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Comparing Single Member District Plurality and Proportional Representation in the Next Eleven Countries

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COMPARING SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICT PLURALITY AND PROPORTIONAL
REPRESENTATION IN THE NEXT ELEVEN COUNTRIES

A Thesis
Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Designation
University Honors

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Introduction

Two of the most popular electoral systems in the world are proportional representation (PR) and single member district plurality (SMDP). While both are employed worldwide, it is unclear which is the most beneficial to constituents. The “Next Eleven” countries (N11) as defined by Goldman Sachs are the countries of focus, which are predicted to be emerging countries in terms of growing population and percent increase in gross domestic product (GDP). Furthermore, there is a fairly even distribution of PR and SMDP systems among the N11 countries, as well as two single-party dominant countries. The following compares the two electoral systems in an attempt to determine which yields greater political freedoms, has better long term stability, and highest rates of minority representation. Proportional representation countries in the N11 have better political rights and civil liberties than their SMDP counterparts. PR countries also have greater economic freedoms and minority representation. SMDP countries have more stable governments than PR countries. Single-party dominant countries are unique because they have the most stable governments, yet the worst minority representation, political rights and civil liberties, and economic freedoms. Both systems yield certain benefits, but over PR electoral systems appear to be better for constituents than SMDP systems.

Background of SMDP and PR

The single member district plurality system is very common in the United States and other countries for electing representatives. In this system, representative districts are created and individuals get their names put on the ballot, which the populace uses to elect their representation in government (Duverger 1972). Whoever gets the most votes in that district gets

that seat. Single member district plurality systems tend to favor fewer parties, as seen in America today. This is the case because the elected official does not need to get a majority of the votes in order to be elected, but rather more than anybody else. In this winner take-all system, a majority of voters may be marginalized because their interests are not represented (Duverger 1972). For example, if a city council seat had four candidates and the voting percentages aligned as follows: Party A – 40%, Party B – 30%, Party C – 20%, and Party D – 10%, Candidate A would win the seat, even though 60% of the voters did not vote for that candidate. If this same result occurred over 10 districts within the city, Party A would have representatives filling every seat, even though the results were anything but unanimous. As a result, voters have a lesser chance of having their interests represented with more parties. Therefore, in single member district plurality systems, voters are more likely to have their interests represented when fewer parties compete, and the two-party system becomes common (Duverger 1972).

Proportional representation, on the other hand, aims to match the percentages of votes cast for a particular party and the representation it receives in its legislative assembly. To use the same example as above, the city council would now be comprised of 10 at-large seats, rather than individual districts. Furthermore, if the same voting percentages were laid out with Party A getting 40%, Party B getting 30%, Party C getting 20%, and Party D getting 10% of the vote, Party A would get only four seats, Party B would get three seats, Party C would get 2 seats, and Party D would get one seat on city council. This provides a much more accurate reflection of the voting public's intentions and interests. Additionally, proportional representation favors greater

numbers of parties because they have greater odds of being represented, since they do not need to carry a plurality of votes to gain a seat. This allows groups to gain representation, which would be disenfranchised in a single member district plurality system.

The phenomenon described above is also known as Duverger's Law. Maurice Duverger, a French sociologist in the mid-twentieth century, found that proportional representation systems produced more, but smaller parties, while single member district plurality systems favor two party systems. In addition to the purely statistical differences in the appropriation of seats, single member district plurality also provides the opportunity for “gerrymandering.”

Gerrymandering is the drawing of district lines along party, class, or other factors rather than by unbiased factors, such as pure numbers in population (Adams 1996). Duverger's Law, however, is not as concrete as social scientists would have one believe. India, the United Kingdom, and Canada are all prime examples of third parties emerging from single member district plurality systems. In the case of the United Kingdom, however, an alliance was made among liberal parties to create the Liberal Democrats in the first place. This alliance is a prime example of a coalition, often used in proportional representation systems.

Because proportional representation systems of government make it difficult for a single party to gain a majority of representatives in the legislative assembly, coalition governments often form among a number of parties to give them a collective simple majority (Adams 1996). There are many ways to combine parties to form coalition governments. One way is between parties with the greatest number of representatives, resulting in fewer parties in the coalition. Another way is to form coalitions along similar political beliefs⁴. Conveniently, these center

parties often have the greatest number of representatives in the legislature, which make negotiations among the parties easier in deciding what courses of action they should take to accomplish their ends. Still, coalitions are potentially volatile as parties within them disagree on policy.

Coalition governments are less stable compared to two party systems, which easily gives one party a majority over the other. One reason for this is the need to negotiate among parties to come to a consensus for decisions. Parties involved in the coalition each seek to represent their own interests, and compromise may be difficult (Duverger 1972). Furthermore, coalition governments may give otherwise minute parties the ability to negotiate with bigger, more popular parties since their votes are needed to maintain the majority. In addition to giving these otherwise insignificant parties extra weight when the majority is on the line, this system may give the smaller parties the publicity and recognition they need for a greater turnout in the next election (Singer and Stevenson 2005).

Greg Adams published *Legislative Effects of Single-Member Vs Multi-Member Districts* in 1996, which delves into the comparative pros and cons of each electoral system. The paper goes on to describe the effects each system may have on the representation within the legislature, and the resulting attitudes of the voting population (Adams 1996).

Like Adams' work, Pippa Norris goes even further in the piece *Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian, and Mixed Systems*. The piece reviews various countries' electoral history as well as explores the strengths and weaknesses of each option. The article

concludes that SMDP systems promote stability, while PR systems promote greater minority representation. Still, she concludes that neither system is fundamentally better than the other for constituents (Norris 1997).

