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**Research on the Quality of Print Journalism
Regarding Political Survey Results
During the 2004 Electoral Campaign
in the Philippines**

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Manila, Philippines 2004

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Research on the Quality of Print Journalism
Regarding Political Survey Results
During the 2004 Electoral Campaign
in the Philippines

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1. ABSTRACT

Pre-election surveys have been criticised and hailed, almost wherever, and however, they may have been published. Especially candidates who may be lagging behind are likely to express the fear that pre-election survey results could have an unwarranted influence on the voter's decision and therefore on the election results. This thesis gives a short review on the background of those criticisms and why the results of pre-election surveys are still considered important news for the journalists and important information for the voters.

Therefore, this paper investigates the quality of reports on pre-election polls in the 2004 election campaign in the Philippines. The database is a content analysis of 281 articles that were published in the three major newspapers in the Philippines [Manila Bulletin (MB), Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI), Philippine Star (PS)] in the last 4 weeks before election day on May 10, 2004. Press releases from the major survey institutes were also investigated for their conformity to international recommendations.

More than 50 years after the first prediction of an election result was given in the Philippines¹, the results of pre-election surveys are now a basic element of reports during election campaigns. As a result, the quality of the press/media reporting on pre-election reports in the 2004 election campaign can be described as mediocre, although comparable numbers are missing. Articles that mention survey results just peripherally are not dominating. In about 30 percent of the articles, the poll results were used to give a prediction of the election result. The closer it came to election day, the more dominant forecasts saw a victory for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Along with the improving survey results for the incumbent came a decrease in the articles biased towards the opposition's top candidate Fernando Poe Jr. The formal quality of the articles (as may be compared with international standards) could be better.

¹ by the opinion research firm Robot Statistics for the presidential election in 1953

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2. INTRODUCTION

Pre-election polls are a beloved, as well as a hated, partner during times of electoral campaigns. Of course, most often, they are used to the advantage by those who are in leading positions, and they are likely used as newsworthy information by the mass media. But they are also often criticized – especially by politicians and journalists.

During the electoral campaign of the 2004 general elections in the Philippines some candidates for the presidency spoke out their presumptions: either the pre-election survey results were wrong or might have been rigged. As to be expected, up in front were those candidates who lagged behind in the voter's preference, in the last round of pre-election polls published shortly before the election day on May 10²: Ronald Allan Kelley Poe, more popularly known as Fernando Poe, Jr., once remarked: *“the finding of NFO Trends that Ms. Macapagal was leading Poe by 10 percentage points was a lie. You don't see this on the ground,”* he said. (Philippine Daily Inquirer; PDI; 27.04.04)

Panfilo Morena “Ping” Lacson further commented: *“If I have P100 million for political advertisements, I would not spend it on costly television and radio ads. I would spend a big part of it for surveys that would show me leading. [...] No wonder they are manipulating the surveys,”* he said. (Philippine Star; PS; 29.04.04)

Eduardo Cruz “Brother Eddie” Villanueva was quoted in an article in the Manila Bulletin (MB):

“And like other presidential candidates, Villanueva claims that the surveys are being manipulated to help the incumbent win the elections. *“Change will only happen if the people resist survey trending and reject old politics. [...]”*, Villanueva said. (MB30.04.04)

Despite the criticism that polls might be wrong or even rigged, there are five major complaints about pre-election polls, as can be read in Philip Meyer's book “The New Precision Journalism³”:

1. There are too many polls
2. The polls are not accurate enough
3. The polls are often wrongly interpreted
4. Polls are too accurate
5. The polls affect the outcome of the election

The argument that polls could have an illegitimate influence on the voter's decision and, on account of this, can influence the outcome of elections, is probably the most used argument against pre-election polls and against their

² 6% lead for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo over Fernando Poe Jr. in the last Pulse Asia Survey and 7% lead for GMA over FPJ in the last SWS Survey before election day, with all other presidential candidates reaching not more than 11% of the votes.

³ Meyer Philip, *The New Precision Journalism*, Indiana University Press Bloomington & Indianapolis, 1991, S.242ff.

publication before election day. The fear that survey results could have an impact on the voting decision is of course very popular among those political candidates who are lagging behind in the surveys.

As in most other western-orientated countries like the Philippines, the discussions about the meaning of opinion polls increase the closer the election day approaches - especially in the daily press.

However, there is an increasing demand especially among politicians - and even some journalists to ban opinion polling or, at least the publication of its results in certain terms before election day – either by law or by a self-regulation agreement among the members of the press/ mass media.

This demand was enunciated by Philippine Star columnist, Jose C. Sison:

“The law should specifically limit the release of survey results to the public as to frequency and timing. Surveys should not be conducted within thirty days prior to an election. Any survey conducted within that period should only be done privately for the candidates and should not be for public consumption. Severe sanctions should be imposed both on the pollsters and candidates found guilty of violating the rules on the conduct of straw polls.”⁴

Even Senatorial candidate, Oliver Lozano, tried to stop the survey institute, Social Weather Stations (SWS), from conducting surveys or releasing its survey reports during the 2004 electoral campaign. Attorney Lozano, on April 22, 2004, filed a petition for injunction with temporary restraining order (TRO) before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court against the SWS. As expected, the Quezon City Regional Trial Court denied outright the petition stating that Attorney Lozano "has not shown a clear right to the issuance of a temporary restraining order, and neither has he shown the irreparable damage or injustice that he would suffer if the elections surveys will not be restrained."⁵

In some countries, unlike in the Philippines, the critics of pre-election polls were more successful in trying to achieve a ban on the publication of opinion poll results by the mass media during a certain period before election day.

As reported in “The Freedom to Publish Opinion Poll Results” by the Foundation for Information⁶ in 2003, there are 30 out of 66 countries worldwide that have restrictions on publishing pre-election poll results before election day, among which are France, Italy, Greece, Republic of Korea. In 16 out of these 30 countries, results of opinion polls are banned, at least, five days before election day.

That these bans do not make sense for a democratic system and free society have also been often discussed. A ban would not stop the survey institutes from

⁴ Comment “Straw polls” by Jose C. Sison in the Philippine Star, 26.04.04

⁵ Social Weather Stations, Court Denies Lozano Petition for TRO against SWS; Press Release April 23 2004

⁶ Foundation for Information (FI), The Foundation for Information is an independent organisation registered in Amsterdam, Netherlands. It was formed in 1996 by ESOMAR. The Foundation operates on a world-wide scale.

polling, it would only stop them from publishing their results for everybody. British Scientist, Robert Worcester, describes situations with a ban for pre-election surveys as:

"[...] the political parties would do even more polling than they do now – and leak it even worse than they do now.

Secondly, stockbrokers, jobbers and other City 'gents' would do private polls and leak them (or make them up as they now).

Thirdly foreign media would commission private polls [...] and publish them overseas, and of course the results would be transmitted and reported subsequently in this country."⁷

Fortunately, the international trend seems to be more inclined towards a liberalization for the regulation of opinion poll reporting. As is written in the 2003 Foundation for Information Report, entitled: "The Freedom to Publish Poll Results", "restrictions have been liberalised or even lifted in 15 countries. They remain unchanged in five countries but in another nine, heavier restrictions were introduced since the last study."⁸

In the Philippines, the survey institute Social Weather Stations under Dr. Mahar Mangahas, Ph. D., fought a successful battle at the Philippine Supreme Court in 1999 for the freedom of speech, including the freedom of listening, assimilating and reporting what the sentiments of the Filipinos are. The Philippine Supreme Court, on May 5, 2001⁹, declared with finality that:

"[...] a ban on election survey publication violates the constitutional freedoms of speech, of expression, and of the press¹⁰". This Supreme Court ruling unequivocally declared as unconstitutional the law that banned the publication of pre-election and exit polls in the Philippines¹¹.

2.1 Questions to be answered

As we know now, the politicians, as well as the journalists will not stop to criticize the pre-election polls and their results. But they will also not stop to use them for their own purposes, as long as the numbers fit their interests.

And as long as there are trustworthy survey institutes, that try to get an insight of the public opinion at a certain moment, using therefor the instruments of empirical methods, there will be reporting about these results. And it is the right of the reader to get the best information possible and all the information he needs to be capable in understanding the results of these surveys.

Before talking about possible effects on the voter's behaviour, it is essential to check on the quality of the articles, as they might be the first source for the public. This paper might, therefore be something like a "control of the control". As is known, the "control" function, for example, of the politicians and their work, is one of the basic responsibilities of the journalists. As journalism normally has

⁷ WORCESTER, Robert M.: British Public Opinion. A Guide to the History and Methodology of Political Opinion Polling, Oxford, Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1991, S.202

⁸ SPANGENBERG, Frits; The Freedom to Publish Opinion Poll Results, Report on a Worldwide Update, Foundation for Information (FI), 2003

⁹ G.R. 147571

¹⁰ MANGAHAS, Mahar: Election Survey Freedom in the Philippines/July 29, 2003

¹¹ RA 9006 – section 5.4

hard times to control its own work there is a vacuum – a “gap” – for studies like this.

Because of that it is the purpose of this paper to check on how the survey institutes release their information to the media and how the media reports about them.

To get an overview over the quality of articles, including information about pre-election surveys, the following questions should be answered:

1. How often are polls mentioned in the print media before an upcoming election?
2. What aspects are media reports focused on: current poll results or statements about polls in general?
3. Are articles about polls used to give a prediction about the election result ahead of time?
4. Are there particular political leanings to poll-related articles, and do they come along with the developments in the surveys?
5. What formal information about the particular survey is mentioned in the examined articles? (Conformity to international standards)
6. How many aspects (compared to international standards) of survey related information is provided through press-releases by survey institutes and other institutions?

But before these questions are answered, some important facts about the relationship between pre-election surveys and the journalists, as well as the relationship between pre-election surveys and the voters should be mentioned.

3. BACKGROUND:

3.1 The importance of pre-election polls for journalists

Like communication scientists found out in other studies before, results of pre-election polls are considered newsworthy information that is, therefore, easily represented by the mass media. Philip Meyer describes it as:

“For many journalists, the effort to measure and even predict electoral behaviour has been motivated by simple competitiveness. The most interesting fact about an election is who wins. If you can find out ahead of time, it is news by definition.”¹²

During electoral campaigns, polls are likely reported in the mass media, and like the Canadian Pollster Andersen describes it, *“during periods when polls were recently released they received more attention than any other election issue, and commonly occupied the lead story.”¹³*

If we agree on the duty of journalists, among others, to present recent and actual developments in society, then we understand better why the results of

¹² MEYER Philip, Loc. cit. pp 241-242

¹³ ANDERSEN, Robert, 'Reporting Public Opinion Polls: The Media and the 1997 Canadian Election', International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 2000, 12: p 285-298.

pre-election polls, and even “polls” that do not earn this term, are taken right through all processes of journalistic news-selection, like the “Gatekeeper Chain” described by David Manning White in 1950¹⁴, the “news-bias appendage” described by Klein and Maccoby in 1954¹⁵ and the “news value theory” described first by Galtung and Ruge in 1965¹⁶.

3.2 Effects of poll reporting on voting behaviour

Communication scientists differ in their opinions about the influence of pre-election poll results on the voter’s decision. However, it is clear that the perception of the poll coverage is considered as an important pre-condition for a direct influence on the voting behavior. As the German scientist, Brettschneider¹⁷, found out, the perception of poll-coverage through mass media increased from 1957 to 1983 to a level from 17% to 75% of the German population. Since then, the percentage of those who got information about polls from the mass media, stabilized between two thirds and three quarters out of 100 percent.

Obviously, the results will differ between the Philippines and Germany, especially considering the media environment of the average Philippine households. According to an SWS Survey, in 1993, 82% of the families had a radio, 54% of the families had a TV; and only 7% of the families were subscribers to one of the daily newspapers¹⁸.

Somehow, some things have changed in the last 10 years. According to recent findings of SWS (2002), 53% of the population watches a daily news show on television, 11% read the latest news in the newspapers and 17% listen to the latest news on radio, at least once a day.

In the same survey, SWS asked the following question: “How often do you follow the results of any public opinion poll in any newspaper or magazine?” Despite the 13% who answered as having followed the survey results regularly, 52% of the respondents answered that they followed the reporting of poll results at least once in a while.

As an answer to the question “whether or not results of some polling organisations that make frequent predictions of election results, are most correct”: 53% percent of the respondents nodded to “most correct” (19% rather not correct, 28% don’t know)¹⁹.

