Liberalism and Conservatism in Chile: Attitudes and Opinions of Chilean Women at the Start of the Twenty-First Century*

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Abstract. Based on a national survey of women and the creation of a 'conservatism-liberalism index', this study shows that conservatism in Chile has deep religious roots and continues to be the most significant symbolic reference point in women's lives. The study concludes also that the female population is drawn more towards a 'liberal' vision, but liberal attitudes are not able to provide an alternative symbolic reference point to conservatism. This is because liberalism seems to be the result of popular exposure to the requirements of modern life rather than a discourse or ideology. For this reason, the opinions and attitudes of women are highly contradictory and heterogeneous and do not find their form, for the most part, in a clearly liberal discourse or in one which is wholly conservative. We are thus dealing with a kind of 'liberalism through exposure', the limits of which are to be found in the conservative ideology which underlies the liberal opinions expressed and is clearly visible in the proportion of the population which is highly educated and deeply religious.

I. Presentation

The stagnation of the secularisation process in Chile,[1] the widespread prevalence of traditional heterosexual gender roles and definitions corresponding to a patriarchal social order, and the conflict generated by this social order with regard to women taking on roles which were not previously considered to be for women make it possible to state unequivocally that Chilean society is conservative in nature.[2] This view is further supported by

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[1] Only 5.1 per cent of the women and 13.4 per cent of men surveyed stated that they did not consider themselves as belonging to any religious group. This figure shows the stagnation of the secularisation process in Chile, which can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it can be said that it reflects the continued influence of the Catholic Church in Chilean society. On the other, this stagnation could be seen as reflecting a rise in Pentecostalism in Chile.

[2] 41.7 per cent of women surveyed responded that 'is good for the woman but not for her family', or that if a woman works 'it is not good either for the woman or for her family'.

the difficulty encountered in modernising legislation on reproductive rights and divorce.[3]

However, the increased number of women in the labour market,[4] the drop in the marriage rate, the increase in annulments,[5] the high incidence of abortion,[6] the number of unmarried couples living together,[7] even the recent appearance in public of homosexual organisations in the streets of Santiago, would all seem to indicate that Chilean society is more 'liberal' than some would like it to appear.

Through the analysis of the data obtained from a national survey on women, the aim of this study is to show the inherent complexity of this topic. Using contemporary feminist literature and the most significant gender studies carried out in the country, we drew up a questionnaire intended to elicit information on seven key areas in the life of Chilean women.[8] These

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[3] In Chile, as yet, there is no Divorce Law and even abortion for health reasons is illegal.

[4] Women's share of the labour market increased from 24.1 per cent in 1990 to 35 per cent in 2000. Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas/Servicio Nacional de la Mujer, *Mujeres chilenas. Estadísticas para el nuevo siglo* (Santiago, 2001). The percentage of women in the economically active population rose from 22 per cent to 32 per cent between 1960 and 2000. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) *Human Development in Chile, 2002, We the Chileans: A Cultural Challenge* (Santiago, 2002) p. 219 (in the Spanish version).

[5] Several studies and statistics reveal an increase in the number of separations and marriage annulments in Chile. According to the survey carried out by the Comisión Nacional De La Familia in 1993, 15.3 per cent of legally married couples were separated or divorced. Another study carried out in 1995 put the figure at 22.6 per cent. These figures contrast strongly with 3.7 per cent and 4.7 per cent from the censuses carried out in 1952 and 1960 by the Instituto Nacional de Estadisticas – H. Montenegro, *Separación matrimonial y conflicto conyugal. Sus efectos en los hijos* (Santiago, 2002), p. 13. According to INE figures, the marriage rate dropped from 7.6 per cent in 1980 to 4.2 per cent in 2000 (per 1000 inhabitants) whilst annulments went up from 3.8 per cent in 1992 to 10.8 per cent in 2001. Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 'Matrimonio en Chile', *Enfoques Estadísticos*, No. 6 (July 2000). Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 'Fecundidad Juvenil en Chile', *Enfoques Estadísticos*, No. 9 (October 2000).

[6] It is estimated that 159,650 abortions are carried out each year, which means that one out of every three pregnancies ends in an abortion. Grupo Iniciativa Mujeres, *El nuevo contrato social* (Santiago, 2002).

[7] *Ibid.* Unregistered cohabitation rose from 3.4 per cent in 1982 to 5.7 per cent in 1992.

[8] Amongst others, it is worth mentioning: M. Anderson, *Aproximaciones a la historia de la familia occidental (1500–1914)* (Madrid, 1988); P. Ariès, *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris, 1973); M. Barret and M. McIntoch, *Familias vs. sociedad* (Bogotá, 1991); P. Bourdieu, *Raisons pratiques. Annexe. L'esprit de famille* (Paris, 1994); P. Bourdieu *La dominación masculina* (Barcelona, 2000); R. Castel, *Las metamorfosis de la Cuestión social. Una crónica del salariado* (Buenos Aires, 1997); R. Castel, *Propriété privée, propriété sociale, propriété de soi* (Paris, 2001); C. Castelain-Meunier, *La place de hommes et les métamorphoses de la famille* (Paris, 2002); J. Commaille and C. Martin, *Les enjeux politiques de la famille* (Paris, 1998); CNF/SERNAM, *Informe Comisión Nacional de la Familia* (Santiago, 1994); Corporación 2000, *Los valores del trabajo y la familia en Chile. Aproximación histórico-cultural y análisis de discursos* (Santiago, 1998), unpublished; P. Covarrubias et al., *En búsqueda de la familia chilena* (Santiago, 1986); Riet Delsing, 'La familia: el poder del discurso' in *Revista Proposiciones*, No. 26, Aproximaciones a la familia (Santiago, 1995); François de Singly, 'Charges et charmes de la vie privée,' in *Masculin-Féminin. Questions pour les sciences de l'homme* (Paris, 2001); J. Donzelot, *La policía de las familias* (Valencia, 1998); L. Dumont, *Essais sur*

areas – personal development and self-fulfilment, awareness of discrimination at work, sexuality, violence, divorce, abortion, participation in public life – enabled us to draw up a 'conservatism-liberalism index' which clearly illustrates the positions adopted by Chilean women on gender and sexuality issues.

We define *conservative* opinions or attitudes as those which set traditional social norms (such as adherence to religious norms and traditional gender roles) above people's freedom to solve primarily personal conflicts of values and/or interests in line with the dictates of their own conscience.[9] By a *liberal* opinion or attitude, we understand an approach which sets the autonomy of the individual[10] above (and even against) adherence to traditional collective norms in primarily personal matters.[11] From a practical point of view, this means that we can only measure conservatism against liberalism. The

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l'individualisme (Paris, 1983); Norbert Elias,'El cambiante equilibrio de poder entre los sexos. Un estudio sociológico procesual: el ejemplo del antiguo estado romano,' in Norbert Elias (ed.), *La civilización de los padres y otros ensayos* (Santa Fé de Bogotá, 1998). Norbert Elias, 'La civilización de los padres,' in *La civilización de los padres y otros ensayos*; Michèle Ferrand, 'Du droit des pères aux pouvoirs des mères,' in *Masculin-Féminin*; M. Garretón, *La sociedad en que vivi (rè)mos. Introducción sociológica al cambio de siglo* (Santiago, 2000); A. Giddens *La transformación de la intimidad. Sexualidad, amor y erotismo en las sociedades modernas* (Madrid, 1992); V. Guzman et al., *Trayectorias laborales de mujeres* (Santiago, nd); J. Olavarría and R. Parrini (eds.), *Masculinidad/des. Identidad, sexualidad y familia* (Santiago, 2000); A. Mattelart and M. Perrot. *La mujer chilena en una nueva sociedad. Un estudio exploratorio acerca de la situación e imagen de la mujer en Chile* (Santiago, 1968); S. Montecino and M. E. Acuña (eds.), *Diálogos sobre el género masculino en Chile* (Santiago, 1996); P. Morandé, *Persona, matrimonio y familia* (Santiago, 1994); R. Sennet, *Le travail sans qualités. Les conséquences humaines de la flexibilité* (Paris, 2000); E. Shorter, *La naissance de la famille moderne* (Paris, 1975); E. Sullerot, *La crise de la famille* (Paris, 2000); A. Touraine and F. Khosrokhavar, *La recherche de soi. Dialogue sur le sujet* (Paris, 2000); A. Touraine, *Pourrons nous vivre ensemble? Egaux et différents* (Paris, 1997); UNICEF, 'Boletín Informativo para Centros de Padres', in *Contactos*, No. 1, (Santiago, August 2001); X. Valdés and K. Araujo, *Vida privada, modernización y modernidad* (Santiago, 1999); Ximena Valdés, *El marco de las transformaciones en la familia y la vida privada. Informe de avance*, Proyecto FONDECYT No. 1000018, unpublished. This bibliography does not include the books articles and other publications quoted in other parts of this document.

9 One assumption of conservatism is the legitimate right to impose matters on people who oppose them. The liberal response is more specific and demanding in this respect. Locke would say that *the only legitimate coercion is one which ensures freedom*. The key aspect of this second point of view is the priority given to freedom. On this point see Antonio Bascuñán, 'Por qué es preferible ser liberal que Católico,' *Estudios Públicos*, No. 93 (summer 2004).

