Mixed-Member Electoral Systems in Constitutional Context

Cox, Gary W., Tan, Alexander C., Huang, Chi, Batto, Nathan F.

Published by University of Michigan Press

Cox, Gary W., et al.
Mixed-Member Electoral Systems in Constitutional Context: Taiwan, Japan, and Beyond.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/52095

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=1997434
This chapter focuses on how major parties adjusted their candidate selection methods (CSMs) to meet the challenges brought about by the new electoral regimes in Taiwan and Japan, respectively. Specifically, it investigates two innovative ways to select district-level candidates adopted by the major parties in each country.¹ In Taiwan, the polling primary became the default system that the two major parties, the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), used to nominate their candidates for the Legislative Yuan elections. In Japan, both of the major parties, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), have turned to the kobo (public recruitment) system to select candidates. The new CSMs were designed to address different concerns. The polling primary was intended to identify the strongest candidate and resolve intraparty competition. In contrast, the initial purpose of the kobo system was not to resolve intraparty clashes among ambitious and powerful contenders. Rather, in the late 1990s and early 2000s the DPJ used kobo for the purposes of party-building. In more recent years, both the DPJ and LDP have increasingly used it to legitimize party decisions.

Candidate Selection Methods, Electoral Reform, and Constitutional Systems

The determinants of CSMs is an important topic for scholars interested in political parties (Ranney 1981; Gallagher and Marsh 1988). Recent work
on the extent to which electoral systems affect the choice of CSMs has not pointed to a consensus. While some comparative case studies argue that electoral institutions should have substantial impacts on choices of CSMs, particularly in terms of ballot structure and district magnitude (Norris 1997; Kasapovic 2001), other recent large-N studies show that the empirical evidence is meager at best (Lundell 2004; Shomer 2012). From the perspective of level of analysis, Hazan and Voerman (2006) point out that electoral systems are a country-level variable that may not account for intracountry, cross-party variation in CSMs. Gallagher and Marsh (1988) are perhaps correct in positing that electoral systems do not, by themselves, completely determine CSMs, yet it is certainly possible that electoral systems exert some degree of influence. Decades of research on electoral systems has clearly indicated that parties do, in fact, vary their strategies according to the different incentive schemes produced by different electoral systems. CSMs are an important element of overall party electoral strategies, and we should expect to see some impact of the electoral incentives on the choice of CSMs. In the particular cases of Taiwan and Japan, although both the polling primary and kobo had been initiated prior to the introduction of electoral reforms, we argue that the electoral and constitutional systems helped facilitate the consolidation of both innovative institutions.

Changing from SNTV to MMM may push parties to adjust their CSMs. For one thing, such a change increases the importance of managing intraparty competition in the nomination stage (Wu and Fell 2003; Krauss and Pekkanen 2004). Under SNTV, much of the intraparty competition takes place in the general election stage, as parties routinely nominate multiple candidates in the same district. While the optimal strategy is for a party to nominate the “right” number of candidates and then distribute its support evenly among them (Cox and Rosenbluth 1993; Cox and Thies 1998; Cox and Niou 1994; Browne and Patterson 1999), overnomination is not always a disaster. If more than the appropriate number of candidates insists on running and no compromise can be found, the party can sometimes simply let them all run and let the electorate decide which is the weakest. That is, the party can opt for a less optimal solution in which no candidate is unfairly denied a nomination. Sometimes this will lead to a worse outcome, but sometimes the party will still manage to avoid losing a winnable seat. In contrast, in single-member districts (SMDs), parties must nominate a single candidate to have any chance to win. A second candidate in an SMD race almost always portends disaster. Thus, any intraparty clashes that appear during the nomination process have to be dealt with at that stage and cannot be pushed off until the general election.
Another way in which the shift to MMM could affect nominations involves the increased number of districts. Under SNTV, each district elects multiple seats. Any party wishing to give every voter a chance to support it has merely to nominate one candidate in every district. With the change to MMM, the number of districts increases markedly, and parties wishing to give all voters an option to support them have to nominate a much larger number of candidates. Even for established parties, this is not an easy task. For smaller and newer parties without deep pools of potential candidates, simply finding enough competent candidates to run in every district can be a daunting challenge. Especially in weaker districts, newer and smaller parties have to struggle to present a roster of credible candidates.

Japan’s parliamentary system creates a different set of problems than Taiwan’s semipresidential system does. Batto and Cox (introduction, this volume) and Lin (chapter 2, this volume) argue that executive posts are the ultimate goal for many politicians. In Japan, cabinet posts are determined by negotiations among party leaders in the House of Representatives. Almost all of the key figures, including the party leaders and the MPs who receive ministerial posts, are legislators who have accumulated years and years of seniority. The typical career path is well documented. An MP is elected at a young age and slowly works his way up through a series of posts. After being reelected several times, he or she might finally accumulate sufficient seniority and experience to be eligible for a ministerial post. Party leaders are generally drawn from this same group of senior MPs. In short, seniority is a prerequisite for securing powerful posts. Taiwan’s semipresidential system works differently. Cabinet posts are allotted unilaterally by the president, not negotiated by legislative leaders. Moreover, since a legislator must resign his or her seat to assume a post in the executive branch, presidents are reluctant to appoint legislators to the cabinet. Ambitious legislators must thus look elsewhere if they hope to hold executive power. In fact, ambitious legislators typically seek to win local executive seats as city mayors or county magistrates. National leaders generally have proven their mettle by winning a highly competitive mayoral race and successfully administering a city government for several years. The legislators who remain in the legislature and accumulate seniority are generally less energetic, charismatic, and politically talented than those who move on to other challenges. The result of this is that legislative seniority is much more important in Japan than in Taiwan. Most important Japanese politicians are senior legislators, while few Taiwanese leaders are.

The differing importance of seniority has significant implications for nomination strategies. Consider a district in which a party is very strong. The nomination in this party is a very valuable commodity, since nomina-
tion almost certainly means winning in the general election. Such a valuable commodity is certainly worth fighting over, even if it means taking on an entrenched incumbent. In Japan, all of the senior figures in the party have accumulated seniority, and they all have an interest in protecting that precious asset. To this end, Japanese parties have written the rules to favor incumbents. In particular, Japanese parties typically automatically renominate incumbents. In Taiwan, the decision makers in the party do not usually have strong personal interests in protecting seniority. They would generally prefer to see the strongest candidate emerge. In fact, party leaders may actually prefer to see energetic challenges to ensure that incumbent legislators work hard and actively stay in touch with their constituents.

As a result, Taiwanese and Japanese CSMs have evolved to address very different challenges. For Taiwanese parties, the most important problem is how to choose nominees in the strongest and most desirable districts. The polling primary has emerged as the best solution for this task. As parties cannot always easily resolve intraparty clashes, they have an incentive to delegate the power to the general public to make the decision. Public opinion surveys are seen as an objective test of strength in which everyone gets a fair shot. Surveys have the added advantage of communicating a quantifiable measure of strength and weakness to the general public. Voters who support the loser not only have to face evidence that their favored candidate has lost in a fair process but also that if he ran a renegade campaign in the general election he would have to face the prospect of widespread strategic voting toward the party nominee.