¹⁴ WHITE, David Manning, 1950: The “Gate Keeper”: A Case Study In the Selection of News. In: Journalism Quarterly 27, pp 383-390

¹⁵ KLEIN, Malcolm W.; MACCOBY, Nathan, 1954: Newspaper Objectivity in the 1952 Campaign. In: Journalism Quarterly 31, pp 285-296

¹⁶ GALTUNG, Johan; RUGE, Mari Holmboe, 1965: The Structure of Foreign News. The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Foreign Newspapers. In: Journal of Peace Research 1, pp 64-90

¹⁷ BRETTSCHEIDER, Frank: Wahlumfragen: Medienberichterstattung und Wirkungen. In: Wüst, Andreas M. (Hrsg.): Politbarometer. Festschrift für Dieter Roth. Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2003, p 257-282

¹⁸ SWS Survey, Do the mass media really affect public opinion?, Social Weather Bulletin, 9/10 1993; May 1993

¹⁹ SWS Survey, 2002 Fourth Quarter (PR1 and 2), Survey Sourcebook, 2002

Still, the perception that media reporting about poll results does not tell of a direct link which may influence a person's voting behaviour. As Brettschneider²⁰ found out, those voters who were interested in the media coverage of pre-election polls – and might have used them as an additional information to make their final voting decision were mostly so-called “Campaign-Junkies”. Those are the persons who desirously absorb information about the electoral campaign, wherever they can. Those people are politically very interested and they are considered to belong to the better formally educated. But they are also considered to be mostly people with an above-average developed connection to a certain political party or basic political setting. And because of their relatively close bonds to a political party or a certain political basic setting, “Campaign-Junkies” are considered to be almost invulnerable to any manipulation by pre-election poll reporting.

In the Philippines “Campaign-Junkies” are not the same as they are described for the German voters. In the Philippines, the more appropriate term for this type of voters would probably be “Political Junkies” because they are not seriously bound to a certain party.

Compare:

“Since politicians change parties easily, voters are much more loyal to personalities than to parties.” and “[...] owing to weakness of party affinity, the subscribers and clients can come from different parts of the political spectrum.”²¹

This study cannot do it, but it would be interesting to check on their long-time bonds to at least a certain political basic setting. As experienced in the electoral campaign of 2004, the political bonds in the Philippines seem to be alliances with characters in politics – more than with any basic settings. In the Philippines people are much more open to change their political camp than in i.e. the European countries. Elections in the Philippines are more about persons, personalities and campaign rallies, rather than about issues. Therefore, it might be possible that even so-called “Campaign-Junkies” in the Philippines are more open to be influenced by mass media reports about pre-election polls than in other countries.

In support of this view, an SWS Occasional Paper (March 2003) cited that: “SWS Surveys show that only a few Filipino allow their voting choices to be affected by the published polls. In these few cases, the tendencies to go for the underdog are almost strong enough to offset the tendencies to go for the ‘overdog’, reducing further the slight bias for leading candidates.”²²

To base their argumentation, the authors of the March 2003 SWS Occasional Paper, Mangahas and Guerrero, referred to a question that was asked for the Social Weather Fourth Quarter 2000 and Second Quarter 2001 Reports:

²⁰ BRETTSCHEIDER; Ibid.

²¹ MANGAHAS Mahar, GUERRERO Linda Luz; Opinion Polling in the Philippines: An Encyclopedia Article; in Social Weather Stations Occasional Paper, March 2003

²² MANGAHAS Mahar, GUERRERO Linda Luz; Ibid.

“Because of the survey news you got, would you say that your feelings as to who would probably win the senatorial election [became] clearer, confused or no effect.²³”

From all respondents who were aware of pre-election survey news in the media, almost 30% answered that their feelings had become clearer (same in 2000). Over 20% answered that their feelings had become more confused (26% in 2000) but the majority in both years answered, that the results of pre-election surveys did have no effect at all (51% in 2001; 44% in 2000).

Considered that a personal estimation of the influence of survey results is not the best methodology to find out about it, it can still be taken as serious hint.

To find out about the “underdog” effect (voting for the candidate, who is far behind in the surveys to help him look better because of feelings like mercy), or the so-called “band wagon” effect (voting for the assumed winner to be with the winning majority), the following two questions were asked in the same survey by the SWS also in 2000 and in 2001:

- b) Changed your vote to a candidate strong in surveys from one weak in surveys?
- c) Changed your vote to a candidate weak in surveys from one strong in surveys?

The answers, based on the Filipinos of voting age in the 1998 election and who got any news on 1998 pre-election surveys, the results were the following:

- a) In 2001 11% answered yes (21% in 2000) and 89% answered no (78%).
- b) In 2001 9% answered yes (16% in 2000) and 91% answered no (84%)²⁴.

With one exception, the Yes answers were always higher within the household of dwelling classes of “ABC” than in “D” or “E”. This might be a slight hint, that the voters of the “ABC” classes could have been more influenced by the mass media reports, than the Filipinos of the lower social-economic classes (“D” & “E”).

Table 1:

	‘Overdog’ & ‘Underdog’ Effect / Poor People			
	RP	ABC	D	E
a) yes	11% (21%)	17% (31%)	10% (21%)	11% (17%)
a) no	89% (78%)	83% (69%)	90% (79%)	89% (83%)
b) yes	9% (16%)	16% (15%)	8% (18%)	7% (7%)
b) no	91% (84%)	84% (85%)	92% (81%)	93% (93%)

The percentages in the chart above are the results of the Social Weather Stations Report: Second Quarter 2001; the percentages in brackets represent the results of the Social Weather Stations Report in 2000.

²³ Social Weather Report, Second Quarter 2001, July 9 to 27, 2001; p.64

²⁴ Social Weather Report, Second Quarter 2001; Ibid. and Social Weather Report, Fourth Quarter 2000, December 8 to 17, 2000; p.78

As said before, communication scientists differ in their opinions about the effects of the poll reporting on the voter's decision. The British Scientist Robert Worcester, concludes in his book "British Public Opinion. A Guide to the History and Methodology of Political Opinion Polling", the following:

"Finally, do polls influence voting behaviour? I believe they do, and I believe this to be a good thing. For many years pollsters and psephologists both in Britain and the United States have shown that the public took notice of the polls and that their voting behaviour was affected thereby."²⁵

Beyond controversy is that voters in the Philippines use the mass media reporting about poll results as additional information to make up their voting decision. And because the importance of mass media is steadily increasing in the Philippines, the quality of the information that is provided by the mass media should also be steadily improved. That is also why the call for a better education for journalists all over the world do not fall silent:

i.e. "The world has become so complicated, the growth of available information is so explosive, that the journalist needs to be a filter as well as a transmitter, organizer and interpreter as well as one who gathers delivers facts. In addition to knowing how to get the information into print or on the air, he or she also must know how to get it into the receiver's head."²⁶ (also Breed in his study "Social Control in the Newsroom" of 1955²⁷)

In a personal interview with Ms. Evangelina Lourdes "Luli" M. Arroyo, only daughter of Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (GMA), she was of the opinion that the influence of the journalists on the news agenda during the 2004 electoral campaign seemed very high. Even so, the campaign team of her mother published "a lot of press releases on several different issues", but the mass media "seemed to focus only on a few, including the discussion about who is leading in the surveys." As Luli said, the result was, of course, that the campaign team would have concentrated on the issues that were finally published, rather than on those that were never seen in, nor heard in any media.

The mass media as source of information about candidates, the election, and also survey results, can be seen as the main source for political information for the general public during election periods. Of course, registered voters can also get their information through talking to friends, family, colleagues or even the church, but most of the time, this information has also been already transmitted over to the mass media beforehand, then to the conversational partner who now quotes as example a certain survey result²⁸.

²⁵ WORCESTER, Robert M; Loc.cit. p.203f.

²⁶ MEYER Philip; Loc.cit. p.1

²⁷ BREED, Warren, Social Control in the Newsroom: A Functional Analysis, Social Forces 33, no. 4 (1955): 326-335

²⁸ BRETTSCHEIDER, Frank: Wahlumfragen. Empirische Befunde zur Darstellung in den Medien und zum Einfluss auf das Wahlverhalten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und den USA. München: Minerva, 1991

A very recent study by the Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC) of the Ateneo de Manila University gives a new basis to that finding:

As presented in the study “The Vote of the Poor – The Values and Pragmatics of Elections” (16 focus-group discussions), the people considered poor (Social Classes D&E) are influenced in their choice of candidates by the following sources in declining order:

Media; Family; Church; Political parties; Surveys²⁹

Considered that the “D” and “E” classes count roughly about 93 percent of some 43 million Filipino voters, this result can be taken as a more than important sign for the meaning of mass media reporting during electoral campaigns. Taking a slight hint of the possible problems that may come with this development, Sheila Coronel and Yvonne Chua wrote in their article, “The Poor Vote Is A Thinking Vote”:

“Another problem the poor have, though, is that they take their cues on the suitability of candidates mainly from the mass media, which do not always give a complete or accurate picture of the qualifications of the contenders.”³⁰

A basic line should become clear:

Any information about pre-election polls and forecasts merely serves as additional information for the people involved in a political process like the elections (i.e. politicians may use it as a campaigning tool).

For the mass media the same information will be used to describe the so-called public opinion during such fierce times. And the public, from poor to rich, may and will, take their parts out of it, to make up their minds and finalize their voting decision. Even if the voter uses the results of pre-election polls to vote somebody out of office or hinder somebody else from winning a powerful position, that is still fair.

As Wolfgang Donsbach, Editor of the Journal of Public Opinion Research and former President of the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) wrote: *“a modern constitutional democracy must believe in the responsibility of its citizens. This also includes belief in the capacity of its citizen to independently select information relevant to them and use this information sensibly.”³¹*

4. DATA and METHODOLOGY

This paper contains the results of a content analysis of three major daily newspapers in the Philippines within the last four weeks before the election day of the 2004 Philippine General Elections (April 12th to May 10th 2004). As

²⁹ The Vote of the Poor; The Values and Pragmatics of Election; Institute of Philippine Culture; Ateneo de Manila University, April 2004

³⁰ CORONEL Sheila S. and CHUA Yvonne T.; The poor vote is a thinking vote, Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism; April 26/27 2004; www.pcij.org; August 11 2004; 15h

³¹ DONSBACH, Wolfgang; Who's Afraid of Election Polls? Normative and Empirical Arguments for Freedom of Pre-Election Surveys. Amsterdam: ESOMAR 2001

primary sources for this research, I focused on the three newspapers with the biggest circulation base in the Philippines. By the time when the work for this paper was started, those three newspaper were:

1. MB; Manila Bulletin (344.205 copies/Sundays - 262.809 copies on weekdays)
2. PDI; Philippine Daily Inquirer (270 000 copies/Sun – 250 000 copies on weekdays) and
3. PS; Philippine Star (259.000 copies/day)

A total of 281 articles were analysed including 189 news articles, 68 opinion articles, 22 business articles and two different, who are considered to be articles published by international news agencies. All coding was done by a single coder to ensure a high coder reliability.

For the results of this paper, two major steps were done:

Step 1: content quality analysis
This analysis was done to tell how often results of pre-election polls were used in an article, and in what context the results of pre-election polls were used before election day.

Step 2: formal quality analysis
This analysis was done to tell if internationally recommended quality standards for the representation of survey results were complied with by the articles or not.

For getting the results, each of the 281 articles was checked by using a code sheet with 46 variables, including 4 screening variables.

Step 1: For the frequencies, there were variables used like “job of the article author”, “user of the results in the article”, “were poll results compared” or “gives the article a prediction of the election outcome”, “are polls rated in the article” among other things.

Step 2: For the formal quality analysis I referred to the “Standards for Minimal Disclosure” in the “Code of Professional Ethics and Practices” of the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR)³² that were given to public opinion researchers in March 1986 and were recently renewed in March 2004.

Of course, it is always difficult to find a quality standard that may be used to measure other people’s work. That is why I chose the same criteria which have been used in similar studies in the past. (Andersen 2000; Weaver/Kim 2002, Brettschneider 2003)

For having the chance to have my results compared with other national studies later, the variables for the formal quality analysis were oriented with the variables in the study of the German Election Campaigns by Prof. Dr. Frank

³² compare to www.aapor.org - Code of Professional Ethics and Practices; August 9th, 2004

Brettschneider³³. Because of that, articles were, among others, checked for the following eight AAPOR criteria:

1. Number of respondents
2. Institution that commissioned the poll
3. Question wording
4. Margin of error of results
5. Definition of population for which the survey is representative
6. Methodology
7. Time of fieldwork
8. Name of the poll institute that conducted the poll

For the articles of the Manila Bulletin, I coded several sub-articles under one main headline article as autonomous articles.

The reason why is easy to explain:

Under the main headline on the front page, the Manila Bulletin published articles that favoured, i.e., one candidate for the presidency and collected therefore several articles about completely different issues under one headline. Those sub-articles were also written by different authors and can therefore be considered as autonomous articles.

5. RESULTS

5.1 STEP 1: content quality analysis

In the 2004 electoral campaign in the Philippines, 281 articles were published during the last four weeks in the three major newspapers (which are the principal sources of this paper). Compared to the other two newspapers, Manila Bulletin (MB) and the Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI), the Philippine Star (PS) had a slightly higher number of articles that included information about surveys. The articles' allocation were as followed:

Manila Bulletin - 81 articles, Philippine Daily Inquirer - 78 articles and the Philippine Star -122 articles.

5.1.1 Information about polls or recent survey results

The number of articles, including pre-election poll results did not significantly change during the time period of the last four weeks before election day. The numbers of articles, including pre-election results, cross-tabulated by weeks, were:

1st week before election day: 67; 2nd week before election day: 84; 3rd week before election day: 69; last week before election day: 61 articles.