10 The idea of personal autonomy expresses a political metaphor since it refers to the ability to 'govern oneself'. Robert Russell examines the different possible meanings of this concept in R. Russell, *From Antagonistic Autonomy to Relational Autonomy: A Theoretical Reflection from the Southern Cone* (Coral Gables, 2003).

11 Other characteristics of a liberal attitude are also included in this definition, such as: *[Liberals] would never talk of paradise. They let everyone imagine their own version of it, pursue it and if possible attain it* – Pablo Ruiz-Tagle, 'La contradicción del liberalismo católico en Chile', *Estudios Públicos*, No. 93 (summer 2004). '*The soul of a liberal shudders at the idea of **complete salvation**, at any idea of reducing the Whole to the One*', Ernesto Rodríguez, 'Porque soy católico y liberal y me resisto a sus consecuencias,' *Estudios Públicos*, No. 93 (summer 2004). Given these definitions, we can

indicators from one type of opinion and attitude or the other can only be observed, therefore, in those areas where there is explicit confrontation between these two guiding principles.

II. *Areas of analysis and general distribution*

1. *Personal development and self-fulfilment*

Traditionally, women have been seen as having a role of reproduction and caring for the family; they are expected to be mothers.[12] In other words, women are seen as belonging to the 'purely private' sphere of life. Their increased participation in economic activity in society and the appreciation of their activity (when it is not solely for economic ends) has led to a change in this traditional definition, and therefore a shift towards attitudes referred to as 'more liberal'.[13] The aim of the questions in this area was to find out what women see as important for their personal development and self-fulfilment: work, family or a combination of both. This first section enables a distinction to be drawn between four differing views: those who consider that women do not have the right to work (if housework is not included as work); those who feel that having a professional life does not affect women's development; those who, whilst valuing a professional life, see in it a contradiction with their role as mother/wife; and those who see only positive aspects arising from greater female participation in the labour market.

The answers to the questions in this first section show two interesting aspects worth highlighting. First, the answers are heterogeneous, with a wide variety of views on this issue. Secondly, there is clear evidence of conflict between the spheres of work and the family; there is widespread acceptance of women's right to work but not of the value of women actually working.

If we take the question of the 'right of women to work' in isolation, it is easy to reach the hasty conclusion that women have a liberal attitude when it comes to work. 81.3 per cent agreed that women have the right to work if they so wish, compared to only 18.5 per cent who agreed

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understand liberalism very broadly as the liberation of all forms of knowledge and activity from a constraining, regulatory authority which is opposed to autonomy.

[12] See: A. Binimeliz and M. Blazquez, 'Análisis de roles y estereotipos sexuales en los textos escolares chilenos,' in *Documento de trabajo SERNAM*, No. 8 (Santiago, 1992).; J. Goody, *La familia europea* (Barcelona, 2001).

[13] See Daniela Sharim and Enrique Espinoza, 'Responsabilidades familiares compartidas. Sistematización y análisis', in *Documentos de Trabajo SERNAM*, No. 41, 1995; Daniela Sharim and Uca Silva, 'Familia y reparto de responsabilidades,' in *Documento de Trabajo SERNAM*, No. 58, 1998.

with this right, provided that 'certain other duties are fulfilled'. This was further broken down into conditions like: 'household tasks have to be done' – 14 per cent gave a high priority to this condition; 'their husbands should not be neglected' – 12 per cent gave a high priority to this condition; and 'the children should be properly cared for' was of a high priority for 17.3 per cent.

However, taking the other questions into account shows that, while most of the respondents consider that women have the right to work, they do not necessarily attach great importance to it. For example, when asked which of the two led a fuller life – a working woman or one who does not work – 56.8 per cent responded 'the one who works', 23.4 per cent 'the one who does not work' while 18.7 per cent felt that 'it doesn't make any difference'.[14] The clash between work and the family is clear, too. When asked about the advantages of women working, only 52.2 per cent responded that 'it is good for the woman and for her family', whilst 31.1 per cent felt that 'it is good for the woman but not for her family', and 10.6 per cent that 'it is not good for the woman or for her family'.[15]

[14] Full integration into society through work and equal rights is an objective which is strongly desired by women. They see it as providing more than just income. They also see the possibility of asserting their individuality and promoting their personal development. This can be seen from the significance attributed to work by men and women. UNPD, Report on Human Development in Chile p. 215 (in the Spanish version). Among men, 61 per cent see work as a means of obtaining economic resources, 25 per cent as a means of personal development, 12 per cent as something enabling an individual to be part of the group and 2 per cent said they did not know or did not respond. For women, the respective percentages were 51 per cent, 38 per cent, 8 per cent and 3 per cent. So women, in comparison to men, tend to see work less as a way of obtaining economic resources and more as a means of personal development. *Ibid.*, pp. 214–21 (in the Spanish version). On this point, the same report also states, 'From the perspective of desire for individuality and equality, people attach enormous importance to changes in gender relations. From the point of view the opportunities and problems encountered in achieving these desires, though, these changes are a significant source of tension.' *Ibid.*, p. 214 (in the Spanish version).

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 216, 'There is tension between the requirements of traditional domestic roles, which continue to be valid and the new demands of work' (in the Spanish version). This results in an overlapping of domestic and professional activities which has been rightly named the double day's work [*doble jornada de trabajo*]. For woman who are heads of their household this situation is becoming critical and is worsened when the conflicts which women face not just in their family circle but also those outside it – in their working environment – are taken into account. (See the following point in this article: 'Igualdad o discriminación laboral'). See also Victoria Nieto, 'Habla la gente. Trabajo y familia: una relación compleja,' in *Documentos de Trabajo SERNAM*, No. 68, 1999; SUR Profesionales Consultores, 'Análisis de experiencias en empresa sobre compatibilización de vida laboral y familiar,' in *Documentos de Trabajo SERNAM*, No. 67, 1999.

Analysis of the distribution by socio-economic group[16] and age[17] shows that both young women and those from the higher social groups have a more liberal attitude compared to women aged 45 and over and women from lower socio-economic groups. Both the highest age group and the lowest socio-economic group are above the average percentage for those who think that 'women only have a right to work if certain other duties are fulfilled', with percentages of 23.9 and 24.9 respectively.

Although it also turned out that the 'higher' group most strongly considers that it is good for women to work, that is also the group which sees the most difficulties in reconciling professional and family life, which, in the end, reduces the importance or value attached to work outside the home. In other words, despite having the most positive liberal view on women in the labour market – in which their work is valued in its own right and not just because of necessity – the higher group continues to adhere to traditional notions on women's household tasks: 37 per cent (compared to 31 per cent of the 'middle' group and 27 per cent of the 'lower' group) consider that it 'is good for the woman but not for her family'. This is further corroborated by two other results: 29.7 per cent think that working 'doesn't make any difference to a woman's self-fulfilment', and 31.5 per cent stated that if they could choose they 'wouldn't work outside the home'.

It was found that the lower social groups feel least positive about women being able to work; they therefore see the least 'contradiction' between enjoying a professional life and a family life. These groups simply have a tendency – comparatively speaking – to attach little value to the participation of women in the labour market: 13.9 per cent (compared to 5.4 per cent of the higher groups and 10.4 per cent of the middle group) consider that 'working is not good for the woman or for her family'. The relationship which the lower groups have with the labour market could be said to be based more on 'necessity' than on freedom and options: 'working is bad for the woman but good for her family' (13.9 per cent against 5.4 per cent of the higher group). Women from the lower socio-economic group adhere more

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[16] In defining the different groups the Esomar model, used by ADIMARK, for determining socio-economic level was used. It considers two key variables: 'the level of education of the head of the household' and 'having a series of goods' (a selection of 10 goods was chosen: shower, colour TV, fridge, washing machine, water heater, microwave, car (saloon, truck, jeep, van), cable or satellite TV, PC and internet). These variables are conceptually related to income, cultural capital and accumulated wealth and therefore coincide with the traditional definition of socio-economic standing. Both of the above variables are combined in a socio-economic classification matrix which determines corresponding levels and classifies them in six groups: A = Very high, B = High, Ca = Mid-High, Cb = Middle, D = Middle-Low, and E = Low. More information can be obtained from www.adimark.cl. See ADIMARK, *Manual de aplicación del nivel socio-económico ESOMAR* (Chile, October 2000).

[17] The ages were split into three groups: 20 to 34, 35 to 44, and 45 and over.

to a 'unilateral' view of women's role in society than those from the higher group: in relative terms it is the group which most often responded 'women only have a right to work if certain other duties are fulfilled'. In the same way, it is the lower group which, in relative terms, expressed agreement most often with the extreme statement: 'women who don't work feel the most fulfilled as women' (15 per cent compared to 8 per cent in the higher and middle groups).

Consideration of age differences shows that the younger section of the population attaches the highest value to integration in the labour market and is the group which perceives the lowest levels of contradiction between professional and family life (65.7 per cent believe that it is good for a woman and for her family if she works, compared to 45.6 per cent in the group of women 45 and over).

