

# PERCEPTIONS OF OPINION LEADERS ON AUTONOMY FOR MUSLIM MINDANAO: A PRELIMINARY STUDY\*

by

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## *Introduction*

This paper is primarily prepared for this conference to share with you the findings of a research study group that looked into the perceptions and opinions of peoples of Mindanao on the current issue of autonomy. The findings that will be presented here are those that pertain to the views held on the same issue by specific persons whom the study group arbitrarily, yet agreeable, termed as "opinion leaders." The data analysis and interpretation are solely confined to the marginal distribution of responses of three (3) ethno-religious/linguistic groups namely, Christian, Muslim, and Tribal group referred to in this study are those coming from the known "cultural communities" (sometimes called as national minorities) located in Mindanao.

As a major research purpose, the study group recognized the importance of knowing and understanding the views of certain persons who command influence and authority in some communities of Mindanao on the issue of autonomy. This group disposition is based on two (2) prime research considerations. The first consideration is drawn from a theoretical perspective which deals with the seemingly accepted view that "leaders" are prime movers of ideas and catalyzers of change (Gouldner, 1950; Stogdill, 1974). On whatever leadership basis (Weber, 1947) or authority patterns

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\*This paper is an abridged version of a report on the same topic, which is an integral part of a Mindanao-wide survey on autonomy. The study was conducted by a team of researchers representing five (5) institutions of higher learning in the region, namely: Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro City, Ateneo de Davao in Davao City, Notre Dame University in Cotabato City, Western Mindanao State University in Zamboanga City, and Mindanao State University at its main campus in Marawi City. The Asia and Ford Foundations provided the funding support for the study under the auspices of the Mindanao Development Studies Center and the Research Institute for Mindanao Cultures, all based at the Xavier University.

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(Etzioni, 1964) they draw from to exert their influence, these persons command visible following in their respective organizations or communities. They tend to assume multiple roles as well as perform varied functions that are related to the well-being of their fellow constituents and in guiding their respective "spheres of influence" towards preferred directions. As such, it is not altogether surprising to find a person in a leadership position to be acting as the local chieftain and as chief priest at the same time. Or, one who is a PTA president and, simultaneously, as the head of a local farmers' cooperative association. And, in reflection to actual conditions to which some of us are currently experiencing, a person who is both the mayor and the reigning sultan of a certain Muslim community. The findings of this study along this research consideration may provide additional insights in analyzing some facets of leadership within the Philippine social context as they relate to the formation of opinion and consensus building. In a more specific context, the results of this study may also give further insights in understanding multiple leadership patterns that exist in most Muslim communities in Southern Philippines, particularly among the Maranaos of Lanao where modern-day leadership is still exercised by known traditional leaders (Benitez, 1968; Saber, 1979).

The second research consideration of this study touches on a seemingly immediate concern. Within the framework of the current autonomy issue, some sectors of the communities in Mindanao and Sulu expressed misgivings on the alleged meager and/or superficial involvement of certain "community leaders" in the various consultative assemblies and other similar fora held that deliberated on the grant and implementation of autonomy in two regions of Mindanao in 1979 in accordance with the provisions of the Tripoli Accord of 1976. The same group further expressed that the intended beneficiaries of autonomy, including their "real leaders" were not adequately consulted on the said issue and, therefore, did not derive worthy benefits from autonomy. And for this reason, among others, it was claimed that the autonomy which was granted nearly a decade ago remained "more of form than substance" (Mastura, 1985).

The desire for a more meaningful and substantive autonomy gained added impetus from the recently ratified constitution of the Philippines by virtue of Article X, Sections 15 to 21, which provided for the setting up of "autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordilleras." In view thereof, there are already tangible evidence that the search for autonomy is now set into motion as shown by the sustained efforts of the Peace Commission in the holding of "multi-sectoral" assemblies throughout the envisioned areas of autonomy as well in the conduct of "shuttle diplomacy" by the national government to some foreign countries that have expressed strong interest on the same issue. As to whether or not these foregoing efforts being exerted in the pursuance of the constitutional mandate for

autonomy are achieving the intended results, it is somewhat premature at this point in time to make any conclusive judgment. At best, it can be wished that the same efforts are on the right track. The recent formation of the Regional Consultative Commission (RCC) to assist the Philippine Congress in drafting the organic act for autonomy should reinforce the foregoing optimism.

On the basis of the two research considerations mentioned, it is hoped that the data findings of this particular inquiry on opinion leaders' perceptions of autonomy will be a positive contribution to the insights of the architects of autonomy in their search for development, stability, and peace in Mindanao.

