

Measures Matter: Assessing Measures of Campaign Tone

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Problem

Campaign tone is an important concept in study of political communication, yet there is no standard approach to measuring it

Are different results, then, the consequence of different measures?

Measuring Tone

1. Newspaper coverage
2. Ads produced
3. Ads aired
4. Local TV News
5. Citizen perceptions

Data

Examining tone in U.S. Senate races

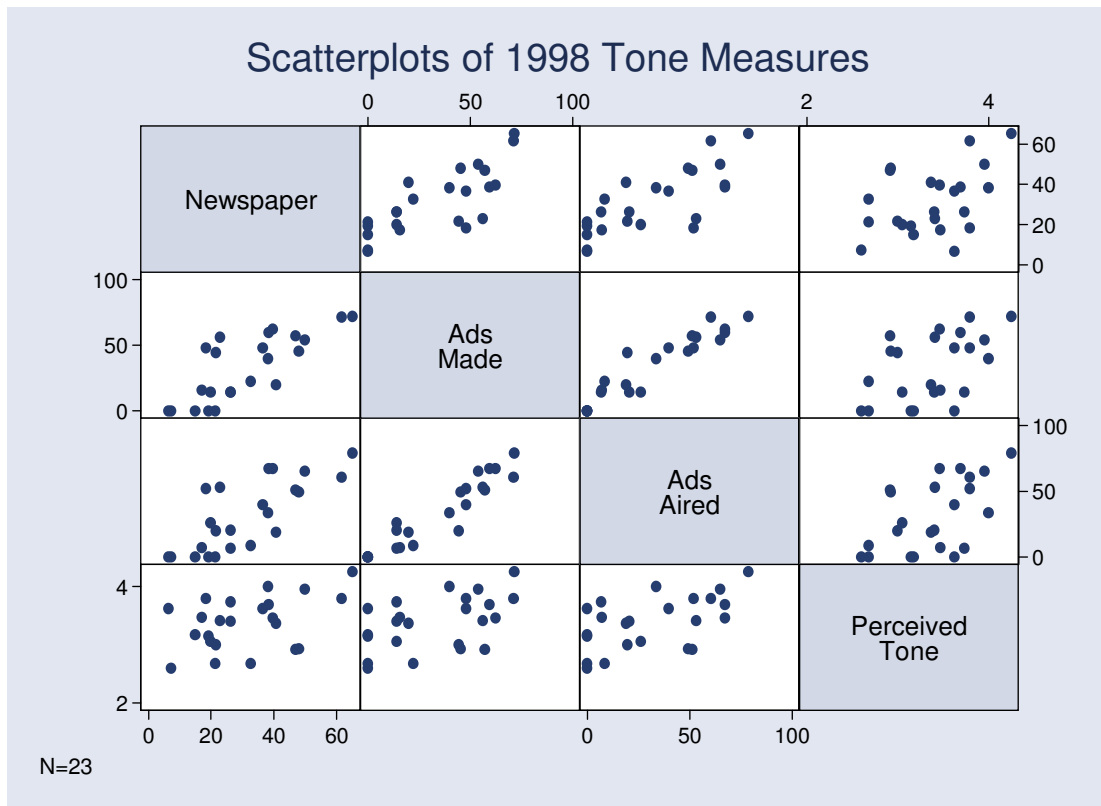
1. Coding of in-state newspapers (Lau and Pomper) from 1998-2002
2. Ad tracking data from 1998-2002
3. Gallup pre-election survey from 1998
4. Wisconsin NewsLab coding of local news broadcasts from 2002

1998 Results

Table 2: Correlations of 1998 Tone Measures

	Newspapers Produced	Ads Produced	Ads Aired	Ads Perceived Tone
Newspapers Produced	1			
Ads Produced	0.7758*	1		
Ads Aired	0.7647*	0.9464*	1	
Ads Perceived Tone	0.4367*	0.5035*	0.5496*	1