2. Equality or workplace discrimination

The integration of women into the labour market, however, does not take place under equal conditions.[18] In one area traditional gender roles, in which mainly women carry out 'female' activities, continue to exist, with women working as teachers, nurses, secretaries, sales staff, cleaners, etc. In another, women find it very difficult to obtain management positions.[19] The series of questions on this topic probe the degree of gender awareness shown by women about labour market discrimination. They test their perception of the opportunities and difficulties encountered by women in the labour market compared to those encountered by men.

When questioned on the difficulties women face in finding work, 51.8 per cent said that women 'face more difficulties than men', 22.3 per cent said they face 'as many difficulties' and 26 per cent felt that women face fewer difficulties than men when looking for a job.

Analysis by socio-economic group shows that the higher socio-economic groups are generally more aware of the difficulties faced by women in the labour market: 66 per cent (compared to 52 per cent of the middle group and 42 per cent of the lower groups) consider that 'women face more difficulties than men when looking for work'. This answer is obvious enough, given that the women from the higher group have had more education and many of them have managed to obtain jobs in areas previously considered to be exclusively for men. As a result, they frequently come up against the 'glass ceiling' – an invisible barrier which prevents them from getting managerial

[18] L. Tilly and J. Scott, *Les femmes, le travail et la famille* (Paris, 1987).
[19] See: Grupo Iniciativa Mujeres, *El nuevo contrato social: balance de una década de democracia en Chile* (Santiago, 2000); M. Muñoz, *Fuerza de trabajo femenina: evolución y tendencias* (Santiago, 1988).

positions. Women from the middle and lower groups tend towards traditional gender roles and therefore do not necessarily feel discriminated against because these sectors of the job market are 'clearly female'. [20]

3. Sexuality

Traditional gender definitions tend to deny women their right to sexuality.[21] The standard cultural references of the 'Virgin Mary' (the pure and chaste mother figure) on the one hand, and 'Eve' (who committed the sin which led to the world's suffering) on the other, have obviously had an influence on women's possibilities of developing and enjoying their sexuality. Women are categorised as either virgins or prostitutes. In traditional societies, women's sexuality has been exclusively linked to reproduction or to satisfying men. The aim of this series of questions was to find out about the view women have on different areas of their sex life. Like the previous questions, these make it possible to distinguish between a more conservative attitude and a more liberal one. Women who are opposed to any form of birth control and see sex only as part of marriage and relatively unimportant in a relationship can be considered conservative. They believe that the rights of men and women differ when it comes to exercising their sexuality. Those who believe it is important to teach children about contraception, who do not feel that sex should mainly or solely take place within marriage, who feel that the sex life of a couple is very important, and who think that men and women should have the same rights in their sex life have a more liberal attitude.

In this series of questions we see once again the heterogeneous, complex nature of the responses.

The answers given about using contraceptives are more liberal than those about when the sex life of men and women should begin. A scale of one to ten was used in which one represents complete disagreement, and ten complete agreement on the need to provide more information on preventing pregnancy. All the social and age groups scored an average of nine for this question. There is also a degree of liberalism in the responses to the

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[20] An example of this can be found in women working in the agriculture for export market in the north of Chile. Anna Bee carried out a full study on the changes in production in this sector and the slower changes in gender issues. The traditional structures tend to persist in a modern context. See Anna Bee, 'Globalization, Grapes and Gender: Women's Work in Traditional and Agro-export Production in Northern Chile,' *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 166, no. 3, 2000.

[21] See D. Méda, *Le temps des femmes. Pour un nouveau partage des rôles* (Paris, 2001); L. Stone, *Familia, sexo y matrimonio en Inglaterra. 1500–1800* (Mexico, 1990); M. Muñoz and C. Reyes, *Una mirada al interior de la familia. ¿Qué piensan los hombres y las mujeres en Chile? ¿Cómo viven en pareja? ¿Qué sienten los hijos?* (Santiago, 1997).

statement 'no steps should be taken to prevent pregnancy'. Only 21.2 per cent of those questioned were willing to accept the prevalence of this rule over the right to take a personal decision, compared to 77.1 per cent who said they disagreed with the statement. Similarly, 93.4 per cent agreed with the statement that 'everyone has the right to use contraceptives to prevent pregnancy, either in marriage or outside it'. Moreover, the responses to the statement 'all women have the right to sterilisation when they feel it is necessary' show a strong liberal tendency since they demonstrate prevalence over the partner's opinion (whether the partner is formally recognised or not). 83.2 per cent expressed agreement with the statement, compared to only 13.2 per cent who disagreed.

When asked, 'in your opinion, what is the best time for a woman's sex life to begin?' the respondents showed a greater degree of conservatism. 25.2 per cent responded 'when she wants to', compared to 41.8 per cent who imposed a clear social restriction in answering 'when she gets married'. A significant proportion put forward other social restrictions – 28.3 per cent answered 'when she's in a serious relationship'. However, the question 'in your opinion, what is the best time for a man's sex life to begin?' received a more liberal response. 45 per cent responded 'when he wants to' and 25.6 per cent 'when he gets married'. In this case, the figure was lower than the 'serious relationship' answer, which 28.3 per cent opted for. The differences in the criteria applied in each case should nevertheless be taken as showing conservatism since lower levels of permissiveness for one of the sexes demonstrates a restriction on the individual freedom of that sex. In other words, in this instance people are inclined to favour the regulation of freedom through a social rule (whatever the basis for it might be).[22]

When asked about the different factors affecting a couple's happiness, only 3.8 per cent of those asked responded that the 'woman's sexual satisfaction is the most important aspect'. The highest number of responses was for 'the independence of both partners' (20.6 per cent) and 'respect for the woman' (38.7 per cent).

If we look at things in terms of socio-economic group and age, we see that poorer and younger women agree most with the need to make contraceptive methods available to both sexes. Yet, when asked about the best moment to begin sexual activity, the lower group chose the answer 'when she gets married' in the highest proportion (50.2 per cent), whilst the higher group accepted the 'serious relationship' as a necessary condition (37.8 per cent). In

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[22] Conservatism does not mean not being aware of the drop, especially over the last three decades, in the age at which sexual activity begins. The *Estudio Nacional de Comportamiento Sexual* carried out in 2000 acknowledges this situation and finds that most Chileans begin their sex life at 18. Miguel Muñoz-Laboy, 'Estudio Nacional de Comportamiento Sexual: Primeros Análisis, Chile 2000,' *Archives of Sexual Behavior* (New York, 2003).

the same way, it is clear that age is linked to the idea that marriage is the time to begin an active sex life since 53 per cent of women of 45 and over expressed this opinion, compared to 28.8 per cent of women from the 20–33 age group. It is worth noting that the liberalism displayed by younger women regarding the use of contraceptives is not borne out by their views on the best age to begin having sex. In fact the younger female population is split into three roughly even groups giving the following percentages: 'when she wants to' – 34 per cent; 'when she's in a serious relationship' – 37 per cent; and 'when she gets married' – 28.8 per cent.

On men's sex lives, though, women from the middle and lower social group have the most conservative attitudes. 47.5 per cent feel that a man can start his sex life when he wants to, compared to 22.9 per cent for a woman. Unfortunately, this same pattern appears once again in young women, who are willing to allow men a greater degree of sexual freedom than women. (48.2 per cent for men compared to 34 per cent for women).

The small percentage who said that the sexual satisfaction of the woman was of essential importance to the couple's happiness come mainly from the middle socio-economic group (56.5 per cent) and the group aged from 34 to 45 (43.5 per cent).[23] It is also interesting to note that women see men's sexual satisfaction as being almost irrelevant to the couple's happiness. Only 0.6 per cent of the whole sample expressed this view.

4. Domestic violence

One of the major ways in which the hierarchical nature of the Chilean social order – in which women are subordinate to men – is expressed is through the physical violence to which women are frequently subjected.[24] A combination of the previously mentioned factors (gender socialisation which reinforces aggression, domination, sexuality, violence, etc.)[25] means that this kind of behaviour can almost occur with impunity. This is especially true in traditional societies where gender roles have not been questioned. The aim of this set of questions was to determine the extent of women's knowledge and their attitudes to the phenomenon of domestic violence, and to discover their views on the growing legislation in this area. These questions allow us to see the difference between conservative and liberal attitudes

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[23] This is only for the purposes of information. It has no statistical value.
[24] In Chile in the 1990s physical abuse was carried out in one out of four homes and psychological abuse in one out of three. Grupo Iniciativa Mujeres, *El nuevo contrato social.*
[25] This corresponds to the image of the Latin American 'macho'. O. Paz, *El laberinto de la soledad. Postdata. Vuelta a* El laberinto de la soledad (Mexico, 1994). S. Montecino, *Madres y huachos. Alegorías sobre el mestizaje chileno* (Santiago, 1991).

by revealing knowledge or ignorance about the existence of domestic violence, acceptance or rejection of it, and support for relevant legislation.

Most of the women questioned (74 per cent) stated that domestic violence is a common phenomenon, although only 43.6 per cent said they were personally aware of a case of it. 78 per cent said that 'the police should be called if the woman who lives next door is being beaten' (compared to 21.2 per cent who felt that 'you shouldn't get involved in other people's affairs').

Of the 90.8 per cent who are aware of the law on domestic violence, 84.7 per cent see it as a positive step and 10.9 per cent as a negative one.

