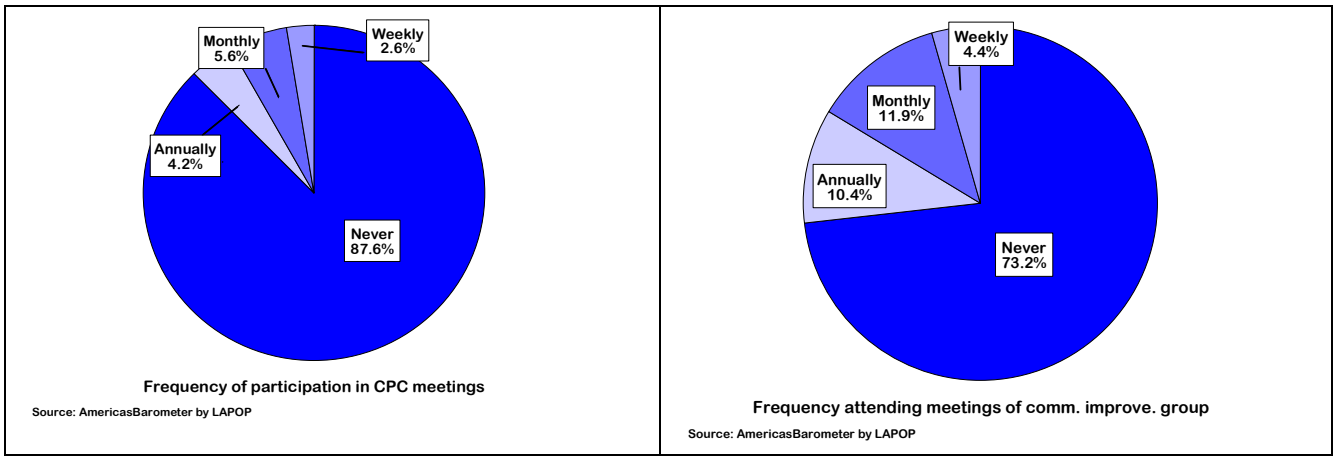

Figure X.1. Frequency of Participation in CPCs and Other Community Improvement Groups for Nicaragua 2008-2010

How have Nicaraguans' levels of CPC and CIG activism changed over time, compared to trends in civil society participation more generally? Figure X.2 compares the levels of participation in CPCs to those in communal betterment organizations and to an average of four civil society groups (church-related, school-related, business-professional-agricultural and community betterment organizations combined). CPC activism in 2008 and 2010 remained well below that of the average for the four types of groups, and also well below the level of other CIGs. Civil society engagement overall and community group activity overall was generally stable from 2004 to 2010. CPCs had therefore not supplanted other communal organizations. On the other hand, the intensity of CPC participation (measured as frequency of attendance at meetings) roughly doubled from 5 to 10 on the 100 point intensity scale from 2008 to 2010, and thus was the most dynamic sector of civil society observed.

[151] There is a possibility that some of those reporting themselves as active in both types of groups are redundantly reporting themselves (i.e., answering for a community group as well as a CPC when they are only active in the latter). However, the fact that the vast majority of both community group activists and CPC activists report they are not in the other type of group, so this overlapping response seems likely to be small.

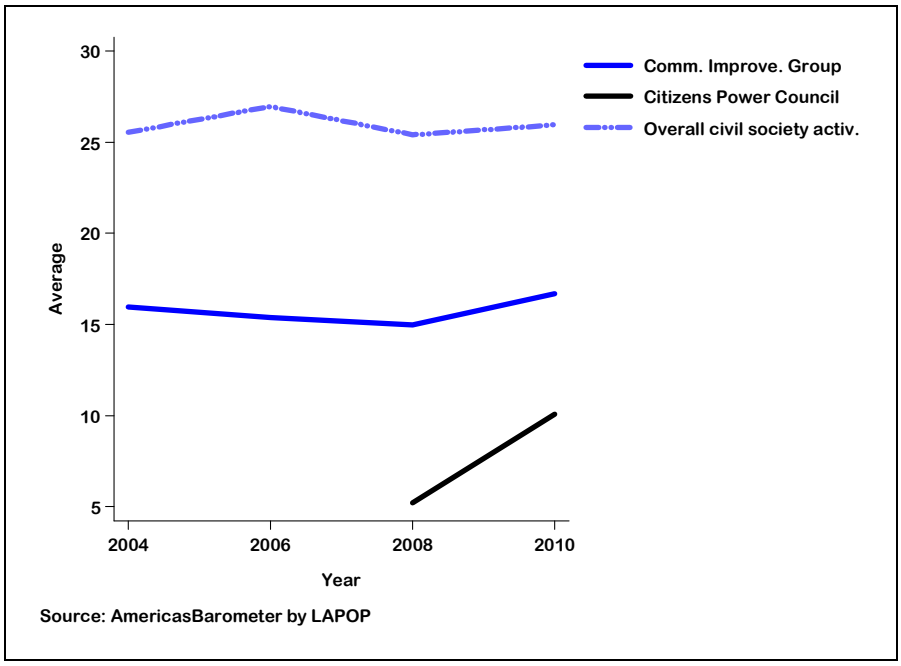

Figure X.2. Trends in Civil Society and CPC Involvement

Participants in Citizen Power Councils

Because the Ortega administration has promoted the CPCs, it is interesting to know to what extent their members are also Sandinista party sympathizers and how that compares to the members of other community improvement organizations. Bay suggests based on her fieldwork case study of CPCs in three Nicaraguan municipalities that membership in them is predominantly but not exclusively Sandinista.[152] How does that compare with our evidence from the 2008 and 2010 AmericasBarometer surveys?

[152] Bay, "The Return of the Left in Nicaragua: Citizen Power Councils, Pro-Poor Social Services, and Regime Consolidation."

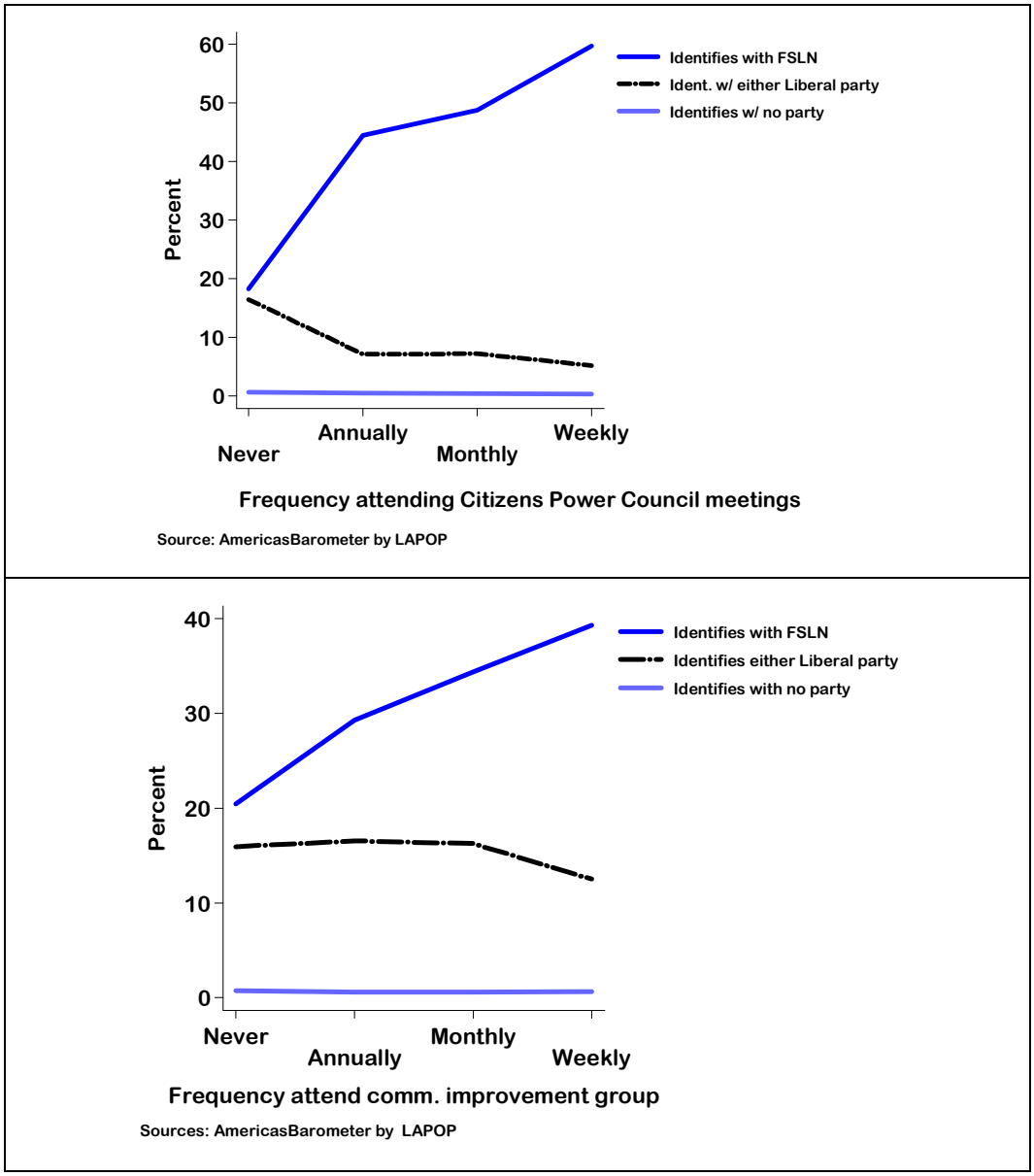

Figure X.3. Party Identification among CPC and CIG Participants Compared

Figure X.3 breaks down party sympathy by type or organization and by level of involvement. In the top half of the figure, for CPC activists, the graph reveals that Frente Sandinista members are many times more intensely engaged in CPCs than are sympathizers with either Liberal faction. The level of FSLN identification also rises with each higher level of participation in CPC meetings. Almost 60 percent of the most frequent CPC attenders report FSLN sympathy, compared to five percent of frequent attenders who sympathize with the Liberals. Persons with no party identification are almost completely absent from CPCs at any level of engagement. The bottom graph in Figure X.3, for CIG-engaged activists, shows that Sandinista sympathy is lower than for the CPC activists for all levels of engagement. Nevertheless, Sandinista identification is considerably higher than is Liberal sympathy in CIGs. Liberals are more involved in CIGs than they are in CPCs, but they are much less involved in CIGs than are Sandinistas. In sum, Sandinistas are more engaged in both types of community groups, and at all levels of involvement, than are Liberals.

What other factors promote participation in Nicaragua's CPCs? Figure X.4 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis for both CPC and CIGs. In the top graph in Figure X.4 we see that only five of 13 possibly related factors have a significant impact on CPC involvement. Satisfaction with local government services and having more education contribute to slightly greater CPC involvement. Two political variables also matter. Identification with either of the Liberal parties contributes to slightly lower citizens' involvement in CPCs. Identification with the FSLN, in contrast, contributes strongly to higher CPC engagement. This survey evidence conforms to Bay's report, based on field research in three municipalities that the CPCs draw heavily from Sandinista party identifiers. The biggest effect, however, comes from engaging in other communal improvement organizations. Indeed, we saw in Figure X.1 that about two thirds of CPC members are also members of CIGs. Demographic differences other than education have no significant impact. This indicates that the CPCs draw upon a broad base of support, with participation by rich and poor, rural and urban, young and old, and males and females.

Turning to the lower graph in Figure X.4, for involvement in community improvement organizations (CIGs), seven variables have significant effects. In one interesting contrast, females are significantly less active in CIGs than are men, something that is not true of CPCs in which where women are equally involved. Older citizens are more involved in CIGs. Residents of larger communities are more active in CIGs (a contrast with CPCs, for which community size did not matter). FLSN identifiers are very slightly more engaged in community improvement groups than non FSLN identifiers. Sympathizing with either Liberal party has no effect on CIG involvement. This pattern of party identification among CIG activists calls into question the view of some observers that CIGs are mainly the province of Liberals. It is actually Sandinistas, by a narrow margin, rather than Liberals who are more prevalent in community improvement groups. Engaging in church-related and school-related groups increases participation in CIGs, marking a difference from the analysis for CPCs in which no such effect appears. Finally, trust in municipal government contributes to greater engagement in communal improvement organizations.

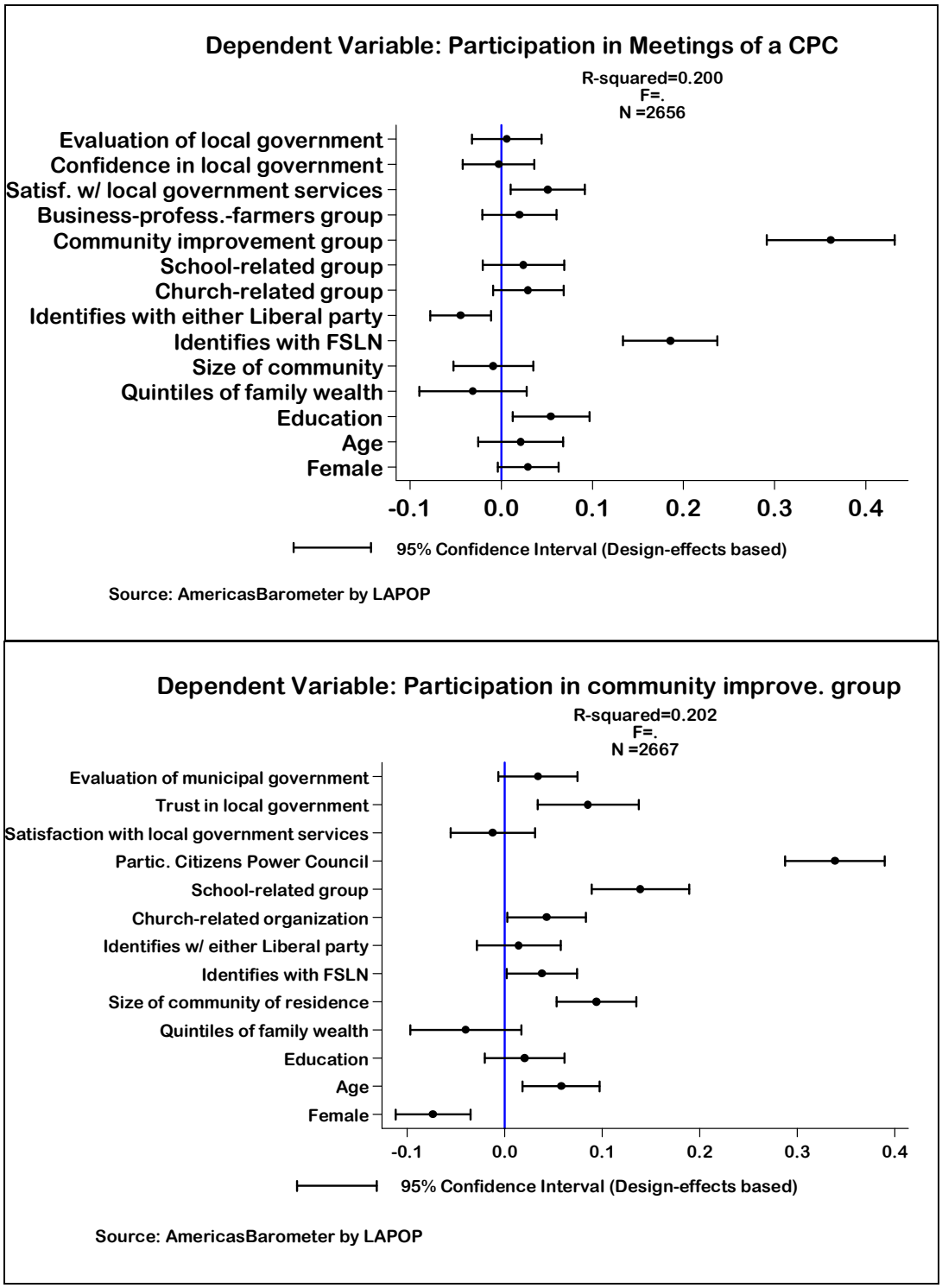

Figure X.4. Factors Contributing to Participation in CPCs and Community Improvement Groups

One finding that emerges from the analysis is the extent to which FSLN sympathizers took an active role in all types of community organizations. Sandinista sympathizers were more involved in CPCs than Liberal sympathizers, but also more involved in CIGs as well. This pattern stands in sharp contrast to the sympathizers of the Liberal parties, who appear to avoid CPCs but also fail to involve themselves to a high degree in other community groups. It is reasonable to surmise that at least part of this Sandinista sympathizer presence in CIGs stems from the party's role in promoting Sandinista Defense Committees and many other types of groups during the revolutionary decade of the 1980s. This practice over recent

decades has likely created among some FSLN sympathizers an inclination to engage in collective problem solving.