Both Adams and Norris agree with Duverger in that SMDP countries tend to have fewer parties represented and more peaceful transitions of power. They also agree that PR countries lead to greater minority representation, but often weaker coalition governments (Duverger 1972).

There are three single-party dominant countries in the N11 category, which merits a review of that system as well. Single-party dominant distinction is very simple: even when the country has elections, an overwhelming number of seats are won by one party, essentially making the party the policy-maker for the country rather than the legislative branch as a whole (Adams 1996). The electorate still elects officials that do not belong to the popular party, but they are in the minority, and political power ultimately resides with the party in power. Furthermore, the electorate is able to remove the party officials from office, but does not for an array of reasons. In the United States, a country where democracy and bipartisanship is revered, the fact that single-party dominant countries are included in a list of up-and-coming nations for economic and political power challenges many preexisting prejudices.

Background of N11 countries

Goldman Sachs is a banking and investment company, with offices in major financial hubs worldwide. It acts as an advisor to individuals, corporations, and governments. With over 150 years of experience in banking and global respect, it publishes financial papers. One such

paper was paper No. 134 in December 2005 to assess the how the BRIC countries were performing compared to expectations (O'Neill, Wilson, et al. 2005). The BRIC countries are Brazil, Russia, India, and China, and economists predicted that these countries have the potential for large growth, as well as the ability to become major world players in the economic realm. Paper No. 134, entitled, "How Solid are the BRICs?" explores each country's progress from 2000-2005, and finds that each country is performing better than anticipated, though to varying degrees (O'Neill, Wilson, et al. 2005). From 2001-2007 for example, each of the BRICs has shown economic growth, even while globally the market turned downward in 2001 and 2002. In 2007, Brazil's GDP grew 4.4%, Russia's grew 7.0%, India's grew 8.9%, and China's grew 11.5% (O'Neill, Wilson, et al. 2005). China is by far the breakaway country of the pack, and has successfully become a global contributor in trade, gross domestic product (GDP) increase, financial reserves, and influence on world markets. As the BRICs grow into competitors in world markets, other countries are emerging to become regional powers.

In October 2006, Goldman Sachs published paper No. 147, entitled, "Globalisation and Disinflation – Can Anyone Else "Do a China?". The paper lauds China for its increased involvement in the global economy, and names the Next Eleven (N11) countries with the potential for economic growth similar to that of the BRICs. They were analyzed based on their macroeconomic stability, political maturity, openness of trade and investment policies, and quality of education (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006). Of these countries, there is a good mix of SMDP and PR electoral systems, which gives evidence to the idea that economic success is not caused by electoral systems. Still, by exploring the N11 countries, which are on comparable

ground in terms of economic strength and potential, one is better able to analyze their differences politically.

The N11 countries are Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, and Vietnam. They are situated all over the world and all are expected to become economic leaders (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006). Still, eight of the N11 countries are on the Asian continent, which includes the Middle East region. They have several similarities which bolster their chances of success, including large and growing populations. This is important because their populations are growing faster than industrialized and developed countries, giving them a large and growing consumer base¹³. Markets can expand quickly with a growing population as potential customers increase, allowing a country's gross domestic product (GDP) to increase accordingly. Furthermore, current consumer trends for the N11 countries are outpacing much of the world. Although they are all experiencing a relative economic boom, they all focus on different specialties, such as Vietnam's exports of textiles and Nigeria's oil exports (Vietnam 2009) (Nigeria 2009).

The N11 countries can be broken down into developing economies and newly industrialized economies. Developing countries are beginning to industrialize and typically have a lower standard of living than newly industrialized economies, which are beginning to export more manufactured goods than ever before. Bangladesh, Iran, Nigeria, and Vietnam are considered developing economies, while Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Turkey are considered newly industrialized economies (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006).

South Korea stands alone as a developed economy because its technology and service sector have advanced to a point beyond the other N11 countries.

Of the N11 countries, four are SMDP, four are PR, and three are single-party dominant currently. Still, different electoral systems have impacted certain countries. For example, up until ten years ago, Mexico, an N11 designee, was controlled primarily by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), though now it is a PR country (Mexico 2009). Other countries have similar histories. It is important to know the history of a country in order to project its future. Each N11 country is unique in its development into the regional power it is today. Each country will be evaluated to include recent history, relevant intergovernmental organization (IGO) membership, and other political and economic distinctions. The analysis will begin with SMDP countries, continue to PR countries, and finish with single-party dominant countries.

It is worth noting that ten of the eleven countries are oil producing countries (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006). Only South Korea is not. The price of oil from October 2006, when they were first named the N11 countries, to July 2008 climbed steadily to record highs, along with increasing oil exports for each country. This, in turn, increased revenues and likely contributed to the increasing GDPs over that time. It remains to be seen how the drop in oil demand and percent of each country's GDP in oil production and exportation will affect economic growth in the future. Already since July 2008, GDPs have begun to suffer as both the price and demand for oil decreased. Cuts in oil production may have encouraged the recent

increase in oil prices, but it is difficult to isolate that sole activity from the global economic climate (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa 2009).

Single Member District Plurality

Bangladesh

Bangladesh is interesting because it has broken away from a larger country twice in less than 70 years, first from India, and then from Pakistan. It is also worth noting that India is one of the BRICs, while Pakistan is another member of the N11 countries. These countries share histories and cultures, and apparently similar potential for success (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006).

