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MUSLIM AUTONOMY  
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A QUALITATIVE REPORT ON THE  
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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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## THE QUALITATIVE BASIS OF THE SURVEY DESIGN

### A Methodological Abstract

Designing a research proposal inevitably brings a researcher to confront the pros and cons between quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. Yet, the polarity between the two is not necessarily equated with their mutual exclusivity. Many current thinking on the subject point to the use of both methods in the same research design or project as ideal, rather than postulate an either or approach in favor of one against the other. In survey studies the qualitative underpinnings of quantitative data are evident in the process by which interview questions are framed. (Festinger and Katz, 1966)

The qualitative underpinnings of quantitative data can be discovered by tracing back to its sources any punch on an IBM card or any numerical value on a computer printout. Behind the test course in a Head Start Program lie the verbal and demonstrational explanations given by the test administrator to the children, the children's qualitative comprehension of the questions, etc. Qualitative knowing on someone's part is also basic to identifying these tested children as the same individuals who participated in the prior Head Start sessions. The Head Start curriculum instructions were conveyed by ordinary language, and if the loyalty of their execution has been checked, it has been by qualitative observations. If interviews with parents have been used, a common sense thrust in shared language and shared motives has undergirded the interview conversation.

Recording of responses and the coding of free response answers achieve quantification only as the end product of a qualitative judgmental process.

The case for qualitative method is more strongly argued by the nature of the data generated by open-ended questions in a survey instrument or by certain types of research interviewing such as in unstructured or semi-structured interviews. Such data as perceptions, attitudes, expectations, and other "symbolic" materials are held to yield their more precise meanings only after a pre-statistical or qualitative handling and processing. When open-ended answers are categorized for quantification purposes analysts refer to the process as content analysis.

For purposes of this report, a qualitative analysis of the responses of Opinion Leaders (OL) in the study, "Autonomy for Muslim Mindanao, A Survey Study" involved the foregoing definition of the qualitative method. More specifically, the report (a) explicates the qualitative underpinnings of the survey design and, (b) interprets the study findings or content. The first part of the analysis describes certain historical events and circumstances that attended the proposal-making of this study. The historical factor vis-a-vis the study objectives was taken as the context upon which decisions in the final research design were made. The analysis makes use of a case study of the implementation of the survey design in Region XI (Davao) as a profile project implementation.

The second phase of the analysis considers the range of the OL responses and the process of categorizing them. The method is used to qualify consensus and obtain some insights as to the nature of the unpopular or minority opinion thus explaining both sides of the polarity; while a description of the process of categorizing the answers is in itself an indication of the assumptions, whether covert or expressed, made in the study.

#### The Survey Design

The gathering of six researchers representing different academic institutions in Mindanao started as early as the months of February and March, 1987. The research consortium was convened by the Director of the then Xavier Peace Center, Bob McAmis who brought the participants together at Cagayan de Oro City. McAmis defined his role as convenor and had no other role save that of an observer during the preparation of the research proposal. The first meeting of the research consortium coincided with the organization of the Mindanao Peace Panel which started the first round of talks between government negotiators and Muslim leaders for the purpose of exploring the issue of Muslim autonomous region in Mindanao and Sulu. When the research proposal was finalized in March, 1987 the Draft Constitution had already been ratified. An anticipation of the imminent implementation of its provisions on autonomy thus determined

the main objectives of the research proposal.

The recent approval of the Draft Constitution now makes these provisions as the basic law of the land. Congress will be convening within the next few months to debate on the specific means to be taken to ensure an effective plan for regional autonomy. At the same time, government negotiators are now beginning to discuss a similar set of issues with the leaders of the various Muslim movements ... Political machinery is now being set in motion to decide the future of the region. And yet one vital element is missing: the voice of the people themselves.

As agreed upon by the members of the research consortium the objectives of the study which was originally titled, "Perceptions On autonomy and Its Implications in the Southern Philippines" were:

A. General Objectives

1. To study how the people of Mindanao and Sulu view the general concept of autonomy and to assess their reactions to various policies which have been suggested as vehicle for bringing about such autonomy; and
2. To compare the major ethno-religious groups in terms of their perceptions regarding autonomy within Mindanao-Sulu.

B. Specific Objectives

1. To identify the concepts on autonomy from pre-existing literature
2. To conduct a survey to determine the following:
  - a. the level of awareness on the autonomy issue exhibited by a random sample of

- respondents now living in Mindanao-Sulu;
- b. perceptions about autonomy in general, and in such specific areas of governance as legal relations, land titles and property rights, police powers, educational policies; and the like; and
  - c. perceived solutions to the present problem of social unrest in Mindanao-Sulu.

A review of literature in existing documents on autonomy from the Dansalan Research Center was an important pre-survey activity. However, due to time constraint the review of documents on autonomy was not undertaken as comprehensively nor as exhaustively as should have done justice to the specific issues involved from the Muslim point of view. The consortium members limited the selection of variables to the scope of legislative powers that were to be included in the Organic Act for the autonomous regions as prescribed in the Constitution:

1. administration and organization
2. creation of sources of revenues
3. ancestral domain and natural resources
4. personal, family, and property relations
5. regional urban and rural planning development
6. economic, social, and tourism development
7. educational policies
8. preservation and development of the cultural heritage; and
9. such other matters as may be authorized by law for the promotion of the general welfare of the people of the region.