Citizens' Views of CPCs

In order to know how Nicaraguan citizens regard the CPCs, the AmericasBarometer 2008 and 2010 surveys asked the following question:

"Thinking about the CPCs or Citizen Power Councils, what do you believe is their principal role?" Response options were: "to stimulate citizen participation; they are a method for stimulating the rendering of accounts; to promote partisan control, to facilitate the decentralization of powers; they are a mechanism to keep vigilance over (vigilar a) citizens."

Nicaraguans' impressions of CPCs changed between the 2008 and 2010 surveys, as is revealed in Figure X.5. Of Nicaraguans who were aware of the CPCs (73 percent in 2008, 85 percent in 2010) about a third overall saw their purpose as "to stimulate citizen participation." This, of course, corresponds to a main stated purpose of the Citizen Power program. Their other ostensible purpose, to "promote decentralization of powers" was seen by a small and declining percent (6.9 to 4.1 percent respectively in 2008 and 2010) as the main purpose of CPCs. Some 21 percent view their purpose as "promoting partisan control," a view that did not change between the two surveys.

The most interesting change in public opinion about the main purpose of CPCs between 2008 and 2010 is a large increase in the percent of Nicaraguans believing them to have been designed "to keep vigilance over one's neighbors." The segment stating this opinion rose from 16.9 percent in 2008 to 36.2 percent in 2010. To what extent this opinion may have grown because of media commentary critical of CPCs is difficult to assess. The common sense and the data suggest that it is important. Two analysis (comparison of means and multiple regression – here is not showed to save space-) show some effect of the media on this point of view. The belief that CPCs have interest in political and social control is lower among those who do not follow the news. In both analyses the association between media contact and negative opinion about CPCs is low but statistically significant. In 2010, in summary, Nicaraguans increasingly regarded CPCs as instruments of social control for the purpose of keeping tabs on citizens. It is worth emphasizing, however, that this negative view was a position taken by a minority of citizens.

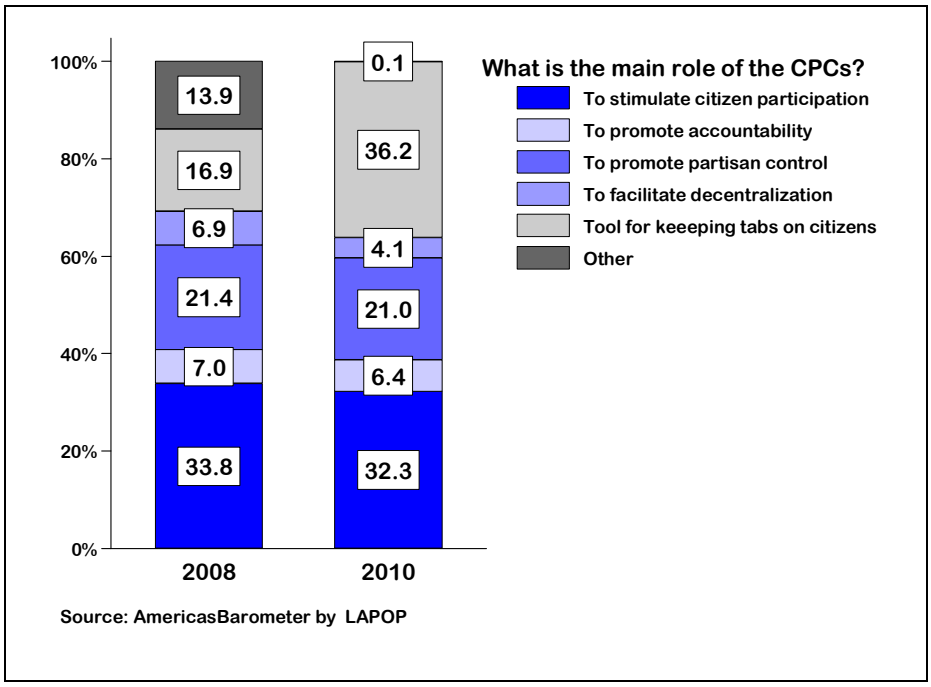

Figure X.5. Nicaraguans' Views of the Roles of Citizen Power Councils

Pursuing Nicaraguans' views of CPCs further, we ask two additional questions. First, how is confidence or trust in CPCs distributed? The overall average on this seven point scale ranging from 1 ("none") to 7 ("much") is 2.8 out of 7, well below the scale midpoint of 4. Overall, then, Nicaraguans do not view Citizens' Power Councils positively. Figure X.6 (the left hand graph) presents the distribution of levels of confidence in CPCs. We see that the largest group (46.4 percent) expresses "none" as its level of confidence in CPCs. All together, two thirds of Nicaraguans express negative views. Only one person in nine responds with a middling or neutral score of 4 on the 7-point scale. On the positive end, a total of only 22.5 percent of respondents express positive confidence in CPCs. In summary, popular disapproval of Citizen Power Councils is very clear – three times as many citizens distrust as trust them.

Second, we must ask: How much is trust in Nicaragua's Citizens' Power organizations based on party identification? Based on the evidence seen so far, one would expect that Sandinista party identifiers would express more trust in them than those identifying with other parties. Indeed, this conjecture is correct. The right hand graph of Figure X.6 presents the average confidence of Nicaraguans in CPCs according to their expressed party sympathy. Both types of Liberals (PLC and ALN) are in the very low confidence range at 1.8 on the 1 to 7 scale. Sandinista identifiers average 4.2 out of 7 points in trust in Citizen Power Councils – a level just above the neutral scale midpoint. Individuals who profess no party identification at all or who mention other parties (the latter negligibly few) express a low mean confidence in CPCs of 2.5. So, CPCs receive their greatest confidence from Sandinistas while other party identifiers and independent Nicaraguans do not trust them, as we expected. However, somewhat surprising is that even among Sandinista sympathizers the average level of trust in CPCs is just at the neutral or midpoint of the approval scale.

To determine whether the very most engaged CPC activists trust the CPCs more, we calculated the average CPC trust by frequency of attending CPC meetings (analysis not shown). Nicaraguans attending CPCs monthly give the groups an approval score of about 4.7. In contrast, those who attend weekly have a mean approval score around 5 out of 7. Thus not even the very most engaged of CPC activists are highly trusting of these organizations.

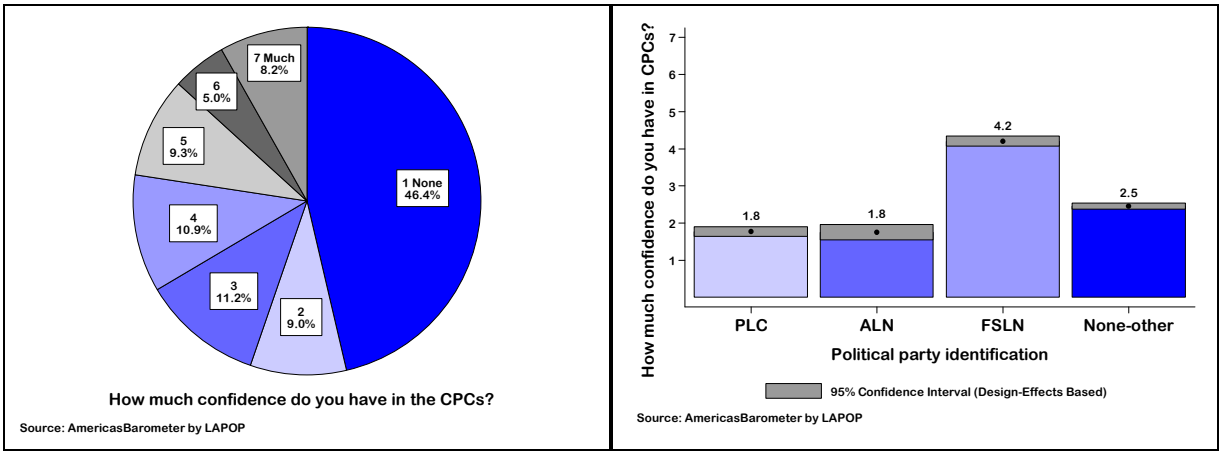

Figure X.6. Confidence in CPCs, Levels and Means by Party Identification (2008-2010)

Effects of CPC Involvement

An additional important question about CPC involvement is the extent to which it mobilizes other forms of political participation. Does taking part in a CPC lead citizens to contact public officials? To engage with local government? To protest? And what effects does CPC involvement have on attitudes, especially attitudes toward local government?

Local Government Participation

Figure X.7 begins to address these questions by comparing engagement with local government by those involved in CPCs and in community improvement groups (CIGs). Promoting increased citizen involvement in formulating local policy is one of the stated purposes of CPCs, so one would reasonably expect that Nicaraguans involved in them would take a greater role in politics, especially in contacting local and other public officials. Figure X.7 shows that taking part in both CPCs and CIGs significantly increases Nicaraguans' engagement with local government. The effect is similar for involvement in both types of groups. In sum, CPCs promote attending municipal meetings and contacting local officials, as intended. CPC involvement produces a very slightly higher rate of local government engagement than does CIG involvement.

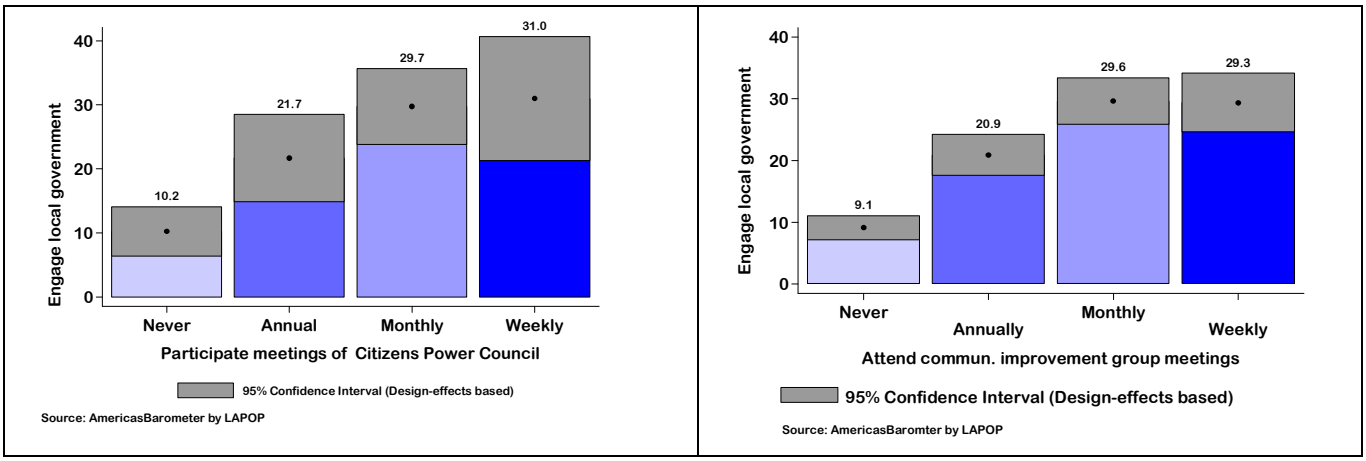

Figure X.7. Influence of CPCs and CIGs on Engaging Local Government

Figure X.8 graphs the effect of CPCs on contacting public officials in general, including municipal and national officials such as a Legislative Assembly deputy or ministerial official. The left hand graph once again demonstrates that the CPCs have the intended effect of increasing citizen involvement with government, significantly elevating contacting. Interestingly, involvement in CIGs (the right hand graph) has roughly the same effect on contacting public officials as involvement in CPCs.

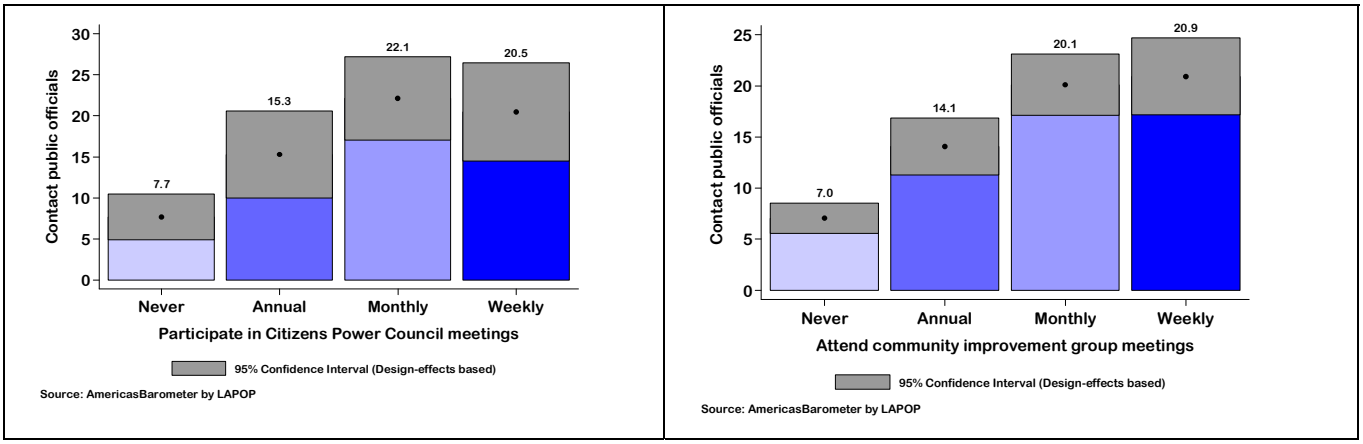

Figure X.8. Influence of CPC and CIG Involvement on Contacting Public Officials

Beyond contacting officials and attending meetings of local government, another tool in the citizen's participation toolkit is protest behavior. Publicly expressing dissatisfaction or demands by demonstrating exerts pressure on officials by revealing for all to see the desires of constituents and their dissatisfaction with the status quo. Sometimes protests can also be supportive of policies, as in demonstrations in favor of a policy or program.

Figure X.9 (left-hand graph) reveals the effect of engagement in CPCs on protest participation. There we see that the Nicaraguans who are most involved in CPCs are over three times more likely to engage in protest than those who do not attend CPC meetings. Although the margin of error is large because of to the small number of respondents, the difference is nevertheless statistically significant. In short, CPC activists are also much more likely than other Nicaraguans to have taken part in protests. Comparing them to those active in other community improvement organizations (the right-hand graph in Figure X.9), two things warrant comment. First, like CPC activists, CIG activists are also significantly

more prone to take part in protests. However, the level of protest participation by CIG-engaged citizens is somewhat less than that of Citizen Power Council participants.