It is also notable because it has recently become an SMDP country. For nine years during the 1980s and early 1990s, Bangladesh was a single-party dominant state as the Army Chief of Staff, Hussain Mohammed Ershad, assumed power and suspended the Constitution and imposed martial law on the country (Bangladesh 2009). In 1991, however, Bangladesh transitioned back to a democracy. Acclimating itself to the new electoral system, however, has proven more difficult.

Bangladesh has also been experiencing internal political turmoil (Stiglitz 2008). In February 2009 the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), a paramilitary force, staged a mutiny that spread through twelve towns (British Broadcasting Corporation 2009). The BDR soldiers held officers

hostage in order to negotiate with the government. This is one example of the tenuous power the Bangladeshi government holds over its citizens.

Bangladesh is a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). SAARC promotes economic and social development among its members, which includes Pakistan and five others. The countries come together to encourage the improvement of agriculture, health, women and children, the environment, science and technology, and transportation (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation 2009). Bangladesh is considered one of the Developing 8 Countries as well, which also promotes economic communication and prosperity. Seven of the eight countries involved are N11 countries, including Iran, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Turkey (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006).

Nigeria

In 2007, Nigeria had the lowest GDP per capita of the N11 countries at \$1,328, partially due to a relatively large population, and partially due to low skill level of employees (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006). Nigeria is one of eight N11 countries to be a member of the G-20 nations. The G-20 is composed of the world's wealthiest economies, and meets annually to discuss international finance. Furthermore, it promotes communication and cooperation to address relevant issues and stabilize international trade (Developing 8 Organization for Economic Cooperation 2009). The G-20 countries have a distinct advantage over non G-20 countries in that they already have a strong or potentially strong economy. They also are able to

meet, discuss, and protect their interests with other heads of countries. Therefore, even though Nigeria has the lowest GDP per capita, it does not have to remain as such.

Nigeria is less developed than most N11 countries, and is considered developing. It is a member of fewer organizations than many other N11 countries. Like many other N11 countries, it is a member of the Developing 8 Countries (Developing 8 Organization for Economic Cooperation 2009).

Pakistan

Pakistan has a similar history to Bangladesh, as they both seceded from India and later fought with each other in civil war. Similarly, they are both experiencing political volatility. The world pays more attention to Pakistan, however, because it has nuclear weapons. Should they fall into the wrong hands, the stability of the entire region could devolve into jeopardy.

Compared to the rest of the N11 countries, Pakistan has experienced the greatest population increase of the N11 countries, more than doubling in the last 20 years. From 1980 – 2008, the population increased 110.8%, an impressive leap (Pakistan 2009). Pakistan is also considered a developing country, and like Nigeria, is a G-20 developing nation.

Pakistan is currently experiencing internal political instability. The December 2007 assassination of former Prime Minister and candidate Benazir Bhutto sent shockwaves around the world. Shortly thereafter, President Musharraf resigned under threats of impeachment (Brummitt 2009). He was succeeded by Bhutto's widower, Asif Ali Zardiri in September 2008. In February 2009, the Pakistani Supreme Court upheld bans of opposition leader and former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif from holding office. This ban has only served to fuel the

cohesiveness of parties other than the ruling party, the Pakistani People's Party (PPP) (British Broadcasting Corporation 2009). Sharif served as Prime Minister for two terms during the 1990's until he was overthrown by former President Musharraf. The political tension has been building ever since, and came to a head with Bhutto's assassination only to begin again with the recent Supreme Court ruling.

The Philippines

The Philippines were a colony of Spain for over 200 years, and briefly belonged to the US, but gained independence in 1946 (Philippines 2009). The transition was stormy, however, since leaders faced coupes or impeachments fairly regularly, decreasing government stability. Recently though, the Philippines have stabilized a bit as its current president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is in her fifth year of six in her term and political turmoil is at a low point (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation 2009). Terrorism is a threat, however, as several cells are believed to exist throughout the country. The government has apprehended many wanted terrorists and has initiated peace talks on several occasions in the last few years.

The Philippines are considered a newly industrialized country, and are a member of the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). APEC was formed to promote economic collaboration. It is composed of 21 countries in Asia or with the Pacific Ocean as a border. As a result, APEC can claim that it represents nearly half of the world's population, GDP, and global trade. These figures are aided in no small way by the membership of China and the United States. The Philippines is not involved in many IGOs. They are, however a G-20 nations developing country (Philippines 2009).

Proportional Representation

Indonesia

Indonesia gained independence shortly after the Philippines, in 1949 after four years of negotiations and hostilities with the Netherlands. After gaining independence, the country entered a period of semi-authoritarian rule by Suharto (Indonesia 2009). It was not until his resignation in 1998 that parliamentary elections took hold. It is now one of the largest democracies in the world, and has the world's largest Muslim population (Election Profile for Indonesia 2009).

The country has transitioned peacefully into democratic elections in the short span of only ten years. However, it still faces separatist sentiments from a few areas, especially Papua and Aceh (Election Profile for Philippines 2009). Some tension was relieved after the tsunami hit Southeast Asia in 2004, encouraging the country to come together to help citizens and recover from the disaster.

Indonesia is very open to gender equality in elections. Election requirements state that at least 30% of candidates from a party must be women (Election Profile for Philippines 2009). This limits the number of parties able to be on ballots, yet improves the representation of women in government. Indonesia is considered a developing country and a G-20 industrial nations member.

Mexico

Mexico has only recently become a PR country. Mexico was led primarily by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) for nearly 70 years, since 1929 in the wake of the Mexican Revolution (Mexico 2009). Up until recently, it was a single-party dominant country, though the country has transitioned to the new government peacefully and smoothly.