Analysis by social group shows that whilst all social groups acknowledge the high frequency of domestic violence, the middle group is most aware of it and the lower group acknowledges it least. However, when asked about personal knowledge of a case, the lower group is the only one with higher than average figures. The higher group is most likely to call the police when these kinds of violent acts occur. Analysis by age shows that, although the differences are smaller (as is the case in analysis by social group), young people tend to acknowledge the frequency of domestic violence more and are more likely to say that they personally knew of a case of it. It is the middle age group (from 34 to 45) who most often say that they know about the law on domestic violence, although the higher group shows the highest levels of approval for legislation in this area.

The difference between high numbers of people who say they are aware of domestic violence and the low level of personal knowledge of cases can be interpreted in two ways. One, rather optimistic way of looking at things would be to say that domestic violence is not as widespread as thought. The nature of the problem has simply been exaggerated for ideological or political reasons. As such, it is similar to the contradictory views expressed about crime during the early years of the Gobierno de la Concertación;[26] many people stated that they knew it existed but few people actually claimed to have suffered from it). Another, more pessimistic, interpretation of the difference is that domestic violence does occur frequently but, for some reason, few people are willing to admit that they personally know about a particular case. Is this because of fear, shame or simply because of domination? The fear experienced by women who are physically abused at home is widely recognised. It means that they do not seek help. However, the subordinate attitude of many women who consider the use of domestic violence (including sexual abuse) as one more right held by men is also a well known phenomenon. The 21.8 per cent of respondents who believe that 'you shouldn't get involved in other people's affairs' clearly show this attitude.

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[26] The Gobierno de la Concertación is a broad coalition of democratic parties which has governed Chile since the end of the military dictatorship.

If domestic violence is so normal, though, why is it hidden away? In this respect, it is interesting that the lower socio-economic group hides it least. Once again it is worth considering why this might be. Is it because it occurs most frequently in this group or because there are fewer stigmas attached to it at this socio-economic level? There is no doubt that the fact that people feel ashamed about it is a positive sign because it means that women are not totally subordinate (domestic abuse is not 'normal' although it does happen). Neither, however, are they totally free of it. The data obtained do not allow us to investigate further in this area but it is certainly a subject which needs to be studied further.

5. Divorce

Whilst de facto separation and marriage annulment were commonplace in Chile, the law on divorce only became a reality in November 2004 after a legislative process of nine years. So, it could be said that Chile is at the forefront of legal conservatism, since couples were long prevented from getting divorced and starting new lives. This series of questions is designed to find out not only who is in favour and who is against the divorce law but also what kind of arguments are used by the different sides on this issue. Once again we can see a range of opinions here, from conservative to liberal. Some people are opposed to the divorce law because it will undermine the family unit in Chile and some support the law because they say that it acknowledges the true nature of the situation (shown by the annulments), and makes it easier for couples who have separated to start a new life.

In the questionnaire this question follows on from six statements which give the usual arguments in favour of or against allowing people to get divorced and portray the strength of the family as a standard social good. As a result the response given by 69 per cent of the women in the survey who said they were 'in favour' of the divorce law must be seen as indicating a clearly liberal attitude, compared to 28.6 per cent who said they were 'against' it. In the same way, on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 showing complete disagreement and 10 complete agreement) the average result was 7.7 for the statement 'the divorce law will just acknowledge the actual situation'. For the statements 'it is better to have divorce than annulment' and 'a divorce law will allow couples whose lives together have not worked out to make a new start', the average scores were 7.9 and 8.3 respectively.

As with the other areas investigated, it is clear that women from the younger age group and those from the higher socio-economic groups tend to be more liberal on this point. In terms of age, 74 per cent of younger women were in favour of the divorce law, compared to 67.9 per cent for the middle age group and 62.9 per cent for the older group. 73.9 per cent of women

from the higher socio-economic expressed support compared to 69.7 per cent for the middle group and 63.2 per cent for the lower group.

6. Abortion

As with marital separation, abortion is also common practice in Chilean society. Although abortion could have been included as an aspect of the part on sexuality, it was dealt with in a separate section because of the complexity of the issue. This is indeed the acid test of liberal and conservative attitudes because abortion is punishable by law; it is, moreover, strongly and publicly condemned by the Catholic Church. Strictly speaking this issue also implies an 'extension' (or radicalisation) of liberal and conservative notions, taking them beyond their very limits. As has already been said, what distinguishes liberal and conservative attitudes in this study is the choice made between individual conscience and a collective moral norm when resolving a personal conflict of values and/or interests. For abortion this is a conflict which affects not only a woman at a personal level but also someone else, too (the unborn child). Choosing the more extreme options offered in the survey therefore indicates someone with radical liberal or conservative views.

This set of questions demonstrates the range of attitudes on abortion – from those who are radically opposed, who believe that abortion should not be allowed under any circumstances, to those who accept it as a form of birth control if it is a woman's preferred method. Attitudes between these two radically differing viewpoints are also analysed. These might include a rejection of abortion in principle but acceptance in certain circumstances, if, for example, the mother's life is at risk or if the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, etc.

The more extreme options (both liberal and conservative) offered in the survey were rejected to the same degree, with most of the respondents choosing the less radical intermediate options. 'Abortion should never be allowed' was rejected by 63.3 per cent and approved by 30.6 per cent of those surveyed. 'It should be allowed when a woman requests it' was rejected by 67.1 per cent and approved by 28.9 per cent.

It is clear that the values expressed here are connected not just with personal freedom in the face of a social norm but also with the rights of a third party – the unborn child. Thus the trends expressed are more towards the less radical answers and in favour of the rights of the mother or the child, depending on the values held which have a bearing on the decision.

The possibility of having an abortion 'if the mother's life is at risk', which is an option which has been increasingly abandoned by science, was chosen by 76.7 per cent of those surveyed. 18.5 per cent rejected it.

67.7 per cent accepted abortion if 'there were problems with the foetus' and 27.1 per cent rejected this possibility. The phrasing of this option was deliberately ambiguous.

58.9 per cent of the women surveyed agreed that abortion should be allowed 'if the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest', which reflects the sadly frequent occurrence of violent attacks on women. This option was rejected by 34.9 per cent.

Justifying abortion because 'more children cannot be financially supported' was rejected by 77.4 per cent and accepted by 20.7 per cent. This option clearly puts economic considerations above the rights of the unborn child.

Only 7 per cent supported abortion 'if the pregnancy means losing your job or having to give up studying' with 91.5 per cent rejecting it. This option clearly puts the interests of the mother before those of the unborn child.

The nuances in the answers about abortion should be interpreted less as a kind of 'moral relativism', and more as indicative of greater complexity in people's moral judgement.[27] This complexity should be compared to the black and white terms in which this issue is usually presented by both extreme liberals and conservatives in the public sphere. 'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy,' Hamlet remarks to an incredulous Horatio about the appearance of the king's ghost. The population is saying something similar to its leaders given the occurrence of abortion which, according to 84.1 per cent of those interviewed, 'takes place frequently' in Chile (question 34). The complexity of the answers to the questions on abortion should, in any case, be interpreted as a tendency towards a liberal, rather than conservative, attitude. The fact that more than three-quarters of those surveyed accept 'reasons' justifying a decision which runs counter to the social norm (and in the case of other reasons the proportion was two thirds or a majority) shows that people are open to considering circumstances and specific issues rather than just applying some kind of universal, common, collective moral criterion.

It is interesting to note that the closer the respondent's life experience was to the justification given the more likely she was to find it acceptable. So the socio-economic group analysis shows that women from the higher group are generally less willing to accept different justifications for having an abortion than those from the lower group. 77.8 per cent of women from the lower group felt that abortion is acceptable when the mother's life is at risk (compared to 70.8 per cent from the higher group). 76.5 per cent felt the

[27] According to Emile Durkheim, a social order without a moral basis is impossible. Every society has a 'system of rules for behaviour' with at least two features: it is compulsory and based on discipline (it is a duty), and it is wanted because these are norms and rules which express beliefs and ideals.

same if there were problems with the foetus (64 per cent of the higher group), and 76.5 per cent if the pregnancy was the result of rape or incest (64 per cent of the higher group). Lastly, although the lower groups are largely against the economic justification of abortion, they tend to be more sympathetic to this kind of argument. 23.4 per cent were in favour of this option, compared to 15.4 per cent of the higher groups.

Age only seems to be a factor in the question about women having the right to an abortion simply because they want one, in other words, without some kind of justification. On this point younger women are broadly in favour of a 'liberal' attitude since 67.5 per cent of them disagree with the statement that 'abortion should never be allowed', compared to 58.8 per cent of women aged 45 and over.

7. *Women's participation in public life*

This section on women's participation in public life attempts to question the definitions of traditional gender roles through 'reasoned argument' and not through power relations. It seeks to show that these definitions do not correspond to an 'innate' condition but to a combination of elements which are fundamentally bound to socialisation processes. These processes in turn contribute to establishing different types of social hierarchy (economic, racial, gender, etc.). This questioning opens up new possibilities for female participation in society and also new conditions for that participation.

In this area there is a broad selection of questions related to women's participation in local organisations and assessment of the importance of such participation. It also includes evaluation of women who hold public office and the importance of women holding these posts.

