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It's My Party and I'll Institutionalize If I Want To: Party System Institutionalization in Young Democracies

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Abstract

Scholars today mostly agree that party system institutionalization (PSI) is a key ingredient in the transition to a functioning democracy. The question of whether PSI matters is more or less resolved. What is less clear is a general theory of what can help new democracies reach a high level of PSI. The aim of this research is to discover the pre-conditions and elite choices that enhance the level of PSI in new democracies. This research uses two Most Different System designs to explore the results of ten hypotheses that test the relationship between the level of PSI and an array of independent variables in country cases across the globe. Analyses reveal that there is no single magic variable or even a single set of factors that reliably lead to PSI across cases. What does emerge is the importance of elite behavior and choices during the initial regime change.

IT'S MY PARTY SYSTEM AND I'LL INSTITUTIONALIZE IF I WANT TO: PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN YOUNG DEMOCRACIES

Zoe Gross

***Abstract:** Scholars today mostly agree that party system institutionalization (PSI) is a key ingredient in the transition to a functioning democracy. The question of whether PSI matters is more or less resolved. What is less clear is a general theory of what can help new democracies reach a high level of PSI. The aim of this research is to discover the pre-conditions and elite choices that enhance the level of PSI in new democracies. This research uses two Most Different System designs to explore the results of ten hypotheses that test the relationship between the level of PSI and an array of independent variables in country cases across the globe. Analyses reveal that there is no single magic variable or even a single set of factors that reliably lead to PSI across cases. What does emerge is the importance of elite behavior and choices during the initial regime change.*

INTRODUCTION

The transition to a functioning democracy can be a long and delicate process. The theoretical literature on democratization and democratic consolidation makes it clear that some factors matter more for strengthening new governments than others. Scholars today mostly agree that party system institutionalization (PSI) is a key ingredient in, and an indicator of, democratic consolidation. Although there is no universally agreed upon definition, PSI is generally believed to occur when a system becomes well established, trusted, predictable, and stable over a period of time. High PSI can help new democracies attain legitimacy and handle the surge of new voters entering the political realm.¹ However, the time it takes for a party system to become institutionalized and how thoroughly the party system institutionalizes varies from one democratic transition to the next. Are there central pre-conditions necessary or choices that transitional elites can make to ensure timely and thorough PSI? It is the aim of this research to determine what matters most to enhance the level of PSI in a new democracy.

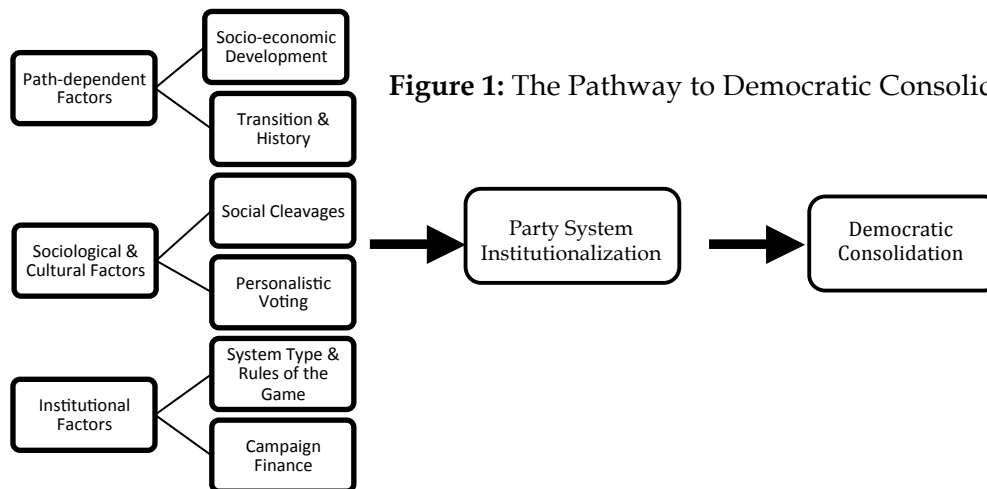
The level of party system institutionalization is an important enhancement to democratic growth, stability, and democratic consolidation. The existence of institutionalized party systems can provide stability between party competition, embed democracy in society, and produce political actors who are committed to the democratic system. On the other hand, states with weak PSI may experience increased uncertainty within elections for voters and elites, hamper citizen involvement, and lessen electoral accountability.² The question of whether PSI matters is more or less resolved. What is less clear is a general theory of what can help new democracies reach a higher level of party system institutionalization.