Out of all 281 articles, over two thirds (71,5%) included information about recent poll results; and almost one third of the articles (28.5%) included information just about polls and surveys in general, sometimes referring to developments at

³³ BRETTSCHEIDER, Frank: Wahlumfragen: Medienberichterstattung und Wirkungen. In: Wüst, Andreas M. (Hrsg.): Politbarometer. Festschrift für Dieter Roth. Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2003, p. 257-282.

certain survey institutes; sometimes presenting additional information about polls.

It seems that the newspapers reacted on the second week (April 19 – 25) and the third week (April 26 – May 2) before election day, when an above-average number of articles about surveys were published (84 articles in all). The high number of articles with general information about polls in the third week (doubled) could be an answer to that. (35 articles compared to 14, 14, and 17 in the other weeks).

Although the Manila Bulletin had only the second highest number after the Philippine Star of articles about surveys in all (81), the Bulletin had the highest number of articles with general information about polls which can be considered most of the times as additional information for the readers for a better understanding of survey results.

Out of all 281 articles, 73 articles (26%) can be considered as “high quality/information articles” about survey results during the 2004 electoral campaign. In those articles, the subject “survey” was dominating, while the article represented recent figures.

5.1.2 Amount of information about polls in an article

To make a conclusion about the general quality of survey-related articles, previous studies used to check on the number of articles which presented information about surveys just casually.

The scholars moan that, in those articles, most of the time the sources of information are not named, therefore, non-verifiable. Further additional information about the mentioned survey results are most of the time also not mentioned.

In this study, the ratio between informative articles and articles with marginally mentioned survey information is positively 60:40 percent³⁴. This is still a good ratio, considering that 60 percent of the studied articles include more than one-third information about surveys. Although there is the slight concern that the ratio might turn more to the side with less informative articles in the future.

As seen in the German Election campaigns for the “Bundestag” in 1987 and 2002 the same ratio worsened over the years from 80:20 percent to 36:64 percent in the latest survey³⁵.

5.1.3 What kind of articles made it to front page

It could have been assumed, that most of those 73 articles (“high quality/information articles”) might have been front page articles, the reality, however, tells us differently. With a statistical irrelevant Cramer’s V of 0.13 there is no statistically significant relationship between those articles and the front page placement. (43 out of 73 articles were no front page articles.)

³⁴ For this ratio the variable subject poll was recoded: answers dominating/important (1/2) were put together compared to the peripheral (3)

³⁵ BRETTSCHEIDER, Frank; Loc.cit. pp 257-282

The 281 articles all in all contain 87 (31%) front page articles, almost one third. Even though the “high quality/information articles” still represent the biggest group among the front page articles (30), the articles which included information about surveys just peripherally, is still high with 25.

Compared to articles that include statements about polls in general, the number of articles with recent survey results on the front page is still way higher (65 compared to 22).

Articles with recent survey results are therefore more likely published on front page than articles, including information about polls in general.

There is a strong statistical relationship between the kind of article (news, opinion, business) and the front page. (Cramer's $V = .451$; Approx. Sig. = .000) As seen in the database, 86 out of 87 front page articles were news articles, only one opinion article made it to the front page. That opinion article was written by the Chairman of the Board and Publisher of the Philippine Star, Maximo V. Soliven³⁶ and can, therefore, be considered more as an exception.

5.1.4 User of the survey results

As a user of an article, I considered the person, who decided to use the survey results for his purposes. If the user of the survey results in an article is a journalist, it was the journalist's decision to use the survey results as additional information or even as a basic information for his article. If the user is a politician, the survey results were used by politicians to strengthen their arguments in public. If the user is a pollster, of course the survey results were used by a professional communication scientist or other similar expert.

In this study, in 161 (57%) articles, the survey results were used by journalists, followed by the politicians with 85 (30%) and the pollsters with 10 (4%) of the articles. In the missing 10%, there was no user of the survey results obviously.

5.1.5 Prediction of election result

When talking about pre-election surveys, two different terms should be discussed. First: “opinion poll” seen as a snap-shot of the actual allocation of public opinion at a certain moment (field time or a poll); and Second “election prediction”, which is considered to give a forecast about the election trend or results ahead of time. Even if this differentiation is not found in the books, one has to keep in mind that an opinion poll does not directly lead to a reliable prediction of the election result.

Like Robert Worcester describes it:

“There is no opinion poll in the world that, taken in April, can predict the outcome of an election held on 14 June, and that goes for France, Britain, or anywhere else in the Western world. A poll is representative of opinion only at the time it is taken.”³⁷

Still, some of the journalists take the results of pre-election surveys for granted and forget that the results of surveys are momentary snap-shots of the “pulse” of the respondents; within a defined sample size; within a defined territorial area; and undertaken within a particularly defined period.

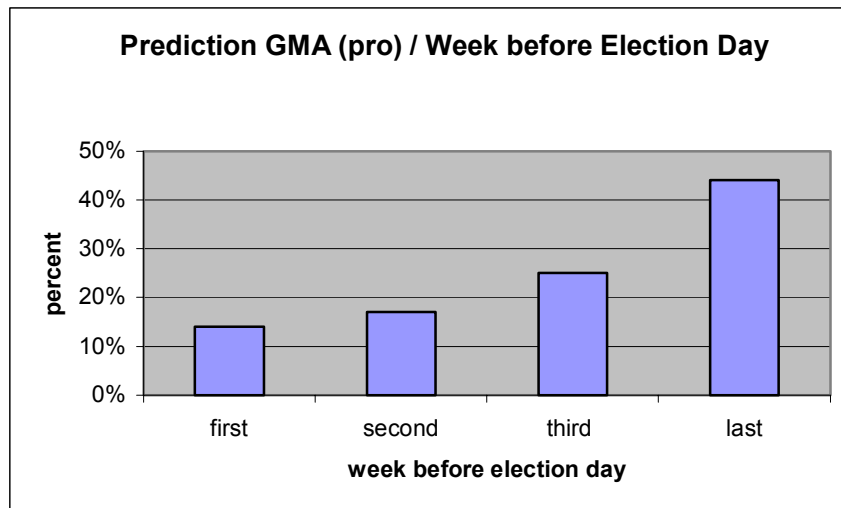
³⁶ Philippine Star; SOLIVEN Maximo V; “If Comelec Chairman Abalos collapsed...”; May 9 2004

³⁷ WORCESTER, Robert M.; Loc.cit. pp.129

In this study, in 81 out of 281 articles (almost 30%), journalists gave already a prediction of the election outcome – most of the time, based on the quoted survey results; sometimes, as a quote of a politician who did the same. Using the pre-election survey results as a mirror of the momentary public opinion about “Whom would you vote for, if the presidential election would be held today?”, 31 of the 81 articles predicted that the election would be still undecided.

The closer it got to election day, the more that journalists followed the increasing numbers in the surveys for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Seen by each of the 4 weeks before election day, the number of predictions that said the election result is already clear (N=52), increased towards the election day on May 10. (Table 2)

Table 2:



The basis for the chart above are all articles that made a prediction of the election result and said the election result was already clear. (N=52) They were then cross tabulated with articles that biased towards GMA and the week of their publication.

Considering that the newspapers followed the survey results in their publications, the strong statistical bias towards President Gloria Macapagal – Arroyo was not a surprise.

Out of 31 Articles that have a clear prediction of the election outcome, 22 are pro GMA, 5 pro FPJ (1 against him), 1 pro Ping, 2 pro Roco and 0 pro Bro.Eddie³⁸.

As a result of the statistical chi-square test, you can say if there were more articles of the same kind (i.e. that have a clear prediction of the election outcome and have a political bias), most of them would be PRO GMA as well³⁹.

³⁸ President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, GMA; Fernando Poe Jr., FPJ; Panfilo Moreno Lacson, Ping; Raul Sagarbarria Roco, Roco; Eduardo Cruz Villanueva, Bro. Eddie

³⁹ At 0.05 level of significance and with 8 degrees of freedom, chi – square value computed 9,18851E-13. We reject the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between the bias of the article among the candidates.

Formula to get the chi-square:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

5.1.6 Candidate bias

To find out about the candidate bias of an article, each argument for or against one of the five presidential candidates was weighed separately. Most of the time, it is easy to tell for or against which candidate the article favoured. In cases of a marginal difference, the arguments of an article were counted to get the final bias.

After a screening variable (“does the article have a political bias), there were five variables implemented whether the article favoured or disfavoured each of the five candidates (President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, GMA; Fernando Poe Jr., FPJ; Panfilo Moreno Lacson, Ping; Raul Sagarbarria Roco, Roco; Eduardo Cruz Villanueva, Bro. Eddie). Because of this set up, several articles could be weighed repeatedly.

Almost every second article that was published in the last four weeks before election day, including information about surveys, had somehow a political bias (48% or 135 out of 281 articles).

From those 135 biased articles, the clear majority tended towards the incumbent GMA with 68 articles or 50%, and only 6 articles or about 4% tending against her.

The other 67 articles favoured the other presidential candidates in declining order: FPJ (22 or 16%); Ping (15 or 11%), Bro.Eddie (14 or 10%) and Roco (8 or almost 6%).

The reason why Roco is last in that ranking can be explained by his drop out of the campaigning activities from April 12 to 28, due to medical treatment in the Houston, Texas in the United States of America. During his active time in the electoral campaign, the number of articles tending towards Roco was almost doubled than during the time when he was out of the country.

As earlier mentioned before, it is obvious that the incumbent President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo could rely on a strong support by the press (at least, of the three newspaper examined for this paper). During the last four weeks of the 2004 electoral campaign, almost every second of those articles favouring one of the five presidential candidates, tended towards Ms. Macapagal-Arroyo.

The supporting effect that this press coverage might have had on the often proclaimed “band wagon effect” for GMA, was also boosted by a dwindling positive coverage for the opposition’s top candidate FPJ. In the last four weeks of the 2004 electoral campaign, the FPJ-tending articles declined steadily from over 20% in the first week to only 10% in the last week before election day. (Table 3)

Table 3:

Candidate Bias / Week before Election Day						
			week before election day			
			first week b4	second week b4	third week b4	last week b4 elec.day
pro/ neutral/ against GMA	pro	Col %	50,0%	58,3%	36,8%	58,6%
	neutral	Col %	50,0%	36,1%	55,3%	37,9%
	against	Col %		5,6%	7,9%	3,4%
pro/ neutral/ against FPJ	pro	Col %	21,9%	19,4%	13,2%	10,3%
	neutral	Col %	75,0%	75,0%	76,3%	86,2%
	against	Col %	3,1%	5,6%	10,5%	3,4%

The base for the percentages of both candidates are in each case all articles with a political bias (N=135; out of all 281 articles) split up into the last four weeks before election day according to the day of appearance in the newspapers:

Out of the three major newspapers, the biggest support for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo came from the Philippine Star. From all articles with a political bias for GMA (68 articles), more than every second article was published in the Philippine Star (52,9%). (One has to keep in mind that the total number of articles published by the Philippine Star was also way higher than the number of articles published by the other two newspapers)

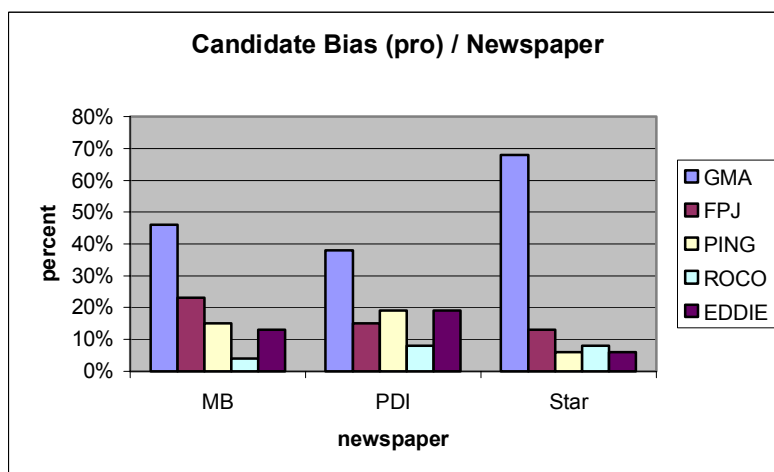
Still with a statistical significance of 0.181, it can be said that, the higher number of Pro-GMA articles published by the Philippine Star was not just by chance.

Of the three newspapers checked for their political preferences (by the article they published, touching the topic surveys with a concrete political leaning for, or against, one of the five presidential candidates), the Philippine Star is the newspaper that favoured GMA the most. Out of 53 articles with a political leaning for a presidential candidate, 36 articles (67%) were written in favour of GMA.

Both other newspapers seemed also to be "Pro-GMA" newspapers, considering that each of them published the majority of their biased articles for the incumbent GMA:

The Manila Bulletin 45%; Daily Inquirer 38% (Table 4)

Although the picture might look very clear, one has to keep in mind, again, that the basis for that survey was just those articles which presented, somehow, information about the topic "survey". Despite these results, it is possible that other articles in the three newspapers examined favoured the other five candidates in a different arrangement. But this does not seem likely.

