

Intraparty Competition and Money Politics in Japan

Matthew Carlson

University of Vermont

ABSTRACT

Scholars have long argued that Japanese election campaigns were expensive, in part, because of the incentives generated by intraparty competition. However, few have studied how candidates and politicians spend and raise money during the official campaign and throughout the year. Using reports based on the official campaign period and from yearly support groups, this paper examines the impact of intraparty competition on the use of political funds. In the case of the Liberal Democratic Party, candidates spend more during the official campaign when they faced intraparty competition. The amounts of funds raised during the campaign period or during the year were largely explained by other factors than the number of same-party competitors. In the case of income raised through politicians' personal support groups, a candidate-level measure of previous electoral experience was the most significant determinant in the statistical analysis.

HYPOTHESES TESTED

H1. LDP candidates will spend and raise more during the official campaign period as the level of intraparty competition increases.

H2. JSP candidates facing intraparty competition do not spend or raise significant amounts of funds during the campaign period compared to JSP candidates that run alone.

H3. The effects of intraparty competition will be stronger on campaign-period funds compared to the annual reports linked to *koenkai*.

H4. New candidates in the LDP will raise less funds during the campaign period and through their yearly political groups compared to incumbent members.

DATA COLLECTED

1. Campaign-period expenditure and income reports, 1967-1993.
2. Total income raised through politicians' political support groups in 1986, 1990, 1993 elections.

MODEL

- FUNDS, the dependent variable, is the amount of campaign-period income or expense (2015 constant Japanese yen, per elector).
- ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR PLUS are coded 1 if the candidate faces one, two, three, or more than four intraparty challengers. The excluded category is candidates who face no intraparty competition.
- NRCOMPETITORS is the total number of candidates competing in the district minus the focal candidate.
- NEW is a dummy variable coded 1 if the candidate has never previously won a lower house seat.
- ENDORSE is coded 1 if the candidate received the official party endorsement and 0 if running as an independent.
- DMAG4 and DMAG5 are dummy variables for four-member and five-member districts. The excluded category is three-member districts (the few other districts are omitted from the analysis).
- DEMOGRAPHICS include district-level measures related to urbanization, age, and industrial structure.

RESULTS FOR CAMPAIGN-PERIOD SPENDING

Variable	Liberal Democratic Party		Japan Socialist Party	
	Estimate	S. Error	Estimate	S. Error
Intercept	16.001***	4.597	19.204***	5.589
ONE	1.578**	0.588	0.181	0.286
TWO	2.517***	0.607	2.094***	0.619
THREE	2.075**	0.653		
FOUR PLUS	2.504***	0.713		
NRCOMPETITORS	0.031	0.083	-0.012	0.088
NEW	-1.302***	0.326	-1.151***	0.352
ENDORSE	2.871***	0.337	2.873***	0.735
DMAG 4	-5.558***	0.257	-3.335***	0.328
DMAG 5	-10.066***	0.292	-6.474***	0.373
Population in DIDs (%)	0.011	0.011	0.003	0.013
Population under 15 (%)	-0.321***	0.084	-0.458***	0.103
Population over 65 (%)	1.241***	0.080	1.074***	0.101
Primary sector workers (%)	0.124**	0.048	0.074	0.058
Manufacturing workers (%)	-0.040	0.041	-0.024	0.051
Service industry workers (%)	-0.200**	0.065	-0.235**	0.078
1969 dummy	1.680***	0.395	2.216***	0.457
1972 dummy	-0.129	0.404	1.621***	0.492
1976 dummy	6.477***	0.451	5.471***	0.536
1979 dummy	9.254***	0.485	6.634***	0.583
1980 dummy	7.486***	0.506	4.821***	0.609
1983 dummy	4.880***	0.523	4.118***	0.645
1986 dummy	3.976***	0.564	3.435***	0.696
1990 dummy	0.621	0.635	-0.368	0.770
1993 dummy	5.608***	0.730	-0.437	0.862
Number of cases	3,689		1,617	
Adjusted R square	0.642		0.577	

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

Note: Dependent variable = campaign-period expenditure (1967-93) per elector (constant 2015 yen).

RESULTS

- Election systems that pit same-party candidates against each other can encourage money politics, but the effects of intraparty competition differs by party and by the types of funds examined.
- Level of intraparty competition felt most strongly for the LDP and for campaign-period spending-weak effect for JSP.
- Level of intraparty competition did not appear to effect amounts of campaign-period income or the total amount of income raised through political support groups.
- Most significant determinant of total support group income hinges on whether the candidate is an incumbent or not.

REFERENCES

- Catalinac, Amy. 2016a. "From Pork to Policy: the Rise of Programmatic Campaigning in Japanese Elections." *Journal of Politics* 78 (1): 1-18.
- Cox, Gary W., and Thies, Michael F. 1998. "The Cost of Intraparty Competition: The Single, Nontransferable Vote and Money Politics in Japan." *Comparative Political Studies* 31: 267-291.
- Grofman, Bernard. 1999. "SNTV: An Inventory of Theoretically Derived Propositions and a Brief Review of the Evidence from Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Alabama." In *Elections in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan Under the Single Non-Transferable Vote*.
- Reed, Steven R., and Daniel M. Smith. 2017. *The Reed-Smith Japanese House of Representatives Elections Dataset*.

Contact

Matthew.Carlson@uvm.edu