¹ Mainwaring 1999; Casal Bértoa 2011; Mainwaring and Torcal 2005a; Wolinetz 2006

² Mainwaring and Torcal 2005a; Thames and Robbins 2007

LITERATURE REVIEW

While countless scholars agree that party system institutionalization is crucial to the process of democratic consolidation, there are competing viewpoints on the forces behind PSI. There is no widely agreed upon cause of PSI, but rather an array of possible factors and situations in which party systems will flourish.³ Most of these dynamics can be separated between two camps: preconditions and choices. Preconditions are established influences on PSI that cannot be changed easily, but rather are long-term system effects or forces. Choices refer to decisions made by key actors that can have an effect on the institutionalization. Figure 1 situates PSI in a pathway to democratic consolidation and traces a framework for organizing and understanding what drives PSI. In this model there are three broad categories of explanation: path dependent factors (modernization, transition, and history), socio-demographic factors, and institutional design. Some of these factors are clearly beyond the control of political actors. Political culture, level of socio-economic modernization, social cleavages, and history form the context which political actors inherit. Within that context, actors may choose the rules of the game. Different inherited pre-conditions and different choices may lead to very different prospects for party system institutionalization.

*Path-Dependent Factors*

There are several inherited pre-conditions that may influence the success of institutionalization. Economic development is considered a crucial determinant of PSI in emerging democracies. Insufficient economic growth in a new democracy can hinder the success of the party in power. Economic hardship is in turn linked to electoral volatility and system instability, as parties

³ Casal Bértoa 2011

and the electorate hold incumbents responsible for the current economic distress. An alternative vote choice is found either in an oppositional party or at the opposite side of the political spectrum.⁴

Evidence also suggests that access to modern communications resources can help improve political competition in new democracies that have a history of single party dominance. Tkacheva (2009), for example, finds that Internet access is strongly correlated with votes won by the opposition party. Increased access can provide voters with the tools necessary to gather information about their political options. With greater party competition, real vote choice, and informed voters should come a more institutionalized party system.

There is also reason to believe that if a party system is established before the imposition of an authoritarian regime, there will be an increase in the stabilization of the re-democratized system. Remmer (1985) argues that the amount of PSI after a democratic transition coincides with the age of the party system before authoritarianism sets in, because the parties have had the opportunity to place roots in society prior to authoritarian control. Others suggest that the length of authoritarian rule has an effect on the continuity of the party system, thereby affecting its institutionalization, as previous political history can “set incentive parameters, which, in turn, affect institutional performance and levels of democracy.”⁵ Mainwaring and Zoco further argue that the electoral volatility within a party system diminishes over time, suggesting that the older a party system is, the more stable it will be. This phenomenon is credited to the increased amount of time that voters have to identify with parties, with the effect lessening after 30 years.⁶

Finally, the type of transition from pre-democratic rule to democracy can affect democratic consolidation and, by extension, PSI. Pacted transitions, where political elites allow for the creation of democracy in their state in a peaceful manner, provide much more stability than other forms of transition (e.g. government overthrow, tyrannicide). Pacts are beneficial because they help lay the foundation of democracy and erode the strength of the authoritarian regime, while at the same time creating a select group of elites to lead the country through transition and the early stages of democracy.⁷ The groups that sit down at a roundtable negotiation to end authoritarian rule may emerge as proto-parties, and later as established parties in the democracy that ensues.

Sociological and Cultural Factors

Sociological factors also appear to influence party system institutionalization. Social cleavages, the division within a community into specific groups with political differences, are thought to be one of the biggest sociological influences on PSI. Cleavages can be divided into three types of groups: descriptive, attitudinal, and behavioral. They require social stratification, shared group

⁴ Tavits 2005; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Casal Bértoa 2011

⁵ Malbrough 2008

⁶ Mainwaring and Zoco 2007

⁷ O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead 1986

interests, and group consciousness. Some argue that party systems institutionalize when voters develop party attachments based on religion, socioeconomic status, residence (urban/rural), and culture. These group attachments can lay the foundations of strong party identification and unity.⁸ Traditionally, cleavages have been explained in terms of their number, type, and strength. In his recent work, Fernando Casal Bértoa argues that none of those factors really matter for PSI, rather that weak PSI is correlated with ‘cross-cutting’ cleavages. These cleavages impede the ability of parties to find ideologically similar partners and create lower partisan attachments due to the different ideological pulls. On the other hand, when cleavages coincide with one another, parties and voters can be combined into two or more easily distinguished blocs.⁹