### *The Sample*

A total number of 220 respondents were determined for the study as its opinion leaders subjects through the use of "purposive" or "interactive" sampling (Lin, 1977). (This number was arrived at by barangay unit for all sampled barangays in the overall autonomy study (Costello, 1988). For every barangay sample, regular respondents to the overall study were asked toward the end of their interviews to name at least three (3) persons whom they normally consult on vital matters that highly concern them and their respective communities. The top two (2) persons identified by regular respondents were considered as the "opinion" leaders of the barangay. Of the 220 identified opinion leaders, 102 came from the Christian respondent group, 98 from the Muslims, and 22 from the Tribals.

Opinion leaders respondents were given the same questions asked of regular respondents. To make a distinction between the two respondent groups, opinion leaders were asked additional questions which require open-ended answers. This procedure made it possible to probe deeper into the beliefs and opinions held by respondents on the autonomy issue.

### *Opinions about Autonomy*

The concept of autonomy seems to be rapidly developing as a household by-word in some places nation-wide, but mostly in Mindanao and the Cordilleras (Sarangani, 1987). The popularity of autonomy, however, and as it currently appears, is not totally indicative of its common understandability in terms of a mutually agreed idea or phenomenon. This impression makes it instructive to suggest that before it is finally tried in the Philippine setting, particularly in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordilleras, autonomy might yet come to a rigorous debate on the issues of definition, implementation, and consequences.

In addressing the foregoing concern, respondents were asked a set of questions concerning their perceptions and opinions about "autonomy" and "autonomy for Muslim Mindanao." The results of this inquiry are presented in Table 1. Respondents who declared to be knowledgeable about the constitutional provision that 'dealt especially with Mindanao' were asked of their understanding of the said provision. As shown by the data on Table 1, more than 80 percent of Christian and Muslim respondents share the the view with nearly 60 percent tribals that such constitutional provision refers to autonomy for Muslims and Mindanao. Less than 35 percent of tribals suggested that the same provision meant "independence of the Muslims and Mindanao".

When asked about their understanding of autonomy, more than 70 percent of Christian and Muslim respondents equated the concept to "self government/self rule, but short of independence". Among tribal respondents, slightly half of them perceived autonomy as "independence". Less than 10 percent of all respondents were unable to define autonomy. On the more definitive issue of "autonomy for Muslim Mindanao", just over half of Christians and tribals share with majority of Muslim respondents the view that the same statement refers to "self-rule, but short of independence". Close to 15 percent of all respondents did not seem to have any idea of what "autonomy for Muslim Mindanao" means.

The ambivalent feelings of respondents towards the whole autonomy proposal, but particularly on the constitutional provision to grant autonomy seemed evident, as suggested by the data shown in Table 2. Almost 90 percent of Muslims consider the constitutional provision as a good idea, while Christians and tribals seemed rather indecisive about the matter. Nearly 60 percent of Christians consider the constitutional provision as at least a bad idea, while 46.7 percent among tribals held the same view. In a separate data analysis (forthcoming), the opinions of respondents on the same item were further investigated to determine the reasons given as to why such a provision is either good or bad. For most Muslim respondents, their endorsement of such provision is based on their belief that, as a prelude to the grant of autonomy, it will "augur well for the achievement of peace", "stability", and "unity" in the region. Furthermore, they add, it will lead to the "realization of Muslim needs", with emphasis on the "true practice of Islamic life". On the other hand, Christian and tribal respondents who considered the constitutional provision as a bad idea viewed the latter as pointing to "Christian discrimination" and an added factor towards the "deterioration of peace and order conditions" in Mindanao. Some Christian and tribal respondents consider that the constitutional provision on autonomy are unclear and might result to "irrelevant autonomy".

The foregoing contrasting sentiments on the constitutional provision on autonomy are repeated by respondents with a high degree of definitive-

ness on their opinions about the proposal for the “establishment of a Muslim Autonomous Region (MAR)” as well as in their reactions if “their respective areas be included in the MAR.” This general observation is discerned from the data shown in Table 2 (Items B and C) up to Table 5. Evidently, majority of Christians (77.6%) disagree on the setting up of a MAR, while tribals are nearly split on the issue. On the other hand, 82 percent of Muslim respondents subscribed to the establishment of a MAR. Obviously, Muslims favor the inclusion of their areas within the MAR, while Christians (94.0%) and tribals (77.3%) hold the opposite view.