One of the initial levels of participation in public life is related to information about what is going on in the country. On this point 56.8 per cent of the women interviewed said they felt 'informed' and 41 per cent that they felt 'relatively uninformed'. 66 per cent of those questioned said that the degree of female participation in public life in the country is 'lower than it should be', 23.6 per cent that it is 'at the right level' and 9 per cent that it was 'higher than it should be.'[28] It is interesting to note how, in response to questions about the areas in which there should be more women, to some extent the traditional role of women is projected onto participation in public affairs. Health, work and education (82.9 per cent, 82.3 per cent and 81.6 per cent respectively) came out ahead of economic decisions, policing and

[28] The resistance to women having the vote and participation of women in politics are two aspects frequently referred to in the specialised bibliography. See: E. Maza, *Catolicismo, anticlericalismo y extensión del sufragio a la mujer en Chile* (Santiago, 1995); M. Tagle, *La separación de la Iglesia y el estado en Chile. Historiografía y debate* (Santiago, 1997).

defence, and politics (77.9 per cent, 69.2 per cent, and 69.1 per cent respectively).[29] The same kind of projection can be seen in responses to question on the kinds of organisations in which women would like to play a role: 'cultural organisations' (25.2 per cent) and 'women's workshops' (37.3 per cent) and 'mother's centres' (17.4 per cent).

Analysis by socio-economic group shows that women from the lower group tend to want to participate in gender-related organisations – women's workshops (44 per cent compared to 23.1 per cent in the higher group), mother's centres (27.6 per cent compared to 9.8 per cent in the higher groups) and religious groups (33.8 per cent compared to 21.4 per cent in the higher group). Women from the higher groups, who are just as opposed to women's participation in political, union or professional organisations, would prefer to work with charity organisations (39.9 per cent).

Analysis by age shows that women of 45 and over are interested in religious organisations (33.8 per cent) and women's workshops (38.8 per cent). The younger population prefer to take part in youth and cultural organisations (24.4 per cent and 30 per cent respectively), although they are also interested in going to women's groups (34.7 per cent) and involvement in charity organisations (39.9 per cent).

III. The conservatism–liberalism index

Is there a common underlying attitude in the responses in each of these areas or are they merely specific answers to specific issues? This is a crucial question for the analysis of the information. Are these specific *opinions* expressed in answer to specific questions or do these opinions correspond to more general *attitudes* or predispositions which imply a similar point of view on different issues? In other words, is there a link between someone's response on women working and their responses on the right age for women to start sexual activity, or on divorce, preventing pregnancy, or permissiveness about abortion?

The answer to this question must be empirically based as well as theoretical. This means that an underlying attitude can be considered to exist if, for each 'liberal' response in one area, there is a greater probability of a 'liberal'

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[29] In 2001 women occupied a very small number of all elected public posts: 11 per cent were mayors, 16 per cent were councillors, and only 10 per cent members of parliament. The same is true of the top posts in the public administration where women represent only 15 per cent of *intendentes*, 18 per cent of governors, 13 per cent of *seremis*, 29 per cent of local authority directors and 34 per cent of the ministers in the Appeals Court. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) *Human Development in Chile*. On women's participation in feminist movements, see Susan Franceschet, 'State Feminism and Women's Movements: The Impact of Chile's Servicio Nacional De La Mujer on Women's Activism,' *Latin American Research Review*, vol. 38, issue 1, 2003.

response to a question in any other area, rather than a 'conservative' one. This is obviously true the other way round, too. So a simple 'opinion' can be said to exist on a specific issue if the 'liberal' or 'conservative' option for a particular area of questions does not affect the probability of a similar answer on a different issue. This opinion, then, could not be extrapolated to other issues.

The tables in the appendix show that the responses to these different dimensions, which can be attributed to the existence of an 'attitude', are in fact linked. The probability of a liberal answer in one of the areas is always greater amongst those who give liberal answers in the other areas than it is for the group as a whole. Similarly, the probability of a conservative response in one area is always greater amongst those who gave conservative answers in the other areas than it is for the sample as a whole. The cross-reference tables included below are intended to show that a systematic pattern exists as shown:

	Liberal response in area X	Conservative response in area X
Liberal response in area Y	Greater than A per cent	Lower than B per cent
Conservative response in area Y	Lower than A per cent	Greater than B per cent
Sample total	A per cent	B per cent

The consistent correlation between these responses shows that a common predisposition exists. This indicates that a set of 'opinions' is coherent with – and expresses – an underlying 'attitude'.

If the responses in the seven areas show a high degree of reciprocal consistency then one of them, or any combination of them, could be used effectively to predict the others. The basis for this affirmation comes not just from the statistical evidence but also, as previously mentioned, from a theoretical assumption. This assumption is that each response, rather than being an isolated opinion, expresses a common dimension, attitude, or predisposition, which is termed 'liberal' or 'conservative' for the purposes of this study. An index of this new dimension (conservatism-liberalism) can be built up as a new variable based on the sum of the previous variables.

An initial attempt to construct this index, including many of the previously mentioned variables failed because there were practically no cases which met all the requirements. In other words, there were only 20 people who were 'extremely liberal', which is too small a percentage to be of statistical significance because it represents only 1.5 per cent of the whole sample. In any event, it is worth pointing out that this 1.5 per cent was mainly made up of young middle-class women who, although Catholic, described themselves as not very religious. It was also impossible to find a proportion of the population who could be described as 'extremely conservative'.

We decided therefore to construct the conservatism and liberalism using a total of 7 variables, rather than all the variables described in the previous areas. Liberals were taken to be those people who agreed with a series of considerations: that women should have the right to work if they want to; that working outside the home is positive for a woman and for her family and that she should be able to begin her sex life when she wants to. Moreover, they strongly believe that contraceptives should be made available to young people of both sexes; they agree with the divorce law; they do not reject outright the justification of abortion and they believe that women do not participate in public life as much as they should. The conservative population was built up through opposition to the liberal one.

On the basis of the sum of these seven variables a new variable termed the 'Liberalism Index' was constructed. This initially gave the following results:

Complete liberalism index

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Extremely liberal	−9	67	5.4	5.4	5.4
	−8	27	2.2	2.2	7.5
	−7	118	9.5	9.5	17.0
	−6	129	10.3	10.3	27.3
	−5	110	8.8	8.8	36.2
	−4	153	12.3	12.3	48.4
	−3	146	11.7	11.7	60.1
	−2	104	8.3	8.3	68.5
	−1	99	7.9	7.9	76.4
	0	92	7.4	7.4	83.8
	1	55	4.4	4.4	88.2
	2	61	4.9	4.9	93.1
	3	29	2.3	2.3	95.4
	4	21	1.7	1.7	97.1
	5	15	1.2	1.2	98.3
	6	9	0.7	0.7	99.0
	7	3	0.2	0.2	99.3
Extremely conservative	8	3	0.2	0.2	99.5
	9	6	0.5	0.5	100.0
Total		1247	100.0	100.0	100.0

As shown in the table, only 5.4 per cent of the sample can be classified as extremely liberal (in other words, they answered all 7 questions previously mentioned in a liberal way, and not just some of them), and only 0.5 per cent can be classified as extremely conservative. However, a second observation must be added to this finding: the main part of the population tends towards the 'liberal sphere' rather than the conservative one, where many national spokespersons tend to situate it. As will be shown in greater detail, the perceived Chilean conservatism mentioned initially should be understood as

a kind of 'conservative liberalism' and not as pure conservatism.[30] Most Chileans liberals do not come out of the survey as 'clearly liberal', because in at least two of the areas they were asked about they give answers which are conservative. These are the questions about when sexual activity should start and the confrontation between the family and working outside the home. As will be seen, only the extreme (or radical) liberals expressed the view that, in the first case, sexual activity should start whenever a woman wants it to, and in the second that 'working is good for the woman and for her family'. This 'conservative' liberalism, though, should not be confused with pure conservatism. In areas like divorce, the right to work, access to contraceptives and even abortion most of those asked gave clearly liberal answers.

In order to describe the sample interviewed more accurately this index was transformed and 'normalised' into five groups. Each group thus created represents about 20 per cent of the overall sample. To do this the values used previously had to be changed.

The values −9, −8 and −7 were grouped into the value −2 (bringing together 17 per cent of the sample); the values −6 and −5 were grouped into value −1 (bringing together 19.2 per cent of the sample); the values −4 and −3 were grouped into value 0 (bringing 24 per cent of the sample); the values −2 and −1 into value 1 (23.7 per cent of the sample) and the values 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 were grouped into value 2 (representing 16 per cent of the sample). The idea behind this step was to position the 'mid-point' of the scale where the 'cultural common sense' of the Chilean people lies. This tends, as previously mentioned, towards liberalism rather than conservatism in theory, but for analytical purposes this index helps to shows us 'who are more liberal than average' and 'who are more conservative than average'.

This time the results were as follows:

The normalised liberalism index

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cum Per cent
Liberal	−2	212	17.0	17.0	17.0
	−1	239	19.2	19.2	36.2
Neutral	0	299	24.0	24.0	60.1
Conservative	1	295	23.7	23.7	83.8
	2	202	16.2	16.2	100.0
Total		1247	100.0	100.0	100.0

[30] Eugenio Tironi describes Chilean society on the basis of a contradiction between the complete openness to the outside world in economic and commercial terms and the rigid protectionism of traditional social values which tend to be defended by groups in power as truths which are not up for discussion. This situation is, in his opinion, an expression of 'anomia', in other words imbalance in material life, institutions and collective representative bodies. Eugenio Tironi, 'La sociedad como lugar de vida moral,' *Estudios Públicos*, No. 71 (winter 1998).