Cleavages can also matter in a number of additional situations. Some believe that the early political mobilization of cleavages by elites will cause a higher level of institutionalization, but whether this applies across a wide range of countries is up for debate. Others speculate that social class cleavages matter more during economic downturns, while racial cleavages have no effect on volatility or PSI. Additionally, the level of PSI is believed to be higher in societies with a higher percentage of unionized labor because unions serve as a sharply defined group to which members identify. Without the support of the organization in the workplace, workers are less likely to create partisan linkages.¹⁰

Other theories of cultural influence on PSI include personalistic voting. In most weakly institutionalized countries, voters make choices based less on ideology and more on the personality of the individual candidate. With weaker parties and party systems, there is less of an incentive for elites to seek the support of parties. When voters cannot rely on party identification as a cue, they will make choices based on the individual and personality. While this allows for more independent candidates to attain office, it limits the importance of parties and weakens parties as institutions.¹¹ Although they can make a huge impact, sociological, cultural, and historical factors are just part of the PSI puzzle. They may be crucial pre-conditions, but are there choices that can be made by elites to further PSI?

Institutional Factors

Arguably, the primary scholarly explanation of PSI today is institutional design. Scholars agree that the institutional framework under which a party system develops can either promote or hinder development. Some believe that proportional representation systems, which are created to have the closest vote-to-seats-won ratio, strengthen the party system more than majoritarian systems do. Proportional representation systems reinforce parties, because party gatekeepers exclusively

⁸ Tavits 2005; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Casal Bértoa 2012

⁹ Casal Bértoa 2011; 2012

¹⁰ Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Casal Bértoa 2012; Croissant and Völkel 2012

¹¹ Mainwaring 1999; Mainwaring and Torcal 2005b; Casal Bértoa 2011

control candidate recruitment and parties have total control over who appears on their lists. Party systems with proportional representation strengthen both the voter and parties, and are more conducive for institutionalization.¹² On the other hand, PR systems allow for a lower party threshold and thus a greater number of parties entering and exiting the system, while majoritarian systems tend to produce stable majorities and two-party dominance.

Party fractionalization is an additional factor related to electoral system that some believe influences PSI. A high degree of fractionalization (or too many parties in a system) has been shown to prevent a multi-party system from functioning efficiently. With too many parties in the system, the ideological differences between the parties will be slim, making it easier to transfer a vote from one party to another. In countries where new election laws have decreased fractionalization, party system strength has increased.¹³

Many scholars emphasize the effect that the “rules of the game” have on party system institutionalization. These rules are made for various reasons, but most signs point to a correlation between political elites who desire loose party rules and weak PSI. Either because of the nature of the rules or the lack of desire by the political elite for change, once electoral rules are in place they are rather difficult to change. The “rules of the game” that affect PSI include: plurality voting for the presidency, short-term limits for the presidency, and some types of plurality voting (SNTV, block voting, or adding additional party lists). In addition to electoral rules, some institutional rules also have an influence on PSI, including incentives for politicians to seek reelection, decentralization of candidate selection, and the protection of a politician’s autonomy.¹⁴

The territorial distribution of power in a state can also have an effect on the institutionalization of party systems. Research has shown that partisan predictability and competition is affected when federalism decentralizes parties. The separation between federal, state, and local powers can have a negative impact on PSI that may be avoided in centralized states.¹⁵

Additionally, scholars argue that the type of regime (parliamentary/ presidential) can influence broad coalitions and provide more power to blocs of voters. Some argue that because presidential candidates, unlike those running in parliamentary elections, cannot afford to ignore any segment of the population and must pull together a range of popular support, helping to increase the strength of a system and the level of PSI. Others argue that the personalization that is typical of presidential elections hurts PSI. The incentives to build party organizations and create ties between the candidates and voters are weaker, leading to increased volatility.¹⁶

¹² (Croissant and Völkel 2012)

¹³ Tavits 2005; Lane and Ersson 2007; Gwiazda 2009

¹⁴ Mainwaring 1999

¹⁵ Mainwaring 1999; Casal Bértoa 2011

¹⁶ Mainwaring, 1999; Casal Bértoa 2011; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Croissant and Völkel 2012

Combining such a wide variety of influences from path-dependent, sociological, cultural, and institutional factors and the nature of PSI causes a widespread theoretical speculation because one particular element does not stand out above the rest. Rather, PSI is a puzzle created by many factors, some inherited and some chosen, that influences the speed and extent to which party systems are able to institutionalize. Table 1 provides a list of hypotheses clustered according to the previous broad schools or approaches.