The data collection was scheduled for April and May, 1987 and the first of a series of four reports was designated to be completed by the end of July, 1987 "in time to enter immediately into the Congressional deliberations on the Organic Act for the autonomous region of Muslim Mindanao".

Most of the variables which emerged later in the draft questionnaire proposed by RIMCU\* (chosen by the consortium members as the center institution for the project) reflected mainly the issues and topics generated by the consortium's discussions on the Constitutional provision on autonomy. The conceptual framework proceeded from a simple understanding and dictionary meaning of autonomy as "self-governing,"

According to Webster's dictionary an 'autonomous' area is one which is 'self-governing'. The proposal to establish an autonomous region for Muslim Mindanao thus refers to the granting of additional powers to a local government body which will be set up in some portions of Mindanao ... The exact powers which will be held by this new government body may include the ability to appoint regional directors, to levy taxes, to change the school curriculum, and the like, but they will probably not involve granting actual political independence ... Many people hope that this approach will allow Muslim Filipinos to set up a locally based government which best suit their culture and religious beliefs.

The questionnaire was organized into five Blocks of questions:

- A. Respondents' Data and Background Information  
(7 pages)
- B. Awareness and Opinion on Political Matters (5 pages)
- C. Perceptions about Life in Mindanao (2 pages)
- D. Opinions about the Muslim Autonomous Region  
(5 pages)
- E. Inter-ethnic Contact and Attitudes (1 page)

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\*Research Institute for Mindanao Culture

The twenty-two page questionnaire devoted the most number of pages to respondents' data and background information, and the two other most investigated areas were Blocks B and D. The questions on respondents' data were intended to gather demographic as well as socio-economic characteristics. Awareness and opinion on political matters were indicated by variables on dichotomies, i.e. agreement or non-agreement with pre-identified officials and personalities and issues surrounding them; agreements or non-agreements with some government as well as non-government agencies, etc. Opinions about the Muslim Autonomous Region were broken down into specific issues such as where MAR should be established; the areas that would be incorporated into it; and the scope of its powers and jurisdiction such as the use of its own flag and seal, its own armed forces, use of Arabic language, etc.

#### The Implementation of the Survey Design in Region XI

The draft questionnaire from RIMCU was refined and finalized at a Field Supervisors' Training Program held in Davao City on April 23-26, 1987. By April and May most of the consortium members had fielded the interview schedule for their respective regions. Due to some delay in the assignment and release of funds for the regional budgets the Ateneo de Davao research team was unable to implement the survey in Region XI until June-July, 1987. In its final form the survey for Region XI was allocated a total of 400 interviews in twenty barangays:

Barangay

Respondents

<u>Day</u>	<u>Respondents</u>
Days 9	264 regulars/18 OL
Days 8	42 regulars/16 OL
Days 3	54 regulars/ 6 OL
20	360
	40

Christian R's were interviewed in the following  
 n XI:

- Day 20 in Poblacion, Davao City
- id in Montevista, Davao Province
- ras in Poblacion, Padada, Davao del Sur
- n in Davao City
- ion in Tandag, Surigao del Sur
- y in Marihatag, Surigao del Sur
- van in Lingig, Surigao del Sur
- n in Nabunturan, Davao Province
- on in Boston, Davao Oriental

were interviewed in the following:

- South Cotabato
- an, South Cotabato
- South Cotabato
- outh Cotabato
- ok, South Cotabato
- Davao Province
- General Santos City
- South Cotabato

Sixty (60) Tribal R's were interviewed in:

1. Tango in Glan, South Cotabato
2. Sangay in Malita, Davao del Sur
3. Lamayan in Caraga, Davao Oriental

A peculiarity in the Davao region as an area of study is that while the Christians predominate, the tribal population is much larger than the Muslim population. The ADDU research team conducted the interviews for Region XI beginning June, 1987 which is the onset of rainy season: Davao Oriental and General Santos City were at that time experiencing heavy rains. Many barangays and municipalities in the eastern coast were inaccessible due to the flooding of rivers and streams. In Davao Oriental the hazards were heightened by the fact that almost all rivers and streams were no more than twenty (20) to thirty (30) yards away from the Pacific Ocean. Twice during the fielding of the survey in Caraga, Davao Oriental the overloaded jeepney which is the only available transportation in these parts nearly capsized because of swollen rivers and strong currents caused by the undertow of receding ocean tides. In spite of these and other contingencies the research team gave up only one area, Manay, for a substitute and this was because the barangay in Manay was inaccessible due to the complete unavailability of transportation.

The research team gave primary importance to two factors: accessibility and availability of transportation in conducting the interviews in the pre-designated barangays and municipalities. This was because of the awareness that time was of essential consideration, especially since the objectives of the study

were ineluctably linked with the major events and historical developments in the Muslim autonomy question. Each day the newspapers carried reports on autonomy with mounting urgency which at times seemed like instigated desperation. One of the many difficulties which the research team encountered in conducting the interviews was the sensitivity of the issues inquired of. Although this was largely foreseen by the research consortium and the field supervisors were adequately warned and instructed on how to deal with this problem, the latter and many interviewers were quite unprepared for the problems that confronted them in the field.