Japanese parties have a different problem. The most desirable districts are almost all occupied by incumbents, and intraparty challenges for these nominations are simply disallowed. Instead, Japanese parties worry about nominating candidates for districts without incumbents. Many of these districts are hopeless and undesirable to ambitious politicians. Nevertheless, big parties generally wish to run candidates in all or almost all districts, so they try to find someone to represent the party.2 In the years just after the electoral reform, this was a particular challenge for the DPJ. The old primary opposition, the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), disintegrated in the new electoral system as it was unable to win pluralities in many districts. The DPJ rose to fill this void, but, as a new party, it did not have deep pools of candidates ready to run in every district. The DPJ turned to kobo to recruit new politicians and ensure that it could run a full slate of candidates. At first, the DPJ used kobo primarily as a party-building mechanism. As the DPJ matured and finding enough candidates to run nationwide became less of a problem, the nature of kobo began to shift. Many districts with no
incumbents were worth fighting for. Local power holders or national faction leaders might maneuver to nominate their most favored candidate into these spots, but concerns over fairness spurred them to try to cloak their influence. Increasingly kobo was used to publicly legitimize decisions made by party leaders. That is, kobo was presented to the public as an open and fair decision-making process. In practice, it was anything but open. Even the LDP, a well-established party with an entrenched local party organization, shared some similarities to the DPJ in the incentives for adopting kobo. Below, we look into the development of new CSMs in each country.

The Polling Primary in Taiwan

*The Evolution of Taiwanese CSMs and the Emergence of the Polling Primary*

The KMT implemented an authoritarian regime after retreating to Taiwan in 1949 and institutionalized different types of elections in order to facilitate its control at the grassroots (Cheng 1989; Wu 2001). To solidify its authority in elections, the KMT adopted a top-down CSM. During the authoritarian era, local party members were informally consulted in the candidate selection process, but the overall CSM was characterized by centralization.

During the transition to democracy in the mid-1980s, Taiwan saw a series of important political markers, such as the establishment of the main opposition party, the DPP, in 1986, the dismantling of martial law in 1987, and the death of President Chiang Ching-kuo in 1988. These events signaled the decline of the KMT’s authoritarian rule and the emergence of competitive party politics (Wu 2001). In response to the inevitable trend of democratization, the KMT adopted and started transforming its Leninist party structure to compete in the new democratic structure. One of the starting points was to open and decentralize its CSM.

In 1989, the KMT adopted a closed primary system. This was the first time that the party’s rank-and-file members could formally participate in the candidate selection process and marked a major decentralization of authority. While the central party headquarters continued to retain the right to make the final decisions, it generally respected the primary results. However, this new system did not produce an entirely favorable outcome. One of the KMT’s goals was to reduce the power of local factions, and this new system led to more nominees who were not associated with local factions
The KMT share of elected seats fell by 9.5% from 1986, and the new CSM, which many argued had produced a weak slate of candidates, was commonly cited as one of the reasons for this poor performance.

The KMT revised its CSM for the 1992 elections to include party member primaries followed by evaluations from party cadres. While this new system was somewhat less decentralized than the 1989 system, the KMT did not return to a fully centralized CSM. Rather, the 1992 system confirmed the power shift from the center to localities, and local party members and party officials have exercised significant influence in determining nominations in all subsequent elections.

In the 1993 county magistrates and city mayoral elections, the KMT further adjusted its CSM to include three factors: party member opinion responses, evaluations by cadres, and public opinion polls (Wu 2001). This marked the first time that the KMT incorporated polling results in its candidate selection process. However, the results from these three processes were not binding, as higher party officials reserved the right to make the final nomination decisions.

Although the KMT was the first party to use polls to assess aspirants, the DPP was the first party to incorporate polling results into a binding formula to determine nominations. In the early years after its founding in 1986, the DPP’s leadership was not composed as a unified group but came from various anti-KMT individuals or factions that occupied offices at the local representative bodies. This unique pre-party history gave the DPP a decentralized pattern of power distribution that was reflected in its CSM. Negotiations and compromises among party factions became the major tool for nominating candidates. If party leaders were unable to reach any consensus, party members were to be asked to cast votes to determine final nominations. In practice, the leadership of the DPP tried to reach consensus through compromise, and it was rare to see party members voting in the 1980s. The above two-stage process characterized the DPP’s candidate selection from its founding until the early 1990s, though it was not officially codified until the 1992 legislative election.

In 1995, the DPP revised its CSM to give party cadres more power. If the party failed to settle on a consensus, votes of party members and party cadres each accounted for 50% of the final decision. The introduction of voting for party cadres signaled the increasing importance of local party branches and a deemphasis on party members in the nomination process. One reason for this was to address an increasing tendency for aspirants to register large numbers of new party members. The aspirant would typically pay the party dues and control the votes of these “head voters” (rentou
and many DPP leaders and supporters saw this as a growing form of corruption or vote buying (Wang 2006). Others worried that DPP factions were becoming too powerful, and it was increasingly impossible for aspirants not affiliated with a faction to win a nomination. In fact, the addition of party cadres did little to reduce the influence of factions, as most of the cadres were themselves deeply embedded in the faction system.

The DPP strategy for avoiding these negative repercussions was to decentralize their nominations. Instead of relying on the small number of formal party members or an even smaller number of party leaders to make decisions, the DPP attempted to empower the much larger number of party supporters and sympathizers in the general public. Aspirants could manipulate the outcomes inside the party by registering easily controlled “head voters” or by factional maneuvering, but the hope was that these strategies would not be feasible in the much larger population of party supporters. This new strategy was first attempted in the contest for the 1996 presidential nomination. The DPP used a closed primary to winnow the field to the top two contestants, and then these two toured the country in a series of debates in which the general public was allowed to vote to determine the nominee. Unfortunately, the attendance at these open primary events was still fairly low, so the DPP continued to look for a better process.

This led to the incorporation of telephone polling in the 1998 legislative nomination process. The DPP scrapped voting by party cadres and instead gave 50% weights to both party member votes and telephone poll results. This marked the first time that either of the two major parties had included polling results in the nomination process in a binding, not merely an advisory, role.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the two main parties’ CSMs evolved in very different ways. The KMT’s main concern was to devolve power from the center to localities in order to compete more effectively in the new democratic system, while the DPP moved from an elite-dominated CSM to one that drew on a much larger selectorate in an attempt to mitigate manipulation of its internal party processes. However, once the polling primary was introduced and its advantages became apparent, the 2000s saw the two parties converge on relatively similar CSMs.