Table 1: Hypotheses

<p><u>Path-Dependency: Socio-economic and Historical Factors</u></p> <p>H1: Greater economic growth and development lead to a more institutionalized party system.</p> <p>H2: The greater the access to information resources, such as the Internet, the higher the level of party system institutionalization.</p> <p>H3: The longer a nation has been a democracy, the more institutionalized its party system.</p> <p>*H4: A pacted transition to democracy will lead to higher levels of party system institutionalization.</p> <p><u>Sociological & Cultural factors</u></p> <p>H5: The fewer the number of cross-cutting cleavages in society, the higher the level of party system institutionalization.</p> <p>H6: As the percentage of the workforce in unionized labor increases, the level of party system institutionalization increases.</p> <p><u>Institutional Factors</u></p> <p>H7: Higher levels of proportionality of the vote-to-seat translation in the electoral rules will lead to higher party system institutionalization</p> <p>H8: The lower the party system fragmentation, the higher the level of party system institutionalization.</p> <p>H9: Parliamentary forms of government are more likely than presidential to have a high level of party system institutionalization.</p> <p>H10: Federalism reduces party system institutionalization.</p> <p>*H4 is both a pre-condition and an elite choice.</p>
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RESEARCH DESIGN AND MEASUREMENT

Research Design

This research is based on a small-N comparative cases design. The unit of analysis of this study is the country, and all data, when necessary, is aggregated up to the macro (country) level. Sixteen cases have been separated into two Most Different Systems Designs, based on their dependent variable score from the party system institutionalization index.

The purpose of using the Most Different Systems Design (MDSD) is to uncover the similarities between various countries that contribute to the observed political outcome. To maximize the benefits of this design, I divided cases into two separate groups of 'high PSI' and 'low PSI' based on my dependent variable index. I will compare the cases within each grouping to one another, in search of the independent variables they share. If my theories are correct, certain factors will be found to be common in the high PSI countries that are not found in those with low PSI.

Case Selection

When selecting cases for a Most Different Systems Design, it is important to select from a wide array of geographical areas, political histories, and cultures. A MDSD has the ability to reduce the number of variables by focusing on what has been hypothesized as explaining the dependent variable. Countries should be very different and share as few common features on the independent variable side as possible, because differences between cases cannot explain a similar outcome, in this case either very low PSI or very high PSI. All new democracies formed since 1978 were considered, yielding approximately 65 cases.¹⁸ From there, cases were eliminated on the basis of data availability and MDSD criteria. The final case selection includes: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Hungary, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, and Ukraine.

The selected cases provide the most control over the biases the MDSD seeks to avoid. They come from five continents across the globe and an from a wide span of political backgrounds. They have been established within the last 32 years, and fit under the classification of ‘new’ democracies. Dividing the countries into groups of high PSI and low PSI increases control over them even more, allowing comparison between states that have been successful at institutionalizing and those that have not. The selected high PSI cases are Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Hungary, the Philippines, South Korea, Spain and Taiwan. The low PSI cases include Argentina, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, and Ukraine. The current research on PSI is primarily on a case-by-case or regional basis, limiting the widespread applicability of theories to all institutionalizing democracies. It is for these reasons that it is important to use cases from all over the world and form a variety of prior authoritarian regimes (right-wing, communist, personal dictatorship, party-state, et. cetera). This strategy improves generalizability and helps to test hypotheses and build theory. There are practical implications, too. If we can identify pathways to PSI, as social scientist we may be able to offer advice to regimes in transition from authoritarianism and to consolidated democracy.

Measurement: Dependent Variable

The dominant literature on party system institutionalization focuses on the theory created by Scott Mainwaring and his colleagues, which include four separate dimensions of PSI: the stability of party competition, strong roots in society, the legitimacy of the party in the eyes of elites, and the independence of party leaders. Although Mainwaring argues that all are important to institutionalization, he disregards the other factors and uses the stability of interparty competition, measured by electoral volatility, as the only measurement of PSI.¹⁷

¹⁷ Mainwaring 1999; Mainwaring & Torcal 2005(a); Mainwaring & Torcal 2005(b); Mainwaring & Zoco 2007; Thames & Robbins 2007; Malbrough 2008

Instead of focusing solely on electoral volatility as the measure of PSI, this research utilizes a dependent variable index that has been adapted from Croissant & Völkel (2012). Table 2 lists the results of the five factors of the dependent variable index; electoral volatility, party identification, trust in political parties, corruption level, and voter turnout. By employing a wide range of indicators of the level of PSI, this approach provides the most thorough way to systematically measure institutionalization.¹⁸

