



A Comparative Survey of

*DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT*

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Generational Change, Political Institutions, and  
Regime Support in East Asia

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## **Asian Barometer**

A Comparative Survey of Democracy, Governance and Development

# **Working Paper Series**

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## **GENERATIONAL CHANGE, POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, AND REGIME SUPPORT IN EAST ASIA**

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### **Introduction**

In the political culture perspective, political attitudes and behavior, including orientations toward political regimes, are formed by a process of socialization from childhood to maturity called early life socialization. Members of society are believed from an early age to be exposed to attitudes, values, and behavior that support a certain regime, whether authoritarian or democratic. Individuals who are socialized from childhood under an authoritarian regime are exposed to attitudes, values, and behavior that support authoritarianism, while individuals who are socialized in a democracy are exposed to values, attitudes, and behavior supportive of that regime (Almond and Verba 1963).

For that reason, individuals who are born and raised to adulthood in an autocratic era are expected to be more supportive of an autocratic regime than of a democracy even though they subsequently experience a democratic regime. And members of a society who are born and raised in a democratic regime tend to be more oriented to a democracy when they become adults. Further, a democracy will grow stronger when members of the generation socialized under a non-democratic regime become fewer with the passage of time, that is, when there is a generational change, from the non-democratic to the democratic generation.

Scholars working from the institutional perspective, on the other hand, believe that support for a regime is formed not by early socialization but by a process of learning and adaptation toward the institution experienced. This will also happen if the subject is older and experiences a regime that differs from the one in which he or she was born and experienced early socialization. In other words, every individual undergoes a process of relearning when he or she is exposed to institutional change and makes a rational calculation relating to institutional performance (March 1988; North 1990).

For that reason, individuals born and raised to adulthood in an authoritarian regime tend to conduct rational assessments concerning, for example, positive or negative evaluations of a

democratic regime. Consequently, even a member of society born and politically socialized in an autocratic era will tend to support, not the regime experienced when young, but the democracy directly experienced in adulthood, if that democracy is judged to be more beneficial. If this perspective is correct, an East Asian who experiences early socialization under an autocratic regime will nonetheless have a positive attitude toward democracy providing that he or she evaluates positively the democratic regime currently experienced. Moreover, there will be no difference in orientation between the two relevant generations. What is more determinative is not the difference in generations but a pure evaluation of the currently experienced regime. If the currently-experienced regime, whether a democracy or an autocracy, is judged more beneficial, then the individual will support that regime, regardless of his or her generation of origin.

Is the generational difference important for regime support in East Asia as maintained by the political culture approach? Or does the institutional approach better explain regime support in the region, where assessments of regime performance are more determinative of regime support regardless of the difference in generations?

Several studies demonstrate that generational difference influences regime support in East Asia (Tan and Wang 2007, Wang 2007). In ten East Asian states, the younger generation tends to be more supportive of democratic values compared to traditional political values, even though that difference is less meaningful in terms of democratic preference (Tan and Wang 2007). In China, support for the current non-democratic regime is stronger within the generational cohort that came to political maturity before the late 1970s' reforms, compared to the succeeding cohort.

This finding is consistent with findings in other parts of the world, for example in Russia (Mishler and Rose 2007). Nonetheless, the impact of generational change on regime support does not erase the importance of the institutional context. Even though the effect of generational difference is important, cross-generational evaluation of institutional performance is also relevant. Russians from the pre-perestroika generation experienced relearning after democratic institutions were introduced, so that they are able to evaluate whether democracy does or does not work well in terms of their interests.

This paper offers an evaluation of the above findings with data from the Asian Barometer Survey wave 3 (ABS 3). Our study focuses on the concept and measures of regime support and how political socialization, generational difference, and institutional performance are associated with that support.

## **Analytical Strategy**

Whether or not generational difference, between the “democratic generation” and the “non-democratic generation,” is important in shaping individual orientations requires a specific analytical strategy. Our basic argument centers on the problem of socialization, that is, how a person acquires cognition and attitudes and chooses behaviors in a political system. Generational difference becomes important at bottom because there is a change in the system

in which one generation lives. For that reason, in order to know the importance of generational change we must first conduct cross-sectional analysis, that is, comparison among states according to regime type, at least between democratic and non-democratic state types. This regime distinction is expected to shape differences in individual orientations toward the regime concerned. Individuals who are socialized in a democratic regime are expected to have a more positive orientation toward democracy; individuals who are socialized in a non-democratic regime are expected to have a weaker orientation toward democracy. The ABS 3 data make it possible to conduct this cross-sectional analysis.

