

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF QUICK COUNT IN ELECTIONS: BETWEEN TRANSPARENCY AND CONTROVERSY



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Abstract:

Quick count is a method of counting election results that is carried out by taking samples of votes from some polling stations (TPS) to predict the final results of the election. Quick counts have become essential in the democratic process, providing fast and accurate preliminary information about election results and serving as a social control tool that prevents fraud. However, the quick count is also not free from controversy. Some parties doubt the accuracy and independence of the survey institutions that conduct the quick count, given the potential for bias and political pressure. In addition, the quick count results that are different from the official results from the KPU (General Election Commission) can trigger tension and distrust among the public. Therefore, survey institutions must maintain integrity and transparency in implementing quick counts to ensure public trust and legitimacy of the election process.

Keywords: quick count, transparency, controversy, elections

A. Introduction

This study aims to analyze the function and impact of the quick count method in the general election process. Quick count, or quick count, is a method of counting votes by survey institutions or independent organizations by taking samples of votes from randomly selected polling stations (polling stations). The results of this quick count are often considered an early indication of election results and are usually very close to the official results announced by the election commission.

The quick count method is often praised for its ability to provide a quick overview of election results. The public could already find the estimated election results within a few hours after the polling station was closed. This helps to increase the transparency of the election process and reduce the political tensions that often occur while waiting to announce official results. Quick counts also help increase public participation and trust in the democratic process because they provide quick access to election results information (NF Raissoevel, 2022)

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However, the quick count is not spared from controversy. One of the main criticisms is related to its accuracy. Although the quick count uses scientific methods in sampling and data analysis, calculation errors are still possible. Sampling errors, bias in polling station selection, and inaccuracies in data can affect the results of the quick count. In addition, there are concerns about the potential for data manipulation by survey institutions that are not independent or have a specific political agenda.

Another controversy related to quick counts is their impact on public perception. The results of the quick count announced early can influence public opinion and cause speculation about the final results of the election. If the quick count results differ from the official results, this can cause distrust and tension in the community. In addition, there are concerns that the results of the quick count could be used by certain parties to claim victory prematurely or to discredit official results announced by the election commission.

In a technical context, the author will analyze the factors that affect the accuracy of the quick count. In addition, the study will examine how survey institutions ensure independence and transparency in implementing quick counts. From an ethical perspective, the research will highlight various issues related to implementing the quick count. This includes transparency in the selection of polling stations, and the examiner will also evaluate whether the quick count meets research ethical standards and whether the survey institution operates per the principles of integrity and accountability.

The public response to the quick count results will also be the focus of this research. The author will examine how the public receives and responds to the results of the quick count, as well as how the mass media and political actors influence the public perception of the fast count. In addition, the study will analyze the impact of the quick count results on political and social stability, as well as how the quick count affects the democratic process as a whole.

Through this analysis, it is hoped that a balance can be found between the transparency benefits offered by Quick Count and the challenges and controversies that arise from its use. This research will provide recommendations on how quick counts can be carried out more accurately, transparently, and ethically so that it can increase public trust in the election process. In addition, this study will guide policymakers and survey institutions on best practices for the implementation of quick counts.

In the end, this research is expected to contribute to improving the quality of democracy by ensuring that the quick count is carried out transparent, accurate, and ethical. Thus, quick counts can effectively increase election transparency and strengthen public trust in election results.

PROBLEM FORMULATION

1. How does the public respond to the quick count results that are different from the official results?
2. How do survey institutions ensure independence and neutrality in implementing quick counts?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quick counts, or quick counts, play an important role in elections by providing an initial overview of the election results before the official count is completed. This method involves collecting data from a randomly selected sample of polling stations (TPS) and

calculating the results to estimate the overall election results. Quick counts allow the public and stakeholders to get initial information quickly, helping to reduce uncertainty and speed up the process of verifying results. In addition, quick counts can increase transparency by providing provisional results that can be compared to official counts and facilitating early detection in the event of discrepancies or fraud. However, it is essential to remember that the quick count is not a substitute for official counting but rather a tool to provide a preliminary picture and monitor the integrity of the electoral process. As for the controversy in the application of Quick Count in calculating election results, when there is a difference in the official calculation results with the KPU. The public's response to quick count results that differ from official count results can vary depending on several factors, including the level of trust in survey institutions, people's political literacy, and political context (Filzah and Joko, 2019).

The discrepancy in the results between the quick count and the official count can trigger distrust and dissatisfaction with the electoral process. When the public sees significant differences, they may begin to doubt the election's integrity and suspect any data manipulation. Public trust is an essential aspect of the democratic process. Without it, the legitimacy of the election results can be questioned, which can potentially cause a crisis of trust in electoral institutions (Dwi Putri S A *et al.*, 2020).