The first field visit for the purpose of collecting the household lists from which the individual R's were drawn gave the research team their first feel of the community. Predictably, the barangay community or more precisely, the barangay captain from whom the list was solicited was either hostile, friendly, or non-committal and indifferent depending upon how the autonomy issue fitted into his own interest and concerns, or not at all. According to the reports of field workers some of the most unfavorable if not hostile reactions came from the Christian communities especially those that have a Muslim population in their midst. Even when Christian barangays did not have an appreciable Muslim community, the research team had to exercise a great deal of tact in preventing barangay captains from interfering or influencing the interview. In some extreme cases some barangay captains tried to subvert the interview by refusing to give a household list or choosing the respondents themselves.

The ADDU research team tried to minimize the problems of uncooperative or unfriendly barangays by securing permits and letters of introduction from both military and civil officials of the Region. While the use of such letters and authorization permits proved in general to be efficacious, in some cases the letters aroused negative partisan reactions when the barangay captain happened to be of a different political persuasion. It may be recalled that political conditions at this time were far from stable and in many parts of the country including the Davao region local government functionaries were sharply divided between Marcos loyalists and Cory Aquino politicians and candidates. Due to these political conditions, many routine problems in field research were rendered doubly difficult. Entry problem into a community became nearly critical as described in the foregoing. To solve this problem interviewers who came from the community itself were trained and hired to conduct the interviews thus eliminating most of the passive resistance of the R's to the study. In three of four barangays where interviewers were brought in from outside the community, the interviews suffered interminable delays and in one Christian barangay the interview almost did not take place.

Among the Muslim barangays the interview problem centered around the uncommunicativeness of the Muslim in regard to political issues. Ostensibly the beneficiaries of the autonomy provision in the Constitution, Muslim R's were found to be most reluctant to answer the interview questions. The usual

assurances of confidentiality of the answers failed to assuage their fear of expressing themselves openly either for fear of reprisals in any form and from whatever sources; or from an outright contempt or plain indifference to the subject. A Muslim respondent who was a member of the CHDF told the field supervisor that he would rather interview than be interviewed. In one Muslim barangay no Muslim woman was willing to be interviewed, many of the pre-designated R's who were female spouses deferred to their husbands or simply refused to be interviewed. At pains to break the problematic impasse, the field supervisor explained that no individual answers will be known, and that the nature of the survey data is similar to the census which state the answers in terms of conglomerate numbers rather than per respondent. While this explanation gave many of them a new understanding of the survey as may be inferred from the looks of relief that swept many faces, for the rest the thought that their answers would be committed to paper or recorded, caused unmitigated suspicion and anxiety and thus remained obstinate.

The main problem in the tribal barangays was their accessibility. Of the three tribal groups included in the regional sample for Davao two were located in the mountains and the other was a lowland "hamlet" or a relocated community. Tribals appeared to be mostly unimpressed with the study and registered little or no reactions to the interview proceedings. After it was explained to them that the interview was authorized they actually showed more willingness to be interviewed than

either the Christian or Muslim respondent. However, the Tribal interviews took much longer apparently because of some language difficulties although the interviewers were native speakers of their language who were recruited from the same community. The open-ended questions required re-translation to Visayan or English, and the exercise of this activity demanded lengthy consultations with the field supervisors.

## THE OL RESPONSES

One of the four main components of the study is an indepth qualitative report for which purpose a sub-sample of opinion leaders so-called in Mindanao-Sulu was drawn from the total sample. The actual design eschewed a pre-categorization or definition of OL. Instead, the identification of the OL was elicited from among the regular respondents who were asked to name two or three persons in the community whom they considered as leader. An OL thus was one whose name was among the most frequently mentioned as leader in the community. A separate interview schedule containing more or less the same questions which were changed to open-ended ones, was administered to OLs.

The categorization procedure adapted by the research consortium was simple: two researchers went through an assigned number of open-ended answers in Visayan and each made a list of categories of the responses after which the two reconciled both lists so as to produce a single list of categories which contained all the given answers. Working in pairs, the researchers-analysts finished categorizing all the answers in Visayan in one and a half days. Further categorization, i.e. collapsing two or more categories into one answer and translating the categories from Visayan to English was undertaken by RIMCU. An example of the process by which categories were finalized in

the Coding Instructions is given below:

Categories of Answers to Questions D12 A and C

"MAR will bring peace."

Very Likely

- Oo, kay an pamalaud sa Quran way pili, ma Kristiyano, ma Muslim, maayo gud an balaod sa Islam, pantay an pagdala sa mga tao.
- Peaceful gayod an Islam.
- Makasabot ma unya an mga Kristiyano sa maayong pamalaod sa Islam, ug makakita na sila sa maayong binuhatan sa Muslim.
- Sa kondisyon na magkasabot na an Kristiyano ug Muslim, pareho na sila gusto sa kalinaw.
- An Muslim ug Kristiyano dili na maghimo ug dautan kay an balaod sa Islam estrikto kaayo, mowala na an dautang buhat tungod sa Islam.
- Kay nahintang na man sila, The Muslims can now run their own affairs.
- Nakalain na man sila, dili na sila manghilabot.

A Little Likely

- Aduna na sila'y lugar na pag-agian, dili na sila magsamok.
- Kay na-a na may sila'y sinabtanay.
- Na-a may respetohay sa usag-usa.
- Kay an batasan sa Muslim lahi, an Muslim gusto sa kagubot ug puwersa.