N=23, *p<.05

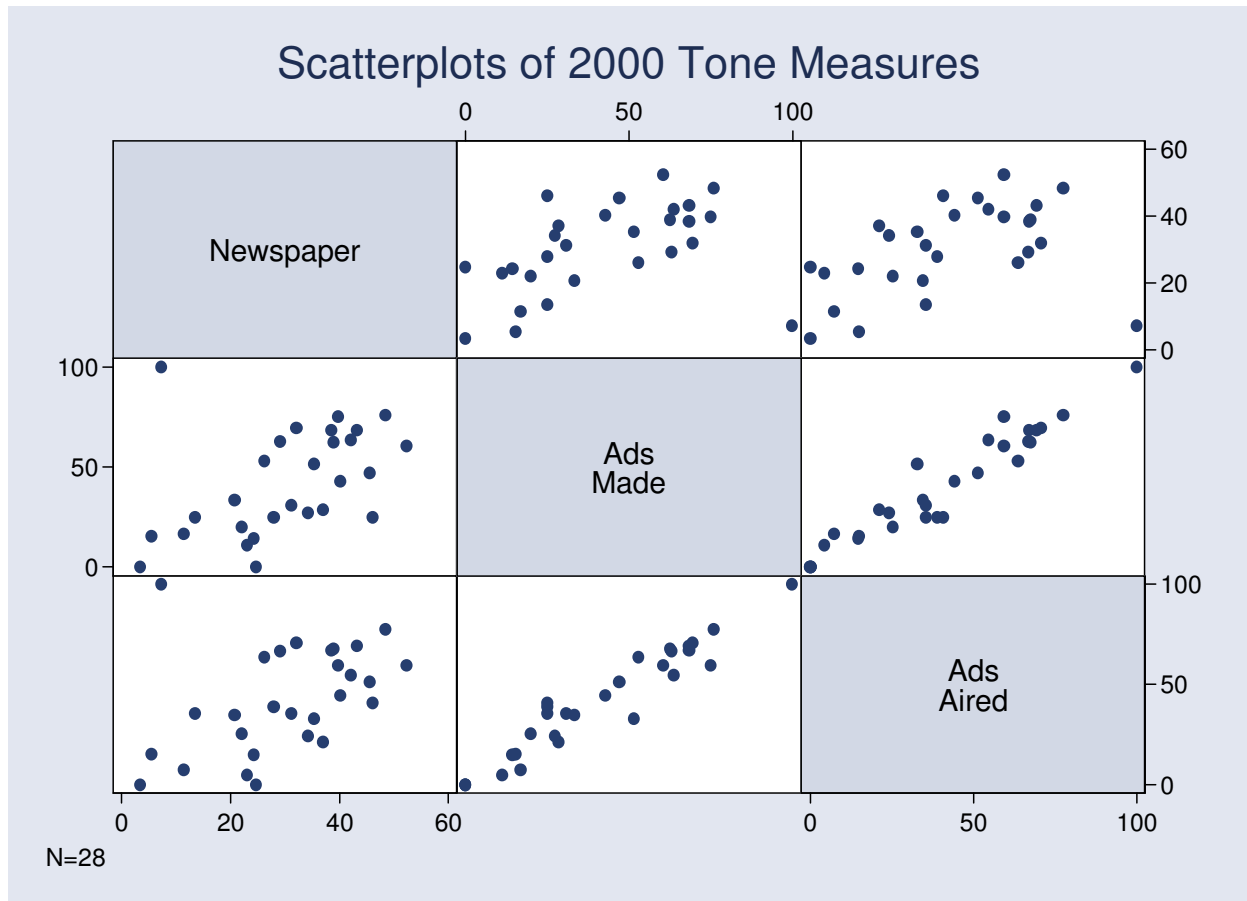


2000 Results

Table 3: Correlations of 2000 Tone Measures

	News- papers	Ads Produced	Ads Aired	
Newspapers		1		
Ads Produced	0.4433*		1	
Ads Aired	0.4309*	0.9544*		1