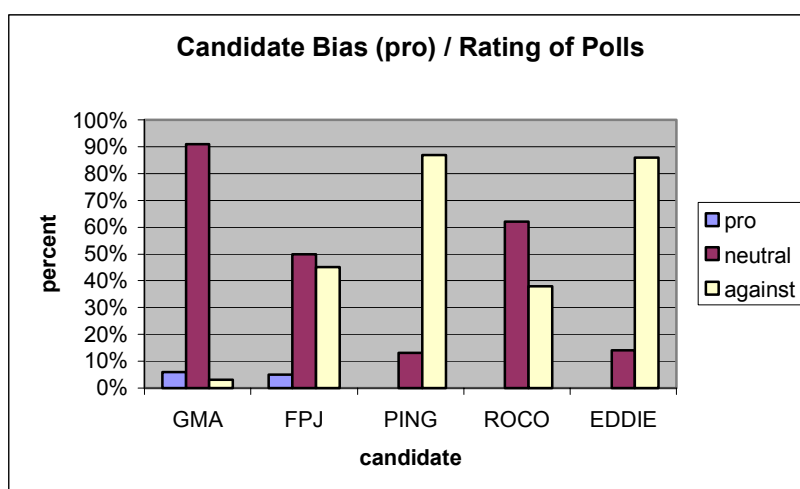
Table 4:

The basis for the chart above is the number of articles with a positive bias towards a candidate. (N=135); The basis for each newspaper were MB 48 articles, PDI 26 articles and Star 53 articles.

5.1.7 Rating of the polls compared to the candidate bias

During electoral campaigns, survey results are almost always criticised by those candidates lagging behind. To check if this was also the case before the 2004 Philippine General Elections, this study used a variable that indicated how the articles rated the polls in general - positive, neutral or negative. Out of 281 articles only 17 (6%) rated the polls positive; 209 (74%) were neutral and 55 (20%) rated the polls as negative.

To check the link to the several candidates, the variable “candidate bias” was used again and cross tabulated with the variable “rating of the polls”.

Table 5:

The basis for the chart above is the number of articles with a positive bias towards a candidate. (N=135). The variable “rating of polls” was coded “negative”, “neutral” and “positive”.

From all the articles which were pro-GMA, 4 articles rated the polls as positive, only two rated the polls as negative. As expected, the articles which favoured the opposition candidates FPJ, Ping and Bro.Eddie, rated the polls overwhelmingly negative. (Table 5)

For GMA, Ping and Bro.Eddie, there is even a statistically significant relationship between the rating of the polls and the political bias towards the candidate. Given an eta of .508 for GMA, .495 for Ping, and .424 for Bro. Eddie at the 0.05 level of significance.

5.2 STEP 2: formal quality analysis

5.2.1 Conformity to AAPOR standards

As mentioned before, this study refers to the same criteria as they were used in other studies before. (Paletz 1980⁴⁰, Miller/Hurd 1982⁴¹, Andersen 2000⁴²; Weaver/Kim 2002⁴³, Brettschneider 2003⁴⁴) The framework for the formal quality analysis is, therefore, oriented towards the recommendations given to journalists by the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR), the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) and the European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (ESOMAR).

As their recommendations are almost similar, these criteria can be regarded as a generally accepted measure to analyse the 281 articles examined in this study.

Although this paper treats the question of these formal criteria as a “the more – the better” story, it has to be said that not all scholars agree that all eight AAPOR disclosure standards should be included in an article about polls. So was written by Meyer and Jurgensen in 1991 that “literal conformity of every report on a poll to AAPOR standards would place burden on the readers that would reduce, not increase, their net acquisition of information⁴⁵”.

Considering just the articles that were dominated by the subject surveys and that presented recent figures (N=73), almost every article included information about the name of the poll institute that conducted the poll.

In two thirds of the articles, the exact time of fieldwork for the mentioned study was presented.

The sample size used was mentioned in 59%, the margin of error in 36% and the Institution that commissioned the survey in 32% of the articles.

⁴⁰ PALETZ, David L./SHORT Jonathan Y./ BAKER Helen/ COOKMAN CAMPBELL Barbara/ COOPER Richard J./ OESLANDER Rochelle M.: Polls in the Media: Content, Credibility, and Consequences; In: Public Opinion Quarterly 44(4), 1980, pp 495-513

⁴¹ MILLER, M. Mark/ HURD Robert: Conformity to AAPOR Standards in Newspaper Reporting of Public Opinion Polls. In: Public Opinion Quarterly 46(2), 1982, pp 243-249

⁴² ANDERSEN, Robert; Loc.cit. pp 285-298

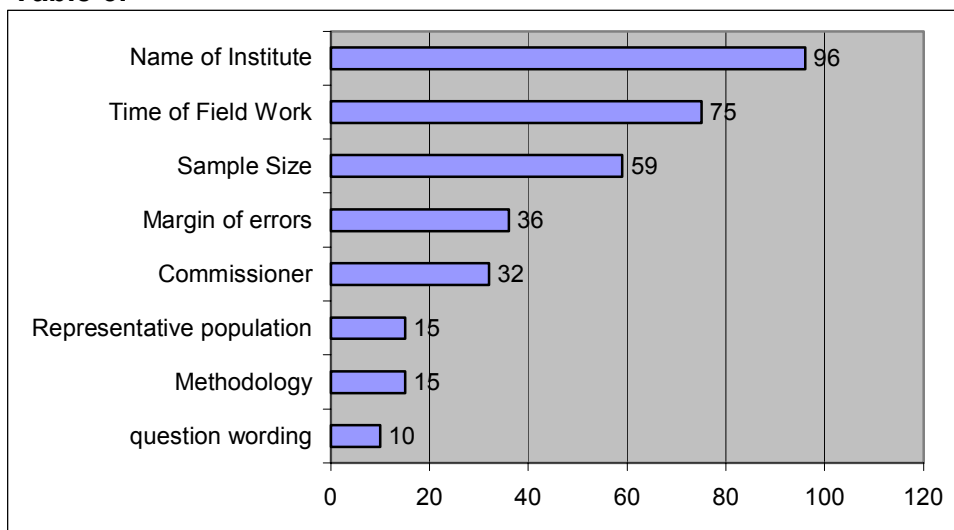
⁴³ WEAVER, David/ SUNG Tae Kim: Quality in Public Opinion Poll Reports: Issue Salience, Knowledge and Conformity to AAPOR/WAPOR Standards; in: International Journal of Public Opinion Research 14 (2), 2002, pp 202 – 212

⁴⁴ BRETTSCHEIDER, Frank; Loc.cit. pp 257-282

⁴⁵ WEAVER, David/ SUNG Tae Kim: Ibid.

Less attention was given to the information about the population for which the survey was representative of (15%), the methodology that was used (15%) and the exact phrasing/wording of the question (10%). (Table 6)

Table 6:



Of course it would be interesting to have comparable numbers from former electoral campaigns in the Philippines, but sadly there are no numbers available.

That is why we have to keep in mind what these numbers really are: one picture of a single moment (4 weeks) before the 2004 election.

For including AAPOR criteria in an article, the mean for all 73 articles is 3,37. Compared with the last results of a survey on the German press coverage in 2002, this is still way better by a plus of 0.79⁴⁶.

It might be of interest to note that in the electoral campaign in Germany in 1998 the number of articles (82), as well as the mean of AAPOR criteria (3,50), was similar to the findings of this study (Please keep in mind that in the German study, 4 newspapers and 12 weeks before election day were examined compared to the 3 newspapers and 4 weeks of this study). It still has to be disputed that the quality of Philippine press coverage on survey results does not follow the German way.

Given a look on the mean of each newspaper, the Philippine Daily Inquirer gets the lead with a mean of 3,93 AAPOR criteria mentioned in all articles that were dominated by the subject survey and presented recent results. The Philippine Star goes second with a mean of 3,36, followed by the Manila Bulletin with a mean of 3,08.

It can be said that the Philippine Daily Inquirer published the fewest articles with the mentioned requirements (N=14), but those included, in average, more AAPOR criteria than the articles published by the Philippine Star (N=33) and especially, than those articles published by the Manila Bulletin (N=26).

⁴⁶ BRETTSCHEIDER, Frank: Loc.cit. page 265

In other comparable studies, the AAPOR criteria were taken as the dependent variables, cross-tabulated with the following independent variables:

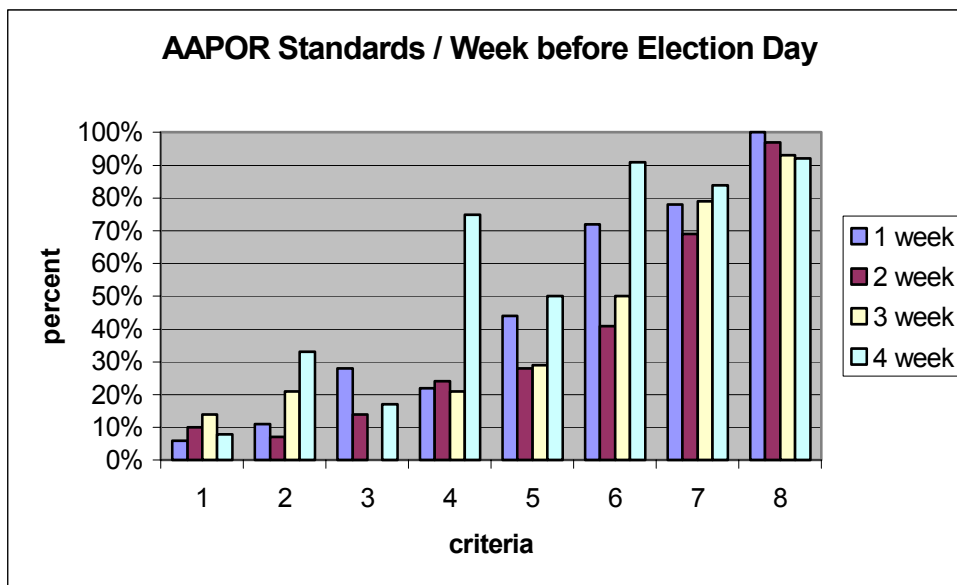
- a) year of election
- b) time period until election day
- c) survey topic and
- d) source of the survey information

Because of a lack of comparable numbers in this study, there could only be a checked on the changes during the time period of the last 4 weeks before election day (May 10, 2004).

Compared to the amount of articles published in each week before election day, Table 7 shows an increase in the percentages of included AAPOR criteria for (Table7):

- Methodology (+22%)
- Commissioner (+53%)
- Margin of errors (+6%)
- Sample Size (+20%)
- Time of field work (+5%)

Table 7:



1. question wording 2. methodology 3. representative population 4. commissioner
5. margin of errors 6. sample size 7. time of field work 8. name of institute who commissioned the poll

Although the number of articles (N=73) did not increase in the four weeks before election day, the percentage of five (out of eight) AAPOR Criteria increased. This can be seen as a sign that the journalists reacted on arguments and concerns during the earlier weeks of the electoral campaign.

Particularly, “who commissioned the poll” was often discussed in public (i.e. PS 25.04.04⁴⁷; MB 28.04.04⁴⁸) before election day. These discussions often included the concerns that the “unmentioned” commissioners might have had an influence on the results of the surveys. The head of the Social Weather Stations, Mahar Mangahas, was even accused that he might have rigged the pre-election surveys in favour of his first cousin and the opposition’s top presidential candidate, Fernando Poe Jr. (FPJ). Several articles in the press tried to answer those fears⁴⁹. Even Senate President, Franklin Drilon, published an article, defending the independence of the accused pollster⁵⁰.

These all might have led to an increased focus of the journalists on publishing the names of the institutes that commissioned the polls. That would explain the extraordinary improvement in mentioning the commissioner of +53% to 75% (9 out of 12) of the last week’s articles prior to election day.

5.2.2 Differences between news reports and opinion columns

During the coding process, the kind of article (opinion column, news report or business article) was also noted. Compared by the number of included AAPOR criteria the news reports did way better than the opinion columns

The mean of AAPOR standards within the news reports was calculated 3.42; the business articles ranked second with a mean of 3.25; and the opinion articles ranked last with a mean of 2.8 AAPOR criteria included. The basis for that examination were the 73 articles that were dominated by the topic “survey” and presented recent results.

But this ranking is neither unusual nor alarming. These results are even highly understandable, as opinion columns focus more on providing a different view on topics and giving reasons to discuss, than focussed on a very detailed presentation of, i.e., pre-election poll results. This lies more on the responsibility of news-report authors. As Andersen wrote in his study, “Reporting the Polls: The Media during the 1997 Canadian Election” opinion columns “[...] provide more elaborate discussion of news stories that are typically discussed elsewhere – they can be excused for their lack of technical reporting.”⁵¹

5.3 Content Analysis of Press-Releases of the Survey Institutes

5.3.1 Pulse Asia

The Survey Institute, Pulse Asia, released two Pre-Election Surveys (PES) during the relevant time period of this study. Both press releases of Pulse Asia (PES March 27 to April 4; April 26 to April 29), included most of the criteria required by the AAPOR.