Mexico is considered a newly industrialized country, which distinguishes it from most other N11 countries, which are considered “developing,” though South Korea is developed (O’Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006). Mexico is a signatory of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which may have helped the country become more economically powerful. Mexico is also a member of the G8+5. The G8 is a collection of the world’s wealthiest eight economies, and Mexico would be considered one of the five additional developing nations (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2009). It is also a member of the G-20, which comes as no surprise since it is a member of the G8+5. These affiliations allow Mexico to meet and discuss with other world leaders to find solutions to problems that are mutually beneficial. These meetings can improve a country’s position relative to the rest of the world as well as internally. Finally, Mexico is a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Like the G8+5 and G20, it allows many countries to come together and discuss relevant issues. However, the OECD differs from them in that it promotes “democracy and the market economy,” which would exclude some countries even if they were economically strong (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2009).

Mexico is the only N11 country in either North or South America. While Brazil represents the Americas in the BRICs, Mexico stands as the only N11 representative of the Western Hemisphere (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006). Many Western Hemisphere countries are already developed though, which would make them less likely to be a member of the N11 countries (O'Neill, Wilson, et al. 2005). Furthermore, Goldman Sachs considers the N11 countries as up-and-coming with the potential to be regional powers. With competition from the United States and Brazil, regional power is more difficult to come by than many Southeast Asian countries. While they compete with China and Japan, they are also finding their own niche in the market.

South Korea

South Korea has experienced the lowest percentage of population growth of the N11 countries, up 28.4% from 1980 to 2007 (South Korea 2009). In 2007, it also had the greatest GDP per capita of the N11 countries at \$26,155, more than twice that of the second highest GDP (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006). South Korea has a small population compared to many other N11 countries, which helps contribute to the high level of skill of many employees in the country.

South Korea is affiliated with more organizations than most other N11 countries. It is also the only country to be considered a developed country with an advanced economy, both by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006). Like many other N11 countries, South Korea is a G-20 industrial nations member, and like Mexico, it is a member of the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2009).

South Korea is a founding member of ASEAN Plus Three, which is similar to ASEAN in that it unites Asian countries together for economic and political discussions. Unlike ASEAN, which was founded in 1967, ASEAN Plus Three was added in 1997 to include the countries of Japan, China, and South Korea. The member-nations work to eliminate tariffs among each other (ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation 2009). Additionally, South Korea helped found APEC, as well as the East Asia Summit (EAS), which is composed of the same countries in ASEAN Plus Three, as well as India, Australia, and New Zealand (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation 2009). EAS meets after the ASEAN meetings, and is also concerned with economic stability and growth in the region.

Turkey

Turkey plays an interesting role in international relations and business since it is considered to be the border between Europe and the Middle East. As a result, it acts as a major commerce hub as goods are exported and re-exported. This is reflected by the amount of foreign direct investment it received in 2006, the most of the N11 countries at over \$20 billion measured in US dollars worldwide (Election Profile for Turkey 2009). This level of investment has undoubtedly helped Turkey develop at the level it has in recent years (O'Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006).

Turkey is the only country other than South Korea to be considered a developed country by the CIA, though not by the IMF as South Korea is (Turkey 2009). Turkey is also a member of the G-20 industrial nations, as well as the OECD. It is considered a newly industrialized country, making it more advanced than many others. Finally Turkey is a member of the European Union

Customs Union. While Turkey is not a member of the European Union (EU), it is a candidate country that may be admitted soon (Turkey 2009).

The EU Customs Union is composed of all EU member-nations, as well as Turkey, Andorra, and San Marino. The purpose of the Union is to limit tariffs and other taxes from being levied among the countries involved (Turkey 2009). This provides an excellent gateway for Turkey to trade with its more developed neighbors more cheaply than most other countries.

Single-party dominant

Egypt

Egypt has a wealth of history and culture stretching back over 5000 years. Since that time, the land has been ruled by Egyptians, Romans, Arabs, and British. The Arabs brought Islam to the region, and now Egypt's population is overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim. Many political alliances have formed or waned as a result (Egypt 2009). For example, Egypt allies with many other states in the Arab world, which works against Israel. Egypt had the Sinai territory occupied by Israel following the Six Day War. The territory was recovered following the Camp David Accords in 1979, which returned the land in exchange for recognition of Israel. This move was not popular among Egyptians, however, and President Sadat was assassinated shortly thereafter (Egypt 2009). Since that time, Egypt's domestic politics have calmed down, though international relations remain tense.

Egypt is one of only two African nations that are N11 countries. As a result, its affiliations are slightly different. Egypt is considered a newly industrialized country and a G-20

developing nation. It is a member of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). Established in 2003, this organization is composed of countries that border or are near member countries of the EU. Its goal is to build, “a political relationship and economic cooperation” between EU and ENP members (European Neighborhood Policy 2009). Egypt is also a member of the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA). COMESA brings several African countries together to encourage trade amongst one another. Several member countries have established free trade agreements (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa 2009).

Iran

Iran has a very tumultuous recent history, since Shah Pahlavi was overthrown in the 1979 revolutions and the Ayatollah Khomeini took power (Iran 2009). Since that time, sweeping political reforms have been enacted, many of which were aimed at reducing Western influence in the country. It now exists as one of the few major theocracies in the world. Over the years, Iran has slowly become more isolated because numerous UN sanctions have passed urging Iran to end its uranium enrichment programs (O’Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006). Trade with EU countries has also declined as a result. Many countries, especially those in the West, are reluctant to trade or have relations with Iran since it is considered a state sponsor to terrorist groups. Still, its oil sector is booming and continues to bolster the economy in spite of the recent slide in oil prices.