In the 2001 Legislative Yuan election, the KMT imitated the DPP by adopting polling results in its nomination process. The KMT’s CSM included two parts: voting by local party members and telephone polling, each given equal weights. Local party branches tabulated and combined the results of the two parts and forwarded them to the central party headquarters, which generally respected the local results.
TABLE 5.1. Evolution of CSMs for Legislative Yuan Elections, 1969 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>KMT</th>
<th>DPP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Candidates produced by consultations with local party members, then reviewed by the provincial party headquarter, and finally decided by the central party headquarters</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Candidates produced by consultations with local party members, then decided by the central party headquarters</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Same as 1972</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Candidates produced by consultations with local party members and reviews of local party officials, then reviewed by the provincial party headquarter, and finally decided by the central party headquarters</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Candidates produced by consultations with local party members and reviews of local party officials, then the provincial party headquarter doubled the number of nominee, and finally decided by the central party headquarters</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Same as 1983</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Candidates produced by party member primary, then decided by the central party headquarters</td>
<td>Candidates produced by consensus; otherwise by party member vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Candidates produced by party member primary (50%), and reviews of local party officials (50%), then decided by the central party headquarters</td>
<td>Candidates produced by consensus; otherwise by party member vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>District candidates produced by consultation with local party members, or by opinion polls, or by reviews of local party officials, then decided by the central party headquarters</td>
<td>Candidates produced by consensus; otherwise by party member vote (50%) and party cadres vote (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Same as 1995</td>
<td>Candidates produced by compromises (consensus), otherwise by party member vote (50%) and opinion polls (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Candidates produced by party member primary (50%), and opinion polls (50%)</td>
<td>Candidates produced by compromises (consensus), otherwise by party member vote (30%) and opinion polls (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Candidates produced by party member primary (30%), and opinion polls (70%)</td>
<td>Same as 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Same as 2004</td>
<td>Same as 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Candidates produced by opinion polls</td>
<td>Candidates produced by opinion polls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data before 2012 were adopted and revised from Wang (2008, 143–70).

Note: The nomination of party list candidates is not included. All nomination decisions, even those after parties began using polling primaries, had to be ratified by the national party headquarters.
The importance of polling results continued to increase. The DPP adjusted its formula to make telephone polling account for 70% of the final outcome, with party members voting reduced to only 30%. The KMT followed suit in 2004, and both parties used the 70–30 rule to determine their district-level nominees for the 2004 and 2008 Legislative Yuan elections. In 2012, both parties completed the evolution toward the polling primary by eliminating voting by party members and determining nominations solely by the results of telephone polls.

While the polling primary evolved in the SNTV era, it arguably is even better suited to nominations for the single-seat districts employed in MMM. In a large SNTV district, a party wishing to nominate four candidates might have to adjudicate between its fourth and fifth strongest aspirants. These aspirants might not be strong enough to cause problems if not nominated, and the party always has the option to simply overnominate. In MMM, the clash is between the two strongest aspirants and overnomination is not a feasible option. Resolving the conflict in a fair way is imperative. Moreover, SNTV elections are characterized by intraparty competition, so finding a balanced roster of nominees that appeal to various factions within the party is important. Internal party processes, such as a closed primary, are useful for ensuring that no single faction monopolizes nominations. In contrast, internal party balance is less urgent in MMM. Single-seat elections are characterized more by interparty competition, and the strongest candidates are those that appeal to broad swaths of the population. Polls are particularly adept at identifying these politicians. In fact, while this chapter focuses on legislative nominations, both parties have used polling primaries extensively for single-seat executive elections. It is thus not surprising that the parties responded to electoral reform by intensifying their use of the polling primary.

**The Mechanics of the Polling Primary**

This section describes the CSMs used by KMT and DPP in the 2012 legislative election. Both the KMT and DPP started their candidate selection procedure with candidate registration. All aspirants had to register, including incumbents. In general, incumbents were not given any special status in the competition for nominations, and sitting legislators often faced competition from challengers within the party. Even when only one candidate registered, he or she still needed to demonstrate electability through public opinion polls. The KMT required that unopposed aspirants must pass a 30% threshold of support to win a nomination, while the DPP head-
quarters reserved the right to reject weak aspirants and search for stronger alternatives.

If more than two aspirants registered for nomination selection, the process proceeded into the second phase—negotiation. Both parties preferred to resolve conflicts behind closed doors rather than by engaging in open and potentially explosive intraparty competition. During the negotiation period, parties sometimes did nonbinding polling to see who had a better chance to win and who should be encouraged to yield. Additionally, the party headquarters sometimes sent a senior party official to handle the negotiation process. In some cases, such negotiation processes was successful and the party was able to nominate a candidate without intense and direct intraparty conflict. For example, in 2012 in New Taipei City 4th District, the KMT’s incumbent Lee Hung-chun faced a challenge from Hsu Bing-kuan, who had a strong local organization and significant grassroots support. Lee and Hsu had known each other for 30 years and were close friends. In the beginning of the negotiation process, Lee expressed a willingness to withdraw and let Hsu represent the KMT in the general election. Yet, the KMT leadership favored Lee due to both his performance in the legislature and his broad popularity in the very competitive 4th District. Thus, at the end of the day, Hsu agreed to withdraw and wait on the sideline for future opportunities.

Most negotiations did not go as smoothly as the previous example. Quite often, contenders refused to step aside and the negotiation process broke down. For example, in New Taipei City 2nd District, the DPP incumbent Lin Shu-fen was challenged by Huang Chien-hue, a former legislator who had lost to Lin in the 2008 DPP primary. Soon after the deadline for registration, the DPP headquarters sent a senior party leader to initiate the negotiation process. Yet, the negotiations fell apart quickly as Huang, who was strongly supported by one of the DPP’s major factions, made it clear that he would never withdraw from the competition. In short, although Lin seemed to be a very strong DPP incumbent candidate, a polling primary was still necessary since a quality contender insisted on challenging her.

When negotiations broke down, the process moved into one of two third phases. In stronger districts, parties held a polling primary, while in weaker districts the party headquarters tended to directly select a nominee. In weaker districts, the party had little chance of winning and the challenge was more commonly to simply recruit any quality candidate rather than to mediate between multiple competent aspirants. In these more difficult districts, the party headquarters sometimes unilaterally decided who the
nominee would be. For example, the DPP deemed all districts in which it had received less than 42.5% of the vote in 2008 as “difficult,” and the party headquarters was given the authority to unilaterally decide nominations in these districts.

Where parties were stronger, the nominations were more valuable, intraparty conflict was potentially more explosive, and parties were more likely to end up with the polling primary. Table 5.2 shows that in nine of the 11 districts in which the KMT held a polling primary in 2012, it eventually won the seat. The DPP was only slightly less successful when it held polling primaries, winning nine of 13 districts.

Incumbents were not immune from challenges. Twelve incumbents were forced to face a polling primary, and three lost. Fifty KMT and DPP incumbents were eventually nominated without resorting to a polling primary. However, this should not be interpreted as 50 unchallenged nominations. In many cases, other aspirants registered or considered registering but were eventually persuaded to yield before or during the negotiation phase.

