

**Gómez, A.,** Franco, R., (2007). "Survival Always Trumps Ideology: A Case Study," *Human Organization*, 66 (3).

Determining the extent to which democracy has taken root in Latin America represents a great challenge amidst the political changes seen in the Region in the last decade. This paper explores the political views of families living in extreme poverty in the Metropolitan Region of Santiago de Chile, by analyzing their socio-economic and political realities within the framework that establishes the characteristics of a democratic government. This longitudinal study used a multiple case study approach for this in-depth exploration and was framed around the concept of human agency. Results from this analysis show this population is keenly aware of politics and how they impact their social and economic environment. Political apathy reflects a discontent with governability and social and economic inequities and does not carry over into families' agency in terms of negotiating their survival and the possibility of a better future for their children. The theoretical and practical implications of adhering to democratic values show that while Chile has made some progress in this area, the country still faces some challenges of which the existing culture of inequity is the most significant one.