Phase of trial (Justice and Crime Coverage)

AUTHOR
Franziska Oehmer

KEYWORDS
judicial reporting, court reporting, representativity

BRIEF DESCRIPTION
The variable “phase of a trial” records whether the phase before, during or after the trial is mainly covered in the reporting (vgl. Haney & Greene, 2004; Glark, 2015; Strother, 2017). Studies show that the media’s focus is mainly on the beginning (when the new information about the case has been introduced) and on the end of the trial and the possible emotional reactions to it, while the main trial is usually not or little covered (Vinson & Ertter, 2002; Haney & Greene, 2004).

FIELD OF APPLICATION/THEORETICAL FOUNDATION
The variable serves - among other variables – as an indicator of the representativeness of judicial reporting.

EXAMPLE STUDY
Haney & Greene (2004)

INFORMATION ON HANEY & GREENE (2004)
Authors: Craig Haney, Susan Greene
Research interest: The study evaluates aspects of newspaper reporting about death penalty cases and capital defendants.
Object of analysis: “representative sample of local, mainstream (i.e., non-“tabloid”) newspaper coverage” (134)
Time frame of analysis: not mentioned
Codebook: not available

INFO ABOUT VARIABLE
Variable name/definition: phase of the trial [Phase des Gerichtsprozesses]
Level of analysis: article
Operationlization/coding instructions: “Generally, the stage of the trial process at which the article was written was stated explicitly. Otherwise, it was inferred from the content of the article or by comparing the date of the article to others written about the same case.” (p.136)
Values:
• pretrial
• guilt-phase
• penalty
• sentencing-phase
• post trial
Intercoder reliability: Cronbach’s alpha of .73 across categories (5 Coder), not mentioned for individual category

REFERENCE