Not Likely

- Lahi-lahi ang kinaiya og kagustohan.
- Lahi an relihiyon sa Kristiyano ug Muslim.
- An mga Muslim mapahitas-on. mag-abuso.
- Mosamot an kagubot tungod kay lain na an Diyos.
- Walay kalinaw.
- Masinahon man gayod an mga Muslim.
- Lahi an Muslim sa Kristiyano.

"MAR will help develop the Muslims economically."

Very Likely

- Aron modato an ilang kadugo na Muslim.
- Aron sila tanan mabulahan.
- Kay gusto man silang mouswag.
- Kay gitugtan na sa gobierno, maningkamot na sila.
- Aron molampos ang kaayohan sa Mindanao.
- Tungod kay tabangan kami sa uban ug Islamic na nausd, ila kaming pautangon nga walay porsyento.
- An tinguha nila kabulahan sa tanan, an kinaiya sa Muslim magtinabangay sa ilang kaayom.

A Little Likely

- Natural na paningkamutan ug tabangan an ilang kauswagan.

Not Likely

- Dili sincero an mga Muslim sa pagtabang sa ilang kauban: an uban mga Muslim na datu, an uban magkalisud-lisud.
- Dili mahitabo kay wala gayud sila an ilang kaugalingon.
- Nabal-an ko na an batasan sa Muslim, an mouswag Muslim lang gayud.

The final coding scheme as adapted in the Coding

## Instructions:

"MAR will bring peace."

Very Likely

- 01 - Islamic laws are good
- 02 - Trouble will be avoided
- 03 - Christians will agree that Islamic laws are good
- 04 - In the MAR Islamic laws will prevail
- 05 - Under Islam, the government will be good
- 06 - They are Muslim Filipinos
- 07 - There are more Christians than Muslims
- 08 - Christians should conform with Islamic beliefs and traditions in MAR/ Christians will be forced to practice Islam
- 09 - Islamic laws will be enforced
- 10 - They are used to Muslim rule

A Little Likely

- 20 - Christians will realize that Islamic government is good
- 21 - Muslims married to Christians will be governed by Muslim laws
- 22 - Islamic law is applicable to all
- 23 - Christians are afraid to follow Islamic law
- 24 - Christians will just abide because they are living in Muslim land
- 25 - Christians will be given due respect by Muslim leaders
- 26 - Christians living in MAR will be affected
- 27 - It depends upon the president
- 28 - Religious differences
- 29 - Christians have their own laws

Not Likely

- 30 - Christians will not agree to only one set of rules
- 31 - Religious/cultural differences

- 32 - The national government still exists
- 33 - Christians will not agree to be governed by Muslims

"MAR will develop Muslims economically."

Very Likely

- 01 - Welfare of the people of Mindanao will be achieved/ everybody will be better off
- 02 - Because their demands are granted, they will exert effort to develop
- 03 - Other Islamic countries will aid MAR for development
- 04 - The goal of MAR is for the good of everybody
- 05 - Because there will be peace and MAR can work for the development of the people/ desire for development
- 06 - Muslim leaders will help their own kind/ their goal is to help one another
- 07 - Irrelevant
- 08 - MAR will help the poor
- 09 - For the welfare of the Muslims
- 10 - Commandment among Muslims to help one another/ Muslim trait
- 11 - Governemnt will be run by Muslims/ they will have their own government to help their own people
- 12 - Muslims will work hard
- 13 - There will be prosperity in Mindanao

A Little Likely

- 20 - It is natural for Muslims to help one another/ Muslim leaders will help their own kind
- 21 - There should be equality regardless of race

Not Likely

- 30 - Officials will work for personal interest/ Muslim officials are not sincere in their efforts to help their fellow Muslims/ Muslim culture shows that only their datus are well-off
- 31 - Muslims are not capable of progress and development
- 32 - Muslims themselves are not united

perceptions of Life in Mindanao  
 satisfaction with life in Mindanao was  
 because, "Life here is stable/peaceful". The  
 perception, "Life is uncertain/unstable" was  
 Muslims gave as the reason for their  
 The Christians and the Tribals who were among  
 similarly dissatisfied gave as reason an economic  
 stress. On the whole, however, the Christians and  
 satisfied with life in Mindanao.

question asked the OLS to name the first  
 in Mindanao to which all three groups gave an  
 answer: "peace and order". Given the sequencing  
 it seems that something is inconsistent and  
 the answers: if the consensus is satisfaction  
 in Mindanao because life in general is stable and  
 it happen that the first mentioned problem  
 is "r"?

mentioned problem provides a wider view of  
 this time the answers already vary across  
 linguistic groups: it is economic for the  
 Christians; and lack of autonomy together with  
 health for the Muslims who were also the ones who  
 mentioned problems such as health, education,  
 security, etc.

if the second mentioned problem was again a  
 question of stability with the Tribals accounting  
 a large percentage of the answers. The cause for the

Muslim problem of lack of autonomy and underrepresentation were policies/leaders of government, a category which includes corrupt and inadequate leadership, military abuses, and complaints against land reform; for the Christians and the Tribals the cause is again economic: a generalized heading for answers of "lack of resources, unemployment, low income, etc." Only the Christians mentioned high prices as a cause for the peace and order problem. Among the unpopular answers were traditional or religious explanations from the Muslim and Christian groups. Land dispute/land grabbing surprisingly did not claim any respondents from the Tribals.