Table 1. *Liberalism index for working outside the home*

	Good for the woman Good for the family		Good for the woman Bad for the family		Good for the family Bad for the woman		Bad for the woman Bad for the family		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	189	89.2	23	10.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	212	100
Moderate Liberal	158	66.1	75	31.4	4	1.7	2	0.8	239	100
Neutral	148	49.5	115	38.5	18	6.0	16	5.4	297	100
Moderate Conservative	127	43.1	109	36.9	21	7.1	38	12.9	295	100
Conservative	35	17.3	65	32.2	31	15.3	71	35.1	202	100

Crossing this scale with the variables in the index shows that on some issues there is consensus amongst the liberal Chilean population, and on others there is a clear difference of opinions. The same is true of the conservatives; the views expressed in some of the seven areas are similar, whilst in others, there are differences of opinion.

Indeed, the table below shows that the issue of women working outside the home and its possible contradictions with family tasks is even a subject of debate for the liberal population. 25 per cent of liberals expressed the view that 'working outside home is good for the woman but not for her family'. The responses are even more varied among conservatives, who not only see a contradiction in women working outside the home and their family role. Indeed, about 50 per cent simply believe that if a woman works it is bad for both her and her family. This type of answer shows that this question demonstrates different degrees of liberalism, and certainly shows the differences between liberals and the very conservative portion of the sample.

However, on the question about the 'right to work', there is a broad consensus amongst liberals. It is only in the most conservative fifth (grouped under value 2) where there is a relatively even split, with 53.5 per cent who think that women have the right to work whenever they wish, compared to 46.5 per cent who say that 'women only have a right to work if certain other duties at home are fulfilled'. So answers to this question show the differences among the conservative sample, rather than the liberal one.

When the liberalism index is used for the question on making contraceptives available to young people of both sexes, once again it is clear that there is a reasonable degree of consensus amongst liberals. Amongst the conservatives, though, opinions vary a great deal. A small percentage of the conservative sample is in favour of the most conservative response to this question; they completely disagree with making contraceptives available to

Table 2. *Liberalism index for the right to work*

	Yes, they have the right		Only when family duties are covered		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	208	98.1	4	1.9	212	100
Moderate Liberal	217	90.8	22	9.2	239	100
Neutral	259	86.6	40	13.4	299	100
Moderate Conservative	221	74.9	74	25.1	295	100
Conservative	108	53.5	94	46.5	202	100

Table 3. *Liberalism index for support for making contraceptives available to young people*

	Completely agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Completely disagree		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	203	95.8	9	4.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	212	100
Moderate Liberal	202	84.5	26	10.9	3	1.3	8	3.3	0	0.0	239	100
Neutral	223	74.6	33	11.0	1	0.3	35	11.7	7	2.3	299	100
Moderate Conservative	176	59.7	43	14.6	2	0.7	44	14.9	30	10.2	295	100
Conservative	73	36.1	13	6.4	0	0.0	50	24.8	66	32.7	202	100

young people. Like the previous question, this one allows distinctions to be drawn between different degrees of conservatism.

On the question about the right time to begin having a sex life, the views of liberals are 'not as clear' as those of conservatives. The moderate liberal sample is split into three groups; some think that this should happen when a woman wishes, some when she is in a serious relationship and some when she gets married. A consensus does not even exist amongst the most liberal portion, which is split in a two thirds/one third ratio. The conservatives are more united in their opinions. 63.4 per cent of moderate conservatives, and 72.8 per cent of conservatives, chose the option 'when she gets married'. This question helps to distinguish the more 'radical' sectors of the liberal population.

The question on divorce once again only allows us to differentiate between different degrees of conservatism. The liberal sample is strongly in favour of divorce, whilst the conservative sample (especially moderate conservatives) is clearly split. 52.2 per cent are in favour of the divorce law and 44.7 per cent are against it.

Only in the most liberal fifth of the female sample is there a consensus of opinion against the statements which reject any justification for having an

Table 4. *Liberalism index for the start of a woman's sex life*

	When she wants		Neutral		When she is in a serious relationship		When she gets married		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	141	66.5	4	1.9	67	31.6	0	0.0	212	100
Moderate Liberal	82	34.3	4	1.7	83	34.7	70	29.3	239	100
Neutral	58	19.4	4	1.3	110	36.8	127	42.5	299	100
Moderate Conservative	18	6.1	2	0.7	88	29.8	187	63.4	295	100
Conservative	12	5.9	1	0.5	42	20.8	147	72.8	202	100

Table 5. *Liberalism index for divorce*

	In favour		Neutral		Against		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	202	95.3	1	0.5	9	4.2	212	100
Moderate Liberal	211	88.3	5	2.1	23	9.6	239	100
Neutral	227	75.9	6	2.0	66	22.1	299	100
Moderate Conservative	154	52.2	9	3.1	132	44.7	295	100
Conservative	59	29.2	5	2.5	138	68.3	202	100

Table 6. *Liberalism index for complete rejection of abortion*

	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	192	90.6	7	3.3	13	6.1	212	100
Moderate Liberal	172	72.0	25	10.5	42	17.6	239	100
Neutral	191	63.9	25	8.4	83	27.8	299	100
Moderate Conservative	154	52.2	11	3.7	130	44.1	295	100
Conservative	83	41.1	9	4.5	110	54.5	202	100

abortion. The rest of the liberals, although generally in favour of the same position, are more cautious. 10 per cent did not express a view and 17.6 per cent were actually in favour of rejecting the possibility of having an abortion. It is interesting to note that the conservative sample did not consistently choose the option of agreement that 'abortion should not be permitted under any circumstances', but was more or less split in two even groups. The spread of the population on this answer shows that the issue of abortion can be used to distinguish between different attitudes amongst both liberals and conservatives.

The question about whether or not women are under-represented or over-represented in public office once again shows up different degrees of conservatism. As shown in the table, the liberal sample consistently chose

Table 7. *Liberalism index for the participation of women in public life*

	Lower than it should be		Neutral		As it should be		Greater than it should be		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	195	92.0	1	0.5	16	7.5	0	0.0	212	100
Moderate Liberal	197	82.4	2	0.8	30	12.6	10	4.2	239	100
Neutral	196	65.6	6	2.0	75	25.1	22	7.4	299	100
Moderate Conservative	163	55.3	5	1.7	92	31.2	35	11.9	295	100
Conservative	73	36.1	3	1.5	80	39.6	46	22.8	202	100

the answer 'women are under-represented', whilst conservatives (especially those grouped in value 2) are split into three more or less equal groups favouring the three different options: under-represented, over-represented or fairly represented.

A particular question can help to determine a liberal attitude (in other words, it can be used as a 'predictor' of a liberal attitude, not just in the specific area of the question but in other areas, too) if it does not give rise to complete consensus but shows varying degrees of liberalism. The same can be said of the conservative sample, which does not necessarily hold exactly opposite views to those of the liberals on each issue. Examination of the ways in which the different areas included in the index can be used to determine degrees of conservatism or liberalism gives the following results:

(a) Liberalism

Ranking the questions from the lowest to the highest response consistency gives the results below.

From a higher to lower degree of liberalism:

1. A woman should be able to start her sex life 'when she wants'.
2. There is no conflict involved in a woman working outside the home and family tasks.
3. Not categorically opposed to abortion.
4. Women are under-represented in public life.
5. In favour of providing access to contraceptives to young people of both ages to prevent pregnancies.
6. Supports the divorce law.
7. In favour of a woman's right to work if she wants to.

With this ranking it can be said that a woman who answers that women's sex lives should begin when they wish is highly likely to be amongst those

who see no source of conflict in a woman working outside the home and family tasks and those who are not categorically against abortion and so on. If liberal responses begin to occur with issue number three (not being opposed to abortion), it is possible to 'predict' that the woman in question will probably give liberal responses for issue 4 onwards but not for issues 1 and 2.

(b) Conservatism

If conservatism is ordered in the same way, the first observation that can be made is that there is generally much less consensus in the different responses. Therefore more of the issues in the study can be used to determine whether a woman's attitude is more or less conservative.

From a higher to a lower degree of conservatism:

1. Women are fairly or over-represented in public life.
2. Against providing access to contraceptives to young people to prevent pregnancies.
3. See a source of contradiction in work and family life.
4. Family tasks are more important than a professional life.
5. Categorically opposed to abortion.
6. Opposed to divorce.
7. A woman should start her sex life when she gets married.

A conservative opinion, like 'women are over-represented in public life', helps to predict a general conservative attitude because this is the most extreme conservative response. However, the response on marriage as the moment when a woman's sex life should begin does not help to determine differing degrees of conservatism because this answer is part of the 'common sense' of this population group. It is at the basic foundation level.

It is interesting to note here that the starting point for radical liberalism and the 'common sense' of conservatism are to be found in the same area of the survey; the one on sexuality.

It would also be possible to use a summary index, taking into account only those areas which show the greatest differences in degree of liberalism or conservatism. This would mean only considering the first three responses for the liberals and the conservatives, for example.