Table 2: Dependent Variable Index

Country	Electoral Volatility ¹	Party Identification ²	Trust in Political Parties ³	Corruption Level ⁴	Voter Turnout ⁵
Argentina	24.9	19.45%	14.7%	3	74.43%
Brazil	24.1	31.45%	21.73%	3.8	80.19%
Chile	16.7	11.06%	29.79%	7.2	87.21%
Czech Republic	25.7	37.1%	21.1%	4.4	62.55%
Hungary	25.1	53.7%	29.9%	4.6	49.53%
Mexico	22.7	28.5%	24.67%	3	47.83%
Peru	46.6	31.3%	13.71%	3.4	83.71%
Philippines	37.3	61.5%	71.2%	2.6	76.25%
Poland	46.6	31.3%	21%	5.5	55.11%
Romania	53	62.65%	15%	3.6	56.2%
Slovenia	38.2	28.5%	16.8%	5.9	65.6%
South Africa	26.5	60%	41%	4.1	77.3%
South Korea	24.6	28%	23.9%	5.4	54.23%
Spain	16.5	42.9%	26.5%	6.2	68.94%
Taiwan	18.7	34.4%	17.4%	6.1	76.33%
Ukraine	59.2	40.3%	16.8%	2.3	66.84%
Median	25.4	32.93%	21.5%	4.25	68.89%

Sources & measurement details:

¹⁸ Croissant & Völkel 2012

¹Electoral volatility scores for Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Hungary, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, and Ukraine from Mainwaring & Torcal, 2005. Scores for South Africa found at the website of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. Scores for the Philippines are found in Allen Hicken's paper on PSI in the Philippines. All scores are measured on a scale from 1-100, where 1 is the lowest and 100 is the highest.

²Party identification scores are the percentage of the population that possesses some form of identification with a particular political party. They are measured on a scale from 1-100, where 1 is the lowest and 100 is the highest. Scores for Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Peru) found in surveys conducted by the Latin America Public Opinion Project. Scores for South Africa from a survey conducted by the Afrobarometer in 2008. Data for Asian countries Taiwan (2006), South Korea (2003), and the Philippines (2005) found from the World Values Survey Values Survey Databank. Data for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, and Spain from the European Social Survey (2010). Data for Romania is from the EU Eurobarometer (2012).

³Trust in political parties comes from a variety of public opinion databanks. It is measured by the percentage of the population that trusts political parties as institutions. They are measured on a scale from 1-100, where 1 is the lowest and 100 is the highest. Scores for Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Peru) found in surveys conducted by the Latin America Public Opinion Project. Scores for South Africa from a survey conducted by the Afrobarometer in 2008. Data for Asian countries Taiwan (2006), South Korea (2003), and the Philippines (2005) found from the World Values Survey Values Survey Databank. Data for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, and Spain from the European Social Survey (2010). Data for Romania from the EU Eurobarometer (2012).

⁴Scores of corruption level from Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index.

⁵Voter turnout is measured by the percent of voter turnout in the most recent election from the International Foundation for Electoral Systems Election Guide.

The first factor of the dependent variable index is electoral volatility. This is measured by the cumulative turnover from one party to the next, from one election to the next. This measures the stability of the party system and the pattern of competition between the parties. This traditional measurement of PSI is followed by the percentage of the population that self-identifies with a particular party and the percent that trust political parties as institutions, both of which are collected from public opinion survey data. Strong party identification is a measure of the strength of party roots in society, while trust in parties, along with low corruption levels and electoral volatility, are signs of the legitimacy of parties and elections.

After collecting the data, the median was calculated for each individual factor and was used to divide the cases into 'high' and 'low' groupings. Then to create an overall index for dividing countries into 'high' and 'low' PSI cases, cases were assigned a star for each factor that has been predicted as positive for PSI. Cases with one or two stars were considered 'low,' while three, four, and the five-star cases were classified as 'high' PSI. The exception to this classification is South Africa, which received three stars but was placed into the 'low' PSI grouping because of extenuating circumstances in the government, culture, and party system. See Table 3 for a complete listing of the classification for each country in each category.

