

# Populism in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes

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## Puzzle

- ❖ President Corazon Aquino rose through a campaign against President Marcos, who extended his presidency through martial law. She created the PDP-Laban Party, whose platform is based on democracy, equity, and justice.
- ❖ President Rodrigo Duterte is associated with hundreds of murders, admitted to planting evidence, shared information with Davao Death Squad, and utilized controversial social commentary before presidency. In the 2016 Presidential Election, he represented the PDP-Laban party.
- ❖ Why did this party, with a history of representing human rights and fighting abusive leaders, decide to let a known brutal politician represent them?

## Argument

President Rodrigo Duterte is the populist leader of the Philippines who utilized its competitive authoritarian characteristics of corruption, flawed governmental branches, mass media manipulation, high class inequality and weak party system to win the election.

## Theory and Methodology

- ❖ Populism is typically associated with democratic regimes; however, the structures and tendencies of competitive authoritarian regimes make it susceptible to the rise in populist figures and parties
- ❖ Populism is an ideology thought of arising in times of disorder, and results in the feeling of an us versus them mentality with a charismatic leader spearheading the movement. Since disorder is the only real necessary factor for populism and competitive authoritarian regimes usually related to this chaos, populist parties and leaders are capable to arise.
- ❖ Competitive authoritarian regimes have a governmental and societal structure that is distinct from democracies, which not only allow for a rise in populism, but also creates a pathway that can make it more susceptible.
- ❖ The paper analyzes a single case study of the Philippines and their populist president. Through the process-tracing method, the causal relationship is competitive authoritarian regimes leading to populism. Corruption, strength of the legislature and judiciary, media manipulation, mass inequality, and party systems will all be analyzed.

## Conclusion

Populism does not only exist in democracies, rather corruption, abilities of government, mass media manipulation, class inequality, and party strength provide a pathway for the ideology to succeed in competitive authoritarian regimes.

## Corruption

- ❖ Table 1:
  - ❖ The lower the values in the corruption index and the higher the international ranking, the more corrupt a country.
  - ❖ Corruption began to increase again in 2015, which is the year before the election
- ❖ Table 2- Functioning of Government: 7/12
  - ❖ Cases take 6 to 7 years to be resolved in the special anticorruption court
  - ❖ “The country’s official anticorruption agencies, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC), have mixed records” and “lack enforcement capabilities” (Freedom House 2015)
  - ❖ In 2014, 4 former congressmen were indicted and 24 others were accused of managing fake NGOs that received PDAF funds or participated in the scam