There were many similarities and a few clear differences in the protocols

| TABLE 5.2. Use of Polling Primaries in the 2012 Legislative Yuan Election |
|-------------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
|                         | KMT       |               | DPP       |
|                         | Number of seats | % of total | Number of seats | % of total |
| Total single-seat districts* | 73 | 100.0% | 73 | 100.0% |
| Districts nominated      | 71 | 97.3% | 71 | 97.3% |
| Districts won in 2012 election | 44 | 60.3% | 27 | 37.0% |
| Districts held prior to the 2012 electionb | 50 | 68.5% | 19 | 26.0% |
| Districts using a polling primary | 11 | 15.1% | 13 | 17.8% |
| Polling primary winners who also won the seat | 9 | 12.3% | 9 | 12.3% |
| Incumbents nominated without a polling primaryc | 39 | 53.4% | 11 | 15.1% |
| Incumbents participating in a polling primary | 7 | 9.6% | 5 | 6.8% |
| Incumbents winning a polling primary | 5 | 6.8% | 4 | 5.5% |

*Only single-seat districts are considered in this table.

bThis is slightly different from the 2008 election result because there were several by-elections between the two general elections.

cFor this table, an incumbent is defined as a legislator who won the district in the 2008 election or an intervening by-election. Legislators who won their seat in a different district or on the party list are not considered incumbents.
used by the two parties (table 5.3). Both parties contracted with outside polling companies to do random sample surveys. The DPP had a list of eligible polling organizations, including its own internal survey unit, and randomly selected three of these for each different race. The KMT adopted a more decentralized method, allowing any two polling organizations to be selected in any race upon the aspirants’ agreement. The two parties applied different scheduling of the surveys, and the KMT employed in-house sampling8 while the DPP did not. These two differences reflected the different priorities of the two parties. The KMT placed the highest priority on getting an accurate reading of public opinion, and its protocols were designed to ensure a representative sample. The KMT prescheduled its surveys to be held over three days, usually including both weekdays and weekends, and it further used in-house sampling rather than simply asking whoever answered the phone in order to eliminate as much as possible any distortions in the sample. The DPP, in contrast, saw the polling primary as a way to test the mobilization capacity of its contenders.9 Rather than trying to eliminate any distortions, the DPP encouraged its contestants to try everything possible to affect the outcome. The scheduling, in particular, was designed specifically to test mobilization. The headquarters only prescheduled a period of time for a list of district primaries without specifying the order. Thus, no one knew which primary would take place on what particular date. Then every morning during the primary period, the headquarters randomly selected one district from the list for a polling primary that night. The contenders were immediately informed, usually around 10:00 a.m. Once the primary date was announced, contenders rushed to mobilize their supporters, encouraging them to be in their homes between 6:00 and 10:00 p.m. that night to wait for possible phone calls. The DPP did not adopt in-house sampling for the same reason. In households with split preferences,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>KMT</th>
<th>DPP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overseen by:</strong></td>
<td>Local party branch</td>
<td>National party headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method:</strong></td>
<td>Telephone survey</td>
<td>Telephone survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Days to complete survey:</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Survey organizations:</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interviews completed by each organization:</strong></td>
<td>At least 1,068</td>
<td>About 1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questionnaire:</strong></td>
<td>Interparty matchup: 85%</td>
<td>Default: Interparty matchup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intraparty matchup: 15%</td>
<td>(can be changed by consensus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong></td>
<td>Prescheduled</td>
<td>Random</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-house sampling:</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
who answered the phone became an important factor in determining the results. Contenders had just a few hours to phone, text, or otherwise contact as many people as possible to ensure that a disproportionate number of their supporters were at home ready to answer the phone.

Finally, the questions put to respondents varied across parties. The DPP’s default question in strong districts was an interparty comparison. For example, if there were two DPP contestants (A and B), respondents were typically asked a pair of questions, whether the respondent preferred A or the KMT candidate and whether the respondent preferred B or the KMT candidate. However, if the contestants agreed on some alternate format or if the KMT candidate had not yet been determined, the DPP was willing to allow other question formats. Unlike the scheduling, which the party headquarters kept under tight control, the question format was open to revision. One common complaint about the interparty comparison was that it did not allow sincere party loyalists to express their preferences for one or the other contestant. Since many loyalists prefer any DPP candidate to any KMT candidate, sincere respondents would express support for both A and B and thus have no impact on the outcome. Only those who strategically answered that they would support the KMT candidate over the less favored DPP contestant affected the outcome, and this led to complaints that the system forced respondents to lie if they wished to have any impact. The KMT system addressed this concern by including both interparty and intraparty comparisons. In addition to pitting the contestants against the DPP nominee, respondents were further asked which of the KMT contestants they preferred. The interparty comparison was still the more important, accounting for 85% of the final score, but the 15% weight given to the intraparty comparison allowed KMT supporters to show their preference for a specific KMT contestant.

Table 5.4 shows an example of a polling primary. In 2010, the DPP had won the seat in Taitung County in a by-election, and the incumbent, Lie Kuen-cheng, wanted to run for reelection. He was opposed by the former deputy head of the county government, Liu Chao-hao. Negotiations did not yield any compromises, so a polling primary was conducted. Since the KMT had already settled on a candidate, Yao Ching-ling, the standard interparty questions were used. On the morning of April 6, 2011, the DPP headquarters randomly drew the Taitung County district for that day’s polling primary. At the same time, it randomly drew three survey organizations to carry out the polls. Between 6:00 and 10:00 that night, each organization conducted 1,200 interviews. The DPP issued a press release on the morning of April 7 announcing that Liu had defeated Lie and would be
nominated. Liu’s nomination was confirmed later that week at the weekly meeting of the DPP’s Central Standing Committee. Two points about the results are worth noting. First, the results from the three organizations were very similar. This was almost always the case, and similar results from different organizations helped to assuage any suspicions of manipulation. Second, no consideration was given to ideas about margin of error. Results were reported with an unrealistic degree of precision, and there was no requirement that the margin of victory be over a certain threshold.

*Discussion*

There are several reasons that the two main parties have turned to the polling primary as the default CSM. First, the polling primary controls costs for parties. Commissioning several polls costs money, but it is cheaper than organizing party member primaries.13 Second, polling primaries identify the candidate who is the most popular among the general public and thus most likely to win in the general election. Previous CSMs relied on more narrow segments of the electorate to decide nominations, and this left them open to the charge that they were not selecting the best candidates. For example, in the early 1990s the KMT leadership “parachuted” several candidates with no local ties into districts, and these were often attacked as outsiders and easily defeated. With the polling primary, parachute candidates whose national fame did not translate into local popularity were rejected while those who did enjoy substantial local support were legitimized.

Third and most important, the polling primary is seen as a much fairer system than any other alternative. Polls produce hard numbers and a clear decision rule: candidates with support from more respondents win. The fact that the poll results are usually very similar across multiple survey organizations gives them added credibility. Moreover, poll results are much

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey organization</th>
<th>DPP Survey Center</th>
<th>Master Survey &amp; Research</th>
<th>All Dimension Survey &amp; Research</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Liu</td>
<td>.4175</td>
<td>.2368</td>
<td>.4195</td>
<td>.2481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie (incumbent)</td>
<td>.3823</td>
<td>.2799</td>
<td>.3905</td>
<td>.2913</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: The surveys were conducted on April 6, 2011. Results were announced on April 7. Respondents were asked a pair of questions, whether they preferred Liu or Yao (the KMT candidate) and whether they preferred Lie or Yao.
harder to manipulate than closed primaries or negotiations by party elites behind closed doors.

The KMT was particularly worried about the influence of local factions in its nomination process. Factions were extremely effective in closed-room negotiations and could often control the recommendations forwarded to the national party by local party branches. This ability to control the process was seen as somewhat illegitimate by the general public, as the factions appeared to simply be dividing up spoils among themselves, and opportunities for regular people to influence nominations were limited. By moving the locus of competition from party elites to the general public and forcing contestants, including faction members, to compete in a transparent process, the KMT was able to credibly claim that faction-affiliated contestants had no unfair advantages.