As a solution to these problems the Christians proposed dialogues between conflicting parties while the Muslims and the Tribals favored government assistance and social services. Autonomy for Mindanao was suggested by an almost equal percentage of Muslims and Tribals, while a very small percentage of Christians proposed the independence of Mindanao.

Of fourteen statements about life in Mindanao-Sulu only five were consensuses:

1. Mindanao is always neglected.
2. People in Manila do not understand (problems in Mindanao-Sulu).
3. The government gives too many privileges to Muslims.
4. Too many Muslims are appointed by the government (to public positions).
5. People in Mindanao should benefit more from its natural resources.

### Awareness and Opinion on Autonomy

OLs were found to be well-informed and highly knowledgeable about political matters in general, and autonomy in particular. Low percentages, however, were registered for the knowledgeability, i.e. correct identification of all armed groups beginning with the NAFP especially the CHDF and including the MNLF. Only the Tribals came out with a positive consensus, i.e. complete agreement, with both the NAFP and the CHDF while 50% of the Muslims were in complete agreement with the MNLF.

Two kinds of understanding of autonomy, one as generally understood; and another as defined by provisions in the Constitution were asked of the OLs. Autonomy was understood by the Muslims and the Christians as self-government or self-rule falling short of independence. The Tribals defined autonomy firstly as independence, and secondly as self-rule short of independence. The range of coded answers defining autonomy in general:

1. It means that Muslims will enjoy self-rule, self-government, Islam will be the basis of government, Shariah-Islamic law and Quran will be followed.
2. self-government but not independence or separation from the nation
3. setting up of an independent government separate from the Philippines
4. individual rights will be recognized, equality/equity

5. attainment of peace
6. irrelevant answers
7. don't know answers
8. no answer
9. not applicable

Autonomy is perceived as directly related to Muslim demands for self-government and Islamic characteristics of such an autonomous government. Some meanings for autonomy associated it with the attainment of peace and recognition of individual rights with equality as the basis of governance.

Another indicator inquires after the meaning of autonomy as "autonomy for Muslim Mindanao":

1. self-rule but recognizing the authority of national government, subject to constitutional processes
2. complete independence for Muslims/ Mindanao will be separated/ separation, own government
3. self-rule recognizing authority of national government but limited to Muslims only, MINSUPALA
4. recognition of Muslim rights and privileges, grant MINSUPALA to Muslims
5. granting, providing a better future, economic development and recognition of will of the people
- 6-9 irrelevant answers

Further questions in regard to autonomy were asked:

- a. whether autonomy was a good/bad idea
- b. agree/disagree with Muslim autonomy; and
- c. whether R would like his municipality to be a part of MAR.

To all these questions only the Muslim answers showed a positive consensus. The disagreement on the part of the Christians and the Tribals were coded according to the following answers:

- 20 - not realistic
- 21 - (it will invite) foreign intervention
- 22 - leaders/implementors lack knowledge about Muslim people/Islam religion
- 23 - Muslims will have their own government
- 24 - Muslim needs are not understood/ not granted
- 25 - not the autonomy we are demanding for
- 26 - (it will lead to) discrimination of Christians
- 27 - autonomy provisions not understood
- 96-99 irrelevant answers, etc.

While most of the answers showed a clear Christian bias some of the negative responses came from Muslims themselves, e.g. "not the autonomy we are demanding for". This indicates the Muslims' disagreement with the idea of autonomy as provided for by the Constitution. Apparently, there are fears among the Muslims that the Constitutional provision on autonomy will not be the answer to their problems. Their fears are further articulated in their reasons for stating that Muslims were not properly represented in the negotiations which were then being held on autonomy:

- 20 - because so many things are not clear to the Muslims (the reason being that they are ignorant of the issues, or they are intentionally being kept in the dark)
- 21 - because what had been signed by Cory has not been implemented
- 22 - because most of us are not for autonomy because it brings chaos (kagubot)
- 23 - because regardless of the negotiations chaos still persists
- 24 - because other Muslim groups are not represented and they have different stands on the matter of autonomy
- 25 - because whatever they have agreed on will not take effect until approved in a referendum (or act of Congress, etc.)

- 26 - because Muslims and Christians do not agree and cannot agree
- 27 - because other groups are not represented, are divided

### Perceptions

On the perception that Christians in Muslim areas have a hard time/ Muslim leaders won't listen, Christians and Muslims both registered affirmative consensuses giving the following reasons:

- 01 - the Maranaos feel that they are superior to the Christians/ they want to be superior/ they don't want democracy
- 02 - because the Muslims won't attend to the needs of the Christians/ they want to own the whole place/ Muslims have bad character (lain ug kinaiya)/ they are against Christians/ they will make it hard for Christians
- 03 - they will favor their co-Muslims
- 04 - because the Muslims and Christians will never understand each other/ different religions
- 05 - because when the Christians have complaints the Muslims won't attend (there is evidence) that's how things have been in Muslim cases
- 06 - Muslims won't listen because Christians regard themselves as superior to Muslims
- 07 - because Muslims will stick to their beliefs/ principles