The reasons given by respondents on why they either agree or disagree with both proposals are basically similar. On the apparent dissenting side, Christians and, to some extent, tribals oppose the two proposals because they believe that these will only “cause more trouble” and that “Christians will be dominated and discriminated by Muslims”. As shown in Table 4, the data indicate that nearly half of Christians (43.88%) do not approved of being within MAR because they claim themselves to be the majority and there are “few Muslims” in their respective communities. Muslims, on the other hand, expressed the view that a MAR will bring “peace and stability”, and their “demands will be granted” or “life aspirations be realized” And finally, on the issue of a MAR, the data appearing in Table 5 show that nearly all Christian and tribal respondents disapproved of the idea of a MAR constituting all of Mindanao and Sulu. The Muslims are not unanimous on this issue.

Additional perceptions about autonomy and the setting up of a MAR were also solicited from respondents. They were asked to identify both “good” and “bad” effects of a MAR should it be established. The data findings on this subject, as presented in Table 6, indicate that slightly over 50 percent of Christian and tribal respondents perceived no good effects of a MAR. Only 20 percent of tribals and barely 15 percent of Christians share with just over one-fourth of Muslim respondents the impression that the “attainment of peace” is one of the good effects of a MAR. Surprisingly, Muslims appear not to have a high regard on “Muslims benefiting” or “Islam being strengthened”, much less the achievement of “Muslim unity” as probable good effects of a MAR.

On the other hand, probable bad effects of a MAR are shared views by more than half of all respondent groups. Almost half of the Muslim respondents tend to agree with the same feelings of at least 80 percent of Christians and tribals that should a MAR be implemented, it is most likely that “more trouble will ensue between Muslims and Christians”, “corruption will prevail”, and “Christians will suffer”, among others.

## *Geographical Parameters of a MAR*

In so far as the grant of autonomy remains a constitutional mandate, its advocates and the national government will have to exert mutually beneficial efforts to get autonomy implemented. This task seemed gigantic enough, as several issues touching on personal pride to the fate of the nation need to be addressed. But central to this task is to determine the geographical limits or territorial boundary of the proposed MAR as well as its powers-to be, since it is the declared uncompromising view of the government that the issue of granting autonomy must always be viewed within the scope of national sovereignty and integrity.

In addressing the foregoing issue, respondents were asked to give their opinions on the possible territorial coverage of the proposed MAR. As shown in Table 7, a listing of all provinces and some cities of Mindanao and Sulu were presented to respondents (with the aid of a map) with the primary purpose of getting their views as to which of these places ought to be included in or excluded from the proposed MAR. The results of this inquiry also appear in Table 7 and the data indicate a replication of earlier observations about contrasting perceptions of respondent groups over the whole autonomy proposal. Most, if not all, of Muslim respondents (seemingly guided by a historical argument that Mindanao was and should always be theirs) are of the opinion that the entire Mindanao-Sulu region should constitute the MAR. On the other hand, and very clearly, the data also show that Christians and tribals, to some extent, appeared somewhat modest to openly declare that a MAR should not be set-up anywhere in Mindanao and Sulu. Only about half of both Christian and tribals are inclined to consider predominantly-Muslim provinces, but not necessarily cities therein, to be included in the proposed MAR. These are the provinces of Sulu, Basilan, and Tawi-tawi. With some apparent hesitance, the tribals together with the Christians seemed not inclined to include the province of Lanao del Sur and its capital city of Marawi, a Maranao-Muslim dominated area, to be a part of the MAR.

## *Power and Authority of the MAR*

If and when a MAR is finally established, it is expected to be vested by the national government with some powers. These powers, however, are expected not to be above, nor even at par, much less in contradiction to the powers of the national government. The range of power and level of authority envisioned for the proposed MAR are stipulated, although in broad terms, in the constitutional provision on autonomy (Section 20, Article X, Philippine Constitution). It is not certain, however, whether the future beneficiaries of autonomy will concur with these powers. By deter-

mining their perceptions of these powers-to-be of the MAR, additional insights may be derived on the respondents' overall disposition towards the autonomy issue. Furthermore, findings on this particular topic may likely lead respondents to possibly suggest other powers that the national government might not have earlier considered for the proposed MAR, or is constrained to give even if such powers will not necessarily undermine the premises for autonomy or that of the nation's integrity.