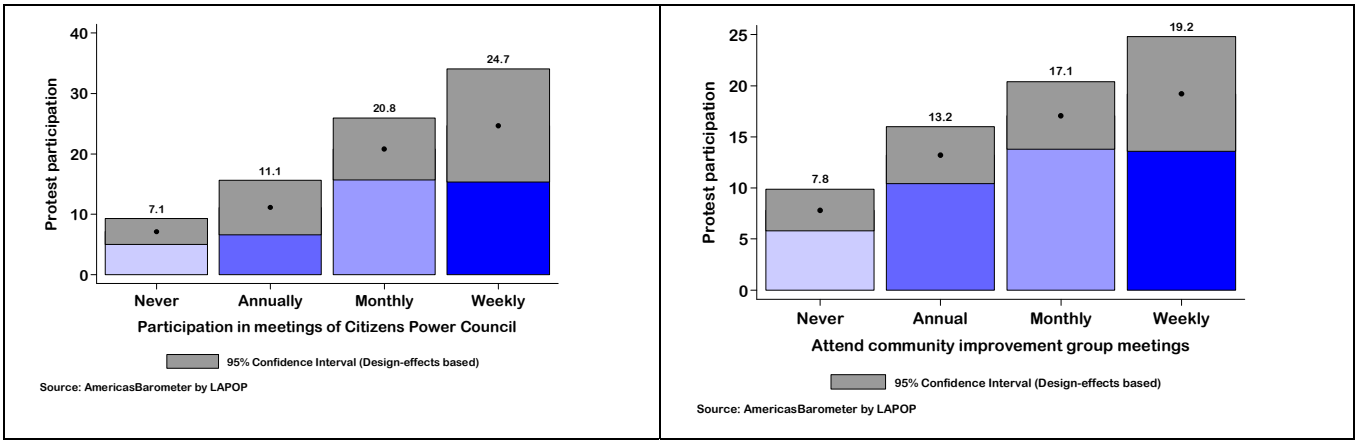

Figure X.9. CPC and CIG Influence on Protest Participation

We have seen so far that CPC engagement elevates the contacting of public officials and engagement with local government. These effects fulfill one of the stated objectives of the government's CPC promotion effort -- to enhance citizen involvement in public policy making and execution. Whether citizens get what they want when contacting or protesting/demonstrating lies beyond the reach of the survey. We also have found that, for the most part, CPC engagement has similar effects on participation to those of other community improvement groups. Again, the surveys cannot tell us what citizen's demand from officials contacted, nor do we know what citizens protest for or against. There is little difference between the participation of CPC activists and CIG activists except that CPC engagement generates somewhat higher levels of protesting.

Political Attitudes

We turn now to the links between CPC engagement and attitudes. In particular, the question is whether activism within a CPC enhances citizens' sense of their efficacy. If the program of CPCs is functioning according to the logic of its design, those who take a more active part should have a greater sense that local government cares about their participation and responds to their wishes. Our survey asked Nicaraguans two questions that address their sense of efficacy:

- "How much influence do you believe you have in what the municipality (*alcaldía*) does? Much (scored 1), some (scored 2), little (scored 3) or none (scored 4)?"
- How interested do believe the mayor is in the participation of the people in the work of the municipality? Very interested (scored 3), somewhat interested (scored 2), little interested (scored 1), or not interested (scored 0)?"

We converted the first efficacy item into a 0-100 scale in which zero corresponds to "no influence" and 100 to "much." Figure X.10 (left-hand graph) explores the effect of CPC involvement levels on Nicaraguans' belief that they have some influence in what the municipal government does. The average scores range between 16 and 32 on the 100 point scale, so the obvious answer to this question from Figure X.10 is that most Nicaraguans believe they have very little such influence. We see that CPC-active citizens perceive themselves as having slightly greater influence than CPC inactives, but the difference is barely statistically significant and of little substantive meaning. Turning to CIG-involved citizens for comparison (Figure X.10, right-hand graph) we see a virtually identical pattern of low perceived influence overall. Community improvement group activists also see themselves as marginally and significantly more influential with local government than CIG inactives, but the difference is so modest that it appears to have little substantive meaning.

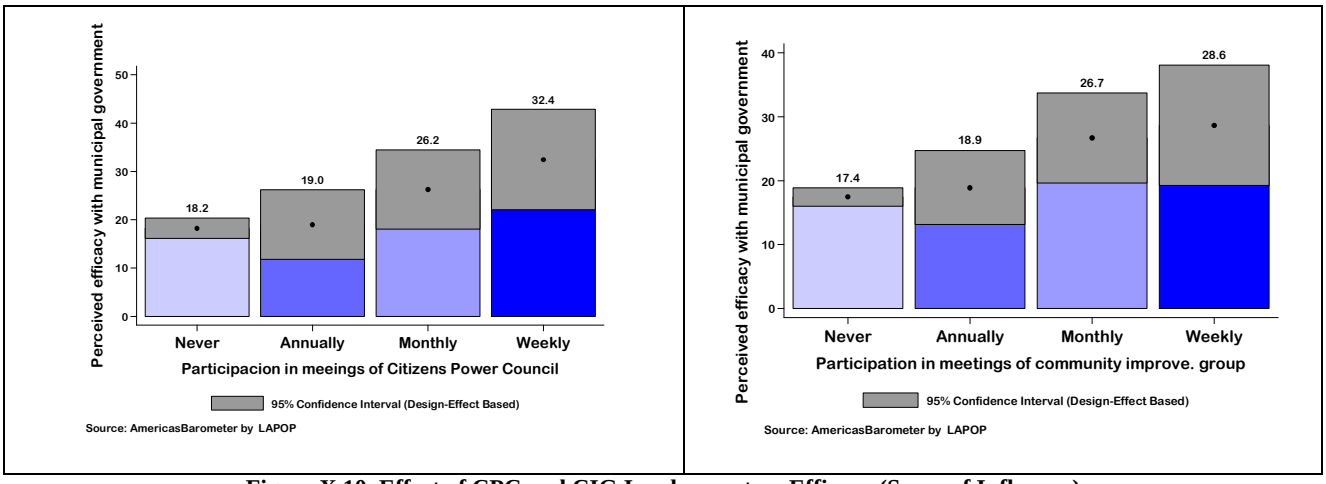

Figure X.10. Effect of CPC and CIG Involvement on Efficacy (Sense of Influence)

The second measure of efficacy with respect to local government concerns the perception that the mayor of the municipality values the participation of citizens in the work of the municipality. This refers to an ostensible purpose of the CPCs, to encourage citizens to become involved in formulating local government policy. Figure X.11 (left-hand graph) presents the impact of CPC involvement on the perception that the mayor values the participation of the people in the work of the municipality. CPC-active citizens report a significantly greater belief that the mayor cared about popular participation than CPC inactives. The more active one is, the greater the effect on this type of efficacy. Comparing this result to that for community improvement group activists, we see a similar pattern (Figure X.11, right-hand graph). CIG-involved citizens also have a greater sense that the mayor values their participation, but the increase is slightly less than for CPC-involved citizens.

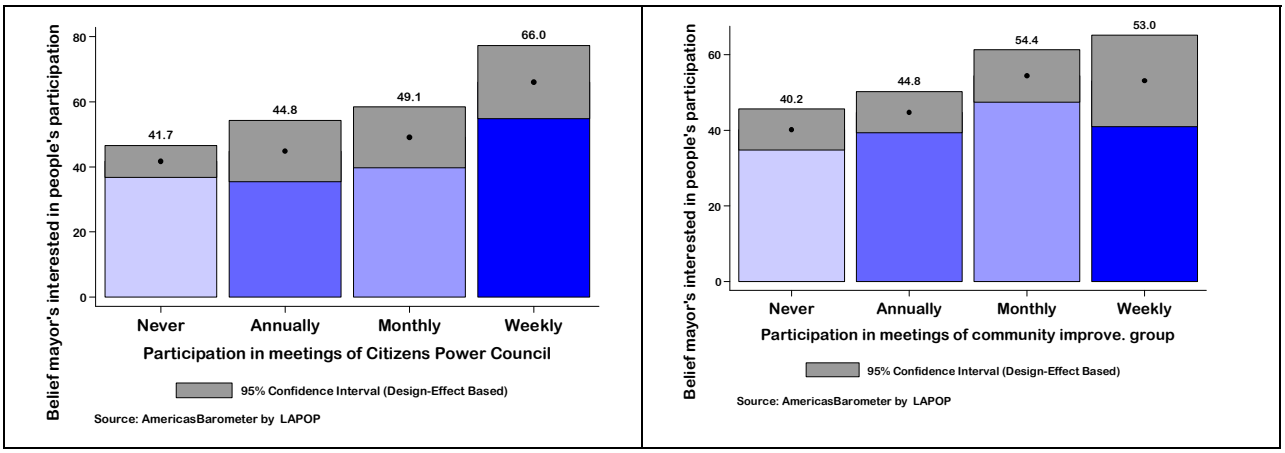

Figure X.11. Influence of CPC and CIG Activism on Efficacy (Perception That Mayor Values Citizen Participation)

A final question concerns the impact of CPC and CIG involvement on democratic norms. We examined the impact of these on preference for democracy, on support for basic participation rights, and on tolerance of regime critics, three fundamental democratic attitudes. The analysis revealed that there are no statistically significant differences in these attitudes between Citizen Power Council and other community betterment group activists. (Because the results are so consistent across all three variables, the graphs are not included here to conserve space.) Thus, being involved in a community improvement group or a Community Power Council matters not at all for Nicaraguans' democratic attitudes.

In summary, there are notable effects of involvement in Citizen Power Councils among Nicaraguans. Those who are involved in CPCs are more likely to engage with local government, to contact public officials, and take part in protests. The same effects are observed for those involved in traditional community improvement organizations, but at slightly lower levels. Citizens' sense of efficacy, measured two different ways (a belief in their influence over the work of the municipality and that the mayor values their participation), is low overall, but is slightly higher among the CPC-engaged and the CIG-engaged. The effects tend to be slightly greater for the CPC activists than for the CIG activists. Contrary to one of the great hypotheses of the social capital literature, engagement in CPCs and CIGs has no effect on democratic norms.

Discussion and Conclusions

The creation of Citizen Power Councils in the early years of the second presidential term of Daniel Ortega was intended to help stimulate direct citizen involvement in local level policy making and to decentralize administrative power. CPCs came into existence in addition to other already existing community improvement organizations (CIGs), many of which had been established in the administration of Enrique Bolaños. While only one in eight Nicaraguans reports involvement in CPC meetings, more than one in four says they are involved in CIGs. Of those citizens involved, almost 9 percent reports taking part in both a CIG and a CPC. We have found that civil society activity in general was essentially stable between 2004 and 2010, with a slight growth in the older CIGs. The CPCs, however, grew rapidly; citizen participation in them has more than doubled between 2008 and 2010.

Citizen Power Councils draw heavily upon citizens who are sympathizers of the Frente Sandinista. Almost half of reported CPC activists identify themselves as Sandinista sympathizers, while only one in twenty sympathizes with either Liberal party. Among other communal organizations, about one person in three is also a Sandinista sympathizer, while one in six is a Liberal. CPC activists come

disproportionately from CIGs, emphasizing the overlap between both types of groups. CPC activist Nicaraguans are more educated than average. Otherwise CPC engagement is broadly distributed among Nicaraguans by gender, age, wealth and community size. This contrasts somewhat with the profile of CIG members, who tend to be older, males, from larger cities, and active in other types of organizations. One similarity, however, is that CIG members also come heavily from the ranks of Sandinista sympathizers.

Involvement in CPCs has the effect of increasing Nicaraguans' engagement with local government, contacting of public officials, and participation in protests and demonstrations. While similar effects occur for those involved in other community betterment groups, the CPCs promote somewhat higher rates of these three kinds of political participation. Because engaging with local government, contacting local and national officials and protesting all send messages to those in power about the demands and policy preferences of those taking part, one may reasonably assume that citizens belonging to all community organizations produce a disproportionate share of whatever messages society sends to the Nicaraguan government and the municipalities. CPCs, while only engaging about an eighth of Nicaraguans, generate somewhat higher rates of contacting and protesting than CIGs, and so likely account for a somewhat disproportionate share of the demands being made. Whether the citizen demands lodged with officials actually in turn affect the decisions or behavior of governments lies beyond the purview of the data we have to work with.

In terms of citizens' sense of efficacy, those involved in both CPCs and CIGs perceive slightly more influence (albeit very modest influence) on municipal government than citizens not active in either type of group. CPC- and CIG-involved citizens report higher agreement with the proposition that mayors care about the participation of citizens than do citizens uninvolved in either type of communal organization. Finally, CPC and CIG activism have no discernible effects on democratic norms, contrary to one of the grand hypotheses of the social capital literature.

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Appendixes

Appendix I: Technical Description of Sample Design

METODOLOGIA MUESTRA LAPOP NICARAGUA 2010

I. Antecedentes

En base a las especificaciones técnicas señaladas en los términos de referencia se ha elaboró un diseño a partir del cual se obtiene una muestra autoponderada, y en la que la etapa final de selección se realiza a través de cuotas de sexo y edad. El tipo de muestreo es estratificado, por conglomerados y multietápico.

II. Universo

El universo o población objetivo corresponde a la población nicaragüense adulta de 16 años y más que habita en las zonas urbanas y rurales del país.

La composición de esta población objetivo por región, zona geográfica y sexo se incluye en la Tabla 1.

Tabla 1: Población de 16 años y más

POBLACIÓN 16 años y más	TOTAL URBANO	TOTAL RURAL	TOTAL
PACÍFICO	590616.5	421058.5	1011675
METROPOLITANA	719039.4	45335.61	764375
NORTE CENTRO	374356.3	569537.7	943894
CARIBE	119885.3	248083.7	367969
TOTAL	1803898	1284015	3087913
Fuente: Censo Nicaragua 2005			

III. Diseño muestral

El diseño que se presenta se sustenta en los siguientes criterios metodológicos:

Que el tamaño de la muestra final sea igual o superior a 1500 casos.
A nivel de manzanas (área urbana) y entidades (área rural).

Etapas del diseño y procedimiento de selección

A. Primera etapa

En la primera etapa de muestreo se realizó una estratificación de tipo geográfica, que divide al país en 5 estratos. A partir de esta estratificación se agrupan los 153 municipios del país. La estratificación toma en cuenta la cantidad de población de los municipios y su ubicación geográfica. En la Tabla A1, se observan los criterios de estratificación de la primera etapa de muestreo.

Tabla A1. Número de municipios según estrato

Estratos/Dominio	Menos 25000 habitantes	Entre 25000 y 100000 habitantes	Más de 100000 habitantes	TOTAL
PACÍFICO	35	19	4	58
METROPOLITANA	1	2	2	5
NORTE CENTRO	39	23	2	64
CARIBE	16	10		26
TOTAL	**91**	**54**	**8**	**153**

Fuente: Censo Nicaragua 2005

En el diseño propuesto, los municipios correspondientes a la unidad de muestreo primaria (UMP), se clasificaron como autorrepresentados y correpresentados:

i. Comunas Autorrepresentadas

Corresponden a aquellos municipios que deben estar presentes en la muestra, en atención a su importancia poblacional en cada estrato. Se trata de los municipios distribuidos en las zonas metropolitanas, Pacífico, Norte centro del país que poseen más de 100 mil habitantes, y que en total corresponden a 8 municipios. La probabilidad de selección de estos municipios es igual a 1.

ii. Comunas Correpresentadas

Corresponden a aquellos municipios con menos de 100 mil habitantes que no fueron incluidas automáticamente en la muestra, y que poseen una probabilidad de selección proporcional a su tamaño.

