

Promotion of candidates and party affiliation in Tokyo: Effects of electoral reform from the MMD to SMD*

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May 2021
01/05/2021

Abstract

This article argues how the 1994 electoral reform of Japan's Lower House influenced candidates' promotion strategy on themselves and party affiliation. The Lower House adopted the single non-transferable vote and multi-member district (SNTV-MMD) system before the reform, thus candidates had to compete against those of the same party in the same district. It has been pointed out that the MMD system induced more fierce intra-party competition among candidates of the same party in the same district, and that the single-member district (SMD) system would lead to the inter-party competition more. If it is right, candidates should promote their party affiliations more than candidates themselves after the reform. Using the campaign bulletin from 1983-2014 in Tokyo, we compare with the Upper House which has maintained the SNTV-MMD system and show that the opposite result was found: candidates in the Lower House were encouraged to promote their own names more than the party affiliations.

JEL Classification Number: H89

Key Words: Houses of Representatives and Councilors, Campaign bulletin, Single and non-transferable vote, Party-oriented campaign, name recognition

* I am grateful to Takero Doi, Kentaro Fukumoto, and the seminar participants at the 13th Empirical Moral Science Conference, the Contract Theory Workshop, Chuo University, and Keio University. This research was partially supported by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research [(C)25380353, (C)16K03708] from the Japanese Ministry of Education, and the Japan Securities Scholarship Foundation. Naturally, any errors are mine alone.

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