The above inquiry was addressed by asking respondents to give their opinions on fourteen (14) statements that broadly reflect the possible set of powers for the MAR. These powers ranged from those ideally "autonomous" in essence such as "to appoint regional directors", "enforcing the observance of Muslim holidays", "regulating the use of the region's natural resources", among others, to powers that seem to effect a semblance of independence such as to "make its own flag and seal", "to determine foreign policy", and "to prepare for independence." The results of this inquiry appear on Table 8 showing the percentage distribution of "agreeing" responses on the fourteen statements, by respondent groups.

Again, true to preceding observations on respondent group opinions about autonomy, Muslims show strong endorsement of an autonomous region than either the Christians or the tribals. Of the fourteen statements, at least a low of 50 percent to a high of 90 percent among Muslims agree with twelve of these powers to be exercised by the M.A.R. On the other hand, a great majority of Christians and tribals do not approve of these powers which, in the general, appear inimical to their own group interests. This observed overall disagreement over these proposed powers could not be construed for anything less than a strong testimony among Christians and tribal peoples for their opposition to the establishment of a Muslim autonomous region.

For purposes of discussion, it is rather interesting to note that majority of Muslims do not agree with two proposed powers of the MAR. They appear not to favor the idea "that only Muslims can hold high positions in the government" and that the MAR "will forbid further Christian settlements in the area". In a forthcoming separate data analysis on the same subject, Muslim respondents explained their disagreements on the latter two powers to be exercised by the MAR. On the former power, Muslims were of the opinion that there are others (obviously referring to some Christians and tribals) who are as qualified as the Muslims to occupy top government positions in the MAR. Owing probably to their level of education and awareness, which appear a little bit above than those of the regular Muslim respondents to the study, Muslim opinion leaders also consider that the MAR should not prevent further Christian settling in the area because they, just like themselves, have the "right to free abode". The foregoing impressions on these two powers tend to suggest that not all Muslims

are that overly irreverent or inconsiderate on the civil liberties of other peoples as what some Christians, and even tribals, would seemingly have it believed.

The idea of land ownership based on ancestral rights is probably one of the most sensitive issues to be resolved within the framework of establishing a MAR. As a possible power-to-be of the MAR, about half of Muslims tend to agree with the majority of Christians and tribals that the MAR should not employ "ancestral rights as the basis of land ownership" Notwithstanding the long and widely-held claim by Muslims that Mindanao is theirs by the twin reasons of history and ancestry, but which most Christians and tribals highly dispute, some Muslims are apparently reconsidering their position on the issue. When further asked why they feel this way, they believed that land titles are the most convincing proofs of land ownership, besides being legal and fair. Bringing this issue into further focus with the MAR, Muslims are likely to believe that land ownership based on ancestral rights is not likely to resolve, but instead further escalate land ownership disputes.

On the issue of the M.A.R. and its creation as a "prelude to independence", the data in Table 8 clearly indicate a general disagreement with such a possibility by majority of Christians and tribals. As in the case of land ownership, half of the Muslims share the same sentiment that the MAR cannot be allowed to have independence since it is very much a part of the Philippines.

### *Perceived Impact of M.A.R.*

The impression that respondents to this study, as separate groups, show mixed and contrasting perceptions about the grant of autonomy and the setting up of a MAR seemed to pervade in this report. In general, Muslims support the idea and grant of autonomy, while Christians and tribals do otherwise. Notwithstanding this general observation, existing trends of events point to the direction of gradually pursuing the grant of autonomy as constitutionally mandated. The creation of the Regional Consultative Commission by Congress and the near appointment of its members should notably reinforce this view. In this regard, some relevant questions may be asked if and when autonomy is finally granted. One will be whether or not a significant shift will occur on the observed perceptions of respondents on autonomy as a proposal. The second is if Christian and tribal respondents will change or soften their vaunted opposition to the autonomy issue, or will it remain as currently observed? And, thirdly, will Muslims have a change of heart and probably opt for something else that could ably respond to their needs in the most efficacious manner possible, apart from or in addition to autonomy arrangements? These questions may appear

rather rhetorical, but answers elicited on them may provide conclusive predictions about the future of autonomy and the proposed M & R.

To address the foregoing subject of inquiry, a series of eleven (11) statements dealing with possible outcomes of a MAR, if and when established, were asked of respondents as to whether or not each outcome will occur. The data findings on this topic are shown in Table 9.