## Evidence

Table 1: Transparency International

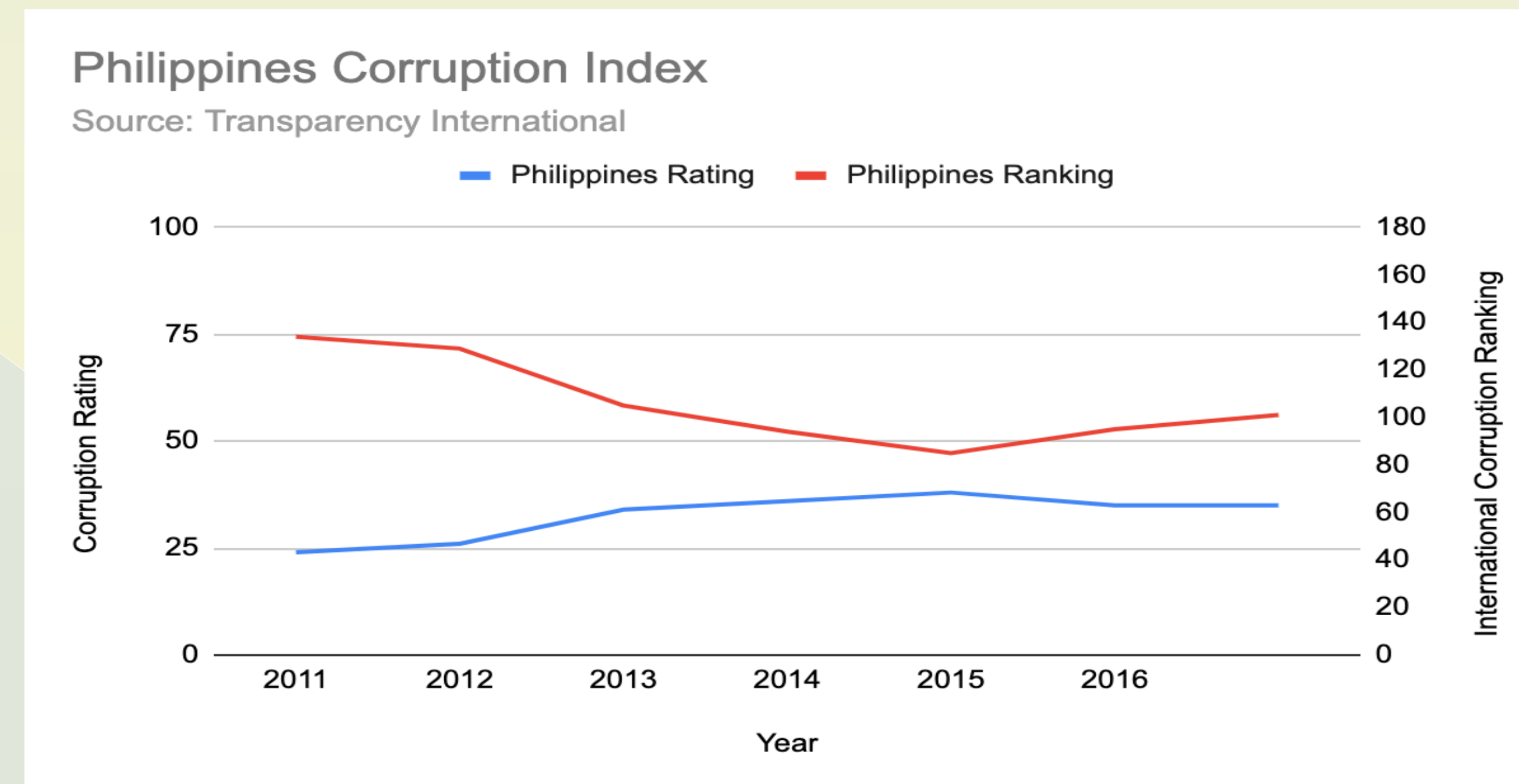