Iran is a member of the Developing 8 Countries, as well as a G-15 member. Additionally, Iran is a central figure in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which regulates the supply of oil and petroleum around the world (O’Neill, Kim and Buchanan 2006).

Finally, Iran is a member of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) which emulates the EU in its desire to create a single market in the Central Asian and Middle Eastern regions. It is composed of ten countries that work together to improve trade and investments (Iran 2009).

Vietnam

Vietnam, like many other N11 countries, especially the single-party dominant countries, has experienced a violent recent history. Vietnam was ruled by the French for 70 years. Still, Communist forces led by Ho Chi Minh emerged and defeated French forces in 1954 (Vietnam 2009). Following French withdrawal, the country was divided into two states, with only North Vietnam as communist. After a long and bitter fighting against US forces who sought to prevent the spread of communism, Vietnam was reunited in 1975 as a communist state (Vietnam 2009).

In 1986, the government initiated a renovation policy to open up and modernize the economy (Vietnam 2009). This policy has increased exports and competition in the region. At the same time, the government is careful not to open up the political side to reform and modernization. There is only one legal political party in Vietnam; all others are banned (Election Profile for Vietnam 2009). The people have responded with protests, but they are typically small and lack the power needed to effect change. Overall the country is stable. It has not experienced the same level of government-led violence during revolutionary periods of its neighbors such as Cambodia or China. Vietnam does not have many affiliations with intergovernmental organizations. Still, it is considered a developing country and is a member of APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation 2009).

Peaceful transitions of power

According to Duverger's Law, SMDP countries typically have more peaceful transitions of power (Duverger 1972). This is supported in practice because most SMDP countries are ruled by two powerful parties, and thus experience less turmoil than PR countries and their coalition governments. SMDP's record of peaceful transitions appears to be upheld with the N11 countries, though the peacefulness is sometimes less so than more stable countries. Bangladesh, for example, has experienced two transitions since 1991. Both times, the defeated party considered their defeat a result of election fraud, calling on citizens to protest (Bangladesh 2009). Ultimately though, each time the defeated party accepted its loss and allowed the opposing party to take control without incident.

Number of seat-holding parties

In the Philippines, 27 parties hold seats in the House of Representatives. A plurality of the 242 seats is held by a two major parties. In fact 22 of the parties have four or fewer seat-holding members, meaning only five parties have a strong voice in legislature (Election Profile for Philippines 2009). Nigeria's 2007 elections gave six parties seats between the House of Representatives and Senate, though the two most represented parties hold over 90% of the seats available (Election Profile for Nigeria 2009).

Pakistan's elections are quickly degenerating since the courts have ruled against some political opponents holding office. This came after Bhutto's assassination and the subsequent tense political situation caused in part by Musharraf (Brummitt 2009). Still, Pakistan's elections are distinctive because parties must reserve some seats for women and minorities to hold office

(Election Profile for Pakistan 2009). Following the 2008 election, ten parties held seats, though only three received more than 10% of the vote (Election Profile for Pakistan 2009). In fact, three parties did not run any candidate in the 2008 election, but retained seats from previous elections. Even though no party in Pakistan has a majority of seats, Pakistan still acts as an SMDP party by favoring very few parties (Adams 1996). Upcoming years will dictate Pakistan's political future, and it unlikely to stay SMDP as political turmoil continues to build and social unrest spreads through the country.

In Bangladesh, eight parties hold seats in the unicameral legislature, Jatiyo Sangshad (Election Profile for Bangladesh 2009). Still, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party holds 193 of the 300 seats, easily making it the most powerful party in the country. There is a steep drop off in voting returns as the second most-seated party won only 62 seats, even though there was less than a 1.5% difference in popular vote between the two (Election Profile for Bangladesh 2009). This could be a result of creative districting, or perhaps disparities in voter turnout in certain parts of the country.

The SMDP countries in the N11 have more parties represented than many SMDP systems around the world, particularly The Philippines which hosts 27 parties. Still, the SMDP countries favor very few parties compared to the number of seat-holding parties. This is evidenced by Pakistan, for one, where only three parties received more than 10% of the vote. Still, in spite of a high number of parties with seats in the legislature, few of them have much political power.

In Mexico, seven parties hold seats in the Senate and nine parties hold seats in the Chamber of Deputies (Election Profile for Mexico 2009). In Turkey, only four parties hold seats

in the Grand National Assembly, despite fifteen parties with candidates on the ballots (Election Profile for Turkey 2009). Seventeen parties hold seats in Indonesia's People's Representative Council. In Indonesia, coalition governments are crucial since no party received more than 22% of the vote in the last election in 2004 (Election Profile for Indonesia 2009). As a result, even marginalized parties play a role in the balance of power in the country. As the countries prepare for the 2009 elections, greater than 60 parties registered, but only 38 qualified to be on the ballot due to eligibility requirements, which stipulate that 30% of the candidates must be women, among other requirements (Election Profile for Indonesia 2009). In South Korea, eight parties hold seats in its Parliament, though only two parties hold more than 25% of the seats (Election Profile for South Korea 2009).

The PR countries have a more even distribution of power than parties in SMDP countries experience. Indonesia is a prime example since no party comes close to holding a majority of seats and alliances and coalitions form in order to accomplish things. Even in South Korea, where two parties control a majority of seats, the other seat-holding parties can still play a role in politics as the top two seat-holding parties vie for supremacy.