Generally speaking, the data indicate that Muslims are enthusiastic about a MAR getting implemented, while Christians and tribals view it the other way. On almost all "positive outcomes" statements, whose benefits will not only accrue to them but others as well, more than half of Muslim respondents perceived of their likely occurrence. Furthermore, at least 90 percent of Muslim respondents hold the view that a MAR could "attract foreign aid" (particularly from Arab-Islamic nations), "help in their economic development", "bring peace", and "stop Muslim rebels from fighting the government". This general sentiment, however, is hardly shared by Christian and tribal respondents. On the contrary as well, majority of them perceived that a MAR will not augur well for the Christians as they "will be discriminated" or "should be forced to move away", considering the latter's agreement with both Muslims and Tribals that they may have to be forcibly "governed by Islamic laws".

It is understandable for Christians and tribals to agree and be sympathetic to Muslims about the idea of a MAR "getting more foreign aid" and, therefore, "hasten Muslim economic development." However, they appear hardly convinced to go along with Muslim expectations that a MAR will likely "bring peace and stability", "make rebels lay down their arms", "improved economic investments", and even "upgrade education standards". And to make the MAR scenario more dim, they can only expect "more corruption" instead of decreasing it. Without necessarily referring to the foregoing ambivalence of opinions about the MAR as a likely basis, but on other issues that they may probably tend to be apprehensive as the Muslims that a MAR may eventually "lead to independence" and a possible territorial dismemberment of the Philippines.

When further asked about other possible consequences of a MAR, once established, the sensitive issue of inter-group relations based on ethno-religious orientations and some other group distinguishing features becomes prominently visible. As shown by the data presented in Table 10, Christians and tribals are likely to see "increased Muslim-Christian confrontations", which Muslims would find hard to subscribe.

Finally, respondents were asked of their respective future dispositions as to what they will do if their own areas of current and or permanent residence are either included or excluded from a prospective MAR. The results of this inquiry appear in Table 11. For those respondents whose areas will be included in the MAR, the data indicate that Muslims "will stay" and support

the autonomous region," while Christians and tribals appear somewhat undecided on what they will do. About half of each group (Christians and tribals) feel that they "should stay," while the other half opted to "move away" or "go home." For those who responded otherwise to both choices of either staying or moving away, only 9.2 percent of Christians considered "studying the situation" first before making a final decision. Slightly over 10 percent of the tribals thought of "joining the rebels" obviously to fight as a sign of protest over the inclusion of their place to the MAR.

The probable actions of respondents if their places are not included in the MAR is as obvious as it is a foregone conclusion. Definitely, as the data suggest, nearly all Christians (92%) and all tribals would have all the exuberance to say that they will "stay put" in their areas. As for the Muslims, 83.3 percent indicate that they "will stay" and "do nothing." Of this number, 32.7 percent insist on autonomy by "joining the rebels and fight the government." Less than 10 percent favor "listening first to their leader's decision" on the issue before making any decision. Altogether though, Muslims are not bent on moving away from their present communities even if excluded from the coverage of the MAR. In summarizing this particular topic of inquiry, a tenable generalization can be made to the effect that Christians, Muslims, and tribals will remain in their current areas of abode, whether or not these be covered by the territorial limits of the proposed MAR. This apparent reality presents itself as probably the most controversial factor within the whole autonomy concern since it succinctly places into proper perspective alleged Christian territorial gains and perceived land losses among Muslims and tribal peoples.

### *Summary, Conclusions, and Implications*

The preceding discussion dealt with a presentation and analysis of data findings on the perceptions of autonomy by 220 respondents, as opinion leaders. The analysis was limited to marginal data distribution representing the responses of Christian, Muslim and tribal opinion leaders.

The general findings of the study show contrasting opinions of respondents about autonomy and its proposed implementation in Muslim Mindanao. Muslim opinion leaders highly endorsed the autonomy proposal, while Christians and tribals expressed heavy opposition to it. The same observation was found in the perceptions of respondents on other autonomy-related issues such as the setting-up of a Muslim Autonomous Region (MAR), its territorial coverage, its envisioned powers, and its perceived impact or consequences. Respondents, however, are unanimous in defining autonomy as "self-rule/self-government, but short of independence." When given a geographical reference, autonomy was perceived by respondents to mean for the Muslims and Mindanao.

Based on the foregoing findings, it appears that the road to autonomy is a long and arduous one. Whither autonomy? This concluding question seemingly requires profound thinking and study. Advocates and architects of autonomy should find it a deep challenge in their individual and group commitments to assist in finally putting the so-called Mindanao Problem to its definite resolution and ultimate rest. With such commitment, it can only be further wished that Mindanao should now be delivered from its fabled character as the "land of promise and opportunity" to a "land of progress, development, and peace."