Table 3: High/Low Dependent Variable Index

Country	Electoral Volatility	Party Identification	Trust in Political Parties	Corruption Level	Voter turn out	
Argentina	Low	Low	Low	High	High	★★★
Brazil	Low	Low	High	High	High	★★★
Chile	Low	Low	High	Low	High	★★★★
Czech Republic	High	High	Low	Low	High	★★★
Hungary	Low	High	High	Low	Low	★★★★
Mexico	Low	Low	High	High	Low	★★
Peru	High	Low	Low	High	High	★
Philippines	High	High	High	High	High	★★★
Poland	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	★
Romania	High	High	Low	High	Low	★
Slovenia	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	★
South Africa	High	High	High	High	High	★★★
South Korea	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	★★★
Spain	Low	High	High	Low	High	★★★★★
Taiwan	Low	High	Low	Low	High	★★★★
Ukraine	High	High	Low	High	Low	★
Star assigned if:	Low	High	High	Low	High	

Measurement: Independent Variables

Table 4 lists the measurements for each of the ten hypotheses associated with this research.

Table 4: Independent Variables

Hypothesis	Independent Variable
H1: Economic Growth and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GDP⁶ • HDI Classification⁷
H2: Access to Internet Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of individuals using the internet⁸
H3: Age of Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Years as a Democracy⁹
H4: Type of Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pacted Transition¹⁰
H5: Cross-cutting Cleavages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of racial/religious cross-cutting cleavages in a society¹¹
H6: Unionized Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of population in unions¹²
H7: Proportionality of Electoral Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallagher's Index (least squares index)¹³
H8: Number of Political Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective number of parties at the electoral level¹⁴
H9: Parliamentary Forms of Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form of government (Parliamentary/Presidential)¹⁵
H10: Division of Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal of Unitary government¹⁶

Sources:

⁶Gross Domestic Product, per capita: From the CIA World Fact Book. Measured in US dollars.

⁷Human Development Index Classification 2011: From the UN Development Report. Classified as "very high," "high," "medium," or "low."

⁸Percentage of individuals using the Internet: from the International Telecommunications Union. Also available from Google Data explorer.

⁹Years as a democracy: From the CIA World Fact Book.

¹⁰Pacted transition: Most taken from the model created Carsten Schneider's book on *The Consolidation of Democracy*.

¹¹From the Cross-national Indices of Multi-dimensional Measures of Social Structure (CIMMSS).

¹²Unionized workforce: percentage of population who identify as belonging to a labor union. All countries excluding Taiwan found through the World Values Survey Values Survey Databank. Taiwan gathered from the Encyclopedia of the Nations.

¹³Gallagher Index: From Gallagher and Mitchell's *The Politics of Electoral Systems*.

¹⁴Effective number of parties: From Gallagher and Mitchell's *The Politics of Electoral Systems*. (Scores for the Philippines found in the Bertelsmann Transformation Index).

¹⁵Parliamentary/presidential form of government: From the CIA World Factbook

¹⁶Federalism: From the Forum of Federations

The data for such a wide collection of variables comes from a combination of many sources. This is a strength, because it gathers from different forms of measurements and minimize the biases that could come from a single source. All sources are reliable, but not complete for all of the countries in the case selection. Because of the missing data, a combination of multiple sources was used to fulfill the independent measures for each case. There are several different ways to measure the different independent variables listed above, but the chosen measures are the most consistent, reliable, and widely available for the most cases as possible.

Table 6: Independent Variables – Low PSI Cases

	Argentina	Mexico	Peru	Poland	Romania	Slovenia	South Africa	Ukraine
Path Dependent Factors								
GDP	\$17,700	\$14,800	\$10,200	\$20,600	\$12,600	\$29,00	\$11,100	\$7,300
HDI Classification	Very High	High	High	Very High	High	Very High	Medium	High
Percent of Individuals who use the Internet	48%	36%	37%	65%	44%	72%	21%	31%
Years as a democracy	29	12	32	23	23	21	18	21
Pacted transition	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Sociological & Cultural Factors								
Number of cross-cutting cleavages	0.944	0.903	0.923	0.931*	0.906*	0.931*	0.543	0.5
Percent of workforce in unions	2%	4.80%	4.50%	15.90%	14.30%	18.10%	6.50%	20.60%
Institutional Factors								
Gallagher Index	4.99	10.46	8.87	5.95	3.32	3.64	0.3	3.59
Effective number of parties	8.94	3.77	5.71	3.74	3.93	5.57	2.13	3.85
Form of government	Presidential	Presidential	Presidential	Parliamentary	Semi-Presidential	Parliamentary	Presidential	Semi-Presidential
Division of power	Federalist	Federalist	Unitary	Unitary	Unitary	Unitary	Federalist	Unitary
Dependent Variable	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