⁴⁷ Philippine Star; Ben Sorrano; Bro. Eddie says surveys part of plan to cheat in polls; April 25; Page 6

⁴⁸ Manila Bulletin.; Roy C. Sinfuego; Senate bed Padilla asks two survey firms: Who’s funding you?; April 28; Page 12

⁴⁹ Philippine Star, Ana Marie Pamintuan; Scapegoats; April 28; page 16

⁵⁰ Philippine Star, Jose Rodol Clapano; Drilon confident SWS not conniving with Malacanang on survey results; April 29; pages 1 and 9

⁵¹ ANDERSEN, Robert; Loc.cit. p 285-298

Very easy available for every reader of the press releases was the information about --

1. Name of the poll institute that conducted the poll
2. Number of respondents (Sample Size)
3. Time of fieldwork
4. Margin of error of results
5. Methodology

Further down – not that easy to find was the information about:

6. Question wording/phrasing
7. Definition of population for which the survey is representative of (Baseline sample)
8. Institution that commissioned the poll

As the Pulse Asia Survey Institute used the same scheme/format for the press release of each PES results, it seems convenient for the reader to find the important additional information about the survey. Absolutely positive is that the first five aspects are concentrated in the first – and mostly second paragraph of the release.

But it seemed irritating to the journalists that the number of Filipinos for which the survey was representative of, as well as the exact question wording was not given in the beginning of the release – but mentioned later in the text.

Unnecessary discussions were raised during the election campaign about “who commissioned the poll”. It seems, that some of the complaints, published in the newspaper are part of the political campaign of some candidates. Even worse if the journalists do not answer these uninformed complaints within the same article, by quoting the press-releases:

“Look who are the people behind or financiers of the SWS, Pulse Asia and other surveys. Most of them, if not all, are businessmen supporting Arroyo or Fernando Poe Jr.” (Presidential candidate) Villanueva said. *“It’s a sin to tell lies much more to deceive people and they are spiritually liable for that.”* he said⁵².

An even worse example of uninformed and unnecessary complaints in the mass media was published in the Manila Bulletin on April 28, when they quoted Nueva Vizcaya Representative Carlos Padilla:

“The SWS and Pulse Asia should make public the personalities who are financing the presidential surveys as well as the survey design”, Padilla said.⁵³

⁵² Philippine Star; Ben Sorrano; Bro. Eddie says surveys part of plan to cheat in polls; April 25; Page 6

⁵³ Manila Bulletin; Roy C. Sinfuego; Senate bed Padilla asks two survey firms: Who’s funding you?; April 28; Page 12

Additional information like “don’t knows”, “sub samples” and informative “charts” were included in all Pulse Asia PES press releases. Pulse Asia decided, to group the “refusals” and the “don’t knows” together – that is legitimate and the information was also provided in the press release.

5.3.2 Social Weather Stations:

The findings in the Press Releases of the Social Weather Stations Survey Institute leave almost no room for any complaints, as well.

During the relevant time period for that study, SWS published 11 press-releases, from which seven included recent figures of the SWS Pre-Election Polls.

As recommended by the AAPOR/WAPOR, all relevant press releases by SWS include:

1. Name of the poll institute that conducted the poll
2. Number of respondents (Sample Size)
3. Time of fieldwork
4. Margin of error of results
5. Methodology

The SWS Survey Institute put much effort in presenting information about

6. Institution that commissioned the poll
7. Definition of population for which the survey is representative (Base)

Especially the companies that commissioned the SWS Pre-Election Surveys (2 media companies, 1 public relations and political consulting company) were always mentioned in the first two paragraphs, and then later again, in the very informative paragraph called “Survey background”.

To include a paragraph like this makes it easy for interested readers, like politicians and journalists, to find the important background information without searching the whole press release.

SWS put also much effort in describing the base for their Pre-Election Surveys. After the COMELEC had announced the number of Registered Voters (RVs) on April 1, 2004, SWS changed their base to that number (43.37 million). After that, SWS tried to find out how many of the Registered Voters were likely to vote. From that time, they used the number of Likely Voters (LVs) as base for their results.

Just the exact

8. Question wording/phrasing

did not find place in the major text parts of the SWS press releases. But if journalists were interested enough to check on the included charts, they could find the exact question that was asked.

Additional information like “don’t knows”, “sub samples” and informative “charts” were included in all SWS PES Press Releases.

5.3.3 IBON Foundation:

The Ibon Foundation describes themselves as a research, education, information, and development institution since 1978. They say they provide research, education, publications, information work and advocacy support.

Because the latest press release of the electoral campaign was not available (showed the opposition’s candidates FPJ and Loren Legarda for the vice-president in lead over the other candidates), this study refers to an earlier press-release of March 2, 2004:

Out of the eight AAPOR criteria, the Ibon Foundation missed to name the methodology that was used, the base for which the survey was representative of, and the institution that commissioned the poll.

The additional information like sub-samples or even the refusals or “don’t knows” were also not mentioned.

6. DISCUSSION

During the last 4 weeks in the 2004 electoral campaign of the Philippines, survey results were used very often as an additional information for journalists, to base their articles about the situation between the five official presidential candidates (after Eddie Gil was declared a nuisance candidate by the Commission on Election).

All in all, it seems that the press coverage about survey results 2004 in the Philippines was mainly based on information provided by the well-accepted institutes, namely: Social Weather Stations (SWS) and Pulse Asia.

Out of 213 articles that mentioned at least one (maximum of 4 survey institutes or institutions), 112 articles referred to information provided by SWS, 109 articles referred to information provided by Pulse Asia.

That can be seen as a good and reasonable development for the Philippine press because those two institutions are not just in the Philippines, but also in the international survey societies well-known and accepted because of their professional working practices and methodologies. As seen in the content

analysis of their press releases, both institutions try hard to fulfil the international recommendations and requirements.

Still this situation seems to be somehow dissatisfactory for the journalists as they could just refer to the same information provided by two institutions. As the press market in the Philippines is a hard business place, the journalists are also asked to find information ahead of their colleagues.

This problem leaves a gap for information and sources that can not be seriously considered being survey results or survey institutes. This problem further challenges the call for the self-regulation of the media.

Even there might be pressure on each kind of media (Print, Radio, TV, Internet, etc.), the sources have to be checked and the reliability of the information provided should be somehow have an influence in the way the information is used for the public. As found out in this study, the three newspapers - Philippine Star, Manila Bulletin and Daily Inquirer, used the information of 18 different institutions for their articles about pre-election surveys and their results.

Journalists should keep in mind that there are elements that make the difference between a mock poll, a text-in or call-in event (which is just used as a gimmick to entertain the public with no scientific background) and a real survey. The difference is in the elements that are indispensable before a survey can be called a survey. Sadly, there is no international regulation for the usage of the word "survey".

The elements of a survey, referring to Philip Meyer, are:

1. An information goal or set of goals
2. A sample
3. A questionnaire
4. A collection method
5. Coding and analysis⁵⁴

Even so, the press presented results of "polls" that did not meet these demands:

"Two more surveys have shown that President Arroyo's bid for a six-year mandate has consistently gained headway down the homestretch of the campaign. A nationwide listener's text poll conducted by the Manila Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) from April 24 to 27 placed Mrs. Arroyo on top of all other presidential candidates.⁵⁵"

Of course, there is a need to entertain the readers and give them food for thoughts about the election and their final voting decision - especially if reliable pre-election polls cannot be done overnight and therefore new results are not available every day.

But it should be kept in the mind of journalists that different surveys cannot be compared directly with each other – especially not without giving additional

⁵⁴ Meyer Philip; Loc. cit p.101

⁵⁵ Source: unknown

information about the field time, sample size, etc.. Treated with the right amount of seriousness, mistakes like the following one would not occur:

“But the most significant note in the NFO Trends survey is the clear 4.4 percent points lost by Poe from the 30.8 percent voter preference he had in last weeks SWS survey.”⁵⁶

Sometimes it seemed that the journalists did not just try to find as many sources as possible for their articles about recent survey results, but they also tried to crunch the results from different surveys in one article to make it, maybe, look more competent.

Almost 30% of all articles that mentioned one survey institute also mentioned at least one other institute. Mentioning two different surveys in one article is even a higher challenge for the journalists and should, therefore be treated with care and caution. There is even no proof that articles with survey results from different surveys may be more informative for the reader than articles focussing on one survey, but presenting these results with all the needed additional information to understand the results and their meaning.

Some journalists may still argue that some additional (technical) information about a certain survey was left out on purpose for the reason not to overstrain the reader or bore them with that additional bunch of numbers and facts. In this regard, I just want to note the responsibility of journalists to use their (journalistic) privileges for the best of the public. Leaving them without information which is necessary to understand is definitely not an accomplishment for this responsibility.

Additionally, journalists should not underestimate the abilities of their readers.

What comes along with the competitiveness of journalists is the drive for information nobody else has published before. In the 2004 electoral campaign, this led to the publication of the results of a survey that was allegedly conducted by the Radio Mindanao Network (RMN). Because the results of this survey were never meant to be reported in the press, RMN never published an official press-release. That the information about this survey came from a private informant was not mentioned in the article. Instead, it was presented like any other survey to the reader. (By the way, a checking of the results of that survey was never done, said the responsible person of RMN, Research Director, Rudolfo “Rudy” A. Tayao, in a personal interview with him on August 2 2004)

6.1 Gap for self-regulation or survey masthead

As mentioned before, the survey market in the Philippines is somehow dominated by the two institutions: the Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia. That these two institutions are not able to present new survey results every day could somehow result in impatience – and open an opportunity – a “gap” for reporting about surveys that do not fill the requirements of real surveys (as explained before). The exercise of self-regulation by the press could, maybe, close this gap and help to prevent that more and more dubious results find their

⁵⁶ Manila Bulletin; REMONDE Cerge M.: Not so much GMA’s gain, but FPJ’s loss; 27.04.04; p.9

way in the daily news. Furthermore it could help that the gimmick surveys, like “text-in” or “call-in” polls would be labelled as what they really are: trending and entertaining additives that are supposed to please the daily reader, or particular interest groups.

This suggestion is not even baseless, as there is an existing self-regulating institution already active in the Philippines – additionally to the television and radio code of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP): the Philippines Press Council (PPC).

Sadly, self-regulation of the press in the Philippines, through the PPC, does not seem to be strong. Just recently, it suffered a small “catastrophe” when the so-called “Romulo letter” was not printed in the other newspapers (only two) as it was requested by Marvin Tort, who had been chair of the Press Council for three years.

(In the “Romulo letter”, 34 points of reported “defamatory” comments made in three columns of the Philippine Star were included. After the Philippine Star published this letter just partly, the Philippine Press Council wanted the other newspapers to publish it completely to reach public attention on the 34 points.)

As a consequence Tort resigned his post and Melinda Quintos de Jesus, Executive Director of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, published an article on July 29, 2004 with the following terse remarks:

“If the press cannot muster the will to make the Council an effective instrument for enforcing ethical conduct on its members, what credibility does the press have to criticize government and other powerful sectors for their failure to enforce rules and regulations? The failure of the press to report on the failings of practice and the misconduct of its members thus weakens its institutional role of “watchdog.”⁵⁷”

Another possible way out of this difficulty with gimmick surveys and unknown institutions could be something like a survey masthead for every major publication about pre-election survey results. Such use of a masthead was already suggested in the eighties, and is now being used by two German survey institutes to label their results with the proper information. This masthead is supposed to include the information that is necessary to understand the survey results properly.

A survey masthead, as described, would also help to improve the number of technical information (according to AAPOR criteria) which should be included in the articles about polls.

6.2 Horse-Race Journalism

Former studies on the quality of journalism during electoral campaigns complained about the high number of articles that are so-called “horse race journalism” type. Especially in the United States and in Canada, this kind of

⁵⁷ QUINTOS DE JESUS, Melinda; Wanted: Self-Regulation for the Free Press, Center for Media Freedom & Responsibility, <http://www.cmfr.com.ph/documents/2004/2004mdjppc.html>; August 12; 10.30h

journalism seems to be very dominant. Even in the German electoral campaigns, about 50% of the articles were written with the focus on who was leading the race; who was up for photo-finish or who had started the final lap in a better condition⁵⁸.

In the 2004 Philippine electoral campaign, the so-called “horse race journalism” did not seem to dominate the press. Even the premises were perfect: having two candidates leading far in front, but still very close to each other in the surveys.

But still, “horse race journalism” was also part of the press coverage about polls in the last 4 weeks before election day in the Philippine 2004 electoral campaign:

„Matching each other stride for stride in the final lap of this presidential race, neither challenger Poe nor incumbent President GMA has managed to gain a decisive advantage over the other.”⁵⁹

6.3 Bandwagon and Snowball Effect

As also described earlier, scholars often tried to describe a “bandwagon effect” that starts after a candidate leads in the surveys. Because people want to join the increasing support for one person and be with the winner in the end, this effect was always considered a positive effect for a candidate.

In the 2004 Philippine presidential electoral campaign, it seems that more and more, the candidates and their spokespersons took the terms “band-wagon” or “snowball” effect to imply that such a positive movement has already started for a particular candidate:

Under the headline “K4 reports snow-balling effect for GMA” campaign spokesman, Michael Defensor, was quoted by the Philippine Star on April 25, 2004, as saying:

“It’s no longer a statistical tie. We now have a bandwagon of support for President Arroyo...”