The DPP was also concerned about the influence of its factions, which were also seen as somewhat illegitimate by many party supporters. In the DPP, the question of faction power was closely related to the number of phantom party members. Most powerful DPP figures controlled a certain number of “head voters,” and they relied on these votes both in internal party elections and in nomination fights. Indeed, DPP factions all had large numbers of head voters in their pockets. Since the formal membership of the DPP was relatively small, factions or individual politicians could decide the outcome of closed primaries by recruiting more head voters, and this was widely seen as a perversion of democracy. The polling primary rendered the “head voter strategy” obsolete. More generally, one can see these phantom party members as a type of vote-buying strategy, and, by dramatically increasing the size of the selectorate, the polling primary made vote-buying extremely inefficient. In fact, given the low payoff, the negative consequences resulting from being publicly exposed as a vote-buyer, and the high probability that one’s opponents would uncover and expose any such activity, the polling primary arguably transformed vote-buying from a beneficial strategy into a harmful one.\textsuperscript{14,15}

There are some criticisms of the polling primary (Wu 2008, 115–45). One popular normative argument is that parties have a responsibility to nominate good people, and by adopting the polling primary and delegating decisions to the general public, parties are abdicating this duty.\textsuperscript{16} A related argument is that allowing the general public to make the decision leaves no important role for ordinary party members. Why should a person formally join a party if he or she has no say in its most important decisions? According to this argument, the polling primary could negatively affect party-building.
Another criticism is that the polling primary encourages politicians to be overly concerned with public opinion. Some Taiwanese commentators have suggested that the polling primary makes potential aspirants (including incumbent candidates) care more about their public image than anything else. As such, politicians expend too much effort seeking media exposure and building name recognition and not enough energy working on mundane but important policy questions.

A quite different line of criticism is more technical, arguing that survey results may not accurately reflect popular opinion. On the one hand, it takes quite a bit of expertise to conduct a random sample survey. Surveys include many different components, such as sampling technique, questionnaire wording and ordering, data processing, and so on. Each component is subject to manipulation, and slight variations may produce different outcomes. In the worst case scenario, an unrepresentative sample or an intentional distorted outcome might give a victory to the wrong person. Less dramatically, surveys produce estimates with statistical errors. Any victory, no matter how small, is sufficient to win the nomination. In close races, the margin of victory may be within the statistical error, but the parties do not consider this.

On the whole, however, the polling primary is generally viewed as a positive innovation. Even if it is not perfect, it has produced substantial benefits to the DPP and KMT by institutionalizing a system that resolves intraparty conflict in a fair and transparent manner.

The Kobo System in Japan

The Evolution of Japanese CSMs and the Emergence of the Kobo System

The Japanese term kobo literally means public advertisement of a post. The opening of a position is publicly announced, and anyone who is interested and qualified can apply. The term only suggests that the entry to the selection process is open to public, but other important aspects could vary (and are often left unspecified), such as what level in the party organization will make the decision, how much outside participation will be allowed, and what the criteria for the decision will be. This method, which merely declared that anyone could enter the nomination race, was regarded as an innovative CSM only in comparison to the closed and informal traditional Japanese nomination practice.
Prior to the appearance of kobo in the 1990s, there was no formal structure for candidate selection adopted by major political parties in Japan. Each party would recruit its candidates through its internal networks, the opening was never officially announced, and the entry to the selection was never made open to the public. For example, prior to the 1994 electoral reform, the LDP typically delegated recruiting candidates to each of its factions (chapter 3, this volume; Krauss and Pekkanen 2011). The supply of human resources came mainly from local and national electable officeholders, national-level bureaucrats, and the heirs of MPs. For other smaller parties, it was the norm to recruit candidates from affiliated organizations, such as trade unions, or from within the hierarchy of party organizations.

By the early 1990s, the prevalence and evils of *seshu* (hereditary succession of electoral turf within bonds of kinship, typically from a father to his son) under the LDP regime became widely criticized (Inada 2009; Uesugi 2009). The media repeatedly questioned the quality of the MPs of the ruling parties, claiming that Japanese politics was hopelessly chaotic largely because it was filled with hereditary MPs, and the path to the Diet was closed to talented people who would have been able to offer solutions.

With the electoral reform from SNTV to MMM in 1994, the parties faced new challenges in their nomination strategies. Under the old system where factions took responsibility for candidate recruitment (chapter 3, this volume), conservative contestants who failed to win an LDP nomination often ran in the general election as independents. If they were able to win, the LDP usually allowed them to join the party. In effect, the LDP deferred difficult coordination decisions to the general election, allowing the electorate to sort things out. In the SMDs used in MMM, this strategy was no longer an option, since having two conservative candidates in the same district was a recipe for disaster. Thus, nominations became more critical, and party leaders were legitimized to take a more active role and exert more power in determining who would be nominated. The new opposition parties faced a different problem, that of finding enough qualified candidates to run in every district. The electoral reform increased the number of nominal districts from 129 to 300. Moreover, under the old system, even a locally weak party could hope to win one seat in most districts, and the possibility of winning attracted quality candidates. Under the new system, many of the districts were hopeless and thus unappealing to ambitious politicians. The difficulty in finding enough qualified candidates was exacerbated by the fact that opposition parties had never done well in prefectural assembly elections and did not have large numbers of established local politicians trying to move up to the national legislature.
Mixed-Member Electoral Systems in Constitutional Context

(Scheiner 2006). Electoral reform thus created a need for opposition parties to explore new strategies to find new pools of talent.

With many vacant seats to fill, the opposition parties naturally were the pioneers to try out kobo. In 1990, the JSP, then suffering from a shortage of candidates, was the first of the major national parties to recruit candidates for elected positions through kobo, although the practice was limited to the city/ward levels. It is widely recognized that the first political party to adopt kobo for national elections was the Nihon Shinto (People’s New Party, 1992–94). It fielded three candidates recruited through kobo in the 1993 HR election. One of them was Yukio Edano, who later became a leading figure in the DPJ. The Shinshinto (New Frontier Party, 1994–97) used kobo extensively for candidate recruitment and managed to field candidates in 235 SMDs in the first election under MMM in 1996. It was the first time the largest opposition party fielded candidates for over half of the district seats in an HR election since the JSP did so in the 1958 general election. The DPJ was the first major party to conduct kobo repeatedly over an extended period of time. The party conducted large-scale national kobo five times from 1999 to 2009. The LDP also tried out kobo on a much smaller scale as early as in 1994, but it did not fully embrace kobo until after the party’s defeat in 2009.

The precise institutional design of kobo differs from party to party, but they can be broadly grouped into two categories: centralized and decentralized. The national headquarters of the party manages the centralized type, and the prefectural branches and the district chapters play dominant roles under the decentralized type. The former became well known for its use by the DPJ, mainly for the elections for the HR from 2000 to 2009. Other relatively new third parties, such as the Minna no To (Your Party, 2009–), the Genzei Nippon (Tax Cut Japan, 2010–), and the Nohon Ishin no Kai (Japan Restoration Party, 2012–) also adopted similar forms of centralized kobo. The latter was implemented widely by the LDP for the 2012 HR election. While the LDP adopted the decentralized version because it was more conducive to its entrenched local organization, parties with relatively short histories and less developed organization typically had no choice but to employ the centralized form.