In Egypt, over two-thirds of the seats in the People's Assembly are held by members of the National Democratic Party (Election Profile for Egypt 2009). Other parties are represented, though not enough to be considered a political force. Iran's elections are unique in that every candidate must be approved by the Guardian Council in order to be on the ballot (Iran 2009). In the 2008 parliamentary elections, 90% of Reformist candidates were not allowed on the ballots because they were not considered loyal to the regime (Election Profile for Iran 2009). As a result,

Iran's elections are not truly democratic. Still, Iran's appearance on the list of N11 shows that democracy is not necessarily a precondition for regional success and influence. Iran has a unique electoral system in other aspects as well. The parliament is elected by both SMDP and PR methods (Election Profile for Iran 2009).

Vietnamese elections yield the most homogenous results of the N11 countries. Of 493 seats, 492 are held by the Vietnamese Fatherland Front (Election Profile for Vietnam 2009). The other seat-holder is self-nominated and non-affiliated. The ruling party is the only party legally allowed to exist, so it will continue to win elections in landslides for a long time to come (Election Profile for Vietnam 2009). There have not been many civilian uprisings, which further reinforces the stability of the government, yet has done little to change the openness of elections in the country.

Political Freedoms

There are a number of factors that go into quantifying the benefit citizens of a country experience. Political freedoms and civil liberties are crucial to analyzing the effect of an electoral system, as well as the healthy functioning of the government in power. Economic freedoms are also important to the well-being of the country as globalization and international trade expands to constantly wider scopes. The N11 have shown they can be economically influential in their regions, but their economic freedoms vary greatly. It is also necessary to find a correlation, or lack thereof, between economic success, economic freedoms, and political rights and civil liberties.

Freedom House

Each year, Freedom House ranks countries on their levels of freedom in terms of civil liberties and political rights. From there, Freedom House breaks lists down into subcategories of political rights and civil liberties. Political rights consist of scores of the electoral process, political pluralism and participation, and functioning of the government (Freedom in the World 2008: Subscores 2008). Civil liberties consist of scores of the freedom of expression and belief, associational and organizational rights, rule of law, and personal autonomy and individual rights (Freedom in the World 2008: Subscores 2008)⁷¹. Finally, these subscores are brought together to create an average per country and are then categorized as Free, Partly Free, or Not Free in half-point increments. Countries with scores from 1.0 to 2.5 are considered free, 3.0 to 5.0 are considered partly free, and 5.5 to 7.0 are considered unfree.

The N11 countries break down almost equally between the categories, with three countries named as free, four countries as partly free, and four countries as not free. Beginning with SMDP countries, no country earned the distinction of free. Most SMDP countries fell together with similar scores as the Philippines scored 3.5, Nigeria scored 4.0, and Bangladesh scored 4.5, which merited them inclusion into the “partly free” category. Finally, Pakistan scored a 5.5, which made it the only SMDP country in the “not free” category (Freedom in the World 2008: Subscores 2008).

Like the SMDP countries, PR countries had similar scores as each other. Proportional representation countries had very different scores than SMDP countries, however, with South

Korea, Mexico, and Indonesia judged to be “free” with scores of 1.5, 2.5, and 2.5, respectively. Turkey was named “partly free” with a score of 3.0⁷². Finally, the single-party dominant countries fell together as Iran, Egypt, and Vietnam were put into the “not free” category, with Iran scoring a 6.0, Egypt scoring a 5.5, and Vietnam a 6.0 (Freedom in the World 2008: Subscores 2008).

It is noteworthy that the three different electoral systems all scored similarly within their own electoral system. Three out of four PR countries were considered “free,” three out of four SMDP countries were considered “partly free,” and all three single-party dominant countries were considered “unfree.” Although one SMDP country was classified as “unfree” and one PR country was classified as “partly free,” the overall homogeneity within each electoral system is interesting. This could indicate general tendencies of electoral systems to be related to Freedom House’s measures of political rights and civil liberties. It remains to be seen, however, if the evidence supports causation or simply a correlation.

Within the subcategories of political rights and civil liberties, ten of the countries had either identical scores, or no more than one point difference (Combined Average Ratings: Independent Countries, 2008 2008). Vietnam had a two point difference between political rights and civil liberties, with a score of 7 in political rights and a 5 in civil liberties (Freedom in the World 2008: Subscores 2008). Vietnam is one of only nine countries worldwide to have a difference of greater than one point in the 2008 Freedom House ratings.

Overall, the PR electoral systems appear to yield greater political rights and civil liberties, while the single-party dominant countries appear to be lacking in both when compared to SMDP and PR. The average political rights score for the N11 SMDP countries is 4.75, with the PR systems' score averaging a 2.0. The average civil liberties score for SMDP countries is a 4.0, whereas PR countries average a 2.75. Still, this is a small sample size of only four countries for SMDP and four for PR countries, but according to Freedom House's 2008 rankings of countries, there is a significant difference in the political rights and civil liberties of those living in single-party dominant countries compared to SMDP or PR countries. Citizens of proportional representation countries appear to have greater political rights and civil liberties than citizens living under single member district plurality systems, and many more than single-party dominant systems (Combined Average Ratings: Independent Countries, 2008 2008).