IV. Who are the liberals and conservatives and what determines the presence of one attitude or the other?

Whilst it is not possible to determine the 'causes' of one attitude or another, if the liberalism index is analysed together with certain variables like age, socio-economic group, economic activity and strength of religious beliefs, it

Table 8. *Liberalism index for age*

	18–33		34–45		45 and over		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	114	53.8	63	29.7	35	16.5	212	100
Moderate Liberal	98	41.0	81	33.9	60	25.1	239	100
Neutral	88	29.4	114	38.1	97	32.4	299	100
Moderate Conservative	70	23.7	112	38.0	113	38.3	295	100
Conservative	39	19.3	66	32.7	97	48.0	202	100

is possible at least to determine the kind of socio-demographic and cultural profile which can be associated with liberal and conservative attitudes.

(a) Age

As already seen in the previous section, the liberal sample is made up principally of young people (from 18 to 33 years old), and the conservatives of people of 45 and over. This indicates that the degree of conservatism rises with age.

(b) Socio-economic group

Analysis by socio-economic group also bears out what has already been seen. The higher and middle social groups represent an above-average proportion of the liberal sample and the lower group an above-average proportion of conservatives. However, this relationship is not as clear as might be thought.

(c) Religious beliefs

The liberalism scale shows that the liberal sample gives an above-average score for the option 'not very religious' and the conservatives a higher than average score for 'religious'. Thus stronger religious beliefs indicate a higher degree of conservatism and weaker ones show greater liberalism.[31] It is not religion itself

[31] Joaquín Fermandois analyses the relationship between the Catholic religion and liberal politics in Chile. He argues that liberalism in Chile, unlike conservatism, traditionally identified with secularity, or anticlericalism and promoted political processes of secularisation which provoked a conservative reaction from the Catholic church (and from some Protestant ones). He adds that this stormy relationship between Catholicism and liberalism has persisted until now and is expressed through modern Catholicism which has a social doctrine but rejects the 'capitalistic materialism' and the 'moral undermining' brought by modernity. Joaquín Fermandois, 'Catolicismo y liberalismo en Chile del siglo XX,' *Estudios Públicos*, No. 93, summer 2004. Antonio Bascuñán is theoretically opposed to the incompatibility of liberalism and Christian religion and puts forward two arguments: (a) liberalism and Christianity are not comparable subjects from which we must choose one (liberalism is a theory about political justice rather than a proposal on the sense of life and

Table 9. *Liberalism index for socio-economic groups*

	High per cent	Middle per cent	Low per cent
Liberal	20.9	18.7	12.2
Moderate Liberal	22.2	18.5	18.4
Neutral	22.2	25.5	22.6
Moderate Conservative	23.5	20.9	27.9
Conservative	11.1	16.4	18.9
Total	100	100	100

Table 10. *Liberalism index for strength of religious belief*

	Religious		Not very religious		Other		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	71	33.7	136	64.2	5	2.2	212	100
Moderate Liberal	89	37.2	148	61.9	2	0.9	239	100
Neutral	145	48.6	150	50	4	1.3	299	100
Moderate Conservative	163	55.2	126	42.7	6	2.0	295	100
Conservative	122	60.6	76	37.8	3	1.5	202	100

which is associated with a liberal or conservative attitude but the strength of belief. Whatever a woman's religion might be, the less religious she feels, the more liberal she is likely to be, and the more religious she feels, the more conservative.

(d) Economic activity

Taking liberalism and economic activity together shows that the liberal sample has above-average scores for those who are 'working', 'studying and working' or 'only studying'. Conservatives are more likely to give the answers like 'housework' and 'retired and investor'. The higher the level of economic dependence is, the higher the degree of conservatism. Conversely, the more time spent and activities carried out outside the home, the higher the degree of liberalism will be.

(e) Young conservatives and economic activity

If the *young conservative sample* is analysed according to economic activity, the pattern is very similar to the conservative sample as a whole. So, young

the world); (b) both liberalism and Christian religiosity seek to be 'heroes in the definition of life itself', in the sense of choosing our goals and struggling to achieve them. However, Bascuñan does not manage to – nor seek to – the general empirical compatibility of both positions (he in fact defines himself as a liberal in practice and ends his conference giving three reasons why not to be a Christian). Antonio Bascuñán, 'Por qué es preferible ser liberal que católico'.

Table 11. *Liberalism index for economic activity*

	Working and employed		Working but job due to finish		Studying and working		Studying and not working		House work		Retired, investor		Other		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Liberal	94	44.3	13	6.1	4	1.9	25	11.8	73	34.4	1	0.2	3	1.4	212	100
Moderate Liberal	105	43.9	19	7.9	2	0.8	13	5.4	91	38.1	6	2.5	3	1.2	239	100
Neutral	123	41.1	17	5.7	5	1.7	10	3.3	136	45.5	3	1.0	5	1.6	299	100
Moderate Conservative	95	32.2	19	6.4	2	0.7	4	1.4	165	55.9	8	2.7	2	0.7	295	100
Conservative	61	30.2	10	5.0	1	0.5	3	1.5	121	59.9	6	3.0	0	0.0	202	100

Table 12. *Young people and economic activity*

	Working and employed		Working but job due to finish		Studying and working		Studying and not working		Housework		Other		Total	
	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent	n	per cent
Young – not conservative	121	40.3	20	6.7	9	3.0	48	16.0	96	32.0	6	2.0	300	100
Young Conservative	39	35.8	10	9.2	1	.9	6	5.5	52	47.7	1	0.9	109	100

conservatives give above average scores for 'housework', in spite of the lower generational probability of their carrying out this kind of activity.

V. *Conclusions: liberalism through exposure and conservatism through ideology*

Everything would seem to indicate that the assumptions at the outset of the study are indeed true; modernisation brings liberalism with it. This can be clearly seen in the distribution of young people in the liberal attitude and the distribution of the older respondents and those from the lower socio-economic groups in the conservative sample. The opposite (or a different) trend can be found among young conservatives. Conservatism in the younger sample is the most worrying since it runs counter to the 'normal' distribution of this population group. However, it does not seem to be an ideological option. It is rather the result of a 'lack of exposure' to the world beyond the four walls of home. Conservatism in young Chileans, therefore, can be explained simply as an 'unfinished process of modernisation'. Analysis by economic group shows that 90 per cent are from social groupings C3 or D and only 30 per cent of them finished secondary education, 20 per cent only have incomplete secondary education and 16 per cent have vocational studies. This is different to the young conservatives from the middle and upper social groupings, who finished higher education.

Whilst economic activity does not differ greatly from one group to the next (as has been seen, they basically carry out housework), religious beliefs among young conservatives from the middle and upper social groupings are certainly stronger than those of the lower group.

This suggests that the young conservatives from the lower social groupings are not so ideologically minded as those from the higher groups. The difference is due to a 'lack of exposure' to different lifestyles, lack of education and early motherhood, which have probably perpetuated the cultural environment of their own mothers. Young conservatives with higher

Table 13. *Upper social grouping of young conservatives by strength of religious belief*

	Religious per cent	Not very religious per cent	Other per cent	Total per cent
Young Conservatives – Lower social groupings	51.6	46.2	2.2	100
Young Conservatives – Higher social groupings	63.6	27.3	9.1	100

education, though, display a more ideological form of conservatism, one they have chosen. Although they have had contact with a wider world through education and employment, they have probably returned to the home because of desire rather than need. It would, nevertheless, be very interesting to interview both groups to ascertain their symbolic reference points.

For conservatism in Chile we can say, then, that there are two origins. The first of these are based on the traditional economic and social views associated with the 'automatic propagation' of traditional gender roles. These are usually justified using some kind of traditional reasoning like 'this is right because it has always been like this'. These are the views held by middle aged and older women from the lower social groupings who do not work outside the home. On account of its origins, it is to be hoped that this kind of conservatism will over time change into liberalism simply because of the expansion of modernisation processes to a larger number of social groups. However, the cultural and economic transformations involved in the process of modernisation would not appear to affect the young conservatives from the higher social grouping. This indicates the second origin of conservatism in Chile, one which stands out because of its high level of education and the strength of its religious beliefs. This is conservative ideology *par excellence.*

But what about the nature of the liberalism here? It is a practical liberalism which is limited by a conservative ideology unaffected by 'modernisation'. This can be seen from the fact that in some of the key issues, despite a wider experience of life, women (and men, too) still retain conservative attitudes.

The contradictory nature of the liberal attitude can be seen in the sample distribution in the first index (in which only 5.4 per cent gave liberal answers to the 7 questions in the index), and even when using the normalised index as a reference. As has been seen, on 'practical' issues, Chilean women and men generally gave more liberal responses, for example, to questions about the right to work, divorce and the use of contraceptives. However, on more ideological matters, which cover areas where women also have experience, the responses were consistently more conservative. This was the case, for example, over when men and women should begin their sex lives (and the difference in the freedoms for the different genders), the low level of awareness about labour market discrimination, the contradictory assessment of the integration of women into the labour market and the contradictory attitude on domestic violence).