The initial goal of adopting kobo was to recruit potential candidates who the parties could not reach to through their traditional internal networks and to find candidates to run in weak districts. This was especially the case with the DPJ. Gradually, however, insider aspirants started to use the DPJ kobo path to take advantage of its legitimacy. The LDP also
used kobo to fill in weak districts, but its decentralized version of kobo, its entrenched local organization, and its more uniform application of kobo to open seats led the system to develop into a mediating device for intraparty competition.

**The DPJ Kobo System**

The current DPJ was formed in 1998 by absorbing three smaller parties\(^1\) into the old DPJ, which had been established in 1996. The members of the new DPJ came from different backgrounds: some of its leading figures originally belonged to the LDP, while others came from the Democratic Socialist Party, which had been established by the conservative wing of the old JSP. Right before the 2003 HR election, another major conservative force, the Liberal Party, dissolved, and joined the DPJ. As a relatively new and small party with underdeveloped local organizations, the DPJ suffered from an inadequacy of candidates, and this was the background for the adoption of kobo.

Within the DPJ, incumbents were given priority over others and were renominated automatically in most cases. Candidates who lost in the previous election were renominated once, but those who lost two elections in a row were not nominated for a third time. Only when the district had no incumbent or held-over candidate from the previous election did the party look for a new candidate. In such a case, the regular candidate selection process was initiated at the district level. The HR district chapter worked with the *kenren* (prefecture branch) in finding a candidate via the traditional internal network. The *kenren* then asked the national headquarters for the endorsement of their choice. The national headquarters reserved the final say. When the district chapter and the *kenren* failed to field or agree on a candidate, the headquarters sent in a kobo-selected candidate. The SMDs where this happened were typically very weak. However, the party also attempted to use kobo as a public relations tool for enhancing its image by putting flashy ads in major newspapers with national circulation.

The DPJ kobo was not conducted independently for each vacant district. Instead, the party held nationwide general kobo five times between 1999 and 2009.\(^2\) All of these were conducted in a similar manner, and each kobo supplied candidates to districts all over the country for the five HR elections for the Diet from 2000 to 2012.\(^3\) There were 74 kobo-selected candidates who debuted between 2000 and 2012 under the DPJ banner (table 5.5). The DPJ kobo for the Diet elections were directly managed by
the national headquarters. The headquarters had to take charge because the party used kobo to find candidates to run in vacant districts when the *kenren* could not find anyone on their own.

A kobo applicant had to pass three hurdles in order to become an official DPJ candidate: passing the kobo screening at the headquarters (Stage 1), securing an informal nomination for a specific district from the district chapter and the *kenren* (Stage 2), and getting this district-designated nomination officially approved by the national headquarters (Stage 3). Technically, the kobo system covered only the first stage, and both kobo and nonkobo candidates had to go through the latter two stages.

The Stage 1 screening was handled by the national headquarters office. The applicants submitted curricula vitae and essays, and those who passed the initial document screening advanced to the in-person interview sessions. A few MPs joined the party staff in interviewing each applicant for about 20 minutes on what he or she wanted to do as an MP and in which district he or she wished to run. Interviewers focused on personality rather than policy orientation because the DPJ, being a hodgepodge of groups with different backgrounds, had no official policy positions it could enforce on its candidates. The total number of applicants for the DPJ national kobo increased from 564 in 1999 to nearly 2,000 in 2009. However, the odds of passing this first stage of screening remained constantly about one to nine.

Those kobo-screenees who passed Stage 1 were eligible to advance to Stage 2—seeking district nomination. The headquarters served as an intermediary by matching these screenees and the *kenren* with vacant districts. During the matching process, the applicants’ personal roots in the districts or prefectures counted heavily. Finding districts to run in was often the toughest hurdle for the kobo screenees. Most of the better seats had been already taken, and the remaining seats often looked hopeless. Less than

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>DPJ Ran</th>
<th>DPJ Elected</th>
<th>LDP Ran</th>
<th>LDP Elected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Compiled by authors from party records.
20% of these district-seekers were eventually embraced by district chapters and the *kenrens* and ran in elections as official party candidates.

Stage 3, approval by the national headquarters, was not an automatic rubber stamp process. The person was not officially regarded as a DPJ candidate until after obtaining final endorsement from the headquarters. Although the national headquarters normally tried to respect local selections and most of the local choices were endorsed, the headquarters would suspend approval or even replace candidates if *kenren*-chosen candidates looked too weak in the polls or did not seem to be campaigning hard enough.

Overall, only 2% of the initial kobo applicants ended up running in the HR elections. We should note, however, that it is difficult to determine the quality of the applicants because the party never released any detailed information about the kobo applicants except for those who were officially nominated. The names of competitors had to be kept secret because running for a public office in Japan almost always meant that one had to quit his or her current job before the election. No one wanted to quit before knowing whether he or she would get the party’s nomination and could actually run in an election. Few people would apply for kobo if their names were not kept confidential.

The use of kobo helped the DPJ prepare to take over power in 2009 by finding nontraditional outsider types of candidates to run in the weak districts. However, the party gradually started to ask those who used to be recruited through traditional paths to apply for kobo, as well, in order to add legitimacy to their nominations. For example, those members of prefecture assemblies who used to join the selection process at Stage 2 were often considered to have “stolen” the nomination by disgruntled kobo-qualified applicants. By the 2009 election, in order to avoid the impression of manipulation, the DPJ encouraged all candidates, including those from traditional career paths, to apply for kobo.

Even though it was increasingly used to confer legitimacy on nominees, the kobo system was still fundamentally a nontransparent process. Decisions at each stage were made behind closed doors. The general public did not know exactly how the kobo selection process worked, who the kobo applicants were, which of them passed the screening stage or the matching stage, or what the bases were for the decisions at each stage. No official records were kept for the decision making at the matching stage. The only way the voters knew that the candidates were selected through kobo was through the label of kobo attached to them when they were presented as the nominated candidates. This opaque process allowed national and
local faction bosses to exert influence behind closed doors during the selection processes. As a result, the DPJ kobo came to function more as a black box convenient for various actors within the party in contrast to its public image as an open and fair CSM (Shoji 2013).

**The LDP Kobo System**

The earliest kobo practice by the LDP was observed in 1994 by the Ishikawa kenren for the 1995 House of Councillors election. After the 1994 electoral reform, several kenrens tried kobo in some districts in preparation for the 1996 HR election. Yet the LDP did not widely conduct kobo for national offices until it suffered heavy losses in the 2003 House of Councillors election. Encouraged by a few kobo successes in special elections, the LDP conducted kobo in about 20 districts before it conducted a special emergency national kobo right before the 2005 HR election. For the latter, 868 applications were submitted in four days. Twenty-four kobo-selected candidates ran in the 2005 HR election, and twelve won in the SMDs. A further nine lost their district race but were elected on the PR list (Asano 2006). For the 2009 HR election, the LDP nominated only six candidates through district-level kobo. After the defeat in the 2009 HR election, the LDP attracted fewer candidates, and the party started to use kobo extensively to fill in the vacant districts.