The answers in the above coding list reflect a high degree of ethnocentrism, while the reasons given for disagreement constitute a defense for Muslim leadership or Islamic principles on social justice:

- 20 - because Islamic beliefs prohibit injustice, regardless of race, religion or sex
- 21 - because it is not always or all the time that the Muslim leaders won't listen to Christian constituents
- 22 - because Muslim leaders are fair, they listen to Christians also
- 23 - in fact, Muslim leaders bend backward to favor the Christians against the Muslims in their effort to be fair

- 24 - because everybody is equal under the law/  
Christians here hold important government  
positions/ nothing bad has happened to them
- 25 - people differe-there are those who are good and  
others who are bad

The perception of the Manila government's neglect of  
Mindanao are due to the following reasons:

- 01 - because we can see the evidence of neglect-"just  
look around Mindanao", the government had really  
neglected (gipasagdan) this place, did not pay  
attention-the roads are so bad
- 02 - because of the distance of Mindanao from the seat  
of government in Manila/ hard to supervise
- 03 - because some leaders won't spend funds on  
development projects (but would pocket the money)
- 04 - because Mindanao is not the government's priority
- 05 - because the political leaders are mostly from  
Luzon and pay more attention to their own place
- 06 - because of gubot-gubot (peace and order problems)  
in Mindanao

That people in Manila don't understand Mindanao problems  
again won a positive consensus which is explained by the  
following:

- 01 -because they are too far/ they hardly come to  
Mindanao/ they only come during election time/  
they don't attend to problems of Mindanao
- 02 - they are not from Mindanao, so they don't know  
about the probelms/ they should limit themselves  
to Manila-they would know their own problems
- 03 - because there are few officials from Mindanao,  
most are from Manila/Luzon
- 04 - people from Manila are prejudiced, they don't  
bother much about Mindanao problems
- 05 - because they don't attend/pay attention to Mindanao
- 06 - the problems of Mindanao are not brought to the  
attention of the President by the leaders

No clear consensus was obtained for the idea that Manila  
officials should decide what is best for Mindanao. The  
affirmative answers carried undertones of very conservative  
and pro-establishment views while the negative answers upheld

the right of local leadership and government.

Agree Answers

- 01 - they have the power to decide/ they know the law/ they are given the authority to do so
- 02 - it is good for them to decide so there will be no favoritism
- 03 - the President is from Luzon or resides there/ it is easy for her to call other government officials/ she can get representatives from other places
- 04 - because they know the solutions to our problems
- 05 - so there will be no problem, better to centralize decision-making
- 06 - Mindanao is part of the Philippines
- 07 - if their decision is good for Mindanao

Disagree Answers

- 20 - they should also listen to local leaders/ local leaders have to be consulted in decision-making/ people of Mindanao should be involved in decision-making/ they should get representatives from Mindanao who know the problems here/ local officials must be the ones to decide
- 21 - local leaders should participate in decision-making concerning Mindanao problems
- 22 - they don't know the problems in Mindanao which are different from the problems of different places/ they are too far

The perception that cultural communities are ignored by the government found agreement in some whose reasons were the following:

- 01 - so that the minorities can be given peace of mind and feel really a part by helping government/ so they will not create trouble for the government
- 02 - there are those who are qualified/knowledgeable/ good/deserve high positions/capable of holding government positions
- 03 - because they should have someone to attend to their interest
- 04 - those who are educated can be given high responsibility in the government
- 05 - because they have not yet been educated (experienced?)

and disagreement from others because:

- 20 - a lot of them are ignorant, no knowledge, no know-how on government bureaucracy
- 21 - many are uneducated
- 22 - it is necessary that government should give equal attention to all Filipinos in Mindanao
- 23 - because they were already given government attention, e.g. schools, PANAMIN
- 24 - most of them cannot be attended to

A follow-up statement that Tribals can hold high positions in the government was supported by the following answers:

- 01 - because many of the natives are qualified for higher positions in the government
- 02 - so that they can educate their companions/ fellow Tribals/ so that they can have good representation
- 03 - because they are also Filipinos
- 04 - so that there will be no trouble

As to the statement, "forbid further movement by Christians to Muslim areas", the affirmative answers were:

- 01 - this will prevent further conflict/ Muslims and Christians can never live together
- 02 - peoples of the same kind should stay together/ each group should have distinct areas of abode
- 03 - Muslims should not be cheated anymore of their lands by Christians/ there will be peace in MAR
- 04 - Muslims can live as one/ will govern themselves according to Islam/ there will be unity
- 05 - Mindanao has always been Muslim land
- 06 - this is within the power, authority of MAR
- 07 - Muslims in MAR should not be bothered anymore/ they should be allowed to prosper and develop MAR
- 08 - Christians will convert Muslims
- 09 - Christians will govern MAR/ will exploit its natural resources/ will become rich and powerful
- 10 - will stifle Muslim aspirations

and the negative answers were:

- 21 - Christians and Tribals are everywhere in Mindanao; they cannot be just driven away/ they have rights to settle in MAR
- 22 - people can settle anywhere they like/ there is a

- right to free abode
- 23 - there are good non-Muslims in MAR; they are entitled to stay, come/ Islam is fair; it does not discriminate
  - 24 - Christians in MAR will be oppressed, persecuted/ will mean trouble, war
  - 25 - Christians and Tribals will not bother the Muslims
  - 26 - Muslims, Christians and other peoples can live together in MAR/ there will be no conflict
  - 27 - MAR still part of RP/ Mindanao is not owned by the Muslims/ Christians cannot be prevented from coming/ the government must decide

The question of ancestral rights as a basis for land ownership is clearly an argument between traditional as against Western systems of land ownership.