Index of Economic Freedom

Like Freedom House, the Index of Economic Freedom ranks countries annually based on their freedoms. Unlike Freedom House's focus on political rights and civil liberties though, the Index of Economic Freedom focuses on financial freedom, which in turn impacts the GDP, as well as both domestic and international trade of each country, business laws, labor laws, and tariffs (Index of Economic Freedom - Explore Comparisons 2009). Each score is made up of ten subscores, which are in turn comprised of several factors that lead to the score. The ten categories that go into a country's level of economic freedom are as follows: business freedom, trade freedom, fiscal freedom, government size, monetary freedom, investment freedom, financial freedom, property rights, freedom from corruption, and labor freedom (Index of

Economic Freedom Country Rankings 2009). The Index of Economic Freedom is sometimes considered a barometer of a country's capitalistic tendencies, which can negatively affect a country's score, especially single-party dominant countries.

From there, each country is assigned a score ranging from zero to 100. Countries with a score of 80 and above are considered economically free, a score between 70 and 80 as mostly free, between 60 and 70 as moderately free, between 50 and 60 as mostly unfree, and below a 50 is considered repressed. No country in the N11 achieved a ranking in the "free" category, as only seven countries in the world were considered "free" in the 2009 Index of Economic Freedom, all of which were economically developed (Index of Economic Freedom Country Rankings 2009). The N11 countries are not completely developed yet, though South Korea is fast-approaching that mark. As a result, the highest ranked N11 country was South Korea, with a score of 68.1, which put it in the "moderately free" category and the fortieth most free country in the world. South Korea was joined by two other countries in the "moderately free" category: Mexico with 65.8 and Turkey with a score of 61.6 (Index of Economic Freedom - Explore Comparisons 2009). All three countries with a designation of "moderately free" were PR countries.

Most N11 countries fell into the "mostly unfree" category. Of those, Egypt scored 58.0, Pakistan a 57.0, The Philippines a 56.8, Nigeria a 55.1, Indonesia a 53.4, and Vietnam a 51.0 (Index of Economic Freedom - Explore Comparisons 2009). Vietnam made a marked improvement since the 2008 rankings, which was enough to improve Vietnam from being considered repressed into the next highest category (Index of Economic Freedom - Explore

Comparisons 2009). Finally, two countries were considered repressed. Those were Bangladesh with 47.5 and Iran with 44.6 points (Index of Economic Freedom Country Rankings 2009). In all, nine of the N11 countries have improved over the last ten years, and those that did not improve managed to maintain their category distinctions and not change more than three points (Index of Economic Freedom Country Rankings 2009).

In general, there is a slight correlation between Freedom House's rankings of political rights and civil liberties and the Index of Economic Freedom's rankings for economic freedoms. For example, both Mexico and South Korea scored in the freest category in Freedom House's rankings, and also managed to score the highest of the N11 countries in the Index of Economic Freedom's rankings. On the other side is Iran, who scored in the least free category of Freedom House as well as the repressed category in the Index of Economic Freedom.

Of SMDP countries, none were considered moderately free, three were considered mostly unfree, and one was considered repressed. Of the PR countries, three were considered moderately free, one was mostly unfree. Finally, of single-party dominant countries, two were considered mostly unfree and one was repressed (Freedom in the World 2008: Subscores 2008). This is similar to how rankings fell in Freedom House's rankings, where SMDP countries had no countries in the highest tier, three in the middle, and one in the lowest tier. PR's placement was similar, with three countries in the top tier and one in the middle (Freedom in the World 2008: Subscores 2008). Although there was a slight variation in which country was designated to a certain category, the overarching idea remains constant: PR countries have better scores than SMDP and single-party dominant countries.

Even though category placements are similar, the scores of each country reveal something else. Of the eleven countries, PR countries had a higher average score, while SMDP countries had a lower average score. Both SMDP and single-party dominant system countries had at least one “repressed” country. Still, SMDP countries averaged a score of 54.1 with a median of 55.95. At the same time, PR countries averaged a score of 62.225, with a median score of 63.7. The differences are drastic enough to show a significant difference in the economic freedoms in the N11 countries, concluding PR countries have greater amounts of economic freedom than SMDP countries. Single-party dominant countries tend to have much lower scores, revealing less economic freedom compared to the other two electoral systems. There is a noticeable trend between the electoral systems in the N11 countries and relative freedom experienced by citizens in the country, including both political and economic freedoms.

Number of representatives per capita

The number of legislative representatives in relation to the population is also important when comparing levels of political and economic freedom. Theoretically, the more people there are representing an individual’s interests, the more likely it will be accurately reflected in legislation (Norris 1997). Increased representation may also lead to greater government stability as citizens are satisfied that their interests are taken into account (Adams 1996).

In SMDP countries, there tend to be fewer legislators per capita than PR countries and single-party dominant countries. In Bangladesh, for example, there are 300 seats available to represent 156 million citizens (Election Profile for Bangladesh 2009). This yields a ratio of one legislator for every 520,000 citizens. In Nigeria, there are 467 seats for 149 million people,

which equals to one legislator for every 319,057 people (Election Profile for Nigeria 2009). The Philippines has 242 seats for 98 million people, or one legislator for every 404,958 citizens (Election Profile for Philippines 2009). Finally, Pakistan's legislative branch has 270 seats to represent 176 million people (Election Profile for Pakistan 2009). This breaks down to one legislator for every 651,852 citizens, the highest of the N11 countries. The average of these four SMDP countries is 1279 seats for 579 million citizens, or one legislator for every 452,697 citizens.