Table 1 – Percentage Distribution, Perceptions Concerning Autonomy, by Ethno-Religious Group

A. Understanding of Constitutional Provision which “dealt especially with Mindanao.”			
	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
Autonomy for Muslims/ Mindanao	89.5	85.4	58.4
Independence for Muslims/ Mindanao	7.5	7.3	33.3
No opinion/don’t know	3.0	7.3	8.3
<b>Total</b>	100.0 (N=67)	100.0 (N=55)	100.0 (N=12)
B. Understanding of the word “Autonomy”			
	Christian	Muslim	
Self-government/rule (short of independence)	72.41	77.91	
Independence	19.54	11.62	
Peace/Equality	1.15	8.14	
Unable to define	6.90	2.33	5.9
<b>Total</b>	100.00 (N=87)	100.00 (N=86)	100.00 (N=17)
C. Understanding of “Autonomy for Muslim Mindanao” as provided for the Constitution			
	Christian	Muslim	
Self-rule, but falling short of independence	53.73	71.	
Complete independence	31.34	6.8	30.8
Peace	1.50	8.8	
Cannot define	13.43	3.6	15.4
<b>Total</b>	100.00 (N=67)	100.00 (N=59)	100.00 (N=13)

Table 2 – Percentage Distributions, Attitudes Toward Autonomy, by Ethno-Religious Group

A. “How do you feel about this Constitutional Provision (to give autonomy to Muslim Mindanao)?

	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
Very good idea	23.2	61.0	20.0
Good idea	17.4	28.6	33.3
Bad idea	20.3	9.1	26.7
Very bad idea	39.1	1.3	20.0
<b>Total</b>	100.0 (N=69)	100.0 (N=77)	100.0 (N=15)

B. Opinion about Muslim Autonomous Region

	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
Agree strongly	6.1	61.8	9.1
Agree a little	16.3	20.2	40.9
Disagree a little	9.2	11.2	13.6
Disagree strongly	68.4	6.7	36.4
<b>Total</b>	100.0 (N=98)	100.0 (N=89)	100.0 (N=22)

C. Would you like your municipality to be a part of the proposed MAR?

	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
Yes	6.0	90.4	22.7
No	94.0	9.6	77.3
	100.0 (N=100)	100.0 (N=94)	100.0 (N=22)

D. Do you think it would be a good idea to set up autonomous governments in other areas of the Philippines?

	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
Yes	12.5	37.2	14.3
No	74.0	31.9	76.2
Not sure	13.5	30.9	9.5
<b>Total</b>	100.0 (N=104)	100.0 (N=94)	100.0 (N=21)

Table 3 – Percentage Distribution, Reasons for Agreeing or Disagreeing with Proposal for MAR, by Ethno-Religious Groups

A. Why do you feel this way? (About Constitutional provision which would “give autonomy to Muslim Mindanao.”)

	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
1. Approve because:			
MAR will bring peace/ stability	6.0	27.6	
MAR will give special privileges to Muslims <sup>a</sup>	9.0	26.3	14.3
MAR will provide Islamic gov't	3.0	13.2	
MAR will hasten economic dev't	11.9	7.9	
Others <sup>b</sup>	1.5	4.1	

<sup>a</sup>Includes self-rule, political rights, and returns of ancestral lands.

<sup>b</sup>Includes “aid in decision making,” “good idea if government is sincere,” and “if approved by majority.”

Disapprove because:

	Christian	Muslim	
Christians will be dominated	25.4	2.6	
Muslims will discriminate	12.0		7.
Peace and order situation will deteriorate	7.5		7.
Autonomy provisions unclear/irrelevant autonomy	8.7	6.5	7.1
Others <sup>c</sup>	15.0	11.8	7.1
Total	100.0 (N=67)	100.0 (N=76)	100.0 (N=14)

<sup>c</sup>Includes “not realistic,” “Muslim needs not understood,” “leaders lack knowledge,” “good for Christians ‘only’.” and MAR part of RP and irrelevant answers.

B. Why do you feel this way (about MAR)?

1. Agree because:	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
MAR will bring peace/stability/ Muslim-Christian unity	5.15	19.31	13.64
Self-government/new powers for Muslims	6.19	32.95	18.17
Implementation of Islamic law		11.36	4.55
Economic development/ Regional dev't	1.03	3.41	
Others <sup>a</sup>	5.15	7.95	

<sup>a</sup>Includes “problems will be solved locally,” and “provided it is recognized.”