Facing new challenges as an opposition party and continuing public complaints over seshu, the LDP made it mandatory to conduct kobo for any open HR district. Right after the 2009 HR election, the then-opposition LDP was no longer as attractive to ambitious new politicians and had some difficulties in recruiting satisfactory candidates through its traditional paths. In response, the LDP once again turned to kobo. As the popularity of the party recovered, the competition for LDP nominations intensified, and the LDP responded by further institutionalizing the use of kobo. In this section, we focus on the LDP’s practices in preparation for the 2012 HR election.

The party heavily protected its incumbents and renominated them automatically, as it had done throughout its history. After the 2009 HR election, the candidates who lost were automatically renominated if they were 65 years old or younger and had lost in the SMD but won at least 70% as many votes as the district winner. The party only began the candidate selection process when there was neither an incumbent nor a held-over candidate in the district.

Although the national headquarters had the final say, the candidate
selection processes of the LDP were bottom-up, starting at the district level. A district chapter worked with its kenren in recruiting and selecting a candidate. Because the party made it a rule to hold kobo for any open district nomination after the 2009 HR election, kobo was conducted not just in weak districts but also in strong districts such as those where strong incumbents had just retired. During this period, the party attempted to bar the sesbu practice, but it had to give up after facing strong resistance. The party justified this by insisting that anyone, sesbu or not, who was selected through kobo was fairly chosen and thus qualified. The LDP fielded 83 candidates through kobo for the 2012 HR election.

The largest difference from the DPJ kobo was that the LDP kobo was always conducted at the prefecture or district level. In most cases, each kobo was held specifically for a certain district, and the kenren would determine the specific kobo procedures. Thus, there was a wide variety in the LDP kobo practices observed across the country. Typically, a selection committee of 20 or fewer people was set up at the district or kenren level for each kobo. Outside experts or prominent local figures representing the interests of local industry were often invited into the committee. The selection processes normally entailed paper-screening and interview sessions. Applicants were always asked to submit essays, and, in a majority of cases, the public announcement listed some connection to the district as a prerequisite or at least as highly desirable. Complete outsiders with no connection to the district or the prefecture were usually not welcome.

In some cases, the selection committee required applicants to fill in survey sheets on policy preferences. The LDP witnessed the DPJ’s travails stemming from the lack of policy coherence within the party and attempted to avoid the same problem by screening the ideological leanings of kobo candidates. The party occasionally asked applicants to sign a pledge that they would not run against the LDP nominee if they were not nominated. While most of the kobo selection took place in closed-door meetings, there were some instances in which the applicants were asked to compete by giving speeches in public or in which the party used opinion polls to identify the most attractive candidate. There were even some kobo cases where party members voted to decide the outcome. These closed primaries did not necessarily lead to more open or fair selections, however, since the competitors with a longer history of local party activities had usually cultivated more supportive members and the newcomers were put at a severe disadvantage.

Broadly speaking, there were three observed patterns in the actual competition under the LDP kobo. The first was districts with a single likely
winner, such as those that would previously have been determined by *sesbu*. Under this category, kobo functioned to justify the predetermined outcome. The second category included districts with two or three major contestants. Those contestants were often well-established local politicians in the district, and the party had a hard time mediating a compromise among them. Kobo helped to justify the final outcome and persuade the losers to accept the result. In this case, kobo worked as a vehicle of conflict resolution. The third category included districts with no strong competitors known prior to kobo. These cases typically involved districts where the party was extremely weak and potential quality candidates were reluctant to run. The party had to recruit complete amateurs from outside the internal network who would dare to run against the strong incumbents of another party.

**Discussion**

Although they were called with the same name, kobo, and they shared a similar function at the early stage of fielding candidates in the weak districts, the centralized and decentralized versions adopted by the DPJ and the LDP, respectively, evolved in very different ways. The contrast is summarized in table 5.6. The headquarters-led DPJ kobo process remained extremely nontransparent in its selection criteria and the decision-making protocol. At the district assignment stage, where the negotiation process remained completely informal and hidden, anything was possible.

Not unaware of these drawbacks, many DPJ staff and MPs testified they never perceived kobo as an ideal CSM. The centralized form of kobo left parties vulnerable to collapse in more difficult times. New parties had to use it because they had underdeveloped party organization and suffered an inadequate supply of candidates. In turn, this dependence on kobo led to negligence in building internal recruitment and training systems. The

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5.6. Characteristics of DPJ and LDP Kobo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DPJ kobo</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit of kobo</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of kobo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope of participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of intensive kobo practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary initial motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of closed primary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DPJ kobo was used by ambitious aspirants who wanted to become MPs while bypassing an unappealing apprenticeship in local politics. These candidates had no loyalty to the party and were prone to leave the party when they did not like the policy decisions made by the leaders. The number of kobo applicants plummeted as the popularity of the party dropped, which revealed that how well kobo functioned depended heavily on whether the party’s electoral prospects looked promising. The quick rise and fall of the Japan Restoration Party, which was completely dependent on the charisma of a single leading figure and an extensive use of centralized kobo, illustrates both the advantages and dangers of this CSM. The structure of centralized kobo left the parties with little space for improvement in terms of intraparty democracy. It merely opened the door to the smoke-filled room to outside aspirants, but the decision-making processes were left exclusive and nontransparent.

The decentralized kobo that the LDP experimented with presented different possibilities. The kenrens tried different ideas, and good examples were copied by others. Some examples of policy debate in public, formal use of polling surveys, and even closed primaries were observed in the course. While many kenrens preferred to remain secretive and exclusive about nomination processes when possible, the LDP experience suggests that kobo might serve as a venue for CSM democratization if implemented by a party with strong local party organization. Although much of the decision-making processes of the LDP kobo remained nontransparent to most voters, the institutionalization of kobo that took place at the prefecture and district levels helped improve the fairness and legitimacy of the nominations. The LDP kobo reform is even showing some signs of being nonreversible. With an increase in the kobo practices, it has become harder for the party to reject holding kobo when demanded by competitors.

While it is hard to measure the impact of kobo on factions within the DPJ, which started to use kobo right after its inception, it should be fair to say that kobo did not help factions within the LDP. If the introduction of SMD had already made things harder for the factions (chapter 3, this volume), opening competition to outsiders in each district made it almost impossible for the factions to coordinate across districts and prefectures.

Some studies investigate the impact of kobo on the type of candidates who won nominations. Smith, Pekkanen, and Krauss (2013) examined DPJ nominations through the 2009 HR election and found that kobo nominees tended to be lower quality on average than nonkobo nominees. DPJ kobo candidates tended to have less connection to the district, and aside from the female-only kobo in 1999, kobo was actually less likely to recruit
female candidates. Overall, the kobo candidates had a higher probability of winning, but the impact of kobo disappears after controlling for the party strength in the district and candidate quality.

As for the LDP kobo, specifically in the run-up to the 2012 HR election when kobo became the default CSM for the party, Smith (2013) argues that it did not significantly change the backgrounds of candidates who were nominated. Kobo helped to push down the average age of first-time nominees, but the backgrounds of those kobo candidates remained largely similar to the traditional pools: local politicians, MP aides, and national-level bureaucrats. We should also note that, although decreasing in number over time, seshu was not wiped out by kobo.