This is very likely to happen if there are indications or a history of irregularities in the previous elections. For example, in countries with an unclean electoral history, the difference in results between the quick and official counts can immediately trigger an adverse reaction. The public, who have experienced irregularities in the past, tends to be more sensitive and alert to potential fraud. They may be quicker to react to election results that are inconsistent with their expectations.

Supporters of candidates who feel disadvantaged by the results of the quick count that differ from the official count may protest, hold demonstrations, or even demand a recount of votes. These demonstrations and protests are often a forum for people to voice their dissatisfaction. In addition, demands for a vote recount could add to the workload and costs for election organizers and prolong political uncertainty.

This dissatisfaction threatens political stability and can undermine public trust in democratic institutions and the electoral process. When the public feels their votes are not counted fairly, they can lose faith in the democratic process and become apathetic or even boycott future elections. This severely threatens democracy because public participation is the foundation of a healthy democratic system.

Suspicion of the election results can trigger various conspiracy theories, further complicating the situation. These theories can spread quickly through social media, exacerbating public distrust. In the digital age, true and false information can spread rapidly, reinforcing the public perception that something is wrong in the electoral process.

In addition, the difference in results between the quick and official counts can also be used by certain political actors to mobilize support or pressure the authorities. For example, candidates or political parties who feel disadvantaged may use this difference in results as an excuse to claim that the election was rigged, which can mobilize their supporters to demand justice or change.

Political stability is one of the most vulnerable aspects affected by public dissatisfaction with the election results. There can be riots, conflicts, or even violence when this discontent is widespread. This not only endangers national security but can also damage

the country's reputation in the eyes of the international community, which in turn can affect diplomatic and economic relations.

Disturbed public trust also impacts the legitimacy of the elected government. If the public feels that the elected government was the result of a fraudulent or non-transparent election, they may not support the government's policies. This can make the government less effective because it does not have the full support of the people.

To address this issue, transparency and accountability in the electoral process must be improved. Survey institutions and election organizers must work hard to ensure that every stage of the election process is done honestly and fairly. In addition, political education to the public about how the election process works and how to understand the results of quick and official counts is essential to building public trust.

The government and relevant institutions must work together to ensure that elections are free and fair, and perceived as such by the public. This includes providing an effective grievance mechanism for the public to report fraud and ensuring that all reports are investigated seriously. Thus, it is hoped that it can create a more credible election and increase public trust in the democratic process. Survey agencies can take several steps to ensure independence and neutrality in the implementation of quick counts;

1. Methodological transparency. Survey institutions must present a clear and transparent methodology, including selecting polling station samples, data collection techniques, and statistical analysis. In this way, the public and third parties can verify the accuracy and validity of the results obtained. The transparency of this methodology also helps build public trust in the survey institutions and the quick count results they present.
2. Survey agencies may invite independent supervisors from non-governmental organizations, academics, or international institutions to monitor the quick count process. The presence of this independent supervisor ensures that there is no intervention or manipulation in implementing the fast count. Independent supervision also ensures that the quick count process is carried out objectively and according to the set standards.
3. Survey agencies must disclose their funding sources and ensure that funding does not come from parties with a political interest in the election results. By transparently revealing the source of funds, survey institutions can avoid conflicts of interest and maintain the integrity of the quick count results.
4. Survey agencies must ensure that their personnel do not have political affiliations that could affect the quick count results. They must also commit to following a code of conduct that guarantees that each stage of the quick count is carried out honestly, fairly, and professionally.
5. Survey institutions must communicate openly about the process and results of the quick count and provide explanations if there are any discrepancies with the official count results. Clear and transparent communication helps reduce the potential for misinformation and strengthen public trust in survey institutions.
6. Survey institutions can increase credibility and public trust in their quick counts. Methodological transparency, independent oversight, transparent funding sources, code of ethics compliance, and effective communication all contribute to the independent and neutral implementation of the quick count. This ensures accurate and reliable results and helps maintain the integrity of the electoral process and strengthen public trust in democracy.

CONCLUSION

The public's response to the quick count results, which differs from the official results, depends on several factors, such as trust in survey institutions, political literacy, and the political context at the time. Mistrust often arises when there is fraud, prompting protests or demands for a recount. If the public trusts the electoral institutions, they are more likely to receive official results despite being different from quick counts. Education and transparency are essential to manage public response and build trust. Survey institutions must be transparent in methodology, have independent oversight, have clear sources of funds, comply with the code of ethics, and communicate effectively with the public to ensure independent and neutral quick count results.

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