2. Disagree because:	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
Christians will be discriminated	18.56		18.17
MAR will bring more trouble/conflict	13.4	.14	4.55
Do not like Islamic government	7.21		4.55
Negative Characteristics of Muslims	1.03	14	
Mindanao will be separated	9.28	—	4.55
Others <sup>b</sup>	33.00	22.74	31.82
Total	100.00 (N=97)	100.00 (N=88)	100.00 (N=22)

<sup>b</sup>Includes “no improvements in Mindanao,” “unrealistic,” irrelevant, “status quo—” “fake autonomy,” and only in Muslim’ areas.”

**Table 4 – Percentage Distribution, Why Respondent Agree/Disagree on the Inclusion of His Area with MAR**

Agree (because):	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
MAR will bring peace/development	2.04	33.71	15.0
Muslim majority/MAR Muslim area	–	37.08	
Good to try	1.02	1.12	
No choice	–	3.37	5.0
Conditional responses	1.02	5.62	
Disagree (because)	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
More trouble will occur	11.22	3.37	5.0
Muslims will control/dominate MAR	10.20	12	25.0
Muslim laws/ways different from Christians	18.37	12	30.0
Few Muslims in my place	43.88		10.0
My place not part of 13 provinces (T.A.)	4.08	1.12	–
Separation of Mindanao	1.02	–	5.0
Don't like MAR	4.08	1.12	–
Irrelevant answers	3.07	11.25	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00</b> <b>(N=98)</b>	<b>100.00</b> <b>(N=89)</b>	<b>100.00</b> <b>(N=20)</b>

**Table 5 – Percentage Distribution, Should MAR Include All Mindanao–Sulu**

	Yes	No	
Christians	2.0	98.0	(N=101)
Muslims	52.7	47.3	(N=93)
Tribal	5.0	95.0	(N=19)

**Table 6 – Percentage Distribution, Perceived Good and Bad Effects of MAR, by Ethno-Linguistic Group**

**A. Good Effects (First Good Effect Mentioned)**

	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
MAR will bring peace	15.56	32.72	20.00
Muslims will benefit	5.56	11.63	6.67
Islam will be strengthened	1.11	5.81	—
Will bring economic development	4.44	20.93	
Muslims will unite	1.11	—	
Conditional approval <sup>a</sup>	1.11	2.33	6.67
Other “good things” <sup>b</sup>	5.56	15.12	6.66
Respondents can perceive no good effects of MAR <sup>c</sup>	65.55	10.46	60.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
	(N=90)	(N=86)	(N=15)

<sup>a</sup>Respondents agree with MAR if “for Muslim areas only,” and “if well-managed.”

<sup>b</sup>Includes “social problems minimized” and “change of government.”

<sup>c</sup>Includes “negative views on Muslims and MAR, and irrelevant responses.”

**B. Bad Effects (First Bad Things Mentioned)**

	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
MAR will bring more trouble between Muslims and Christians <sup>a</sup>	67.68	29.33	76.19
Christians will be discriminated	5.05	2.67	4.76
Corruption in the MAR	3.03	13.33	—
Other bad effects <sup>b</sup>	13.13	4.00	14.29
Respondent can perceive no bad effects of MAR	7.07	36.00	—
Conditional responses <sup>c</sup>	4.04	14.67	4.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
	(N=95)	(N=75)	(N=21)

<sup>a</sup>Includes “political rivalry,” “civil war,” “disunity,” “cultural conflict.”

<sup>b</sup>Other “bad effects” includes “problem of employment,” “Muslim proportion will increase,” “problem in Christian adjustment,” “Mindanao will be divided,” “land confiscation,” “travel difficulty,” “(MAR) financially incapable,” and “oppressions of tribals.”

<sup>c</sup>Includes irrelevant answers.

Table 7 – Opinions about Incorporating Various Locations of Mindanao-Sulu into the Proposed MAR, Percentage Agreeing, by Ethno-Linguistic Group