#### Agree Answers

- 01 - land ownership among Muslims and other natives of Mindanao has always been based on ancestral rights
- 02 - ancestral rights are accepted, while land titles can be manipulated and bought
- 03 - Muslims in Mindanao lost their lands due to land titles; ancestral rights were ignored/ land titles are unfair to Muslims
- 04 - land titles will create sibling rivalries on land claims/ sense of communal property will be gone
- 05 - land ownership through ancestral rights will settle land disputes in MAR/ will return lands to rightful owners
- 06 - within the power, authority of MAR
- 07 - the poor peoples of MAR cannot afford to spend on land titles
- 08 - Muslims and other natives of Mindanao put great value on ancestral rights/ they cannot understand, appreciate land titles
- 09 - will bring peace and stability in MAR/ will result to progress and development

#### Disagree Answers

- 21 - land titles are legal bases of land ownership/ they are constitutional; must be respected/ ancestral rights are unconstitutional
- 22 - land titles are accepted worldwide as proof of land ownership; ancestral rights are not
- 23 - ancestral rights will create conflict and trouble/ promote rivalry among Tribal families/ squatting and land grabbing
- 24 - Muslims will get every land in sight (even if not theirs) they will own MAR/ will dominate and oppress non-Muslims

- 25 - unfair to Christian settlers
- 26 - will make Muslims and Tribals more powerful; they will work for independence
- 27 - will deter progress and development of MAR due to land dispute/ there will be more killings
- 28 - more trouble, only Muslims can own land
- 29 - they are lazy that's why they sold their lands at a cheap price

#### Impact of MAR: Expectations

Will the establishment of MAR bring peace? Three answers were pre-coded for this question Block: very likely, a little likely, not likely. The categories of open-ended answers have already been cited somewhere in the foregoing text as an example describing the process of formulating the categories. By and large, the nature of the three kinds of answers revolved around the religious factor, i.e. the benevolence of Islamic laws and their acceptability to Christians who will be subject to them once the MAR is established. In effect, none of the categories state that MAR will bring peace.

That the establishment of MAR will help develop the Muslims economically is regarded with great optimism especially by the Muslim groups. On the other hand, the negative categories cite observations of corrupt Muslim officialdom to predict that the present social structures in Muslim communities will obviate the achievement of any significant changes.

Agreements on the statement that Muslim rebels will stop fighting if MAR is established were not as easily drawn.

Very Likely Answers

- 01 - Muslim laws will be implemented and all acts will be judged accordingly
- 02 - the goal is for the good of the people
- 03 - they are running their own affairs
- 04 - the goal of MAR is peace/ there will be peace and everyone will prosper
- 05 - equality of all Filipinos
- 06 - understanding between Muslims and Christians
- 07 - Muslims will no longer cause trouble because it is their government
- 08 - demands have been granted/ welfare of Muslims will be attended to
- 09 - understanding will be attained if personal interests will not prevail
- 10 - both Christians and Muslims desire peace

Not Likely Answers

- 20 - differences in thinking
- 21 - Muslims have always been fighting the government/ causing trouble
- 22 - cultural differences
- 23 - Muslims do not know contentment nor satisfaction
- 24 - the root of the trouble is personal interest and not Muslim-Christian conflict
- 25 - Christians will refuse to be ruled by Muslims
- 26 - there will never be understanding between Muslims and Christians
- 27 - the conflict will worsen

The negation of the statement "There will be fewer investments" closely parallels the highly optimistic affirmation of "MAR will develop Muslims economically" as seen from the following categories:

Very Likely Answers

- 01 - Muslims will monopolize the business
- 02 - fear of Muslim businessmen who are considered as traitors/ Muslims have different traits
- 03 - most businessmen will refuse to have small projects which is provided for in the Islamic law-Muslims will cheat
- 04 - Muslims will refuse competition
- 05 - business will be obstructed by the Muslims
- 06 - it depends upon the law promulgated by the Muslims
- 07 - areas mostly occupied by Muslims are not peaceful

A Little Likely Answers

- 01 - Muslims will want to monopolize business so they will become rich
- 02 - businessmen will avoid the Muslims
- 03 - businessmen fear Muslim traits
- 04 - abide by policies of MAR
- 05 - business is needed in MAR

Not Likely Answers

- 01 - Muslims will have to conduct business to increase the income of Mindanao
- 02 - people would not care if their business is in the MAR/ where there is profit businessmen will go there
- 03 - Muslim rule is alright
- 04 - business can help the country
- 05 - business is the source of livelihood and will be conducted anywhere
- 06 - MAR will be peaceful so businessmen will be attracted to MAR
- 07 - businessmen believe that Islam is the right way to rule
- 08 - businessmen will be interested in the natural resources
- 09 - law does not provide that business cannot be conducted in MAR
- 10 - will conduct business if businessmen will not be driven away

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This qualitative report has taken into consideration the whole research procedure beginning with the survey design through its implementation as the overt expression of the principles that have guided the conduct of the study. The objectives of the research proposal clearly indicated the intentions of the researchers as well as the goals of the survey: to gather data on public opinion and predisposition with regard to the autonomy issue. The report shows that the scientific character of the investigation notwithstanding, the decisions taken in working out the research design were not impervious to historical factors. In fact, the latter was the framework upon which the main concepts used in the study were evolved and crystallized. Thus the objectives of the study addressed perceptions, attitudes, and opinions that enjoyed currency at the time for the purpose of providing policy-makers and government agencies with hard data as evidence.