Defensor made this remark after the latest SWS survey showed GMA as taking a significant lead over her main rival, movie actor, Fernando Poe Jr.⁶⁰

But also the opposition tried hard to start a bandwagon effect for their candidate, Fernando Poe Jr., as was published in the Manila Bulletin on May 6:

“The bandwagon effect has already been established that would lead to the eventual victory of opposition Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP) presidential candidate, movie star Fernando Poe Jr., in the May 10 presidential elections, former Senate President Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr., a KNP senatorial bet, said yesterday.”⁶¹

⁵⁸ BRETTSCHEIDER, Frank; Loc.cit. pp 257-282

⁵⁹ Philippine Star; MIRANDA Felipe B.: “Of breakaways and breakdowns”; April 13;

⁶⁰ Philippine Star; “K4 reports snow-balling effect for GMA”; April 25; p.11

⁶¹ Manila Bulletin; “Bandwagon effect for Poe on, Pimentel says”; May 6;

This development is somehow astonishing as the politicians and their teams try to start a movement on purpose using the results of communication science – even before these movements were observed, described and explained by scholars – even before a name was found for it.

6.4 Impact on the Economy

Especially in a rather politically unstable country, like the Philippines, election survey results have a great impact on the economy. In the 2004 electoral campaign, the representatives of (“mainstream”) economic interest groups supported the candidacy of the President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Said in a different way, most of the foreign and local investors seemed to fear a high school drop-out and popular actor, like Fernando Poe Jr., in Malacañang - the Philippine “White House”.

This was clearly manifested in the “roller coaster” performance of the Philippine stock market and the ultra teetering value of the Philippine peso during the electoral campaign which were principally related to the changes in the survey results:

“Philippine Stocks hit a three-year high yesterday after PGMA for the first time grabbed a clear lead over actor Fernando Poe Jr. in an opinion poll 18 days before elections.⁶²”

or

“The financial market is happy with the recent surveys which revealed the turning of the tide in favour for the incumbent, so to simply put it. Confidence is high for GMA, Chinatrust Commercial Bank Philippines Executive Vice President and Treasurer Roland Avante said.⁶³”

The stock market and the currency are crucial and sensitive societal elements. If we consider that a lot of business companies and investors in the Philippines and abroad thought the same way, a correct and complete presentation of pre-election survey results in the press is even more important.

6.5 Final thoughts

As it seems, there is still a lot of space for improvement in the journalistic coverage of pre-election polls and their results in the Philippines - even if one keeps in mind that this study focuses only on a time stretch of 4 weeks before election day, and the publications in just three major daily newspapers.

Not many complaints can be directed to the two major survey institutes in the country - the Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia. But I am sure that, already, for the next electoral season in the Philippines, a lot of smaller institutions will come up again (maybe even more than in 2004), with polls and surveys and their results. For these institutions, this paper can offer some hints on what they can focus on in their surveys or where to get some further information - if they want to do their part for a better journalistic coverage of survey results in the Philippines in the future.

⁶² Daily Inquirer; Juliet Labog-Javellana: RP stocks soar to 3 year closing high; April 24; p1&15

⁶³ Daily Inquirer; DUMLAO Doris C.: Peso stocks cheer GMA poll lead; April 28; B1

For the journalists, there might be a lot of different reasons for the mediocre quality of the articles examined for this study. But even the number of reasons is hard to number down. The two following aspects are mainly mentioned when it comes to a check on the quality of journalism:

1. insufficient education of the journalists
2. typical problems in the journalistic workflow

Of course, for example, a survey between journalists would help to enlighten the reasons for their working results. But this cannot be done within the framework of this paper.

6.5.1 The problem of insufficient education

Especially during the earlier times of opinion polling and surveying the public's opinion during electoral campaigns, there were many complaints about the less educated journalists – particularly, regarding their capability to work with statistical data and empirical research methods. But over the years, the journalists improved their knowledge and the number of conducted surveys increased. However, since opinion polling in the Philippines has been done now for more than 50 years, it seems that the methodology of empirical research has already grown to a reliable instrument of journalistic work in the Philippines.

Of course, supplementary educational programs for journalists would help improve the situation. One possibility are seminars - as they were already offered, for example, by the Social Weather Stations since 1995. At that time, experts from SWS, together with foreign scholars of WAPOR, “toured” through different media institutions to offer an extra amount of background information on professional polling, its methodology and the problems that can occur while reporting about it. For journalists that were not visited during the “tour”, a special event in the office of the Social Weather Stations was offered.

Seminars like that could be offered by universities and other professional institutions - although I see the responsibility for requesting such events rather on the side of the media than on the side of the pollsters and empirical research experts.

Another idea that was brought up in former studies was that mass media companies should have, at least, one poll expert in their staff who would be able to rewrite difficult parts about survey results or point out any important aspects to his colleagues. With this solution, only one person would have to attend further education about empirical research – which obviously means a savings in money and time for the mass media companies.

6.5.2 Problems in the journalistic work flow

It is obvious that journalists, more often, do not work in a perfect working environment. There are a lot of different reasons, like the competition to internet news-sources or the still increasing amount of information that should be published, which make time very limited for journalists. This time might be missing in the end to finalize or double-check an article about survey results.

Other problems that affect the journalistic work flow has been described by the British Scholar Robert Worcester:

“Other problems that beset pollsters in dealing with the press include sub-editing after stories have been agreed with the reporter by sub-editors who do not understand (or care about?) the accuracy of the copy; well meaning academics or other third parties who ‘interpret’, sometimes, unknowledgeably, opinion poll results; inevitably short lead times and tight deadlines; space pressures; competitive ‘scoops’, ‘poll of polls’ averaging polls taken over the past week or so to suggest greater statistical reliability (theoretically so, but not if one poll is inaccurate as was the case in 1979); and perhaps my favourite, publication of amateur polls [...].⁶⁴”

As Andersen concluded in his study on the press coverage about the 1997 Canadian elections, he wrote: “certainly some of the poor reporting can be blamed on ignorance.⁶⁵” I agree that not all mistakes in the coverage of the 2004 electoral campaign in the Philippines can be blamed on the lack of education of the journalists. However, the quality of reportage on pre-election survey results in the Philippines during the 2004 electoral campaign could have been much better --- but could have been also worse, as developments in other countries like the USA and Germany show.

It would be a great success for this paper if it could help get a focus on the problems that come along with reporting about pre-election surveys. Towards this end, it is desirable that everybody takes his part in the ongoing struggle to prevent a development for the worse of the Philippine journalism – or even to gain a development to improve the reporting about pre-election surveys.

⁶⁴ WORCESTER, Robert M.: Loc. cit. p.183

⁶⁵ ANDERSEN, Robert; Loc.cit. pp 285-298

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8. Appendix

8.1 Summary of all articles examined for this study - in order of publication date

No. of Article	Date	Headline of the Article	Newspaper	Front yes/no	Page
1	15.04.2003	Roco back in two weeks	Philippine Star	Front Page	2
2	12.04.2004	Lakas: Poe begging for funds	Philippine Star	Front Page	4
3	12.04.2004	JDV fearless forecast: GMA to lead by 5%	Philippine Star	Front Page	9
4	12.04.2004	Again, quo vadis?	Philippine Star		13
5	12.04.2004	Ping, FPJ try again to unite	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	5
6	12.04.2004	Roco squelches rumors says fight continues	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	5
7	12.04.2004	All-out poll drives resume	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	4
8	12.04.2004	Cebu groups back Roxas bid	Manila Bulletin		6
9	13.04.2004	Poll: GMA, FPJ still locked in tight race	Philippine Star	Front Page	6
10	13.04.2004	If you want unity, kick out Edong, Tito	Philippine Star	Front Page	7
11	13.04.2004	The undecided	Philippine Star		9
12	13.04.2004	GMA now leads FPJ says latest survey	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	16
13	13.04.2004	Surveys	Manila Bulletin		9
14	13.04.2004	FPJ, GMA in close fight	Manila Bulletin		4
15	13.04.2004	Revilla true to form in campaign sorties	Manila Bulletin		12
16	14.04.2004	local machinery GMA smile did it	Philippine Star	Front Page	1
17	14.04.2004	FPJ on surveys: no need to worry	Philippine Star	Front Page	1
18	14.04.2004	It's 6-6 in race for senate	Philippine Star	Front Page	1
19	14.04.2004	Lacson to quit Senate if he gets 3M vote or less	Philippine Star		9
20	14.04.2004	Roco leaves the campaign FPJ jumps back into it	Philippine Star		16
21	14.04.2004	UST and democracy	Philippine Star		17
22	14.04.2004	Benefitting from Rocos absence	Philippine Star		17
23	14.04.2004	Roco's break	Daily Inquirer		14
24	14.04.2004	Da King downplays GMA lead	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	10
25	14.04.2004	FPJ slams Lacson defends Angara	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	10
26	14.04.2004	Roxas leads Senate race	Daily Inquirer		3
27	14.04.2004	Bro. Eddie still confident of win	Daily Inquirer		3
28	14.04.2004	De facto withdrawal boosts GMA, pressures rivals	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	22
29	14.04.2004	FPJ stepping up drive in remaining 27 days	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	6
30	14.04.2004	Polls rigged	Manila Bulletin		6
31	14.04.2004	Villanueva camp predicts surprise win	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	9
32	14.04.2004	Speedy recovery	Manila Bulletin		6
33	15.04.2004	GMA: It's down to a 2-way race	Philippine Star	Front Page	7
34	15.04.2004	Bro. Eddie fighting to the end	Philippine Star		8
35	15.04.2004	Drilon predicts slim GMA win over	Philippine Star		8

		FPJ		
36	15.04.2004	Virtual withdrawal	Philippine Star	10
37	15.04.2004	FPJ chart remains flat as GMA creeps onward	Philippine Star	11
38	15.04.2004	The stunning survey	Philippine Star	27
39	15.04.2004	RP bond spreads tighten on hopes of GMA victory in May	Philippine Star	4
40	15.04.2004	Race is down to FPJ vs. GMA says Angara	Daily Inquirer	2
41	15.04.2004	Ping: This will make GMA faint	Daily Inquirer	2
42	15.04.2004	Wind	Daily Inquirer	14
43	15.04.2004	Bandwagon for GMA	Daily Inquirer	15
44	15.04.2004	Peso hits intro - day high of 55.66 to 1\$	Daily Inquirer	1
45	15.04.2004	Gov't dept yields fall	Daily Inquirer	1
46	15.04.2004	Internal surveys show FPJ way ahead - KNP	Manila Bulletin Front Page	4
47	15.04.2004	Most capable	Manila Bulletin	4
48	15.04.2004	Sense of the Senate	Manila Bulletin	10
49	16.04.2004	PingPoe unification a done deal	Philippine Star	9
50	16.04.2004	Opinion pollsters as king makers	Daily Inquirer	14
51	16.04.2004	The tide has turned	Daily Inquirer	15
52	16.04.2004	Bayan cites high survey rating to debunk Rad tag	Daily Inquirer	17
53	16.04.2004	Bangon Pilipinas bares anti-Bro. Eddie effort	Manila Bulletin Front Page	6
54	16.04.2004	No bandwagon effect	Manila Bulletin	11
55	17.04.2004	Lacson-Poe unity talks set anew	Philippine Star Front Page	8
56	17.04.2004	From -3% in Nov to 30% in March - SWS	Philippine Star Front Page	8
57	17.04.2004	Virtual runoff	Philippine Star	16
58	17.04.2004	Palace denies internal survey, says KNP deluded	Philippine Star	30
59	17.04.2004	Western Visayas poll	Manila Bulletin	11
60	17.04.2004	Muslim group defect to Ping's side	Daily Inquirer Front Page	10
61	17.04.2004	FPJ, Lacson to talk unity on Estrada birthday	Daily Inquirer Front Page	10
62	18.04.2004	GMA satisfaction rating up to lead	Philippine Star Front Page	11
63	18.04.2004	It ain't over till the fat lady sings	Philippine Star	16
64	18.04.2004	Without majority mandate the winner can't govern well	Philippine Star	17
65	18.04.2004	Kasaanga youth group gears up for GMA	Philippine Star	30
66	18.04.2004	Poll trending tells the story of Palace race	Daily Inquirer Front Page	21
67	19.04.2004	fame, family dominate senatorial race	Philippine Star Front Page	16
68	19.04.2004	Abalos: a narrow win of just over 1M voters for either GMA, FPJ	Philippine Star	4
69	19.04.2004	Loren leads Noli in Ibon opinion poll	Philippine Star	8
70	19.04.2004	Unification	Philippine Star	12
71	19.04.2004	Why FPS's dipsy-dool why GMA's upsy-daisy	Philippine Star	13
72	19.04.2004	Mar's Mom confirms his romance with Korina	Philippine Star	16