Eliminating Possibilities

A review of the tables more effectively explains which theories and independent variables are not related to PSI than pointing out strong causes. Table 5 shows that there are almost no path dependent factors that make a difference in the PSI of the cases studied, and the same can be found in the Low PSI cases, shown by Table 6. There are a wide range of GDP values for both groupings, with both significantly higher values in the low PSI group and lower values in the high PSI group. HDI classification and the percent of individuals who use the Internet can also be eliminated for both the high and low PSI cases as well. Because they are fairly modernized societies, all of the cases fall within the “medium” to “very high” HDI classification, with most scoring “high” or “very high.” Although Table 5 shows that the high PSI cases tend to have higher percentages of individuals who

use the Internet, there is great variance and even some cases where Internet usage is very low. The same occurs with the low PSI cases, with percentages ranging from 21% to 72%. Nor does the number of years as an established democracy affect either the high or low PSI cases. This comes as no surprise, as the variation between the cases is very slim due to their shared status as “new democracies.”

Neither of the independent variables associated with the sociological or cultural factors appear to have an effect on the level of PSI in either the high or low cases. It is hypothesized that as the number of cross-cutting cleavages increases (or as the score gets closer to 1), the PSI will decrease. Although a few of the high PSI cases have lower levels of cross-cutting cleavages, most are high and relatively similar to the low PSI cases. There is not a significant relationship between these variables. The percent of the workforce associated with unions also does little as an explanation of the level of PSI. Both the high and low designs show no clear relationship between an increase in a unionized workforce and an increase in PSI.

Generally, institutional factors also seem to make little difference in the level of PSI. Contrary to the hypothesis, parliamentary forms of government do not dominate the high PSI cases, but rather, more cases have presidential systems. There are also more presidential forms of government in the low PSI cases, but a fair number of parliamentary systems exist, eliminating this as an explanation for the low PSI cases as well.

The division of power within a government, whether federalist or unitary, can also be eliminated as having an effect on both the high and low PSI cases. There are federalist and highly devolved unitary states that have very high levels of PSI (Brazil and Spain), and many low PSI cases with unitary governments. This goes against the predicted hypothesis.

Like other institutional factors, the effective number of parties also appears to have little significance for the high or low PSI cases. The number of effective parties is all over the board for both MSSD tables, and may be attributed to the type of electoral system in each given country. In the end, it does not appear to be a cause of the PSI in the selected cases.

High PSI cases are predicted to have lower scores on the Gallagher Index, but this study seems to show just the opposite. A score of zero on the Gallagher Index indicates an election where the seats won to vote share is perfectly proportional, and 100 would indicate perfect disproportionality. Only Brazil has a fairly low score (2.5), with others reaching a score greater than 10. The low PSI cases, on the other hand, perform better overall on the Gallagher Index, with most cases at or near a score of 5. These results do not help predict why some systems are more institutionalized and can be eliminated as a cause.¹⁹

The most promising relationship in both the high and the low PSI cases is the last path dependent variable. The presence of a pacted transition at the time of democratic transition, although

not perfect, seems to have some relationship with the level of PSI. Table 6 shows that pacted transitions were found in four of the eight cases. This on its own would hardly be enough to warrant a relationship, but Table 6 shows that only two of the low PSI cases had pacted transitions. This data shows that a pacted transition may have a significant effect on the future level of institutionalization and deserves further consideration.

The Significance of Pacted Transitions

It appears as if the only potential explanation of the level of PSI in these cases come from the presence of a pacted transition at the time of democratic transition. To further test this relationship, all sixteen cases were brought back together into a single dataset, and a single-tailed bivariate correlation was found between the level of party system institutionalization and presence of a pacted transition. The results are shown in Table 7.

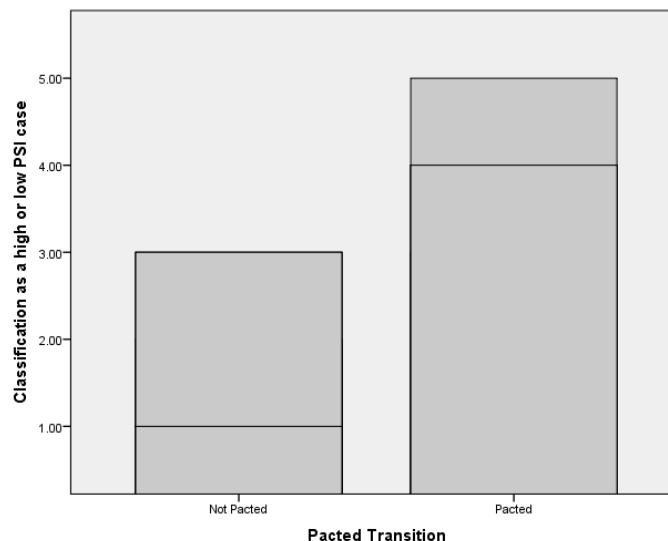
Table 7: Pearson Correlation of Pacted Transitions