Table 2: Freedom House 2015



Table 3: Philippine Statistic Authority and Rappler

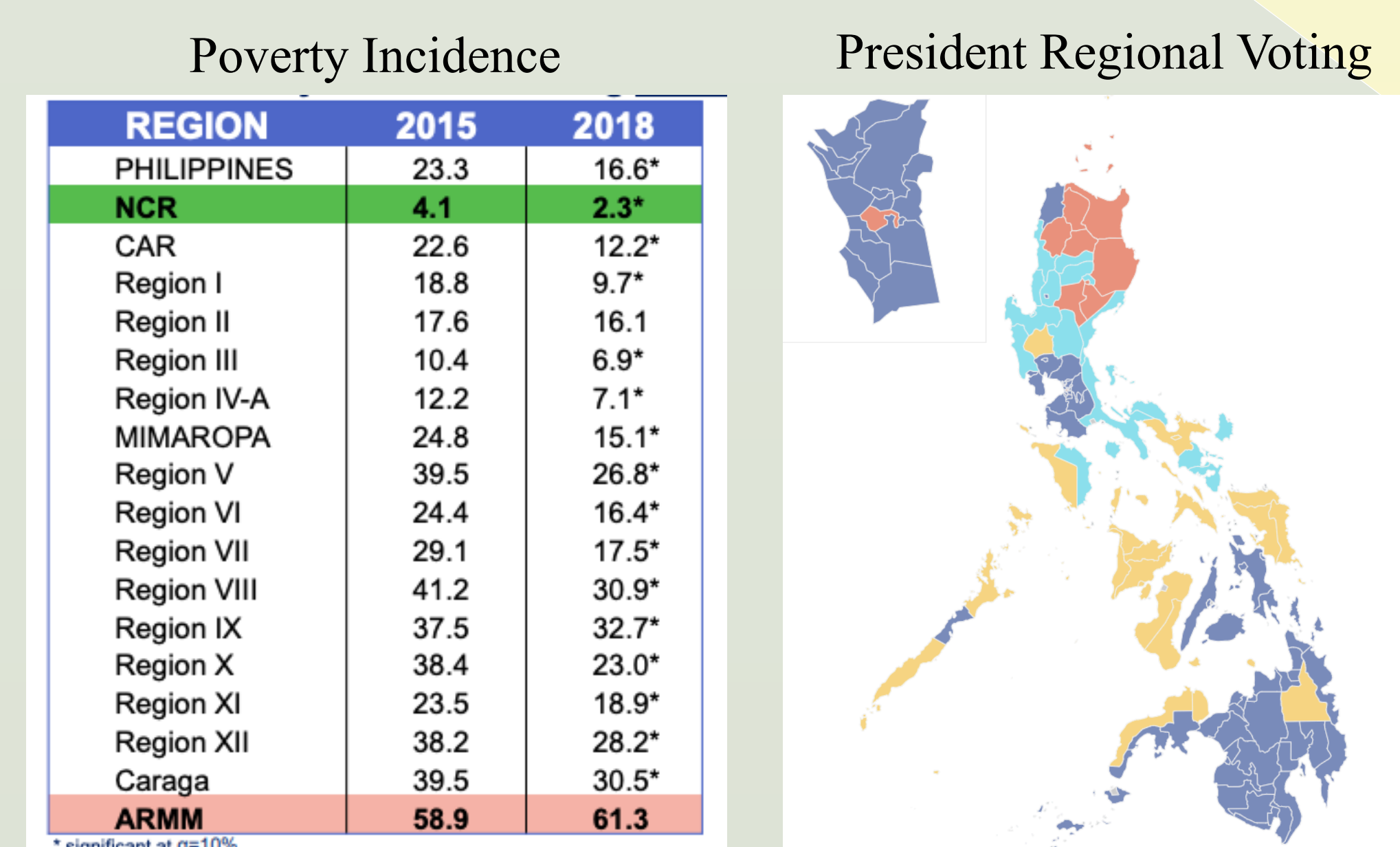