N=28, *p<.05

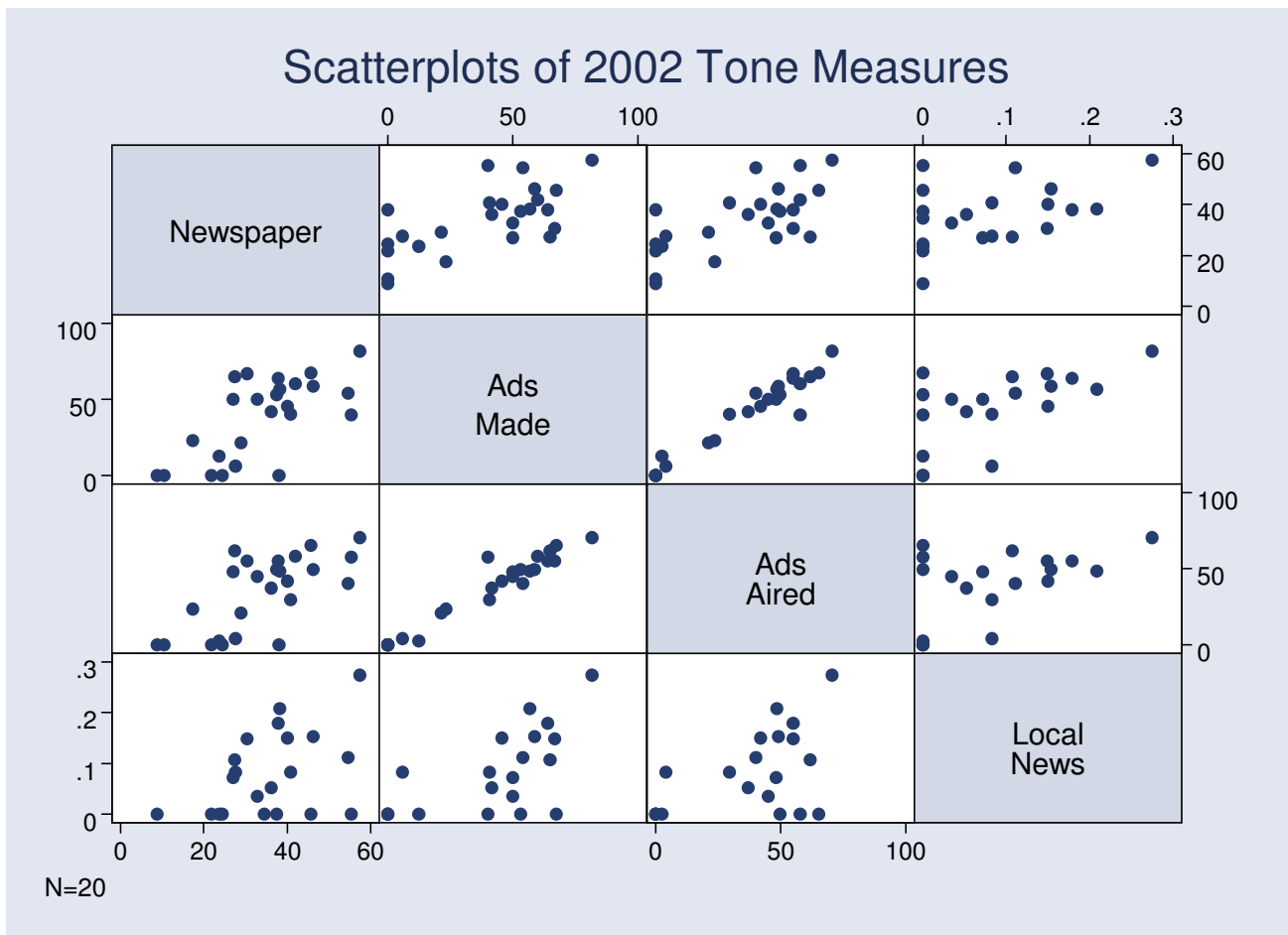


2002 Results

Table 4: Correlations of 2002 Tone Measures

	Ads Newspapers Produced	Ads Produced Aired	Local News	
Newspapers Ads Produced	1			
Ads Aired	0.6716*	1		
Local News	0.6915*	0.9631*	1	1
	0.4475*	0.6323*	0.5142*	

N=20, *p<.05



All-Year Results

Table 5: Tone Measure Correlations Across All Years

	Ads		
	Newspapers	Produced	Ads Aired
Newspapers	1		
Ads Produced	0.5886*	1	
Ads Aired	0.5794*	0.9608*	1

N=82, *p<.05

Regression Results

Table 6: Effect of Tone on Turnout, Altering Tone Measure

	Coef.	Std. Error	p-value
Newspaper	.010	.040	.808
Ads Made	.041	.023	.081
Ads Aired	.037	.022	.102

These are coefficient estimates from three separate turnout models.

Conclusions

1. All measures examined appear to tap the same general concept of candidate tone
2. Yet they are not so alike that one's results go unaffected
3. Scholars should replicate their findings with multiple measures