		Pacted Transition
Level of party system institutionalization	Pearson Correlation	.600**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.007
	N	16

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

The table above shows that there is a strong, statistically significant relationship between the level of PSI and the presence of a pacted transition. The relationship is in the predicted direction ('pacted' transition is coded as 1 in the data set, and 'not pacted' is a zero). As the level of party system institutionalization increases, the prevalence of pacted transitions also increases. Figure 2 shows the relationship between the independent and dependent variable in the form of a bar graph. Although the relationship is not perfect, a positive relationship is clear.

Figure 2: The Relationship between PSI and Pacted Transitions



Hypothesis 4 in this research appears to be correct and suggests that the way the transition to democracy is carried out and the elites that emerge to lead the new government can make a difference in the level of PSI. Stable and peaceful transitions will help perpetuate stable party systems in the future. The successes of the party system may be dependent on the circumstances of transition and could actually have little to do with the decisions made by elites thereafter.

For example, the transitions of one-star Romania and five-star Spain show the impact a peaceful, pacted transition can have on the immediate and long-term success of democracy. The Romanian transition included violent demonstrations and a coup that ended with the execution of Communist leader Nicolae Ceaucescu.¹⁹ Spain, on the other hand, featured almost every type of pact, including the elite-driven *Pacte de la Moncloa* of 1977.²⁰ There is no doubt that this peaceful transition had an impact on Spain's immediate success as a democracy. It is understood that "pacts are not always likely or possible, but we are convinced that where they are a feature of the transition, they are desirable—that is, they enhance the probability that the process will lead to a viable political democracy".²¹

CONCLUSION

Almost all of the hypotheses derived from the existing literature on the causes of party system institutionalization have been rejected in this study. Some of them, such as the institutional framework and rules chosen by elites, come as quite a surprise, while the finding of others were more expected. These findings suggests a disparity between the cases and the literature, or in the data gathered for each variable. Although only one independent variable, the use of pacted transitions, has been shown to have an effect on the level of PSI, many other common theories appear to be misguided.

It is entirely possible that there is no single pre-condition or choice that solely affects the level of institutionalization of a party system. It appears as if PSI is a puzzle made up of many different pieces from path-dependent, sociological and cultural, and institutional factors alike. It is also possible that the true relationship between the level of party system institutionalization and its causes was hidden by the dependent variable index used in this study. Although it was created to give a more accurate and holistic reading of the level of PSI, it is possible that electoral volatility, the traditional measure of PSI, may provide more striking results.

It is also worthy to note that some of both the high and low PSI cases appear to be outliers; they do not fit with any of the predictions. In the high PSI cases, for example, the Philippines has results for many independent variables that are not expected in a high PSI case. The opposite is true

¹⁹ Matei 2008

²⁰ Encarnación, 2003

²¹ Ibid, 2003

for Slovenia, a low PSI case that has many of the traits associated with high PSI . Further analysis into these individual cases may uncover different forces at play that contribute to their interesting outcomes. It might also be possible to produce more consistent results on a bivariate correlation or crosstabs on some of the hypothesized variables if those cases are removed.

Many possibilities exist for future research and avenues to continue exploring the causes of party system institutionalization. Although mentioned in the literature review, personalistic voting was not tested for in this research. A standardized measure may be tested to show that personalistic voting matters for PSI. Additionally, a study of the impact of a communist history may yield interesting results. Of the six post-communist states featured in this study, two are in the high PSI group compared to four with low PSI.

These results contribute the discussion of party system institutionalization in new democracies in a different way. They point to some areas that require greater focus, while creating a framework to consider the factors of party system institutionalization. The strong correlation between the level of PSI and the presence of pacted transitions show that choices made by elites really do matter and have lasting consequences. Facilitating negotiations between elites that put in place future leaders and political players can help shape the future of a new democracy. Behavior during the critical moment of regime transition is critical to the success of a new democracy countless years down the road. The results from this research suggest that there is still much to be learned in the area of PSI in new democracies.

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