El número de unidades primarias *correpresentadas* se obtuvo de manera proporcional al porcentaje de población representada en cada estrato. Se seleccionan un total de 39 municipios de las cuales 8 son *autorrepresentados* y 31 *correpresentados*, tal como se especifica en la Tabla A2.

Tabla A2

Población	< 25 mil habitantes	> 25 < 100 mil habitantes	> 100 mil habitantes	Total
PACIFICO	235575	429884	346216	1011675
METROPOLITANA	8526	64713	691136	764375
NORTE CENTRO	272974	518086	152834	943894
CARIBE	113972	253997		367969
TOTAL	**631047**	**1266680**	**1190186**	**3087913**
%	< 25 mil habitantes	> 25 < 100 mil habitantes	> 100 mil habitantes	Total
PACIFICO	37%	34%	29%	33%
METROPOLITANA	1%	5%	58%	25%
NORTE CENTRO	43%	41%	13%	31%
CARIBE	18%	20%	0%	12%
TOTAL	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
Número de entrevistas	< 25 mil habitantes	> 25 < 100 mil habitantes	> 100 mil habitantes	Total
PACIFICO	120	210	180	510
METROPOLITANA	30	30	330	390
NORTE CENTRO	120	240	90	450
CARIBE	60	120	0	180
TOTAL	**330**	**600**	**600**	**1530**
Municipios a seleccionar	< 25 mil habitantes	> 25 < 100 mil habitantes	> 100 mil habitantes	Total
PACIFICO	4	7	4	15
METROPOLITANA	1	1	2	4
NORTE CENTRO	4	8	2	14
CARIBE	2	4	0	6
TOTAL	11	20	**8**	39

A partir del marco muestral, se seleccionaron con probabilidad proporcional al tamaño (PPT) una muestra de 8 municipios autorrepresentados (más de 100 mil habitantes), 20 municipios entre 25 y 100 mil habitantes, y 11 municipios con menos de 25 mil habitantes.

B. Determinación de las unidades primarias de muestreos o upm

- Municipios correpresentados

En el caso de los municipios correpresentados, cada municipio fue considerado como una UPM y se entrevistó a 30 personas en cada municipio.

- Municipios autorrepresentados

La muestra consiste de 8 municipios autorrepresentados. Se seleccionó un número específico de localidades dentro de estos municipos autorrepresentados tal y como aparece en la tabla B1. Por ejemplo, para el caso del municipio de Managua, se seleccionaron 12 localidades y se realizaron 30 entrevistas en cada localidad.

Tabla B1

Estrato	Dominio	Municipos	TOTAL mayor 16 años	%	Número de entrevistas	Número de localidades que se deben seleccionar
Pacífico	**Más de 100 mil habitantes**	Granada	66907	19.3%	90	3
		Chinandega	75972	21.9%	120	4
		Masaya	88575	25.6%	120	4
		León	114762	33.1%	180	6
		Total	**346216**	100.0%	510	17
Metropolitana	**Más de 100 mil habitantes**	Tipitapa	63763	9.2%	30	1
		Managua	627373	90.8%	360	12
		Total	691136	100.0%	390	13
Norte Centro	**Más de 100 mil habitantes**	Estelí	71388	46.7%	210	7
		Matagalpa	81446	53.3%	240	8
		Total	152834	100.0%	450	15

C. Selección de los segmentos censales

Una vez seleccionados los municipios según estrato de tamaño y agrupación geográfica, se definió el número de segmentos a seleccionar dentro de cada municipio.

1. Se agruparon los segmentos censales por su ubicación geográfica: urbano y rural.
2. La distribución de los segmentos en cada municipio se realizó de manera proporcional a la cantidad de población que representa al interior de cada estrato y la distribución urbano/rural.
3. Se siguió la regla de LAPOP de realizar 5 a 8 entrevistas en los segmentos urbanos y 10-12 entrevistas en los segmentos rurales.

Appendix II: The IRB "Informed Consent" Document

B&A
Borge y Asociados

Estimado señor o señora:

Usted ha sido elegido/a por sorteo para participar en un estudio de opinión pública, el cual es financiado por la Universidad de Vanderbilt. Vengo por encargo de la empresa Borge y Asociados, S.A. para solicitarle una entrevista que durará de 30 a 40 minutos.

El objetivo principal del estudio es conocer la opinión de las personas acerca de diferentes aspectos de la situación del país.

Su participación en el estudio es voluntaria. Usted puede dejar preguntas sin responder o terminar la entrevista en cualquier momento. Las respuestas que usted proporcione serán completamente confidenciales y anónimas.

Si tiene preguntas respecto al estudio, puede comunicarse a Borge y Asociados, S.A. al teléfono 2687341-2687352 y preguntar por Mara Miranda, persona responsable de este proyecto.

¿Desea Participar?

Appendix III: The Questionnaire

Nicaragua, Versión # 10.1b ***IRB Approval***: #**090103**

El Barómetro de las Américas: Nicaragua, 2010

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PAIS.

01. México	02. Guatemala	03. El Salvador	04. Honduras	**05. Nicaragua**
06. Costa Rica	07. Panamá	08. Colombia	09. Ecuador	10. Bolivia
11. Perú	12. Paraguay	13. Chile	14. Uruguay	15. Brasil
16. Venezuela	17. Argentina	21. Rep. Dom.	22. Haití	23. Jamaica
24.Guyana	25. Trinidad y Tobago	26. Belice	40. Estados Unidos	41. Canadá
27. Surinam				

5

IDNUM. Número de cuestionario **[asignado en la oficina]**_____ ☐☐☐☐

ESTRATOPRI:
(501) Metropolitana (502) Centro
(503) Norte (504) Pacífico Norte
(505) Pacífico Sur (506) Caribe

5☐☐

UPM. (Unidad Primaria de Muestreo) _____ ☐☐☐

PROV. Departamento :_____ **5** ☐☐

MUNICIPIO. Municipio: _____ **5** ☐☐

NICSEGMENTO. SEGMENTO CENSAL_____ ☐☐☐

NICSEC. Sector_____ ☐☐☐

CLUSTER. (Unidad Final de Muestreo o Punto Muestral)
[Máximo de 8 entrevistas urbanas, 12 rurales] ☐☐

UR. (1) Urbano (2) Rural [Usar definición censal del país] ☐☐

TAMANO. Tamaño del lugar:
(1) Capital nacional (área metropolitana) (2) Ciudad grande
(3) Ciudad mediana (4) Ciudad pequeña (5) Área rural ☐

IDIOMAQ. Idioma del cuestionario: (1) Español ☐

Hora de inicio: _____:_____ ☐☐☐☐

FECHA. Fecha de la entrevista día: ____ **mes:**_____ año: 2010 ☐☐☐☐

ATENCIÓN: ES UN REQUISITO LEER SIEMPRE LA HOJA DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO ANTES DE COMENZAR LA ENTREVISTA

Q1. **[Anotar, no preguntar]** Género: (1) Hombre (2) Mujer

LS3. Para comenzar, ¿en general, qué tan satisfecho está con su vida? ¿Usted diría que se encuentra: **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Muy satisfecho(a) (2) Algo satisfecho(a) (3) Algo **in**satisfecho(a) (4) Muy **in**satisfecho(a) (88) NS (98) NR	

A4. En su opinión ¿cuál es el problema **más grave** que está enfrentando el país? **[NO LEER ALTERNATIVAS; SÓLO UNA OPCIÓN]**	☐☐

Agua, falta de	19	Impunidad	61
Caminos/vías en mal estado	18	Inflación, altos precios	02
Conflicto armado	30	Los políticos	59
Corrupción	13	Mal gobierno	15
Crédito, falta de	09	Medio ambiente	10
Delincuencia, crimen,	05	Migración	16
Derechos humanos, violaciones de	56	Narcotráfico	12
Desempleo/falta de empleo	03	Pandillas	14
Desigualdad	58	Pobreza	04
Desnutrición	23	Protestas populares (huelgas, cierre de carreteras, paros, etc.)	06
Desplazamiento forzado	32	Salud, falta de servicio	22
Deuda Externa	26	Secuestro	31
Discriminación	25	Seguridad (falta de)	27
Drogadicción	11	Terrorismo	33
Economía, problemas con, crisis de	01	Tierra para cultivar, falta de	07
Educación, falta de, mala calidad	21	Transporte, problemas con el	60
Electricidad, falta de	24	Violencia	57
Explosión demográfica	20	Vivienda	55
Guerra contra terrorismo	17	Otro	70
NS	88	NR	98

SOCT1. Ahora, hablando de la economía… ¿Cómo calificaría la situación económica **del país**? ¿Diría usted que es muy buena, buena, ni buena ni mala, mala o muy mala? (1) Muy buena (2) Buena (3) Ni buena, ni mala (regular) (4) Mala (5) Muy mala (pésima) (88) NS (98) NR	
SOCT2. ¿Considera usted que la situación económica actual **del país** es mejor, igual o peor que hace doce meses? (1) Mejor (2) Igual (3) Peor (88) NS (98) NR	
SOCT3. ¿Considera usted que dentro de 12 meses la situación económica **del país** será mejor, igual o peor que la de ahora? (1) Mejor (2) Igual (3) Peor (88) NS (98) NR	
IDIO1. ¿Cómo calificaría **en general su** situación económica? ¿Diría usted que es muy buena, buena, ni buena ni mala, mala o muy mala? (1) Muy buena (2) Buena (3) Ni buena, ni mala (regular) (4) Mala (5) Muy mala (pésima) (88) NS (98) NR	
IDIO2. ¿Considera usted que **su** situación económica actual es mejor, igual o peor que la de hace doce meses? (1) Mejor (2) Igual (3) Peor (88) NS (98) NR	
IDIO3. ¿Considera usted que dentro de 12 meses **su** situación económica será mejor, igual o peor que la de ahora? (1) Mejor (2) Igual (3) Peor (88) NS (98) NR	

Ahora, para hablar de otra cosa, a veces la gente y las comunidades tienen problemas que no pueden resolver por sí mismas, y para poder resolverlos piden ayuda a algún funcionario u oficina del gobierno.					
¿Para poder resolver sus problemas alguna vez ha pedido usted ayuda o cooperación ... **[Lea cada opción y anote la respuesta]**	**Sí**	**No**	**NS**	**NR**	
CP2. ¿A algún diputado de la Asamblea Nacional?	1	2	88	98	
CP4A. ¿A alguna autoridad local como el Coordinador regional, concejal regional, alcalde, municipalidad o concejal?	1	2	88	98	
CP4. ¿A algún ministerio/secretario, institución pública, u oficina del estado?	1	2	88	98	

Ahora vamos a hablar de su municipio...	
NP1. ¿Ha asistido a un cabildo abierto o una sesión del concejo municipal durante los últimos 12 meses? (1) Sí (2) No (88) No Sabe (98) No Responde	
NP2. ¿Ha solicitado ayuda o ha presentado una petición a alguna oficina, funcionario, concejal o síndico de la alcaldía durante los últimos 12 meses? (1) Sí **[Siga]** (2) No **[Pase a SGL1]** (88) NS **[Pase a SGL1]** (98) No responde **[Pase a SGL1]**	
MUNI10. ¿Le resolvieron su asunto o petición? (1) Sí (0) No (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	

SGL1. ¿Diría usted que los servicios que la alcaldía está dando a la gente son: **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Muy buenos (2) Buenos (3) Ni buenos ni malos (regulares) (4) Malos (5) Muy malos (pésimos) (88) NS (98) NR	

NICMUNI5. ¿Ha participado usted en la elaboración del presupuesto del municipio?
(1) Sí ha participado (0) No ha participado (88) NS (98) NR

NICMUNI6. ¿Qué grado de confianza tiene usted en el buen manejo de los fondos por parte de la alcaldía? **[Leer alternativas]**
(3) Mucha confianza (2) Algo de confianza (1) Poca confianza (0) Nada de confianza
(88) NS (98) NR

NICMUNI8. ¿Ha realizado usted algún trámite o solicitado algún documento en la alcaldía durante los últimos doce meses? (1) Sí **[siga]** (0) No **[pase a NICMUNI11]** (88) NS **[pase a NICMUNI11]**
(98) NR **[Pase a NICMUNI11]**

NICMUNI9. ¿Cómo fue atendido? **[Leer alternativas]**
(1) Muy bien (2) Bien (3) Ni bien, ni mal (Regular) (4) Mal (5) Muy mal (Pésimo) (88) NS
(98) NR (99) Inap.

NICMUNI11. [Preguntar a todos] ¿Qué tanta influencia cree que tiene usted en lo que hace la alcaldía? ¿Diría que tiene mucha, algo, poca, o nada de influencia?
(1) Mucha (2) Algo (3) Poca (4) Nada (88) NS (98) NR

NICMUNI15. ¿Qué tan interesado cree usted que está el alcalde en la participación de la gente en el trabajo del municipio? **[Leer alternativas]** (3) Muy interesado (2) Algo interesado (1) Poco interesado
(0) Nada interesado (88) NS (98) NR

NICMUNI16. ¿Ha escuchado hablar de los CPC o Consejos del Poder Ciudadano?
(1) Si **[Siga]** (2) No **[Pase a CP5]** (88) NS **[Pase a CP5]** (98) NR **[Pase a CP5]**

NICMUNI16A. Pensando en los CPC o Consejos del Poder Ciudadano, ¿Cuál cree usted que es el rol **principal** de estos? **[Leer alternativas]**
(1) Estimular la participación de los ciudadanos
(2) Son un método para estimular la rendición de cuentas
(3) Promover el control partidista
(4) Facilitar la descentralización de poderes
(5) Son un mecanismo para vigilar a los ciudadanos
(6) Otro (especifique): _____ **[No leer]**
(88) NS
(98) NR
(99) Inap

	Una vez a la semana	Una o dos veces al mes	Una o dos veces al año	Nunca	NS	NR	
CP5. Ahora, para cambiar el tema, ¿en los últimos doce meses usted ha contribuido para ayudar a solucionar algún problema de su comunidad o de los vecinos de su barrio o colonia? Por favor, dígame si lo hizo por lo menos una vez a la semana, una o dos veces al mes, una o dos veces al año, o nunca en los últimos 12 meses.	1	2	3	4	88	98	

Voy a leerle una lista de grupos y organizaciones. Por favor, dígame si asiste a las reuniones de estas organizaciones: una vez a la semana, una o dos veces al mes, una o dos veces al año, o nunca. **[Repetir "una vez a la semana," "una o dos veces al mes," "una o dos veces al año," o "nunca" para ayudar al entrevistado]**

	Una vez a la semana	Una o dos veces al mes	Una o dos veces al año	Nunca	NS	NR	
CP6. ¿Reuniones de alguna organización religiosa? Asiste…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP7. ¿Reuniones de una asociación de padres de familia de la escuela o colegio? Asiste…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP8. ¿Reuniones de un comité o junta de mejoras para la comunidad? Asiste…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP9. ¿Reuniones de una asociación de profesionales, comerciantes, productores, y/u organizaciones campesinas? Asiste…	1	2	3	4	88	98	

CP13. ¿Reuniones de un partido o movimiento político? Asiste…	1	2	3	4	88		98	
NICCP14. ¿Reuniones de un CPC o Consejo del Poder Ciudadano? Asiste…	1	2	3	4	88		98	
CP20. [Solo mujeres] ¿Reuniones de asociaciones o grupos de mujeres o amas de casa? Asiste…	1	2	3	4	NS 88	NR 98	INAP 99	

[ENTRÉGUELE AL ENTREVISTADO LA TARJETA "A"]
LS6. En esta tarjeta hay una escalera con gradas numeradas del cero al diez. El cero es la grada más baja y representa la peor vida posible para usted. El diez es la grada más alta y representa la mejor vida posible para usted.
¿En qué grada de la escalera se siente usted en estos momentos? **Por favor escoja la grada que mejor represente su opinión.**
[Señale en la tarjeta el número que representa la "peor vida posible" y el que representa "la mejor vida posible". Indíquele a la persona entrevistada que puede seleccionar un número intermedio en la escala].