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed new innovations in CSMs for legislative elections in Taiwan and Japan. While the origins of the polling primary in Taiwan and kobo in Japan both predate electoral reform, we argue that the shifts from SNTV to MMM created pressures for parties in both countries to intensify the use of these two institutions. Further, the effects of the changing electoral rules on CSMs need to be addressed in the context of the different constitutional systems of the two countries. Specifically, Taiwan’s semipresidential system deemphasizes legislative seniority while Japan’s parliamentary system always relies on senior MPs to form the government. Such contextual variance leads to the different purposes and scopes of the CSM reforms adopted by major parties in the two countries.

In Taiwan, where seniority is less valuable and incumbents are not protected, the parties converged on the use of the polling primary in strong districts. The polling primary has proven useful to the parties by successfully mediating intraparty conflict, and it is also beneficial to the general public to the extent that it is a disincentive to corruption. In Japan, where seniority is more valuable and incumbents are heavily protected, both major parties adopted kobo in weak districts. This allowed them access to a wider pool of potential candidates and helped to defuse charges that insiders were illegitimately monopolizing nominations.

Of course, the CSMs continue to evolve. In Taiwan, many worry that the polling primary harms intraparty democracy and party-building by leaving no role for party members to influence nominations. After the 2012 elections, there was discussion in both parties about reinstating some mix of closed primaries and polling primaries. Though neither party has opted
Innovations in Candidate Selection Methods

for a change from the 2012 rules as of this writing, the parties continue to search for a CSM that will give party members a bigger role while still resolving conflict and discouraging corruption. In Japan, there are serious concerns about the effects of centralized kobo, which has proven useful for young and popular parties but has also hindered efforts to develop party institutions that can survive when a party's fortunes decline. The decentralized version may prove more sustainable. It shows signs of taking root and has demonstrated some potential for intraparty democratization.

NOTES

1. In the new electoral regimes in both Taiwan and Japan, the nominal tier plays the dominant role in shaping incentives. In both countries, a relatively large proportion of seats are determined in single-member districts. Further, in Japan the practice of dual candidacy results in SMD candidates taking up most of the space on PR lists, thus leaving relatively few spots for PR-only candidates. This chapter thus focuses on the linkage between electoral rules for the nominal tier and CSMs. Nemoto and Tsai take up the topic of list tier nominations in chapter 6, this volume.

2. This has been less of a problem in Taiwan than in Japan for three main reasons. First, Taiwan has only 73 SMDs compared to Japan's 300. Parties simply have fewer districts to worry about. Second, as part of Taiwan's electoral reform, the total number of seats was cut in half. That meant that Taiwan had large numbers of incumbents chasing a relatively small number of seats. Third and most important, like the LDP and unlike the DPJ, both of Taiwan's major parties were well established and had already amassed reservoirs of ambitious potential candidates within their ranks.

3. DPP cadres include party members of the Legislative Yuan, National Assembly, Taiwan Provincial Assembly, as well as Taipei and Kaohsiung city councils.

4. Both parties utilize more centralized methods to determine their candidates for party list vote. For more on party list nominations, see chapter 6 by Nemoto and Tsai in this volume.

5. Officially, the KMT nomination rules still include the clause allowing party members' votes to account for 30% of the decision. However, aspirants may agree to skip this stage, and in 2012 all KMT aspirants chose to use only polling results to determine nominations.


8. In-house sampling refers to a protocol used to determine which member of the household should respond to the survey. Typically, the interviewer determines how many adult males and females live in the residence. Based on these numbers and a predetermined schedule, the interviewer will ask to speak to, for example, the second-oldest female. On in-house sampling, see Hung 1996.


10. The interparty comparison was used when the DPP candidate's support was higher than the KMT candidate's. Where the KMT candidate was more popular
than any of the DPP candidates, an intraparty head-to-head question was used. However, most of the districts that required a polling primary were those in which the DPP was more popular, so we consider the interparty comparison to be the default.

11. The DPP finished its nomination process before the KMT, so the KMT candidate was not always known. However, because of the KMT’s landslide victory in 2008, most districts, including many of the DPP’s stronger districts, had a KMT incumbent that the DPP assumed would be renominated in 2012.

12. The KMT intentionally waited until the DPP had completed its nomination process so that it could choose the best candidate to match up with that specific DPP opponent. (Interview with a member of the KMT’s think tank, Dr. Hsieh Hsian-chin, November 16, 2011.)

13. Interview with deputy secretary general Hung Yao-fu, November 14, 2011.

14. The fear over vote-buying was an important factor in the DPP’s decision to move to a 100% polling primary in 2012. In November 2007, the KMT-dominated legislature revised the election law and made it illegal to buy votes in party primaries, not just in the general election. The DPP worried that the KMT would use its control over the bureaucracy to subject its nominees to intense scrutiny and might be able to disqualify some of them. Rather than fight the election with a roster of tainted candidates, the DPP simply eliminated the party-member voting section of its CSM.

15. Many people also worry that their party’s CSM is vulnerable to manipulation by the other party. For example, KMT supporters might participate in the DPP’s polling primary and express support for the weakest DPP candidate. These fears are probably overblown, and DPP deputy secretary general Hung Yao-fu even identified the low vulnerability of the polling primary to manipulation from the other party as one of its major advantages (interview, November 14, 2011). On the one hand, the closed party primaries were probably more vulnerable since the other party could strategically launch a registration drive and send large number of its supporters to vote in the other party’s primary. In contrast, since polls are random, this action would need to be individually undertaken by large numbers of other-party supporters who would further have to agree on who the weakest contestant was. The polling primary simply makes the coordination costs very high. On the other hand, anecdotal evidence suggests that the same people who are worried about the other party manipulating their nominations tend to be disinterested in manipulating the other party’s nominations.

16. A common sarcastic jab is that DPP no longer stands for Democratic Progressive Party (minjindang); now it stands for Democratic Polling Party (mindiaodang).

17. A nonpartisan civic movement emerged in 1990 to use kobo to cultivate and promote fresh candidates without party stigma for local executive offices. The movement originated in the mayoral election in Asahikawa City, Hokkaido, and it gradually spread to other prefectures around the country over the next few years. The popularity of this movement and the media attention it drew might have had some impact on the decision of parties to try kobo.

18. No party has used kobo for the selection of PR-only candidates.

19. The three smaller parties were Minsei To (Good Governance Party, 1998),

20. In addition to these general ones, the DPJ headquarters conducted a female-focused kobo in 1999 and a district-specified kobo in 2005. The latter was special in the sense that vacant districts were listed in advance; they had remained available because they were all extremely difficult for the DPJ.

21. We located in newspapers nine cases of kobo conducted by the DPJ kenrens at the prefecture level for the HR elections between 2000 and 2009, and there might have been more. However, these cases were not recognized by the national headquarters, and no systematic records have been kept for them. For this paper, we focus on the national kobo conducted by the headquarters.

22. The number of kobo candidates differs across studies due to the way of counting. More than a few cases of kobo were observed that were called kobo by the kenrens but were not recognized by the national headquarters. Here in this chapter, we focus on those that were officially recognized by the national headquarters.

REFERENCES


Hung, Yung-tai. 1996. Huzhong Xuanyang zhi Y anjiu [In-house sampling]. Taipei: Shihying.