	Christian (N=103)	Muslim (N=97)	Tribal (N=22)
<b>A. Provinces</b>			
Sulu	64.1	95.7	63.6
Tawi-Tawi	65.0	94.6	63.6
Basilan	54.4	93.5	59.1
Zamboanga del Sur	15.5	89.2	22.7
Zamboanga del Norte	12.6	88.2	19.0
Misamis Occidental	2.9	59.8	4.5
Lanao del Norte	28.2	95.7	54.5
Lanao del Sur	46.6	95.7	59.1
North Cotabato	17.5	92.5	36.4
Davao del Sur	5.8	81.7	9.1
Davao del Norte	2.9	73.1	9.1
Davao Oriental	2.9	69.9	9.1
Misamis Oriental	1.9	54.8	4.5
Bukidnon	2.9	61.3	13.6
Agusan del Norte	1.0	54.8	4.5
Agusan del Sur	1.0	55.9	4.5
Surigao del Norte	1.0	54.8	4.5
Surigao del Sur	1.0	54.8	4.5
Camiguin	1.9	51.1	9.1
Sultan Kudarat	32.0	93.5	40.9
South Cotabato	11.7	90.3	31.8
Maguindanao	40.8	93.5	54.5
<b>B. Cities</b>			
Zamboanga City	7.8	93.5	22.7
Cotabato City	11.7	93.5	36.4
Gen. Santos City	6.8	90.3	18.2
Marawi City	48.5	95.7	61.9
Davao City	1.9	86.0	9.5
Iligan City	3.9	90.9	14.3

Table 8 – Opinions About the Various Powers of MAR (Percent Agreeing Each Power Should Be Delegated), by Ethno-Religious Group

Power	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
Make its own seal and flag	20.2	72.8	13.6
Enforce Muslim holidays (Observance)	44.2	90.3	5.8
Set up "Shariah" courts	25.2	92.4	22.7
Special textbooks teaching Islam values	18.4	91.4	13.6
Levy taxes	26.5	80.2	22.7
Put up regional security force	9.7	71.4	9.1
Arabic as medium of instruction	17.5	59.1	9.1
Muslims only can hold high positions	7.8	37.0	9.1
Forbid further Christian settlements	17.5	34.8	36.4
Land ownership by ancestral rights	5.8	54.3	13.6
Prepare for independence	7.7	50.0	9.1
Regulate use of natural resources	19.2	90.2	22.7
Appoint regional directors	12.5	71.0	31.8
Determine foreign policies	11.5	66.7	79.5

Table-9 – Perceived Impact of the MAR (Percent Agreeing that Each of Various Possible Outcome Will Occur), by Ethno-Religious Group

Outcome	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
1. MAR will bring peace	21.2	93.6	33.3
2. MAR will suffer corruption	89.9	16.3	85.7
3. MAR will help Muslim develop economically	86.3	94.5	85.7
4. MAR will discriminate Christians	88.0	29.0	85.7
5. Muslim rebels will stop fighting	29.0	92.3	38.1
6. Education standards will decline	76.3	25.8	81.0
7. MAR will eventually become independent	65.6	56.3	76.1
8. There will be fewer investments	81.2	24.5	76.2
9. There will be more foreign aid	92.8	96.8	76.2
10. Christians will move away from MAR	76.3	44.6	71.4
11. Christians will be governed by Islamic laws	65.1	66.0	61.9

Table 10 – Percent Distribution, Perceived Additional Consequences of Establishing MAR, by Ethno-Religious Group

Consequence	Christian (N=66)	Muslim (N=42)	Tribal (N=13)
Increased Muslim-Christian conflict	75.8	9.5	69.2
Increased conflict between Muslim groups	1.5	4.8	7.7
Christians will suffer	7.7	—	—
Muslims will try to take the adjoining areas/handle our affairs	3.0	2.4	7.7
Other bad effects <sup>a</sup>	3.0	2.4	7.7
Peace/unity/good government	4.5	31.0	—
Economic development for MAR	—	21.4	—
Other effects <sup>b</sup>	1.5	4.8	—
Irrelevant answers	3.0	23.7	7.7

<sup>a</sup>Includes “less income,” “Philippine government will lose control over MAR.”

<sup>b</sup>Other effects include “immigration of people of MAR,” MAR will have its own set of constitution.

Table Percentage Distribution, Responses If Place Be or Not Be Part of MAR

A. If Place Included in MAR:

	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
Will stay	26.5	18.5	27.8
Will support MAR	16.3	69.6	11.1
Move away	22.4	1.1	44.4
Go home	17.3	1.1	
Study situation	9.2	3.3	
Join rebels	6.1	—	
Irrelevant responses	2.2	6.6	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b> (N=98)	<b>100.0</b> (N=92)	<b>100.0</b> (N=18)

B. If Place Not Included in MAR

	Christian	Muslim	Tribal
Move away			
Will join rebels/fight government	—	15.8	
Demand for autonomy	2.0	16.9	
Wait leader's decision	—	9.0	—
Will stay	92.0	30.3	100.0
Do nothing	1.0	21.3	
Irrelevant answers	5.0	5.6	
<b>Total</b>	100.0 (N=100)	100.0 (N=89)	100.0 (N=19)

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