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	88	98	
La peor vida posible										**La mejor vida posible**	**NS**	**NR**	

LS6A. ¿En qué grada diría usted que se encontraba hace dos años, es decir, en el 2008?

[RECOGER TARJETA "A"]

IT1. Ahora, hablando de la gente de por aquí, ¿diría que la gente de su comunidad es: **[Leer alternativas]**
(1) Muy confiable (2) Algo confiable (3) Poco confiable (4) Nada confiable (88) NS (98) NR

[ENTRÉGUELE AL ENTREVISTADO LA TARJETA "B"]

L1. Cambiando de tema, en esta tarjeta tenemos una escala del 1 a 10 que va de izquierda a derecha, en la cual el número 1 significa izquierda y el 10 significa derecha. Hoy en día cuando se habla de tendencias políticas, mucha gente habla de aquellos que simpatizan más con la izquierda o con la derecha. Según el sentido que tengan para usted los términos "izquierda" y "derecha" cuando piensa sobre su punto de vista político, ¿dónde se encontraría usted en esta escala?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	**(NS=88) (NR=98)**
Izquierda									**Derecha**	

[RECOGER TARJETA "B"]

PROT3.¿En los **últimos 12 meses** ha participado en una manifestación o protesta pública?
(1) Sí ha participado **[Siga]** (2) No ha participado **[Pase a JC1]** (88) NS **[Pase a JC1]**
(98) NR **[Pase a JC1]**

PROT4. ¿Cuántas veces ha participado en una manifestación o protesta pública en los **últimos 12 meses**? _____ (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP

Y4. ¿Cuál era el motivo de la manifestación o protesta? **[NO LEER. MARCAR SOLO UNA. Si participó en más de una, preguntar por la más reciente. Si había más de un motivo, preguntar por el más importante]**
(1) Asuntos económicos (trabajo, precios, inflación, falta de oportunidades)
(2) Educación (falta de oportunidades, matrículas altas, mala calidad, política educativa)
(3) Asuntos políticos (protesta contra leyes, partidos o candidatos políticos, exclusión, corrupción)
(4) Problemas de seguridad (crimen, milicias, pandillas)
(5) Derechos humanos
(6) Temas ambientales
(7) Falta de Servicios públicos
(8) Otros
(88) NS (98) NR (99) Inap (No ha participado en protesta pública)

Ahora hablemos de otro tema. Alguna gente dice que en ciertas circunstancias se justificaría que los militares de este país tomen el poder por un golpe de estado. En su opinión se justificaría que hubiera un golpe de estado por los militares frente a las siguientes circunstancias…? **[Lea las alternativas después de cada pregunta]**:					
JC1. Frente al desempleo muy alto.	(1) Se justificaría que los militares tomen el poder por un golpe de estado	(2) No se justificaría que los militares tomen el poder por un golpe de estado	NS (88)	NR (98)	
JC10. Frente a mucha delincuencia.	(1) Se justificaría que los militares tomen el poder por un golpe de estado	(2) No se justificaría que los militares tomen el poder por un golpe de estado	NS (88)	NR (98)	
JC13. Frente a mucha corrupción.	(1) Se justificaría que los militares tomen el poder por un golpe de estado	(2) No se justificaría que los militares tomen el poder por un golpe de estado	NS (88)	NR (98)	

JC15A. ¿Cree usted que cuando el país enfrenta momentos muy difíciles, se justifica que el presidente del país cierre la Asamblea Nacional y gobierne sin la Asamblea Nacional? **[Leer alternativas]**	(1) Sí se justifica	(2) No se justifica	(88) NS	(98) NR	
JC16A. ¿Cree usted que cuando el país enfrenta momentos muy difíciles se justifica que el presidente del país disuelva la Corte Suprema de Justicia y gobierne sin la Corte Suprema de Justicia? **[Leer alternativas]**	(1) Sí se justifica	(2) No se justifica	(88) NS	(98) NR	

VIC1EXT. Ahora, cambiando el tema, ¿ha sido usted víctima de algún acto de delincuencia en los últimos 12 meses? Es decir, ¿ha sido usted víctima de un robo, hurto, agresión, fraude, chantaje, extorsión, amenazas o **algún otro tipo** de acto delincuencial en los últimos 12 meses? (1) Sí **[Siga]** (2) No **[Pasar a VIC1HOGAR]** (88) NS **[Pasar a VIC1HOGAR]** (98) NR **[Pasar a VIC1HOGAR]**	
VIC1EXTA. ¿Cuántas veces ha sido usted víctima de un acto delincuencial en los últimos 12 meses? _____[Marcar el número]_____ (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	
VIC2. Pensando en el último acto delincuencial del cual usted fue víctima, de la lista que le voy a leer, ¿qué tipo de acto delincuencial sufrió? **[Leer alternativas]** (01) Robo sin arma **sin** agresión o amenaza física (02) Robo sin arma **con** agresión o amenaza física (03) Robo con arma (04) Agresión física sin robo (05) Violación o asalto sexual (06) Secuestro (07) Daño a la propiedad (08) Robo en la casa (10) Extorsión [o alguien le sobornó] (11) Estafa (12) Otro (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP (no fue víctima)	

VIC2AA. ¿Podría decirme en qué lugar ocurrió el último acto delincuencial del cual usted fue víctima? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) En su hogar (2) En este barrio o comunidad (3) En este municipio (4) En otro municipio (5) En otro país (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	
VIC1HOGAR. ¿Alguna otra persona que vive en su hogar ha sido víctima de algún acto de delincuencia en los últimos 12 meses? Es decir, ¿alguna otra persona que vive en su hogar ha sido víctima de un robo, hurto, agresión, fraude, chantaje, extorsión, amenazas o **algún otro tipo** de acto delincuencial en los últimos 12 meses? (1) Sí (2) No (88) NS (98) NR	

AOJ8. Para poder capturar delincuentes, ¿cree usted que las autoridades siempre deben respetar las leyes o en ocasiones pueden actuar al margen de la ley? **[No leer alternativas]** (1) Deben respetar las leyes siempre (2) En ocasiones pueden actuar al margen de la ley (88) NS (98) NR	
AOJ11. Hablando del lugar o el barrio/la colonia donde usted vive y pensando en la posibilidad de ser víctima de un asalto o robo, ¿usted se siente muy seguro(a), algo seguro(a), algo **in**seguro(a) o muy **in**seguro(a)? (1) Muy seguro(a) (2) Algo seguro(a) (3) Algo inseguro(a) (4) Muy inseguro(a) (88) NS (98) NR	

AOJ11A. Y hablando del país en general, ¿qué tanto cree usted que el nivel de delincuencia que tenemos ahora representa una amenaza para el bienestar de nuestro futuro? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Mucho (2) Algo (3) Poco (4) Nada (88) NS (98) NR	
AOJ12. Si usted fuera víctima de un robo o asalto, ¿cuánto confiaría que el sistema judicial castigaría al culpable? **[Leer alternativas]** Confiaría… (1) Mucho (2) Algo (3) Poco (4) Nada (88) NS (98) NR	
AOJ17. ¿Hasta qué punto diría que su barrio está afectado por las pandillas? ¿Diría mucho, algo, poco o nada? (1) Mucho (2) Algo (3) Poco (4) Nada (88) NS (98) NR	

[ENTRÉGUELE AL ENTREVISTADO LA TARJETA "C"]

En esta tarjeta hay una escalera con gradas numeradas del uno al siete, en la cual el 1 es la grada más baja y significa NADA y el 7es la grada más alta y significa MUCHO. Por ejemplo, si yo le preguntara hasta qué punto le gusta ver televisión, si a usted no le gusta ver nada, elegiría un puntaje de 1. Si por el contrario le gusta ver mucha televisión me diría el número 7. Si su opinión está entre nada y mucho elegiría un puntaje intermedio. ¿Entonces, hasta qué punto le gusta a usted ver televisión? Léame el número. ***[Asegúrese que el entrevistado entienda correctamente]***.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88	98
Nada						**Mucho**	**NS**	**NR**

	Anotar el número 1-7 88 para los que NS y 98 para los NR
Voy a hacerle una serie de preguntas, y le voy a pedir que para darme su respuesta utilice los números de esta escalera. Recuerde que puede usar cualquier número. **B1**. ¿Hasta qué punto cree usted que los tribunales de justicia de Nicaragua garantizan un juicio justo? *(**Sondee:** Si usted cree que los tribunales no garantizan para nada la justicia, escoja el número 1; si cree que los tribunales garantizan mucho la justicia, escoja el número 7 o escoja un puntaje intermedio)*	
B2. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted respeto por las instituciones políticas de Nicaragua?	

B3. ¿Hasta qué punto cree usted que los derechos básicos del ciudadano están bien protegidos por el sistema político nicaragüense?	
B4. ¿Hasta qué punto se siente usted orgulloso(a) de vivir bajo el sistema político nicaragüense?	
B6. ¿Hasta qué punto piensa usted que se debe apoyar al sistema político nicaragüense?	
B10A. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en el sistema de justicia?	
B11. ¿Hasta qué punto usted tiene confianza en el Consejo Supremo Electoral?	
B12. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en el Ejército de Nicaragua?	
B13. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en la Asamblea Nacional?	
B14. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en el Gobierno?	
B18. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en la Policía Nacional?	
B20. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en la Iglesia Católica?	
B20A. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en la Iglesia Evangélica?	
B21. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en los partidos políticos?	
B21A. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en el presidente?	
B31. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en la Corte Suprema de Justicia?	
B32. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en su alcaldía?	
B43. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted orgullo de ser nicaragüense?	
B16. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en la Procuraduría General de la República?	
B17. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en la Defensoría Pública?	
B37. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en los medios de comunicación?	
B46 [b45]. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en la Contraloría General de la República?	
B47. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en las elecciones?	
B48. ¿Hasta qué punto cree usted que los tratados de libre comercio ayudan a mejorar la economía?	
NICB49. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en los CPC o Consejos del Poder Ciudadano?	
NICB50. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene usted confianza en los Concejales de su Municipio?	

Ahora, usando la misma escalera ***[continúe con la tarjeta C: escala 1-7]*** **NADA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 MUCHO**	**Anotar 1-7, 88 = NS, 98 = NR**
N1. ¿Hasta qué punto diría que el gobierno actual combate la pobreza?	
N3*.* ¿Hasta qué punto diría que el gobierno actual promueve y protege los principios democráticos?	

N9. ¿Hasta qué punto diría que el gobierno actual combate la corrupción en el gobierno?	
N11. ¿Hasta qué punto diría que el gobierno actual mejora la seguridad ciudadana?	
N12. ¿Hasta qué punto diría que el gobierno actual combate el desempleo?	
N15. ¿Hasta qué punto diría que el gobierno actual está manejando bien la economía?	
NICN10. ¿Hasta qué punto diría que el Gobierno actual protege los derechos humanos?	

[RECOGER TARJETA "C"]

WT1. ¿Qué tan preocupado(a) está usted de que haya un ataque violento por terroristas en Nicaragua en los próximos 12 meses? ¿Está usted muy, algo, poco, o nada preocupado(a), o diría usted que no ha pensado mucho en esto? (1) Muy preocupado (2) Algo preocupado (3) Poco preocupado (4) Nada preocupado (5) No ha pensado mucho en esto (88) NS (98) NR	
WT2. ¿Qué tan preocupado(a) está de que usted o alguien de su familia sea víctima de un ataque violento por terroristas? ¿Está usted muy, algo, poco, o nada preocupado(a), o diría usted que no ha pensado mucho en esto? (1) Muy preocupado (2) Algo preocupado (3) Poco preocupado (4) Nada preocupado (5) No ha pensado mucho en esto (88) NS (98) NR	

M1. Hablando en general acerca del gobierno actual, ¿diría usted que el trabajo que está realizando el Presidente Daniel Ortega es...?: **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Muy bueno (2) Bueno (3) Ni bueno, ni malo (regular) (4) Malo (5) Muy malo (pésimo) (88) NS (98) NR	
M2. Hablando de la Asamblea Nacional y pensando en todos los diputados en su conjunto, sin importar los partidos políticos a los que pertenecen; ¿usted cree que los diputados de la Asamblea Nacional de Nicaragua están haciendo su trabajo muy bien, bien, ni bien ni mal, mal, o muy mal? (1) Muy bien (2) Bien (3) Ni bien ni mal (regular) (4) Mal (5) Muy Mal (88) NS (98)NR	

[ENTRÉGUELE AL ENTREVISTADO LA TARJETA "D"]

Ahora, vamos a usar una escalera similar, pero el número 1 representa "muy en desacuerdo" y el número 7 representa "muy de acuerdo". Un número entre el 1 y el 7, representa un puntaje intermedio. **Anotar Número 1-7, 88 para los que NS y 98 para los NR**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**NS**	**NS**
Muy en desacuerdo						**Muy de acuerdo**	**88**	**98**
							Anotar un número 1-7, 88 para los que NS y 98 para los NR	

Teniendo en cuenta la situación actual del país, usando esa tarjeta quisiera que me diga hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones **POP101.** Para el progreso del país, es necesario que nuestros presidentes limiten la voz y el voto de los partidos de la oposición. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo? (88) NS (98) NR	
POP102. Cuando la Asamblea Nacional estorba el trabajo del gobierno, nuestros presidentes deben gobernar sin la Asamblea Nacional. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo? (88) NS (98) NR	
POP103. Cuando la Corte Suprema de Justicia estorba el trabajo del gobierno, la Corte Suprema de Justicia debe ser ignorada por nuestros presidentes. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo? (88) NS (98) NR	
POP107. El pueblo debe gobernar **directamente** y no a través de los representantes electos. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo? (88) NS (98) NR	
POP113. Aquellos que no están de acuerdo con la mayoría representan una amenaza para el país. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo? (88) NS (98) NR	

Continuamos usando la misma escalera. Por favor, dígame hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con las siguientes frases.

EFF1. A los que gobiernan el país les interesa lo que piensa la gente como usted. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	
EFF2. Usted siente que entiende bien los asuntos políticos más importantes del país. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	

Anotar un número 1-7, 88 para los que NS y 98 para los NR

ING4. Puede que la democracia tenga problemas, pero es mejor que cualquier otra forma de gobierno. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	
DEM23. La democracia puede existir sin partidos políticos. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	

Ahora le voy a leer unas frases sobre el rol del Estado. Por favor dígame hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con ellas. Seguimos usando la misma escalera de 1 a 7. **NS = 88, NR = 98**	
ROS1. El Estado nicaragüense, en lugar del sector privado, debería ser el dueño de las empresas e industrias más importantes del país. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	
ROS2. El Estado nicaragüense, más que los individuos, debería ser el principal responsable de asegurar el bienestar de la gente. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	
ROS3. El Estado nicaragüense, más que la empresa privada, debería ser el principal responsable de crear empleos. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	

ROS4. El Estado nicaragüense debe implementar políticas **firmes** para reducir la desigualdad de ingresos entre ricos y pobres. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	
ROS5. El Estado nicaragüense, más que el sector privado, debería ser el principal responsable de proveer las pensiones de jubilación ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	
ROS6. El Estado nicaragüense, más que el sector privado, debería ser el principal responsable de proveer los servicios de salud. ¿Hasta qué punto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta frase?	