A profile of project implementation is adduced by describing the survey undertaken in Region XI (Davao Region) as a case study. The case study presents the sample size and allocation for Davao Region, the barangays selected, and the problems that were encountered and how they were coped with, etc.

To the extent that OLS were presumed to be pe  
were likely to influence ideas and perceptions of iss  
their communities, the OLS were asked more open-ended  
than the regular respondents. As barometers of publi  
the OLS were found to be highly knowledgeable and wel  
about political matters in general, and about autonom  
particular. The exceptions were the low percentages  
correct identification of armed groups which included  
CHDF, and the MNLF.

The question Block, "Awareness and Opinions"  
autonomy and its various meanings. As perceived by C  
autonomy is directly related to Muslim demands and ha  
attributes. Non-agreement with autonomy and in part  
Muslim fears and reservations regarding autonomy as  
for by the Constitution emanate from a notion that s  
autonomy may not be the kind that would solve their

But for the Muslims, the OLS admitted to a 9  
satisfaction with life in Mindanao and this satisfact  
derives from attributes of life in Mindanao as peace  
stable. For the Tribal OLS, a further and older rea  
their family roots are found here. However, when ask  
the first perceived problem in Mindanao an overwhel  
across all three ethno-religious groups was the "peac  
order situation". An apparent incongruity in these  
insinuated itself and reinforced by the sequencing of  
questions/answers; the two questions were asked succ

The main cause of this problem of peace and order as perceived by OLS, is rebellion/instability, a reflection of political, as well as socio-economic disorders. As a solution, the Muslims and Tribals suggested government assistance and social services, while the Christian OLS favored dialogues between the conflicting parties. Among the unpopular solutions offered were autonomy, as suggested by both Muslim and Tribal OLS and a very small percentage of Christian OLS proposed independence for Mindanao.

One wishes that the "satisfied with life in Mindanao-Sulu" answers were followed up with as many, if not more indicators as the "dissatisfied" responses, especially since more OLS replied affirmatively than negatively to the question. Under the circumstances, the investigation of more problems and their causes served as some form of orientation point for the questions following it. The whole question Block on life in Mindanao-Sulu produced answers that depicted a grim picture of Mindanao-Sulu as a place with serious peace and order problems and whose inhabitants including the Christians have suffered grave government neglect.

The perception of the National Government's neglect of Mindanao-Sulu is shared by all three groups in the sample. This perception is expressed in such comments and answers as "We can see the evidence of this neglect, just look around Mindanao", accusations of corrupt, indifferent, or apathetic leadership; and Mindanao-Sulu not being a priority area for

development since most of those responsible for development projects are from Luzon and not Mindanao-Sulu; etc.

The above perception is reinforced by subsequent data on the relationship between Mindanao and the National Government in Manila, and their respective officials: people in Manila do not understand Mindanao because they do not live here and are not therefore interested in its problems, or because local leaders have not apprised the President of the Philippines of the problems of Mindanao-Sulu. A part of all these is the plight of the cultural communities or Tribals, perceived as similarly ignored and left out of the socio-political mainstream. For this reason, the idea or suggestion that Tribals may also be given high positions in the government met with favorable responses. One of the stated reasons for favoring this suggestion is that the Tribal peoples are also Filipinos hence, deserving of equal attention and treatment from the government.

The incipient controversy on ancestral rights as basis for land ownership drew highly polarized answers between those who perceived the proposition as the solution to their problems, and those whose viewpoint is that it will be the cause of many problems and further Muslim-Christian conflict. The intensity of the reactions point to the salience of the issue as an economic factor: farming/fishing is the primary occupation of all three groups, especially the Tribals. Yet, some corollary questions have shown surprising answers. The advocacy of land

rights by ancestry obtained a low percentage of "Agree" answers from the Tribals whose group would be the most benefited since by comparison with the two other ethno-religious groups, the Tribals are shown to be the oldest staying people in Mindanao. Likewise, the Tribal OLS barely arrived at a consensus in approving the idea that MAR should be empowered to prohibit further Christian settlements in Mindanao. On the other hand, they showed a clear majority agreement with the statement that the government should indeed proscribe further Christian settlements in Mindanao-Sulu.

Although the establishment of MAR will not likely bring peace one of its perceived impacts is that it is a means that will eventually or indirectly lead to peace. One of the most optimistic perceptions of MAR is that it will help develop the Muslims economically, because other Muslim countries will give aid to it, etc. Their demands having been granted by the government the Muslim peoples will feel that a great incentive shall have been given to them, consequently all Muslims will work hard, help one another, and will all be better off in the future. Finally; with the improvement of the Muslim peoples who for centuries have been neglected there will be prosperity for all in Mindanao-Sulu.

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