73	19.04.2004	Davide to polls: protect the environment	Philippine Star		24
74	19.04.2004	Last chance for opposition	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	22
75	19.04.2004	Nonsense and unsensibility	Daily Inquirer		15
76	19.04.2004	Ibon survey indicates Loren now a dead	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	4
77	19.04.2004	A president who is decisive and in command	Manila Bulletin		11
78	19.04.2004	Alyansa Senate bet urges prayers for Roco	Manila Bulletin		12
79	19.04.2004	FPJ allies insist that Lacson withdraw from race	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	21
80	20.04.2004	Erap b'day wish: united opposition	Philippine Star	Front Page	6
81	20.04.2004	electoral inertia	Philippine Star		8
82	20.04.2004	An opposition win?	Philippine Star		9
83	20.04.2004	Political twist in western visayas	Philippine Star		21
84	20.04.2004	Unity eludes opposition	Daily Inquirer		13
85	20.04.2004	Losers	Daily Inquirer		12
86	20.04.2004	Poe win seen	Manila Bulletin		4
87	20.04.2004	GMA woos - and wins - business community	Manila Bulletin		8
88	20.04.2004	GMA's offer of a gov't of nat'l unity	Manila Bulletin		9
89	21.04.2004	Pinoy's pessimism not my fault - Arroyo	Philippine Star		2
90	21.04.2004	Miriam wants other Senate bets to account for TV/radio poll ads	Philippine Star	Front Page	7
91	21.04.2004	Joker warns GMA could lose Senate	Philippine Star		11
92	21.04.2004	If you depend too much on feng shui, you might end up chop suey	Philippine Star		16
93	21.04.2004	GMA firms up lead in Western Visayas as FPJ supports dwindles	Philippine Star		30
94	21.04.2004	Dollar spreads tighten as GMA widens lead over rivals	Philippine Star		8
95	21.04.2004	Senator's funds	Manila Bulletin		4
96	21.04.2004	Miriam rails vs. TV spending	Daily Inquirer		2
97	21.04.2004	FPJ warns Ping time fast running out	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	7
98	21.04.2004	Bro. Eddie No.1 in job interviews	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	8
99	21.04.2004	The importance of having a party machine	Daily Inquirer		15
100	22.04.2004	KNP: FPJ will win with or without united opposition	Philippine Star		6
101	22.04.2004	Elusive merger	Philippine Star		8
102	22.04.2004	GMA in Western Visayas	Philippine Star		23
103	22.04.2004	FPJ leads in Ibon survey; Loren overtakes Noli	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	5
104	22.04.2004	Ibon survey reveals FPJ leading rivals	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	4
105	22.04.2004	Most not satisfied	Manila Bulletin		4
106	22.04.2004	Who should give way	Manila Bulletin		8
107	22.04.2004	CalPERS: Either vote of confidence or bargaining gain	Daily Inquirer		3
108	22.04.2004	Another view on the campaign	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	5
109	23.04.2004	CBCP asks voters to shun	Philippine Star		4

		experienced candidates		
110	23.04.2004	Ping rejects FVR advice to slide down	Philippine Star	10
111	23.04.2004	Ping Lacson will "tell all" on/ FPJ invited, too	Philippine Star	14
112	23.04.2004	Pro GMA group launched, says her victory imminent	Manila Bulletin	12
113	23.04.2004	Self selection and cherry picking in the polling business	Manila Bulletin	14
114	23.04.2004	Sentimental journey	Daily Inquirer	15
115	23.04.2004	FPJ leading in 3 surveys, KNP bares	Manila Bulletin Front Page	4
116	23.04.2004	Solons hail Ibon poll see trend for GMA	Manila Bulletin Front Page	4
117	23.04.2004	Confusing the public	Manila Bulletin	9
118	23.04.2004	Lakas sees silver lining in Ibon poll	Daily Inquirer	2
119	23.04.2004	As I see it	Daily Inquirer	14
120	23.04.2004	Confusing the public	Manila Bulletin	9
121	24.04.2004	Poe, Loren refute latest SWS poll	Philippine Star Front Page	6
122	24.04.2004	SWS: opposition chances better if Lacson withdraws	Philippine Star Front Page	4
123	24.04.2004	Election development favoring the president	Philippine Star	15
124	24.04.2004	Selective democracy	Philippine Star	16
125	24.04.2004	Port communities pick Roco in mock polls	Philippine Star	29
126	24.04.2004	Roxas tops cebu radio survey	Philippine Star	29
127	24.04.2004	Stocks hit 3-yr high, peso up as GMA widens lead	Philippine Star	1
128	24.04.2004	Survey	Manila Bulletin	4
129	24.04.2004	Poll results assessed	Manila Bulletin	4
130	24.04.2004	Arroyo reaction	Manila Bulletin	4
131	24.04.2004	SWS survey	Manila Bulletin	5
132	24.04.2004	RP bond prives rally in HK	Manila Bulletin	1
133	24.04.2004	More Filipinos think movie star Poe would win presidential race	Manila Bulletin	10
134	24.04.2004	For 1st time GMA clearly leads FPJ	Daily Inquirer Front Page	15
135	24.04.2004	RP stocks soar to 3 year closing high	Daily Inquirer Front Page	15
136	24.04.2004	The turtle and the hare	Daily Inquirer	13
137	25.04.2004	FPJ not sliding down either	Philippine Star Front Page	6
138	25.04.2004	Iglesia, power brokers to decide May elections	Philippine Star Front Page	5
139	25.04.2004	FPJ by now should have run out of excuses for not meeting with Lacson	Philippine Star	14
140	25.04.2004	Palace: United opposition has no chance against Arroyo	Philippine Star	6
141	25.04.2004	Bro. Eddie says surveys part of plan to cheat in polls	Philippine Star	6
142	25.04.2004	K4 reports snowballing support for GMA	Philippine Star	11
143	25.04.2004	More groups join `Kasaangga ni Gloria`	Philippine Star	30
144	25.04.2004	Poe to win in 9 of 16 regions -	Philippine Star	30

		Ibon			
145	25.04.2004	Lacson - SWS survey results impossible	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	13
146	25.04.2004	The closing end game	Manila Bulletin		16
147	25.04.2004	The rise and fall of political ratings	Manila Bulletin		17
148	25.04.2004	Results of Aklan opinion survey raise questions	Manila Bulletin		3
149	25.04.2004	GMA rivals postpone rally in the deference to Labor Day	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	19
150	25.04.2004	Reading the surveys?	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	19
151	26.04.2004	Newsbreak: Preventing a checkmate	Philippine Star	Front Page	10
152	26.04.2004	Poe, Lacson not giving up on unity	Philippine Star		6
153	26.04.2004	GMA widens lead over FPJ in survey	Philippine Star		12
154	26.04.2004	Don't take out the champagne yet	Philippine Star	Front Page	11
155	26.04.2004	Straw polls	Philippine Star		15
156	26.04.2004	Survey samplings scanty for senators	Philippine Star		15
157	26.04.2004	Alyansa confident Roco will bounce back after US trip	Philippine Star		12
158	26.04.2004	Bangon Philipinas prays for Roco to back Bro. Eddie	Philippine Star		12
159	26.04.2004	Miriam tops Western Visayas poll	Manila Bulletin		8
160	26.04.2004	GMA widens lead over FPJ	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	22
161	26.04.2004	Thwart moves to undermine May polls, GMA asks voters	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	4
162	26.04.2004	Undecided vote still up for grabs	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	22
163	27.04.2004	Poor Pinoys distrust, ignore surveys - study	Philippine Star	Front Page	8
164	27.04.2004	Lacson's camp complains survey's massaged to favor Arroyo	Philippine Star		2
165	27.04.2004	Trend more important than slim lead in surveys	Philippine Star		11
166	27.04.2004	GMA vows to get the highest mandate	Philippine Star	Front Page	2
167	27.04.2004	Roco, Bro. Eddie to explore alliance	Philippine Star		7
168	27.04.2004	Maceda keeps momentum in surveys	Philippine Star		21
169	27.04.2004	FPJ not giving way to Lacson	Philippine Star	Front Page	9
170	27.04.2004	GMA sees landslide win in May 10 polls	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	11
171	27.04.2004	GMA leads	Manila Bulletin		11
172	27.04.2004	More groups endorse Revilla	Manila Bulletin		12
173	27.04.2004	T-bill yields drop on GMA's poll lead	Daily Inquirer		1
174	27.04.2004	Pro-Lacson respondents doubts poll	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	27
175	27.04.2004	Candidates surveys irrelevant to the poor, says Ateneo study	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	10
176	27.04.2004	Not so much GMA's gain, but FPJ's loss	Manila Bulletin		9
177	27.04.2004	No-el scenario makes no sense	Daily Inquirer		15
178	28.04.2004	Bro. Eddie vows to disprove surveys in Ayalla rally tomorrow	Philippine Star		6

179	28.04.2004	Scapegoats	Philippine Star	16
180	28.04.2004	Senate bed Padilla asks two survey firms: Who's funding you?	Manila Bulletin	12
181	28.04.2004	Peso stocks cheer GMA poll lead	Daily Inquirer	1
182	28.04.2004	Credible elections	Daily Inquirer	15
183	28.04.2004	Blind followers of surveys	Daily Inquirer	16
184	28.04.2004	Opposition bets continue to question survey firms	Daily Inquirer Front Page	8
185	28.04.2004	Villanueva disqualification case dismissed by Comelec in Makati	Manila Bulletin Front Page	4
186	28.04.2004	Lacson camp eyes alliance with Villanueva's group	Manila Bulletin Front Page	5
187	29.04.2004	May the best man win	Philippine Star Front Page	18
188	29.04.2004	Drilon confident SWS not conniving with Malacanang on survey results	Philippine Star Front Page	9
189	29.04.2004	Desperados	Philippine Star	12
190	29.04.2004	K-4 sees insurmountable GMA lead	Philippine Star	27
191	29.04.2004	Roxas: Topping survey a victory for palengke people	Philippine Star	27
192	29.04.2004	FPJ, Lacson unite to fight poll cheating	Manila Bulletin Front Page	4
193	29.04.2004	Vote of confidence	Manila Bulletin	4
194	29.04.2004	surprises	Manila Bulletin	7
195	29.04.2004	Narrow GMA victory seen	Daily Inquirer	2
196	29.04.2004	Drilon defends polling firms	Daily Inquirer	2
197	29.04.2004	Informed choice	Daily Inquirer	14
198	29.04.2004	Scientific tool	Daily Inquirer	14
199	30.04.2004	GMA may win by landslide - study	Philippine Star	6
200	30.04.2004	Hubris	Philippine Star	14
201	30.04.2004	election surveys	Philippine Star	15
202	30.04.2004	It isn't a slam dunk yet	Philippine Star	3
203	30.04.2004	Villanueva exhorts own political camp at rally	Manila Bulletin Front Page	15
204	30.04.2004	polls defended	Manila Bulletin	6
205	30.04.2004	NY report says GMA win likely	Daily Inquirer	5
206	30.04.2004	Home from the sea	Daily Inquirer	14
207	01.05.2004	Homestretch	Philippine Star	12
208	01.05.2004	Policemen's vote to give Poe a big lead	Philippine Star	31
209	01.05.2004	From campaign	Daily Inquirer	14
210	01.05.2004	Negative ads	Daily Inquirer	14
211	01.05.2004	Why is Roco persisting in his quest?	Daily Inquirer	15
212	01.05.2004	Respondents surfaces, criticizes survey firms	Manila Bulletin Front Page	6
213	01.05.2004	People's attitude could distort survey results	Manila Bulletin	10
214	01.05.2004	FPJ is leading on the ground, says Marahon	Manila Bulletin	3
215	02.05.2004	Iglesia endorses GMA, Noli	Philippine Star Front Page	11
216	02.05.2004	Our evolving politics	Philippine Star	15
217	02.05.2004	Foreign analysts predict GMA landslide win	Philippine Star	32
218	02.05.2004	Professionals air support for	Manila Bulletin	10

		Comelec and Abalos		
219	02.05.2004	Two more surveys	Manila Bulletin	19
220	02.05.2004	Cavite leaders see GMA win amid opposition division	Daily Inquirer	17
221	03.05.2004	Terror threats cancel GMA sorties in South	Philippine Star Front Page	14
222	03.05.2004	Ping tops SSS mock polls	Philippine Star	11
223	03.05.2004	It's your fault if you are cheated	Philippine Star	17
224	03.05.2004	Presidential race now in the final stretch	Philippine Star	32
225	03.05.2004	Disturbing complaints	Manila Bulletin	10
226	03.05.2004	The poor also don't believe in surveys	Manila Bulletin	11
227	03.05.2004	Hard work, glitz, Image reloaded, GMA now on winning streak	Daily Inquirer Front Page	22
228	03.05.2004	GMA hold on E class spells difference	Daily Inquirer	15
229	03.05.2004	What do political surveys have to do with business?	Daily Inquirer	2
230	04.05.2004	Hopeful signs	Manila Bulletin	8
231	04.05.2004	Elections seen clearing uncertainty, but Peso outlook basically cloudy	Manila Bulletin	2
232	04.05.2004	Plugging for friends	Daily Inquirer	13
233	04.05.2004	Lead in all you survey	Daily Inquirer	2
234	04.05.2004	INC: The little sect is a big player in RP politics	Philippine Star Front Page	2
235	04.05.2004	Muslim-christian alliance pledges support for Arroyo	Philippine Star	9
236	05.05.2004	UST posts survey FPJ Loren ahead	Philippine Star Front Page	9
237	05.05.2004	Noli - Loren word war heats up	Philippine Star	11
238	05.05.2004	couriouser and couriouser / how GMA cast her dragnet	Philippine Star	15
239	05.05.2004	Lacson to attend mass	Manila Bulletin	16
240	05.05.2004	FPJ takes big lead in new nat'l survey	Manila Bulletin Front Page	14
241	05.05.2004	K4 shifts to Senate race	Manila Bulletin Front Page	14
242	05.05.2004	Victory for GMA seen - Abalos	Manila Bulletin	2
243	05.05.2004	FPJ's campaign: royal passage stuck in real world	Daily Inquirer Front Page	21
244	05.05.2004	Fearless forecasts at Kapihan sa Manila	Daily Inquirer	14
245	05.05.2004	Satur says GMA victory imminent	Daily Inquirer	18
246	06.05.2004	GMA widens lead over FPJ	Philippine Star Front Page	8
247	06.05.2004	Most Pinoys trust Comelec but not Abalos	Philippine Star	6
248	06.05.2004	Peso closes at 4 month high of 55.46 to the dollar	Philippine Star	1
249	06.05.2004	Pulse Asia Survey	Manila Bulletin	4
250	06.05.2004	Exit plan	Manila Bulletin	4
251	06.05.2004	Bro. Eddie's thousands out to disprove surveys	Daily Inquirer Front Page	8
252	06.05.2004	GMA pads lead in new survey	Daily Inquirer	2
253	06.05.2004	Peso soars on widening GMA poll lead	Daily Inquirer	1
254	07.05.2004	Pacquiao in seven - GMA by eight	Philippine Star	15