[RECOGER TARJETA "D"]

PN4. En general, ¿usted diría que está muy satisfecho(a), satisfecho(a), **in**satisfecho(a) o muy **in**satisfecho(a) con la forma en que la democracia funciona en Nicaragua? (1) Muy satisfecho (a) (2) Satisfecho (a) (3) **In**satisfecho (a) (4) Muy **in**satisfecho (a) (88) NS (98) NR	
PN5*.* En su opinión, ¿Nicaragua es un país muy democrático, algo democrático, poco democrático, o nada democrático? (1) Muy democrático (2) Algo democrático (3) Poco democrático (4) Nada democrático (88) NS (98) NR	

[ENTRÉGUELE AL ENTREVISTADO LA TARJETA "E"]
Ahora vamos a cambiar a otra tarjeta. Esta nueva tarjeta tiene una escalera del 1 a 10, el 1 indica que usted *desaprueba firmemente* y el 10 indica que usted *aprueba firmemente*. Voy a leerle una lista de algunas acciones o cosas que las personas pueden hacer para alcanzar sus metas y objetivos políticos. Quisiera que me dijera con qué firmeza usted aprobaría o desaprobaría que las personas hagan las siguientes acciones.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	NS	NR
Desaprueba firmemente									**Aprueba firmemente**	**88**	**98**
										1-10, 88, 98	
E5. Que las personas participen en manifestaciones permitidas por la ley. ¿Hasta qué punto aprueba o desaprueba?											
E8. Que las personas participen en una organización o grupo para tratar de resolver los problemas de las comunidades. ¿Hasta qué punto aprueba o desaprueba?											
E11. Que las personas trabajen en campañas electorales para un partido político o candidato. ¿Hasta qué punto aprueba o desaprueba?											
E15. Que las personas participen en un cierre o bloqueo de calles o carreteras como forma de protesta. Usando la misma escala, ¿Hasta qué punto aprueba o desaprueba?											
E14. Que las personas invadan propiedades o terrenos privados como forma de protesta. ¿Hasta qué punto aprueba o desaprueba?											
E3. Que las personas participen en un grupo que quiera derrocar por medios violentos a un gobierno electo. ¿Hasta qué punto aprueba o desaprueba?											

E16. Que las personas hagan justicia por su propia cuenta cuando el Estado no castiga a los criminales. ¿Hasta qué punto aprueba o desaprueba?	
NICE17. Que las personas usen la violencia física para impedir manifestaciones pacíficas y permitidas por la ley. ¿Hasta qué punto aprueba o desaprueba?	

[No recoja tarjeta "E"]

Las preguntas que siguen son para saber su opinión sobre las diferentes ideas que tienen las personas que viven en Nicaragua. Por favor continúe usando la escalera de 10 puntos.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	**NS**	**NR**
Desaprueba firmemente									**Aprueba firmemente**	**88**	**98**

	1-10, 88, 98
D1. Hay personas que siempre hablan mal de la forma de gobierno de Nicaragua, no sólo del gobierno de turno, sino del sistema de gobierno, ¿con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba usted el **derecho de votar** de esas personas? Por favor léame el número de la escalera: ***[Sondee: ¿Hasta qué punto?]***	
D2. ¿Con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba usted que estas personas puedan llevar a cabo **manifestaciones pacíficas** con el propósito de expresar sus puntos de vista? Por favor léame el número.	
D3. Siempre pensando en los que hablan mal de la forma de gobierno de Nicaragua. ¿Con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba usted que estas personas puedan **postularse para cargos públicos**?	
D4. ¿Con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba usted que estas personas salgan en la televisión **para dar un discurso**?	
D5. Y ahora, cambiando el tema, y pensando en los homosexuales. ¿Con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba que estas personas **puedan postularse para cargos públicos**?	
D6. ¿Con qué firmeza aprueba o desaprueba que las parejas del mismo sexo puedan tener el derecho a casarse?	

[Recoger tarjeta "E"]

Ahora cambiando de tema…

DEM2. Con cuál de las siguientes frases está usted más de acuerdo: (1) A la gente como uno, le da lo mismo un régimen democrático que uno **no** democrático, **O** (2) La democracia es preferible a cualquier otra forma de gobierno, **O** (3) En algunas circunstancias un gobierno autoritario puede ser preferible a uno democrático (88) NS (98) NR	
DEM11. ¿Cree usted que en nuestro país hace falta un gobierno de mano dura, o cree que los problemas pueden resolverse con la participación de todos? (1) Mano dura (2) Participación de todos (88) NS (98) NR	
AUT1. Hay gente que dice que necesitamos un líder fuerte que no tenga que ser electo a través del voto popular. Otros dicen, que aunque las cosas no funcionen, la democracia electoral o sea, el voto popular es siempre lo mejor. ¿Usted qué piensa? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Necesitamos un líder fuerte que no tenga que ser elegido, o (2) La democracia electoral es lo mejor (88) NS (98) NR	

PP1. Durante las elecciones, alguna gente trata de convencer a otras para que voten por algún partido o candidato. ¿Con qué frecuencia ha tratado usted de convencer a otros para que voten por un partido o candidato? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Frecuentemente (2) De vez en cuando (3) Rara vez (4) Nunca (88) NS (98) NR	
PP1. Durante las elecciones, alguna gente trata de convencer a otras para que voten por algún partido o candidato. ¿Con qué frecuencia ha tratado usted de convencer a otros para que voten por un partido o candidato? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Frecuentemente (2) De vez en cuando (3) Rara vez (4) Nunca (88) NS (98) NR	
NICPP2. Hay personas que trabajan para algún partido o candidato durante las campañas electorales. ¿Trabajó usted para algún candidato o partido en las pasadas elecciones municipales de 2008? (1) Sí trabajó (2) No trabajó (88) NS (98) NR	
NICPOL3 ¿Piensa votar en las próximas elecciones Presidenciales del 2011? (1) Sí (2) No (88) NS (98) NR	

	INAP No trató o tuvo contacto	**No**	**Sí**	**NS**	**NR**	
Ahora queremos hablar de su experiencia personal con cosas que pasan en la vida diaria...						
EXC2. ¿Algún agente de policía le pidió una mordida en los últimos 12 meses?		0	1	88	98	
EXC6. ¿En los últimos 12 meses, algún empleado público le ha solicitado una mordida?		0	1	88	98	
EXC11. ¿Ha tramitado algo en la alcaldía en los últimos 12 meses? **Si la respuesta es No → Marcar 99** **Si la respuesta es Si → Preguntar:** Para tramitar algo en la alcaldía, como un permiso, por ejemplo, durante el último año, ¿ha tenido que pagar alguna suma además de lo exigido por la ley?	99	0	1	88	98	
EXC13. ¿Usted trabaja? **Si la respuesta es No → Marcar 99** **Sí la respuesta es Si → Preguntar:** En su trabajo, ¿le han solicitado alguna mordida en los últimos 12 meses?	99	0	1	88	98	
EXC14. ¿En los últimos 12 meses, tuvo algún trato con los juzgados? **Si la respuesta es No → Marcar 99** **Sí la respuesta es Si → Preguntar:** ¿Ha tenido que pagar una mordida en los juzgados en este último año?	99	0	1	88	98	
EXC15. ¿Usó servicios médicos públicos (del Estado) en los últimos 12 meses? **Si la respuesta es No → Marcar 99** **Sí la respuesta es Si → Preguntar:** En los últimos 12 meses, ¿ha tenido que pagar alguna mordida para ser atendido en un hospital o en un puesto de salud?	99	0	1	88	98	
EXC16. En el último año, ¿tuvo algún hijo o hija matriculados en la escuela o colegio público? **Si la respuesta es No → Marcar 99** **Sí la respuesta es Si → Preguntar:** En los últimos 12 meses, ¿tuvo que pagar alguna mordida en la escuela o colegio?	99	0	1	88	98	
EXC18. ¿Cree que como están las cosas a veces se justifica pagar una mordida?		0	1	88	98	

EXC7. Teniendo en cuenta su experiencia o lo que ha oído mencionar, ¿la corrupción de los funcionarios públicos en el país está: **[LEER]** (1) Muy generalizada (2) Algo generalizada (3) Poco generalizada (4) Nada generalizada (88) NS (98) NR	

[Entregar otra vez la Tarjeta "D"] Ahora, voy a leerle una serie de rasgos de personalidad que podrían aplicarse o no aplicarse a usted. Por favor use la misma escalera del 1 al 7 para indicar en qué medida está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo en que estas frases se aplican a su persona. Debe calificar en qué medida se aplican a usted estos rasgos de personalidad, aun cuando alguna característica se aplique en mayor medida que otra.	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88	98
Muy en desacuerdo						**Muy de acuerdo**	**NS**	**NR**

Usted se considera una persona que es:	
PER1. Sociable y activa	
PER2. Una persona criticona y peleonera	
PER3. Una persona confiable y disciplinada	
PER4. Una persona ansiosa y fácil de molestarse	
PER5. Una persona abierta a nuevas experiencias e intelectual	
PER6. Una persona callada y tímida	
PER7. Una persona generosa y cariñosa	
PER8. Una persona desorganizada y descuidada	
PER9. Una persona calmada y emocionalmente estable	
PER10. Una persona poco creativa y con poca imaginación	

[Recoger Tarjeta "D"]

CRISIS1. Algunos dicen que nuestro país está sufriendo una crisis económica muy grave, otros dicen que estamos sufriendo una crisis económica pero que no es muy grave, mientras otros dicen que no hay crisis económica. ¿Qué piensa usted? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Estamos sufriendo una crisis económica muy grave **[Siga]** (2) Estamos sufriendo una crisis económica pero no es muy grave**,[Siga]** o (3) No hay crisis económica **[Pase a VB1]** (88) NS **[Pase a VB1]** (98) NR **[Pase a VB1]**	
CRISIS2. ¿Quién de los siguientes es el principal culpable de la crisis económica actual en nuestro país?: **[LEER LISTA, MARCAR SOLO UNA RESPUESTA]** (01) El gobierno anterior (02) El gobierno actual (03) Nosotros, los nicaragüenses (04) Los ricos de nuestro país (05) Los problemas de la democracia (06) Los países ricos **[Acepte también: Estados Unidos, Inglaterra, Francia, Alemania y Japón]** (07) El sistema económico del país, o (08) Nunca ha pensado en esto (77) **[NO LEER]** Otro (88) **[NO LEER]** NS (98) **[NO LEER]** NR (99) INAP	

VB1. ¿Tiene usted cédula de identidad? (1) Sí (2) No (3) En trámite (88) NS (98) NR	
VB2. ¿Votó usted en las últimas elecciones presidenciales del 2006? (1) Sí votó **[Siga]** (2) No votó **[Pasar a VB4]** (88) NS **[Pasar a VB6]** (98) NR **[Pasar a VB6]**	

VB3. ¿Por quién votó para Presidente en las últimas elecciones presidenciales de 2006? **[NO LEER LISTA]** (00) Ninguno (fue a votar pero dejó la boleta en blanco, arruinó o anuló su voto) (501)Eduardo Montealegre (Alianza Liberal Nicaragüense) (502) José Daniel Ortega Saavedra (FSLN) (503) José Rizo Castellón (Partido Liberal Constitucional) (504) Edmundo Jarquín Calderón (Movimiento Renovador Sandinista (505) Edén Atanasio Pastora Gómez (Alternativa para el Cambio) (77) Otro (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP (No votó) **[Pasar a VB8]**	
VB4. [Sólo para los que no votaron] [No leer alternativas] ¿Por qué no votó en las pasadas elecciones presidenciales del 2006? **[anotar una sola respuesta]** (1) Falta de transporte (2) Enfermedad (3) Falta de interés (4) No le gustó ningún candidato (5) No cree en el sistema (6) Nuevo votante y no ha recibido su cédula de identidad (7) No se encontró en padrón electoral (10) No tener edad necesaria (11) Encontró la Junta Receptora de Votos cerrada (12) Tener que trabajar/ Falta de tiempo (13). Incapacidad física o discapacidad (14).Tenía que preparar los alimentos de ese día (15) Otra razón (88) NS (98) NR (99) Inap **[Después de esta pregunta, Pasar a VB6]**	
VB8. [Para los que votaron] Cuando votó, ¿cual fue la razón más importante de su voto? **[Leer todos]** (1) Las cualidades del candidato (2) El partido político del candidato (3) El plan de gobierno del candidato (88) NS (98) NR (99) Inap (no votó)	
VB6. ¿Votó usted para diputado en las últimas elecciones? (1) Sí **[Siga]** (2) No **[Pasar a VB10]** (88) NS **[Pasar a VB10]** (98) NR **[Pasar a VB10]**	
NICVB7. ¿Por cuál partido votó para diputado en las últimas elecciones? (0) Ninguno (fue a votar pero dejo boleta en blanco, o anuló su voto) (1) Partido Liberal Constitucional (2) Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (3) Alianza Liberal Nicaragüense (4) Partido Conservador (77) Otro (88) NS (98) NR (99) Inap (no votó)	

VB10. ¿En este momento, simpatiza con algún partido político? (1) Sí **[Siga]** (2) No **[Pase a NICVB2]** (88) NS **[Pase a NICVB2]** (98) NR **[Pase a NICVB2]**	

VB11. ¿Con cuál partido político simpatiza usted? **[NO LEER LISTA]**
(501) Partido Liberal Constitucional
(502) Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional
(503) Alianza Liberal Nicaragüense
(504) Partido Conservador
(505) Movimiento Renovador Sandinista
(77) Otro
(88) NS
(98) NR
(99) INAP

NICVB2. ¿Votó usted en las últimas **elecciones municipales** del 2008?
(1) Sí votó **[Pasar a POL1]**
(2) No votó **[Siga]**
(88) NS **[Pasar a POL1]** (98) NR **[Pasar a POL1]**

NICVB4. [Sólo para los que no votaron] [No leer alternativas]
¿Por qué no votó en las pasadas elecciones municipales en noviembre de 2008? **[anotar una sola respuesta]**
(1) Falta de transporte
(2) Enfermedad
(3) Falta de interés
(4) No le gustó ningún candidato
(5) No cree en el sistema
(6) Falta de cédula de identidad
(7) No se encontró en padrón electoral
(10) No tener edad necesaria
(11) Llegó tarde a votar y estaba cerrado
(12) Tener que trabajar/ Falta de tiempo
(13) Incapacidad física o discapacidad
(14) Otra razón
(88) NS
(98) NR
(99) Inap
[Después de esta pregunta, Pasar a POL1]

POL1. ¿Qué tanto interés tiene usted en la política: mucho, algo, poco o nada?
(1) Mucho (2) Algo (3) Poco (4) Nada (88) NS (98) NR

VB20. ¿Si esta semana fueran las próximas elecciones presidenciales, qué haría usted? **[Leer opciones]**
(1) No votaría
(2) Votaría por el candidato o partido del actual presidente
(3) Votaría por algún candidato o partido diferente del actual gobierno
(4) Iría a votar pero dejaría la boleta en blanco o la anularía
(88) NS (98) NR

CLIEN1. En los últimos años y pensando en las campañas electorales, ¿algún candidato o alguien de un partido político le ofreció algo, como un favor, comida o alguna otra cosa o beneficio a cambio de que usted votara o apoyara a ese candidato o partido? ¿Esto pasó frecuentemente, rara vez, o nunca?
(1) Frecuentemente **[SIGA con CLIEN2]**
(2) Rara vez **[SIGA con CLIEN2]**
(3) Nunca **[Pase a NICORTEGA]**
(88) NS **[Pase a NICORTEGA]**
(98) NR **[Pase a NICORTEGA]**