Table 4: Rappler

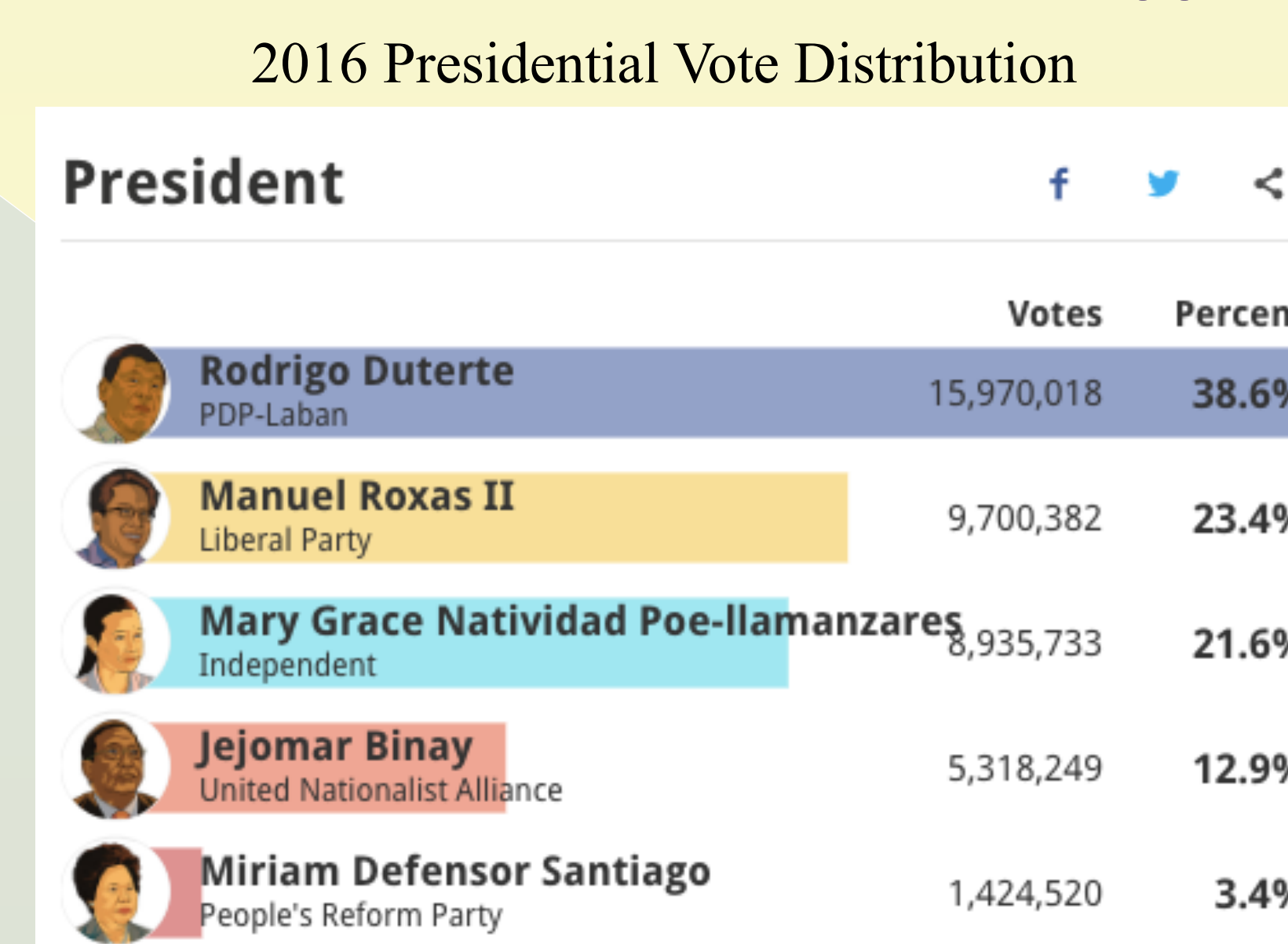
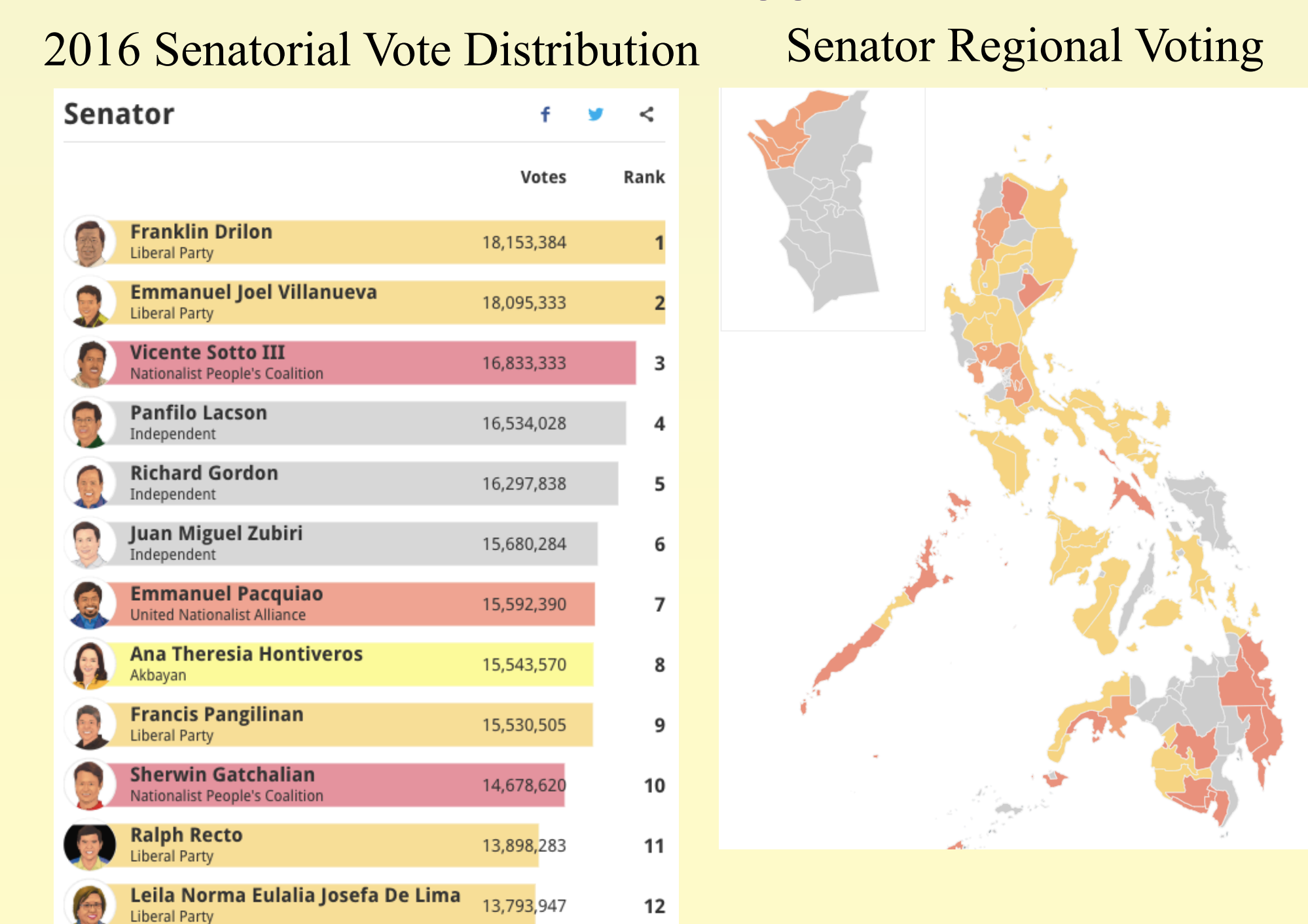