255	07.05.2004	New survey confirms FPJ's standing - KNP	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	6
256	07.05.2004	Non existent trend	Manila Bulletin		6
257	07.05.2004	Lacson camp preparing for a thank-you dinner	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	6
258	07.05.2004	The homestretch	Manila Bulletin		10
259	07.05.2004	Marketers and the polls	Manila Bulletin		5
260	07.05.2004	Villanueva's middle class armies	Daily Inquirer		15
261	08.05.2004	FPJ dismisses INC Shaddai nod to GMA	Philippine Star	Front Page	7
262	08.05.2004	two futures	Philippine Star		10
263	08.05.2004	Index ends up as market expects GMA to win	Philippine Star		2
264	09.05.2004	Arroyo headed for victory - SWS	Philippine Star	Front Page	6
265	09.05.2004	Kabayan deplores hatchet job	Philippine Star	Front Page	14
266	09.05.2004	If Comelec Chairman Abalos collapsed...	Philippine Star	Front Page	16
267	09.05.2004	RP economy to pick up if GMA wins - Bunye	Philippine Star		1
268	09.05.2004	Lokal markets cautions ahead of elections	Manila Bulletin		4
269	09.05.2004	Meet the undecided voters	Manila Bulletin		3
270	09.05.2004	Undecided to decide	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	2
271	09.05.2004	As ratings dip, Noli decries black prop	Daily Inquirer		2
272	09.05.2004	90 days	Daily Inquirer		14
273	10.05.2004	Comelec: It's all systems go	Philippine Star	Front Page	10
274	10.05.2004	Sheer hard work drives Arroyo's presidential bid	Philippine Star		2
275	10.05.2004	Noli appeals to people: Guard your votes	Philippine Star		4
276	10.05.2004	300 000 Namfrel volunteers ready	Manila Bulletin	Front Page	4
277	10.05.2004	A wide open race	Manila Bulletin		8
278	10.05.2004	Credible elections to boost stocks	Manila Bulletin		2
279	10.05.2004	The role of image studies and poll surveys in the election	Manila Bulletin		2
280	10.05.2004	Dislike for a bet doesn't necessarily mean he will lose	Daily Inquirer		3
281	10.05.2004	Quiapo fortune tellers an't agree on who'll win	Daily Inquirer	Front Page	10

8.2 Tables:

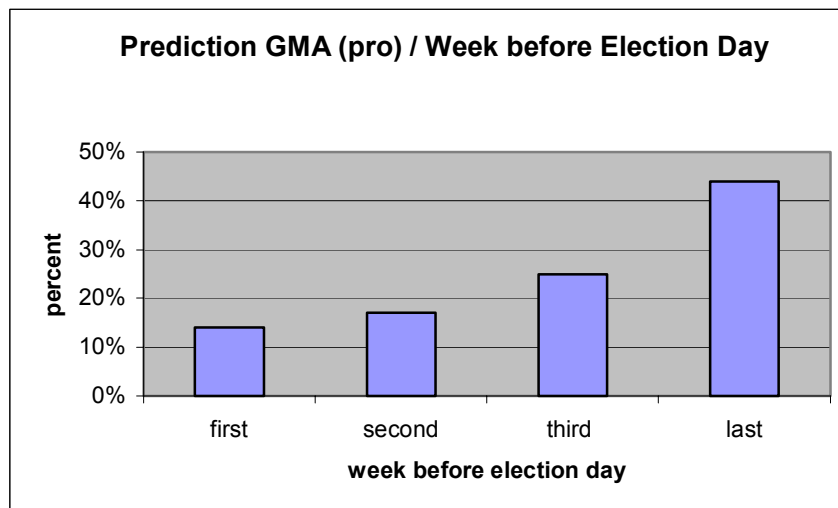
Table 1: Page 10

	'Overdog' & 'Underdog' Effect / Poor People			
	RP	ABC	D	E
a) yes	11% (21%)	17% (31%)	10% (21%)	11% (17%)
a) no	89% (78%)	83% (69%)	90% (79%)	89% (83%)
b) yes	9% (16%)	16% (15%)	8% (18%)	7% (7%)
b) no	91% (84%)	84% (85%)	92% (81%)	93% (93%)

The percentages in the chart above are the results of the Social Weather Stations Report: Second Quarter 2001; the percentages in brackets represent the results of the Social Weather Stations Report in 2000.

Table 2: Page 17

Table 2:



The basis for the chart above are all articles that made a prediction of the election result and said the election result was already clear. (N=52) They were then cross tabulated with articles that biased towards GMA and the week of their publication.

Table 3: Page 19

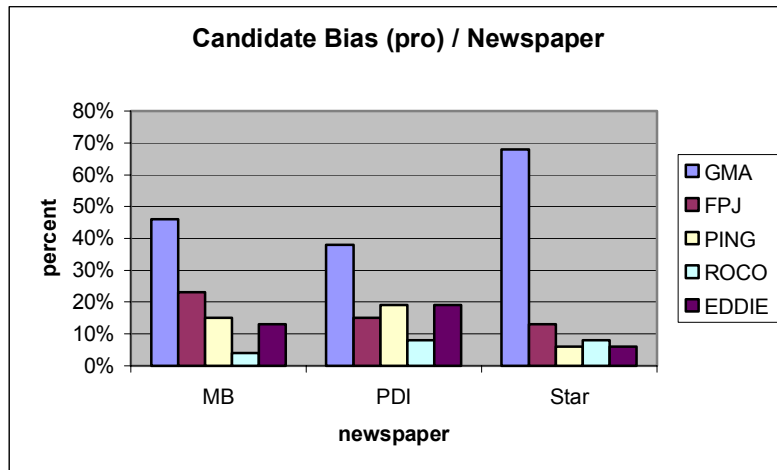
Table 3:

Candidate Bias / Week before Election Day						
			week before election day			
			first week b4	second week b4	third week b4	last week b4 elec.day
pro/ neutral/ against GMA	pro	Col %	50,0%	58,3%	36,8%	58,6%
	neutral	Col %	50,0%	36,1%	55,3%	37,9%
	against	Col %		5,6%	7,9%	3,4%
pro/ neutral/ against FPJ	pro	Col %	21,9%	19,4%	13,2%	10,3%
	neutral	Col %	75,0%	75,0%	76,3%	86,2%
	against	Col %	3,1%	5,6%	10,5%	3,4%

The base for the percentages of both candidates are in each case all articles with a political bias (N=135; out of all 281 articles) split up into the last four weeks before election day according to the day of appearance in the newspapers:

Table 4: Page 20

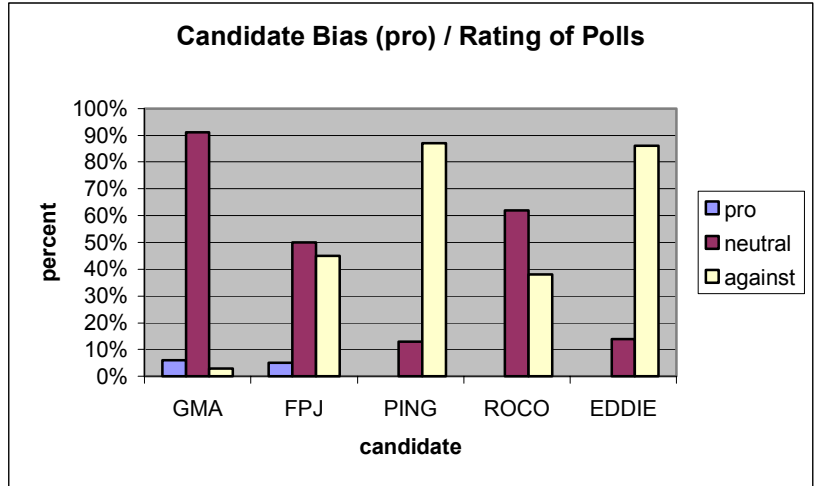
Table 4:



The basis for the chart above is the number of articles with a positive bias towards a candidate. (N=135); The basis for each newspaper were MB 48 articles, PDI 26 articles and Star 53 articles.

Table 5: Page 20

Table 5:



The basis for the chart above is the number of articles with a positive bias towards a candidate. (N=135). The variable "rating of polls" was coded "negative", "neutral" and "positive".

Table 6: Page 22

Table 6:

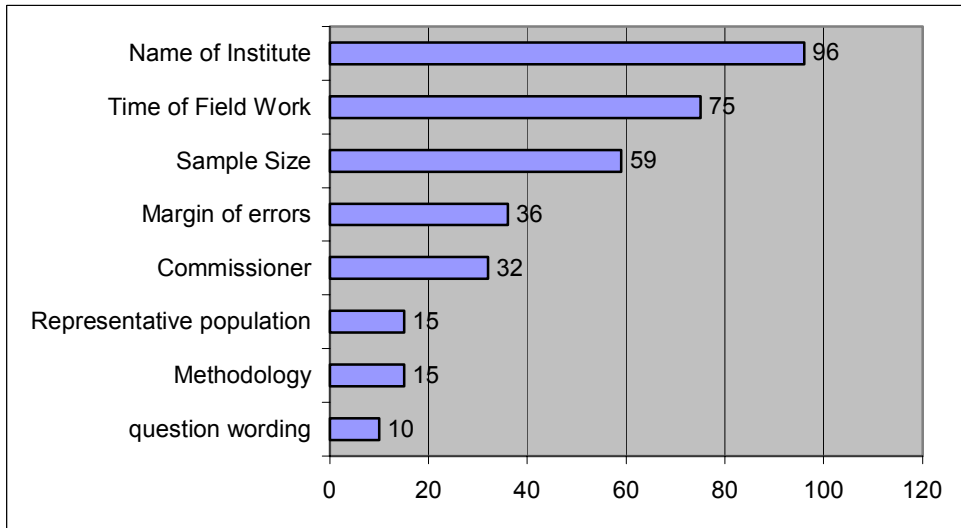
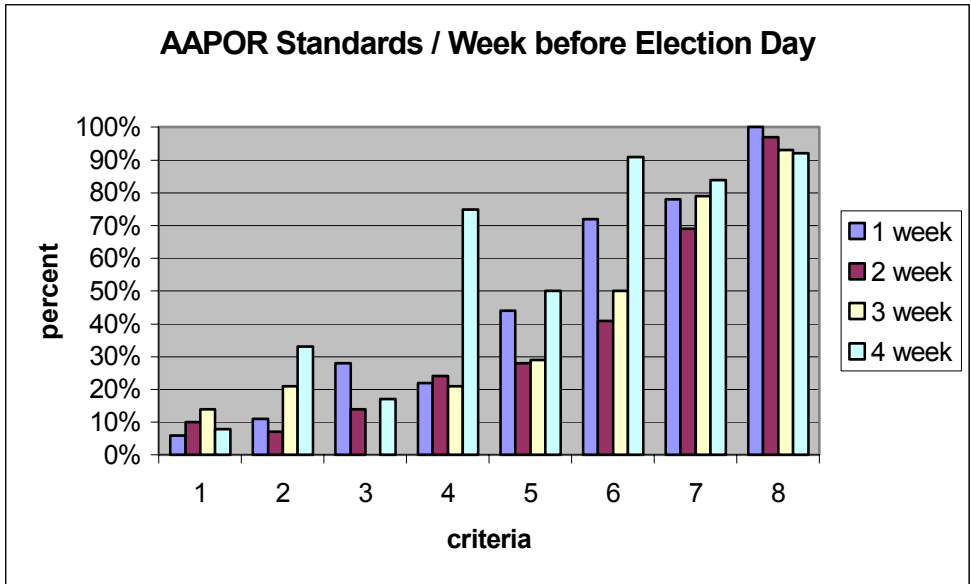


Table 7: Page 23

Table 7:



Numbers used in the chart above:

- 1. question wording
- 2. methodology
- 3. representative population
- 4. commissioner
- 5. margin of errors
- 6. sample size
- 7. time of field work
- 8. name of institute who commissioned the poll