PR countries have a much lower ratio of legislators to citizens. Mexico, for one, has 500 available seats for 111 million people, an average of 1 seat for every 222,000 citizens (Election Profile for Mexico 2009). South Korea has 299 seats for 48.5 million people, the smallest population of the N11 countries (Election Profile for South Korea 2009). This averages one legislator for every 162,207 citizens. Turkey has the lowest ratio of the N11 countries at one legislator for every 140,000 citizens. There are 550 seats for 77 million people (Election Profile for Turkey 2009). Finally, Indonesia has the highest ratio of the PR countries, with 550 seats for 240 million people, or one legislator for every 436,364 citizens (Election Profile for Indonesia 2009). PR countries have a total of 1899 seats to represent 476.5 million people. The average ratio is one legislator for every 250,921 citizens.

Finally, single-party dominant countries boast lower ratios of legislators to citizens than both SMDP and PR countries in the N11. Egypt has 454 seats available for 83 million people, or one legislator for every 182,819 citizens (Election Profile for Egypt 2009). Iran has 209 seats for 66.5 million people, or one legislator for every 318,182 citizens (Election Profile for Iran 2009).

Finally, Vietnam has 493 seats available for 87 million people, averaging one legislator for every 176,471 people (Election Profile for Vietnam 2009). Average representation for single-party dominant countries is one legislator for every 204,585 citizens. The three countries have 1156 seats for 236.5 million people.

The results of representatives per capita were unexpected. Single-party dominant tend to have the most stable governments, followed by SMDP countries, while PR countries tend to have less stable governments (Duverger 1972). Yet single-party dominant countries have the greatest number of legislators to citizens, SMDP countries have the fewest, and PR countries fall in the middle. This renders the idea that greater representation yields greater government stability as inconclusive.

The results also call into question any correlation between representatives to citizens and political rights and civil liberties. According to Freedom House, PR countries tend to have better political rights and civil liberties, followed by SMDP countries, with single-party dominant countries yielding the worst rankings for political rights and civil liberties (Freedom in the World 2008: Subscores 2008). This shows that representation alone does not appear to improve political rights and civil liberties.

Finally there is little correlation between the numbers of parties in the legislature to the number of representatives. Single-party dominant countries have the fewest number of parties, but the most of representatives per capita. SMDP countries have the fewest representatives per capita, yet fall in the middle of number of parties represented. PR countries have the most countries represented overall, yet the middle number of representatives per capita.

The information from Freedom House and the Index of Economic Freedom points to the idea that PR electoral systems benefit citizens more than SMDP or single-party dominant systems. There appears to be little evidence linking representatives per capita to either government stability or political rights and civil liberties.

Pakistan acts as an outlier when generalizing the outcomes of the N11 countries. It is the only country that is not single-party dominant to be considered “not free” by Freedom House (Freedom in the World 2008: Subscores 2008). It is also the only one considered repressed by the Index of Economic Freedom (Index of Economic Freedom Country Rankings 2009). Those scores brought down the average scores of SMDP parties and gave the SMDP systems an overall score disproportionately low compared to PR systems. Pakistan’s current political climate is not an accurate representation of most SMDP countries, and the country may be on the verge of drastic internal changes. It remains to be seen if Pakistan will stabilize or have to restructure itself, perhaps changing it from an SMDP system to another form of elections. In short, Pakistan may have skewed the results of SMDP countries relative to the rest of the world. This would be magnified in this research due to a small sample size. The averages of SMDP countries’ Freedom House rankings and Index of Economic Freedom rankings would have been much higher if Pakistan had not been included. This should be noted for further analysis.

Summary

The N11 countries are a unique collection from around the world, gaining notice for their emerging regional economic influence. Goldman Sachs chose a variety of cultural backgrounds, history, levels of industrialization, and even electoral systems. Of the eleven countries, four are

SMDP, four are PR, and three are single-party dominant. The single-party dominant countries appearing on the list of emerging economic influences cast doubt on the notion that only democracy leads to economic prosperity. Still, SMDP and PR countries have better scores from both Freedom House and the Index of Economic Freedom for their political rights, civil liberties, and economic freedoms than their single-party dominant counterparts. There does not appear to be a correlation between the number of representatives per capita and government stability, political rights and civil liberties, or number of parties represented.

By applying Duverger's Law to the N11 countries, one can see that his principles are upheld, even with such a small sampling of countries and their electoral systems. Looking beyond Duverger, however, one finds more than just a tendency toward numbers of parties or political stability. There is a trend towards political freedoms and civil liberties. Yet, although a correlation is emerging between political freedoms and electoral systems, it is unknown if the electoral system causes the increase in political freedoms. A country's history, neighbors, and allies all play a role, making a direct link difficult to find. Still, a relationship exists between electoral system and benefits obtained by constituents, giving reason for this relationship to be examined in greater depth. Further research could include deeper examination of the N11 countries or a study of more countries to determine if the relationship exists on a more universal level.

Conclusion

In summation, both SMDP and PR electoral systems have definite benefits and detriments. SMDP tends to favor a fewer parties, often marginalizing minority parties. Still,

SMDP generally has greater stability from one election to another, as peaceful transitions of power take place with relative ease as one party gains a majority of seats over the other. PR, on the other hand, tends to favor several parties, though rarely does a party gain a majority of seats. Coalitions of parties occur in order to accomplish agendas. Ties are made and cooperation encouraged through similar ideology or strength of party. Still, PR systems are less stable than SMDP as elections and transitions can be volatile. In terms of political freedoms, PR systems tend to have greater levels than SMDP systems. Additionally, PR systems appear to have greater economic freedoms. Overall, single-party dominant systems are the least advantageous for its constituents when compared to proportional representation or single member district plurality electoral systems. In the N11 countries, proportional representation electoral systems yield greater benefits for its constituents than single member district plurality countries.

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