CLIEN2. Y pensando en la última vez que esto pasó, ¿lo que le ofrecieron le hizo estar más inclinado o menos inclinado a votar por el candidato o el partido que le ofreció ese bien?
(1) Más inclinado
(2) Menos inclinado
(3) Ni más ni menos inclinado
(88) NS
(98) NR
(99) INAP

NICORTEGA. Está de acuerdo con el fallo de la Corte Suprema de Justicia que permite la reelección al Presidente Ortega? **[Leer alternativas]**
(1) Muy de acuerdo (2) algo de acuerdo (3) algo en desacuerdo
(4) muy en desacuerdo (88) NS (98) NR

ED. ¿Cuál fue el último año de educación que usted completó o aprobó?
_____ Año de _____ (primaria, secundaria, universitaria, superior no universitaria) = _____ años total **[Usar tabla a continuación para el código]**

	1⁰	**2⁰**	**3⁰**	**4⁰**	**5⁰**	**6⁰**
Ninguno	0					
Primaria	1	2	3	4	5	6
Secundaria	7	8	9	10	11	12
Universitaria	13	14	15	16	17	18+
Superior no universitaria	13	14	15	16		
NS	88					
NR	98					

Q2. ¿Cuál es su edad en años cumplidos? _____ años (888 = NS 988 = NR) ☐☐

[Preguntar a las personas entrevistadas de 25 años o menos] [Si la persona entrevistada es mayor de 25 años pasar a Q3C]
Y1. Dentro de cinco años, ¿se ve usted desempeñando algún papel en la política del país, como por ejemplo… **[Leer alternativas, MARCAR SOLO UNA]**
(1) Participando en una asociación civil (ONG), comunitaria o un partido político
(2) Postulándose a algún cargo público en las elecciones
(3) Participando en un movimiento revolucionario
(4) Ninguna de estas
(5) **[NO LEER]** Otra
(88) NS
(98) NR
(99) INAP

[Preguntar a las personas entrevistadas de 25 años o menos] **Y2.** ¿Qué temas o problemas le preocupan con frecuencia? **[NO leer alternativas, MARCAR SOLO UNA] [Si dice "el futuro" preguntar ¿y qué cosas del futuro le preocupan?]** (1) Trabajo, empleo, salarios, ingreso, estabilidad económica o laboral (2) Pasarla bien, fiestas, deportes, club, citas, pareja, formar familia, chicas o chicos (3) Posesiones materiales (ropa y calzado, celulares, ipods, computadoras) (4) Obtener o terminar educación, pagar educación (5) Seguridad, crimen, pandillas (6) Relacionamiento interpersonal (relación con padres, familia, amigos y otros) (7) Salud (8) Medio ambiente (9) Situación del país (10) Nada, no le preocupa nada (11) Otra respuesta (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	
[Preguntar a las personas entrevistadas de 25 años o menos] **Y3.** En su opinión, en términos generales, ¿el país se está encaminando en la dirección correcta o en la dirección equivocada? (1) Correcta (2) Equivocada (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	
[Preguntar a las personas entrevistadas de 25 años o menos] **HAICR1.** Podría decirme ¿cómo se informa usted principalmente sobre la situación del país? **[NO leer alternativas, MARCAR SOLO UNA]** (01) TV (02) Diario (03) Radio (04) Iglesia (05) Centro comunitario (06) Escuela (07) Familiares (08) Compañeros de trabajo o estudio (09) Amigos (10) Vecinos (11) Portales de Internet (excluye diarios) (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	

Q3C. Si usted es de alguna religión, ¿podría decirme cuál es su religión? **[No leer opciones]**

[Si el entrevistado dice que no tiene ninguna religión, sondee más para ubicar si pertenece a la alternativa 4 u 11]

(01) Católico

(02) Protestante, Protestante Tradicional o Protestante no Evangélico (Cristiano, Calvinista; Luterano; Metodista; Presbiteriano; Discípulo de Cristo; Anglicano; Episcopaliano; Iglesia Morava).

(03) Religiones Orientales no Cristianas (Islam; Budista; Hinduista; Taoísta; Confucianismo; Baha'i).

(04) Ninguna (Cree en un Ser Superior pero no pertenece a ninguna religión)

(05) Evangélica y Pentecostal (Evangélico, Pentecostal; Iglesia de Dios; Asambleas de Dios; Iglesia Universal del Reino de Dios; Iglesia Cuadrangular; Iglesia de Cristo; Congregación Cristiana; Menonita; Hermanos de Cristo; Iglesia Cristiana Reformada; Carismático no Católico; Luz del Mundo; Bautista; Iglesia del Nazareno; Ejército de Salvación; Adventista; Adventista del Séptimo Día, Sara Nossa Terra).

(06) Iglesia de los Santos de los Últimos Días (Mormones).

(07) Religiones Tradicionales (Candomblé, Vudú, Rastafari, Religiones Mayas, Umbanda; María Lonza; Inti, Kardecista, Santo Daime, Esotérica).

(10) Judío (Ortodoxo, Conservador o Reformado)

(11) Agnóstico o ateo (no cree en Dios)

(12) Testigos de Jehová.
(88) NS
(98) NR

Q5A. ¿Con qué frecuencia asiste usted a servicios religiosos? **[Leer alternativas]**
(1) Más de una vez por semana (2) Una vez por semana (3) Una vez al mes
(4) Una o dos veces al año (5) Nunca o casi nunca (88) NS (98) NR

Q5B. Por favor, ¿podría decirme, qué tan importante es la religión en su vida? **[Leer alternativas]**
(1) Muy importante (2) Algo importante (3) Poco importante
(4) Nada importante (88) NS (98) NR

[ENTRÉGUELE AL ENTREVISTADO LA TARJETA "F"]
Q10. ¿En cuál de los siguientes rangos se encuentran los ingresos familiares mensuales de este hogar, incluyendo las remesas del exterior y el ingreso de todos los adultos e hijos que trabajan?
[Si no entiende, pregunte: ¿Cuánto dinero entra en total a su casa al mes?]
(00) Ningún ingreso
(01) C$ 1,500 córdobas o menos
(02) Entre C$1,501- C$3,000
(03) C$3,001-C$4,250
(04) C$4,251- C $5,500
(05) C$5,501- C $8,500
(06) C$8,501- C $12,750
(07) C$12,751- C $17,000
(08) C$17,001- C 21,250
(09) C$21,251- C $25,500
(10) C$25,501y más
(88) NS
(98) NR
[RECOGER TARJETA "F"]

Q10A. ¿Usted o alguien que vive en su casa recibe remesas, es decir, ayuda económica del exterior?
(1) Sí **[Siga]** (2) No **[Pase a Q10C]** (88) NS **[Pase a Q10C]** (98) NR **[Pase a Q10C]**

Q10B. [Sólo si recibe remesas] ¿Hasta qué punto dependen los ingresos familiares de esta casa de las remesas del exterior? **[Leer alternativas]**
(1) Mucho (2) Algo (3) Poco (4) Nada (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP

Q10A3. [Sólo si recibe remesas] En los últimos doces meses, ¿la cantidad de dinero que recibe del exterior ha disminuido, aumentado, permanecido igual, o no recibió dinero del exterior en los últimos doce meses? (1) Ha aumentado (2) Se ha mantenido igual (3) Ha disminuido (4) No recibió dinero del exterior en los últimos doce meses (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	
Q10C. [Preguntar a todos] ¿Tiene usted familiares cercanos que antes vivieron en esta casa y que hoy estén residiendo en el exterior? **[Si dijo "Sí", preguntar ¿en dónde?]** **[No leer alternativas]** (1) Sí, en los Estados Unidos solamente **[Siga]** (2) Sí, en los Estados Unidos y en otros países **[Siga]** (3) Sí, en otros países (no en Estados Unidos) **[Siga]** (4) No **[Pase a Q14]** (88) NS **[Pase a Q14]** (98) NR **[Pase a Q14]**	
Q16. [Sólo para los que contestaron Sí en Q10C] ¿Con qué frecuencia se comunica con ellos? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Todos los días (2) Una o dos veces por semana (3) Una o dos veces por mes (4) Rara vez (5) Nunca (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	
Q14. [Preguntar a todos] ¿Tiene usted intenciones de irse a vivir o a trabajar a otro país en los próximos tres años? (1) Sí (2) No (88) NS (98) NR	
Q10D. El salario o sueldo que usted recibe y el total del ingreso de su hogar: **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Les alcanza bien y pueden ahorrar (2) Les alcanza justo sin grandes dificultades (3) No les alcanza y tienen dificultades (4) No les alcanza y tienen grandes dificultades (88) **[No leer]** NS (98) **[No leer]** NR	
Q10E. En los últimos dos años, el ingreso de su hogar: **[Leer opciones]** (1) ¿Aumentó? **[Pase a Q11]** (2) ¿Permaneció igual? **[Pase a Q11]** (3) ¿Disminuyó? **[Pase a Q10F]** (88) NS **[Pase a Q11]** (98) NR **[Pase a Q11]**	

Q10F. ¿Cuál fue la principal razón por la que el ingreso de su hogar disminuyó en los últimos dos años? **[NO LEER ALTERNATIVAS]** (1) Disminuyó la cantidad de horas de trabajo o salario (2) Un miembro de la familia perdió su trabajo (3) Bajaron las ventas/El negocio no anduvo bien (4) El negocio familiar se quebró (5) Las remesas (dinero del exterior) disminuyeron o dejaron de recibirse (6) Un miembro de la familia que recibía ingreso se enfermó, murió o se fue del hogar (7) Desastre natural/ pérdida de cultivo (9) Todo está más caro, el ingreso alcanza menos (8) Otra razón (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP ("Aumentó", "Permaneció igual" o NS/NR en Q10E)	

Q11. ¿Cuál es su estado civil? **[No leer alternativas]** (1) Soltero (2) Casado (3) Unión libre (acompañado) (4) Divorciado (5) Separado (6) Viudo (88) NS (98) NR	
Q12. ¿Tiene hijos(as)? ¿Cuántos? _____ **(00= ninguno → Pase a ETID)** (88) NS (98) NR	
Q12A. [Si tiene hijos] ¿Cuántos hijos viven en su hogar en este momento? _____ **00 = ninguno,** (88) NS (98) NR **(99) INAP (no tiene hijos)**	

ETID. ¿Usted se considera una persona blanca, mestiza, indígena, negra, mulata u otra? **[Si la persona entrevistada dice Afro-nicaragüense, codificar como (4) Negra]** (1) Blanca (2) Mestiza (3) Indígena (4) Negra (5) Mulata (7) Otra (88) NS (98) NR	
NICETIDA. Considera que su madre es o era una persona blanca, mestiza, indígena, negra o mulata? (1) Blanca (2) Mestiza (3) Indígena (4) Negra o Afro-nicaragüense (5) Mulata (7) Otra (88) NS (98) NR	
LENG1. ¿Cuál es su lengua materna, o el primer idioma que habló de pequeño en su casa?**[No leer alternativas] [acepte una alternativa, no más]** (501) Castellano (502) Inglés (503) Mískito (506) Sumo o Mayangna (Twahka, Panamahka o Ulwa) (507) Rama (508) Garífuna (504) Otro (nativo) (505) Otro extranjero (88) NS (98) NR	

WWW1. Hablando de otras cosas, ¿qué tan frecuentemente usa usted el Internet? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Diariamente (2) Algunas veces a la semana (3) Algunas veces al mes (4) Rara vez (5) Nunca (88) NS **[No leer]** (98) NR **[No leer]**	

Por propósitos estadísticos, ahora queremos saber cuánta información sobre política y el país tiene la gente… **GI0.** ¿Con qué frecuencia sigue las noticias, ya sea en la televisión, la radio, los periódicos, o el Internet? **[Leer opciones]:** (1) Diariamente (2) Algunas veces a la semana (3) Algunas veces al mes (4) Rara vez (5) Nunca (88) NS (98) NR	
GI1. ¿Cómo se llama el actual presidente de los Estados Unidos? **[NO LEER**: Barack Obama, aceptar Obama**]** (1) Correcto (2) Incorrecto (88) No sabe (98) No responde	
GI3. ¿Cuántos departamentos tiene Nicaragua? **[NO LEER**: 15 ó 17, **ACEPTAR CON O SIN COMARCAS]** (1) Correcto (2) Incorrecto (88) No sabe (98) No Responde	
GI4. ¿Cuánto tiempo dura el período presidencial en Nicaragua? **[NO LEER**: 5 años**]** (1) Correcto (2) Incorrecto (88) No sabe (98) No Responde	

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

R1. Televisor	(0) No			(1) Sí	
R3. Refrigeradora (nevera)	(0) No			(1) Sí	
R4. Teléfono convencional /fijo (no celular)	(0) No			(1) Sí	
R4A. Teléfono celular	(0) No			(1) Sí	
R5. Vehículo. ¿Cuántos?	(0) No	(1) Uno	(2) Dos	(3) Tres o más	

R6. Lavadora de ropa	(0) No	(1) Sí	
R7. Microondas	(0) No	(1) Sí	
R8. Motocicleta	(0) No	(1) Sí	
R12. Agua potable dentro de la casa	(0) No	(1) Sí	
R14. Cuarto de baño dentro de la casa	(0) No	(1) Sí	
R15. Computadora	(0) No	(1) Sí	
R16. Televisor de pantalla plana	(0) No	(1) Sí	
R18. Servicio de internet	(0) No	(1) Sí	

OCUP4A. ¿A qué se dedica usted principalmente? ¿Está usted actualmente: **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Trabajando? **[Siga]** (2) No está trabajando en este momento pero tiene trabajo? **[Siga]** (3) Está buscando trabajo activamente? **[Pase a OCUP1B1]** (4) Es estudiante? **[Pase a OCUP1B1]** (5) Se dedica a los quehaceres de su hogar? **[Pase a OCUP1B1]** (6) Está jubilado, pensionado o incapacitado permanentemente para trabajar? **[Pase a OCUP1B1]** (7) No trabaja y no está buscando trabajo? **[Pase a OCUP1B1]** (88) NS **[Pase a OCUP1B1]** (98) NR **[Pase a OCUP1B1]**	

OCUP1A. En su ocupación principal usted es: **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Asalariado del gobierno o empresa estatal? (2) Asalariado en el sector privado? (3) Patrono o socio de empresa? (4) Trabajador por cuenta propia? (5) Trabajador no remunerado o sin pago? (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	

OCUP1B1. ¿Ha perdido usted su trabajo en los últimos dos años? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Sí, usted perdió su trabajo pero ha encontrado uno nuevo. (2) Sí, usted perdió su trabajo y no ha encontrado uno nuevo. (3) No, no perdió su trabajo (4) Por decisión propia o incapacidad no ha tenido trabajo (88) NS (98) NR	
OCUP1B2. ¿Además de usted, alguien que vive en este hogar ha perdido su trabajo en los últimos dos años? (1) Sí (2) No (88) NS (98)NR	

PEN1. ¿Se encuentra usted afiliado a un sistema de pensiones, como por ejemplo el INSS o algún fondo privado? (1) Sí **[Siga]** (2) No **[Pase a SAL1]** (88) NS **[Pase a SAL1]** (98) NR **[Pase a SAL1]**	
PEN3. ¿A qué sistema de pensiones está usted afiliado? **[Leer alternativas]** (1) Fondo de retiro privado (cuentas individuales o AFP - Administradora de Fondo de Pensiones-) (2) Instituto Nicaragüense de Seguridad Social (Sistema público) (3) Instituto de Previsión Social Militar (pensiones para militares) (4) Instituto de Seguridad Social y Desarrollo Humano (pensiones para policía y bomberos) (7) Otro (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	