Table 5: Rappler



## Mass Media Manipulation

- ❖ According to Reporters Without Borders, the Philippines was ranked the 149<sup>th</sup> most restrictive country for mass
- ❖ From 1990 to 2015, 146 journalists and mass media workers were killed
- ❖ The Philippines was the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest for the “Most Dangerous Countries for Journalists and Media Staff 1990-2015” (International Federation of Journalists 2016)
- ❖ The powerful political Ampatuan clan is believed to be responsible for orchestrating the Maguindanao Massacre, which witnessed the killing of 57 people, including more than 30 journalists (International Federation of Journalists 2016, 44)
- ❖ 31 Members of the Press were killed during Aquino’s presidency (Gavilan 2018)

## Weak Judiciary

- ❖ Table 2- Rule of Law: 5/16
  - ❖ Judges and lawyers often depend on local power holders for their salaries
  - ❖ “inefficiency, low pay, intimidation, corruption, and high vacancy rates, all of which have contributed to excessive delays and a backlog of more than 600,000 cases” (Freedom House 2015)
  - ❖ “At least 12 judges have been killed since 1999, and there have been no convictions for the attacks.” (Freedom House 2015)

## Weak Legislature

- ❖ Table 2- Functioning of Government: 7/12
  - ❖ “Local “bosses” often control their respective areas, limiting accountability and committing abuses of power.” (Freedom House 2015)
  - ❖ Leading families control politics and the legislature
  - ❖ In 2013, there were “approximately 80 election-related deaths” and “130 reported in the 2010 elections.” (Freedom House 2015)

## Class Inequality

- ❖ Wintrobe 2018: “the more equal the society, the less the poor will value redistribution and, therefore, the more stable the government will be” (219)
- ❖ Table 3
  - ❖ Navy is Duterte (PDP-Laban)
  - ❖ Yellow is Roxas (Liberal Party)
  - ❖ Southern Regions more impoverished and made up majority of votes for Duterte

## Weak Party System

- ❖ Table 4- 2016 Presidential Election
  - ❖ Independent candidate Poe-Ilamanzares secured 21.6% of the votes
- ❖ Table 5- 2016 Senatorial Election
  - ❖ Liberal party, United Nationalist Alliance, Nationalist People’s Coalition, Independents, Akbayan Party
  - ❖ 3 Independent winners
  - ❖ No PDP-Laban winners
- ❖ Northern regions voted Independent and United Nationalist Alliance for the Presidential Election, but voted primarily Liberal Party for the Senatorial Election
- ❖ Southern regions voted PDP-Laban Party for the Presidential Election, but voted Independent, United Nationalist Alliance, and Liberal Party
- ❖ Metro Manila voted primarily PDP-Laban party for the Presidential Election and voted primarily Independent in the Senatorial Election
- ❖ There is no structure restricting candidates from joining in the election, which allows for populist figures to get involved