This practical liberalism superimposed on a certain ideological conservatism suggests that an 'ideological liberalism' as such does not really exist. It is more likely that this it is an example of ideological conservatism which has been 'fractured' by the experience of modernity and the need to adapt to it. This is why it is difficult to find a clear liberal discourse which reflects new ideological structures and 'world visions' integrating new lifestyles which are not fundamentally conditioned by the collective rules of a traditional social hierarchy.

A significant indication of this can be found in the profound lack of links between the liberalism index and political preferences for the party system. Whilst in the group of extreme liberals there is a higher proportion of people who identify more with the concept of being 'left wing', and in the group of extreme conservatives there are a great many who are not interested or reject politics, it is also true that *within* each of these political identifications the liberal-conservative analysis is still valid. In other words, being 'liberal' means that someone is more likely to be 'left wing' but 'being left wing' does not make it more likely that someone will be more 'liberal'. The same is true the other way round, but there is a slight difference. Being 'conservative' makes it more likely that someone will be 'against politics', rather than 'right wing'.

This distribution can be interpreted in two ways. Either it shows the lack of political representation of the 'moral cultures' which exist in Chilean society, or a breaking of the link in people's minds between politics and 'morality'. This in turn reflects the persistence of the traditional dichotomy between the private and public spheres, in which politics is not expected to solve, or even have anything to do with, issues related to private morality. In any case, both of these interpretations would seem to indicate the precariousness of the secularising role of the current Chilean political system. This contributes to the continued precedence of traditional moral mandates over advances in personal civil liberties.

The quantitative character of this study means that the proportions and socio-demographic nature of liberal and conservative attitudes can be determined. The contradictory nature of the liberal discourse (or what has also been termed 'fragmented conservatism') present in most of the sample studied suggests, however, that the main point of consideration should be the tensions which could arise in people and in society, due to the coexistence of moral discourses which are not only different and incongruous but also potentially antagonistic. In terms of everyday life, this tension could lead to a kind of 'double standards' culture (with people behaving differently in private from the views they express in public[32]).

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[32] Eugenio Tironi refers to this situation, suggesting that: 'there is a big difference between the debates we have in our society on sexuality, censorship, divorce, etc. and between the values and norms which dominate public expression and our customs and habits'. Eugenio Tironi, 'La sociedad como lugar de vida moral,' p. 83.

At societal level, this tension would seem not to be acknowledged, leading to a 'failed' interpellation to a supposedly 'coherently' conservative society. In both cases day-to-day experience surpasses the discourse which attempts to represent it.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning the challenge that this situation has led to in Chilean society. Although it is conservative discourse which ideologically confers a certain degree of 'unity' on the Chilean population, it is clear that it is losing ground in the national psyche because of the process of modernisation in the country. However, the lack of a liberal, ideological proposal means that, on the one hand, conservative norms which do not really represent our culture are prevalent but, on the other, there could also be a growth in social disintegration and anomie. Our society lacks new collective, symbolic reference points which give sense to people's actions.[33]

VI. Methodological Annex

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE:

- Probabilistic, stratified, proportional at city level (except for Gran Santiago and the rest of the country) and municipality level.
- By conglomeration (blocks in municipalities).
- Six surveys per block were carried out in Gran Santiago, five in Viña del Mar, Valparaíso, Concepción, Talcahuano and Temuco and three in the other cities. Independent samples were taken in each of the cities.

SAMPLE:

- Sample group of 20 and over, living in the following cities: Arica, Iquique, Calama, Antofagasta, Copiapó, La Serena, Coquimbo, Valparaíso, Viña Del Mar, Quilpue, Rancagua, Curico, Talca, Chillan, Los Ángeles, Concepción, Talcahuano, Temuco, Valdivia, Osorno, Pto. Montt, Gran Santiago.

DATE FOR FIELD WORK:

- 20 to 30 January 1999.

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[33] The main challenges raised by the Report on Human Development in Chile underline the importance of strengthening the symbolic reference points which might permit the idea of 'we the Chileans' to be revitalised in order to channel the process of development and social change. People themselves cannot be aware or effective in this search if they lack the collective imagination (in addition to other social resources) which would allow them to give meaning to the changes, and thereby shape them. UNDP *Human Development in Chile*.

SIZE:

- The number of valid cases was to 1800; 1,250 women and 550 men distributed as follows:

	Sample			
	Women	per cent	Men	per cent
ARICA	30	2.38	13	2.38
IQUIQUE	27	2.18	12	2.18
CALAMA	22	1.73	10	1.73
ANTOFAGASTA	42	3.34	18	3.34
COPIAPO	18	1.43	8	1.43
LA SERENA	21	1.65	9	1.65
COQUIMBO	22	1.73	9	1.73
VALPARAISO	53	4.25	23	4.25
VIÑA DEL MAR	58	4.68	26	4.68
QUILPUE	20	1.58	9	1.58
RANCAGUA	34	2.70	15	2.70
CURICO	15	1.21	7	1.21
TALCA	31	2.47	14	2.47
CHILLAN	28	2.26	12	2.26
LOS ANGELES	18	1.44	8	1.44
CONCEPCION	62	4.95	27	4.95
TALCAHUANO	46	3.65	20	3.65
TEMUCO	41	3.24	18	3.24
VALDIVIA	21	1.71	9	1.71
OSORNO	22	1.74	10	1.74
PTO. MONTT	21	1.68	9	1.68
subtotal	**650**	**52.00**	**286**	**52.00**

	Sample			
	Women	per cent	Men	per cent
SANTIAGO	26	2.07	11	2.07
INDEPENDENCIA	8	0.66	4	0.66
CONCHALI	17	1.35	7	1.35
HUECHURABA	7	0.59	3	0.59
RECOLETA	19	1.49	8	1.49
PROVIDENCIA	12	0.98	5	0.98
VITACURA	9	0.76	4	0.76
BARRENECHEA	8	0.61	3	0.61
LAS CONDES	25	2.03	11	2.03
NUNOA	20	1.57	9	1.57
LA REINA	11	0.90	5	0.90
MACUL	14	1.13	6	1.13
PENALOLEN	23	1.86	10	1.86
LA FLORIDA	47	3.74	21	3.74
SAN JOAQUIN	12	0.97	5	0.97
LA GRANJA	17	1.34	7	1.34
LA PINTANA	27	2.13	12	2.13

SAN RAMON	11	0.91	5	0.91
SAN MIGUEL	9	0.71	4	0.71
LA CISTERNA	10	0.84	5	0.84
EL BOSQUE	21	1.72	9	1.72
PAC	13	1.08	6	1.08
LO ESPEJO	13	1.05	6	1.05
EST. CENTRAL	15	1.22	7	1.22
CERRILLOS	9	0.69	4	0.69
MAIPU	39	3.13	17	3.13
QUINTA NORMAL	12	0.98	5	0.98
LO PRADO	13	1.03	6	1.03
PUDAHUEL	18	1.48	8	1.48
CERRO NAVIA	19	1.50	8	1.50
RENCA	17	1.36	8	1.36
QUILICURA	6	0.48	3	0.48
PTE. ALTO	43	3.48	19	3.48
SAN BERNARDO	27	2.18	12	2.18
subtotal	**600**	**48.00**	**264**	**48.00**
TOTAL	**1250**	**100.00**	**550**	**100.00**

SAMPLE BREAKDOWN:

ARICA	1.84
IQUIQUE	1.68
CALAMA	1.34
ANTOFAGASTA	2.58
COPIAPO	1.10
LA SERENA	1.28
COQUIMBO	1.33
VALPARAÍSO	3.28
VIÑA DEL MAR	3.61
QUILPUE	1.22
RANCAGUA	2.09
CURICO	0.93
TALCA	1.90
CHILLAN	1.74
LOS ANGELES	1.11
CONCEPCIÓN	3.82
TALCAHUANO	2.82
TEMUCO	2.51
VALDIVIA	1.32
OSORNO	1.34
PTO. MONTT	1.29
subtotal	**40.16**
SANTIAGO	2.58
INDEPENDENCIA	0.82
CONCHALI	1.69
HUECHURABA	0.73
RECOLETA	1.86
PROVIDENCIA	1.22
VITACURA	0.95
BARRENECHEA	0.76

SAMPLE BREAKDOWN: (cont.)

LAS CONDES	2.53
NUNOA	1.95
LA REINA	1.13
MACUL	1.40
PENALOLEN	2.32
LA FLORIDA	4.66
SAN JOAQUIN	1.20
LA GRANJA	1.67
LA PINTANA	2.65
SAN RAMON	1.14
SAN MIGUEL	0.89
LA CISTERNA	1.05
EL BOSQUE	2.14
PAC	1.34
LO ESPEJO	1.31
EST. CENTRAL	1.52
CERRILLOS	0.86
MAIPÚ	3.90
QUINTA NORMAL	1.22
LO PRADO	1.29
PUDAHUEL	1.84
CERRO NAVIA	1.87
RENCA	1.70
QUILICURA	0.60
PTE. ALTO	4.33
SAN BERNARDO	2.71
subtotal	**59.84**

TOTAL   100

The relative weightings were adjusted based on INE projections.

SAMPLE ERROR:

Zones	Sample Size		Margin Of Error (per cent) (95 per cent confidence level)	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
NORTH	312	137	5.55	8.37
CENTRE	600	264	4.00	6.03
SOUTH	338	149	5.33	8.03
TOTAL	**1250**	**550**	**2.77**	**4.18**