PEN4. ¿En los últimos 12 meses, usted cotizó a su fondo de pensión? **[Leer alternativas]:** (1) Todos los meses (2) Por lo menos una o dos veces al año, o (3) No cotizó (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP	

[Preguntar a todos]

SAL1. Tiene usted un seguro médico? (1) Sí **[Siga]** (2) No **[Finalizar]** (88) NS **[Finalizar]** (98) NR **[Finalizar]**	
SAL2. Es su plan de seguro médico… **[Leer opciones]** (1) Del gobierno, parte del seguro social (2) De otro plan del Estado (3) Es un plan privado **[No leer]:** (4) Tiene ambos, del gobierno y un plan privado (88) NS (98) NR (99) INAP (no tiene seguro médico)	
SAL4. ¿En su plan de seguro médico, es usted el titular o es beneficiario? (1) Titular (2) Beneficiario (88) NS (98) NR (99) Inap	

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

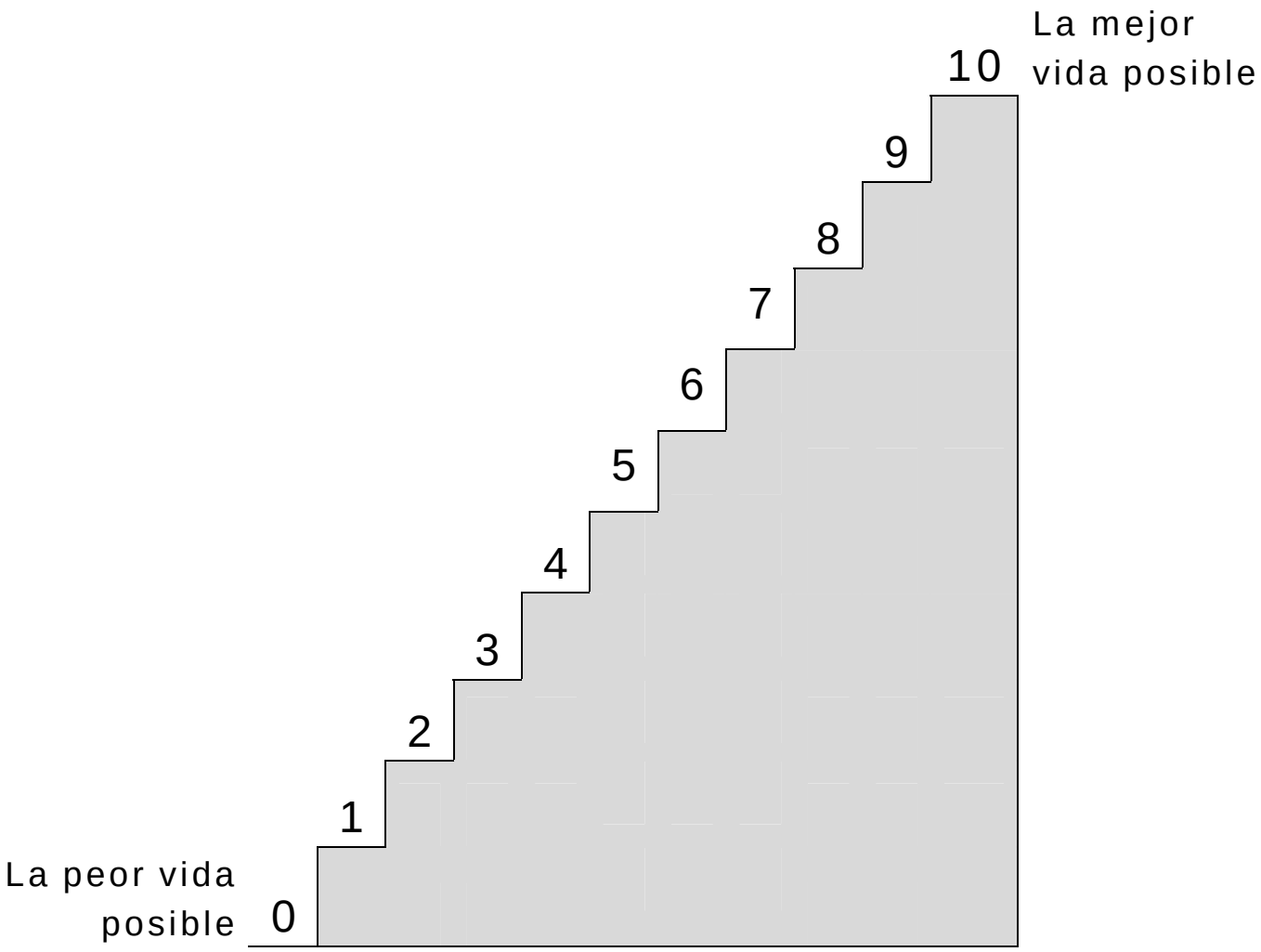
COLORR. [Una vez salga de la entrevista, SIN PREGUNTAR, por favor use la Paleta de Colores, e indique el número que más se acerca al color de piel de la cara del entrevistado] ____ (97) No se pudo clasificar **[Marcar (97) *únicamente,* si por alguna razón, no se pudo ver la cara de la persona entrevistada]**	|__|__|
Hora en la cual terminó la entrevista _____ : _____ **TI.** Duración de la entrevista ***[minutos, ver página # 1]*** _____	☐☐☐☐
INTID. Número de identificación del entrevistador: _____	|__|__|__|__|
SEXI. Anotar el sexo suyo: (1) Hombre (2) Mujer	
COLORI. Usando la Paleta de Colores, anote el color de piel suyo_____	|__|__|

Yo juro que esta entrevista fue llevada a cabo con la persona indicada.
*Firma del entrevistador*_____ *Fecha* ____ /_____ /_____

Firma del supervisor de campo _____
Comentarios: _____
_____
[No usar para PDA] Firma de la persona que digitó los datos _____
[No usar para PDA] Firma de la persona que verificó los datos _____

Tarjeta "A"

¿En qué escalón [grada] de la escalera se siente usted en estos momentos?

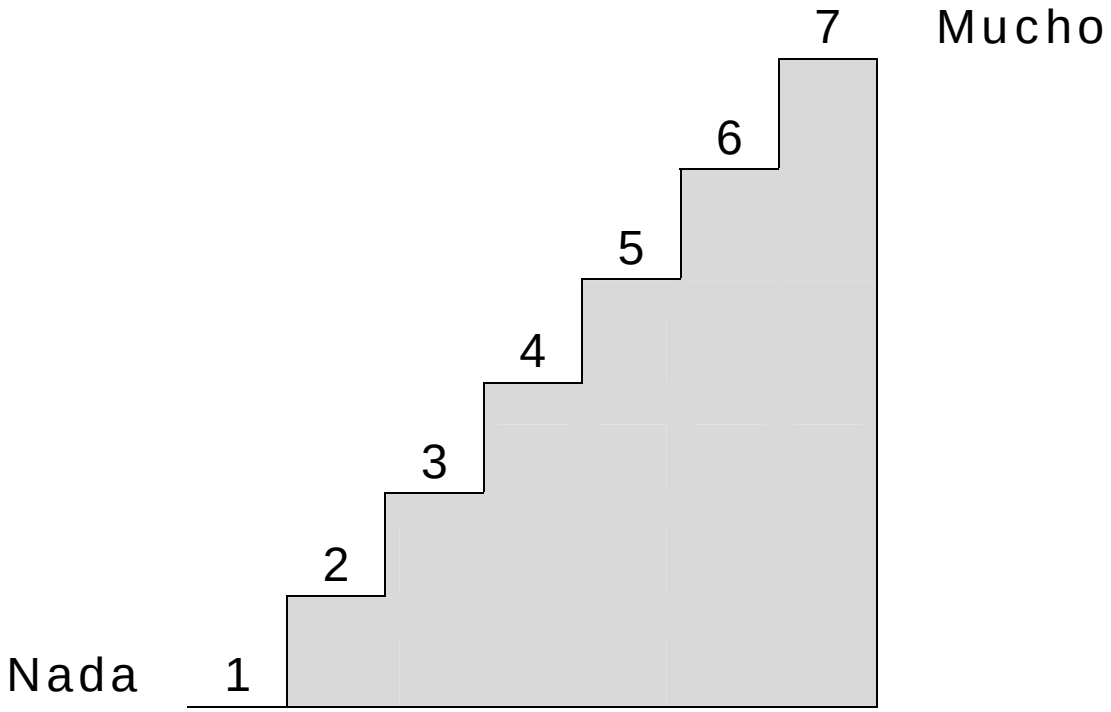


Tarjeta "B"

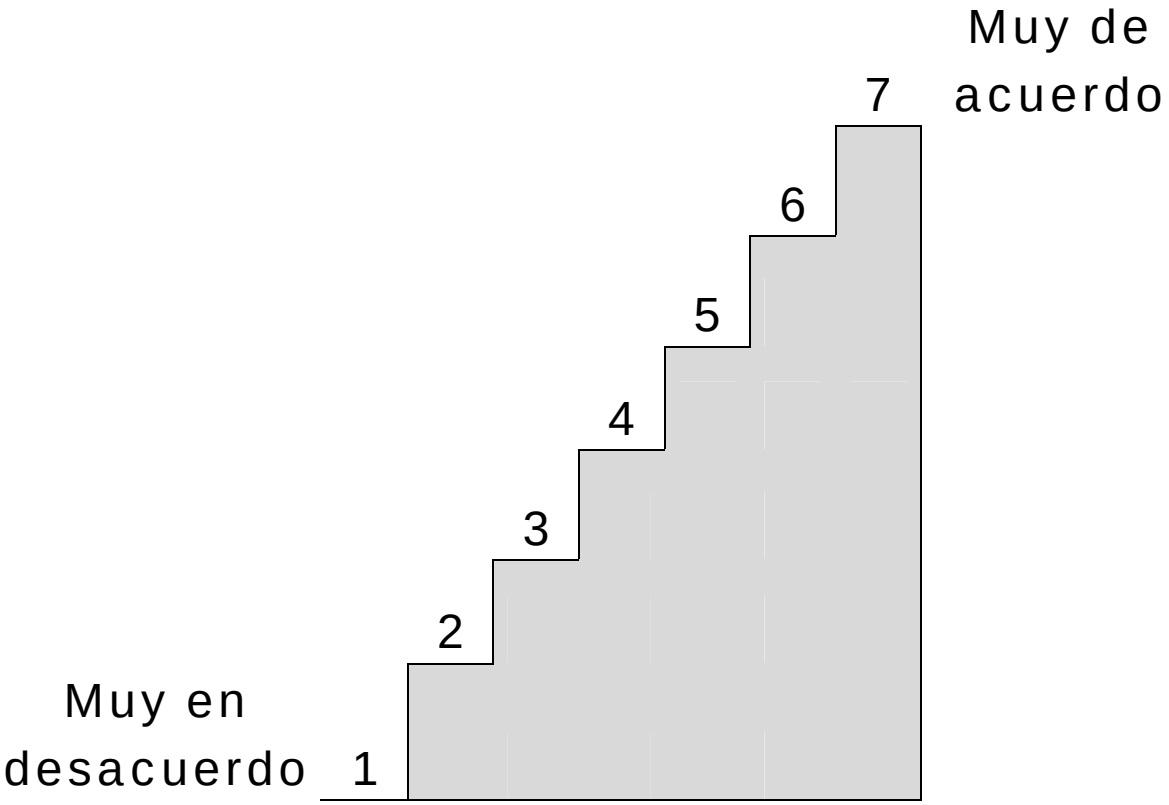
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Izquierda **Derecha**

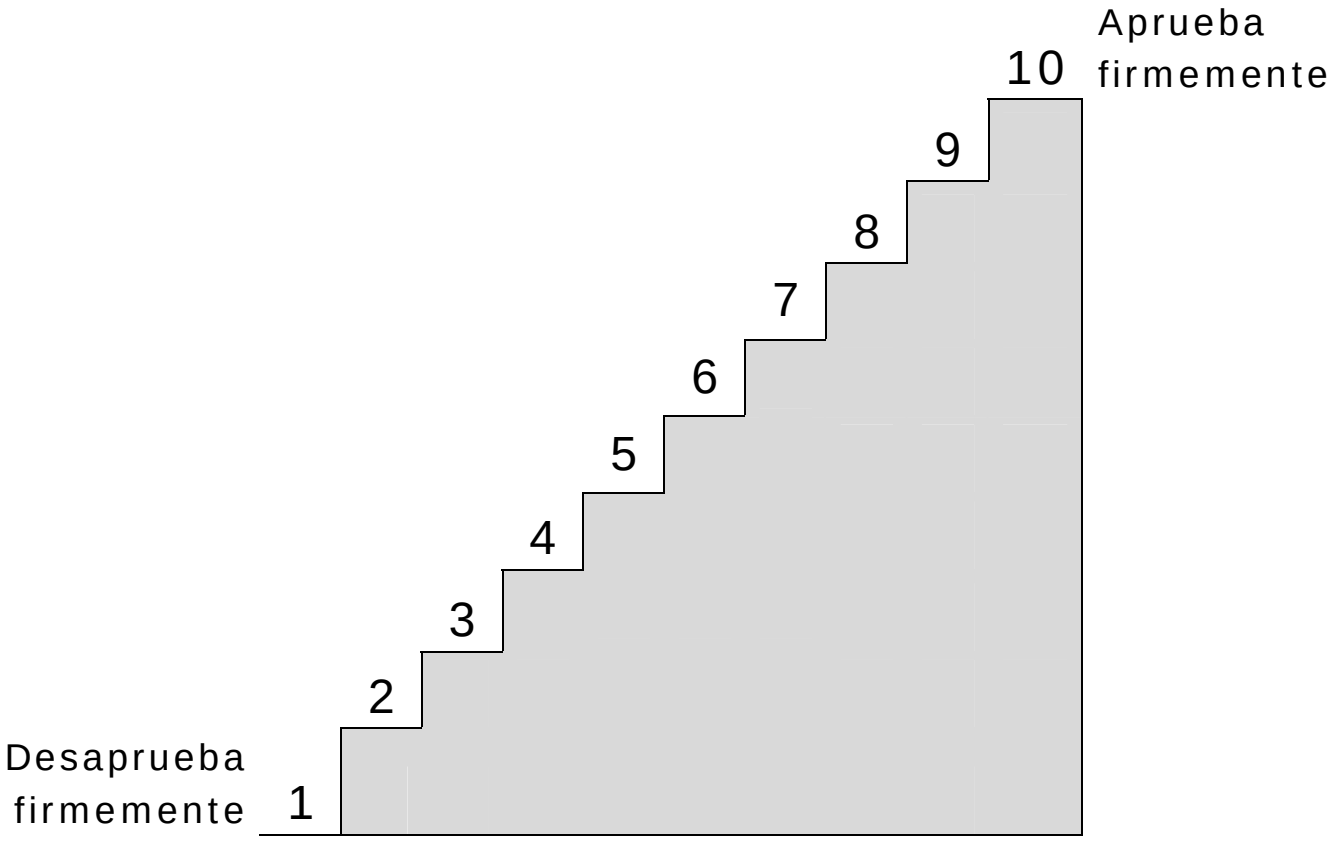
Tarjeta "C"



Tarjeta "D"



Tarjeta "E"



Tarjeta "F"

(00) Ningún ingreso
(01) C$ 1,500 córdobas o menos
(02) Entre C$1,501- C$3,000
(03) C$3,001-C$4,250
(04) C$4,251- C $5,500
(05) C$5,501- C $8,500
(06) C$8,501- C $12,750
(07) C$12,751- C $17,000
(08) C$17,001- C 21,250
(09) C$21,251- C $25,500
(10) C$25,501y más