Our next strategic move is to compare the orientation of individuals in a given country toward regimes from the democratic and non-democratic generations. This can be done for countries that possess both of these generations. In the ABS data, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Philippines, Mongolia and Indonesia have two separate generations with relatively clear boundaries between them. Vietnam, mainland China, Singapore, and Malaysia, however, do not have sharp enough generational differences. Thailand is a very complex case. This country has experienced very frequent regime change compared to other countries in East Asia, making it difficult to decide which generation is democratic and which autocratic.

## **Measures**

In the ABS, the concept of regime support is understood to mean individual attitudes or orientations toward certain political systems, whether democratic or non-democratic, whether currently experienced or not/not yet experienced. It is assumed that individuals understand these terms well enough, at least to the extent of recognizing them as divergent political systems.

Building on the concept of political system support formulated by David Easton (1965), Pippa Norris (1999) outlined several system support components: political community, regime principles, regime performance, regime institutions, and political actors. From these components, Tan and Wang chose only the dimensions of regime principles (democratic support and democratic values) (Tan and Wang 2007) and regime support, understood as support for the existing regime plus regime institutions (trust in the institution) (Wang 2007).

Regime principles in the ABS 3 include democratic support or preference and democratic values. We added existing regime support and political trust in order to understand more generally the concept of regime support in the context of democracy and non-democracy.

In addition, two factors that are believed to influence regime support, that is generational difference and institutional performance, are understood and measured as follows.

Generational difference is first defined in terms of individuals socialized in democratic and non-democratic systems. In East Asia, there are no countries whose inhabitants have been socialized completely in a democratic system. There are however countries whose inhabitants are more socialized in a democratic system than other countries, because their democratic history is longer. For that reason, the most individuals socialized in a democracy are to be

found in Japan, followed by Korea, Philippines, Taiwan, and Thailand. Thailand and the Philippines, however, are less stable and not yet consolidated as democracies. Malaysia was arguably a democracy from independence in 1957 until the racial disturbance of 1969. From that time on, Malaysian democracy has declined into at best a semi-democracy. Mongolia and Indonesia are relatively new democracies. Other countries in the ABS 3, that is China, Vietnam and Singapore, have never been democracies.

Japan became democratic soon after the end of World War II in 1945. Korea restored its democracy in the 1980s, as did the Philippines. Taiwan also soon became a democracy. Unfortunately, the Philippines' democracy has never consolidated or risen to the "fully free" category as defined by Freedom House. For that reason Filipinos are probably undersocialized as democrats compared to citizens of the other three countries.

Mongolia only became a democracy in 1990, and was recognized as fully free five years later. Indonesia is a younger democracy. Democracy was restored in 1998-1999, after an earlier democratic period from 1945 to 1959. This country too has only been a fully free democracy for the last seven years. For that reason, in Mongolia and Indonesia there are probably fewer citizens who have directly experienced democratic socialization compared to Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

Thailand has had more experience with democracy, but its democracy has often been challenged. Coups often happen. Democracy and autocracy frequently change places. The result is that Thailand has never achieved the status of fully free.

Malaysia has had difficulty building and consolidating its democracy primarily because of ethnic conflict. The main instance is the 1969 ethnic rioting, after which the government imposed emergency legislation that limited political and civil liberties. This legislation was only repealed in 2011. Among all our countries, probably the fewest inhabitants of mainland China, Vietnam and Singapore are directly socialized in democratic attitudes, values and behavior. These three states are until now the least free countries in the ABS 3. In sum: we expect that these differences in regime, between consolidated democracy (Japan, Korea, and Taiwan), electoral democracy (Mongolia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Thailand), and non-democracy (mainland China, Vietnam, Singapore, and Malaysia) will be reflected in different orientations as well.

Generational differences may be understood more directly as differences in birth cohort and early political socialization, defined as socialization before age fifteen (Mishler and Rose 2007). More simply, generational differences may be defined as individuals who are born and mature to age fifteen or older in a non-democracy and individuals who are born and mature to age fifteen or more in a democracy.

This understanding of generational differences makes possible our analysis in each country. Generational differences are of course very specific for each country, in accord with that country's political history.

In Asia, Japan is the earliest, most stable, and most long-lived democratic country. For that reason, in the Japanese case generations are differentiated into two groups: those who did not experience democracy at the time of birth and early socialization, that is, the generation born before 1945, and the subsequent generation, that is, the democratic generation. Because the process of early socialization is between birth and fifteen years, individuals who were born before 1945 and those who were under ten years of age at that time we consider the democratic generation. This group experienced democracy for at least five years before their fifteenth birthday. Thus, for the Japanese case the democratic generation includes those born after 1935, and the non-democratic generation is comprised of those born in 1934 or earlier.

South Koreans can also be divided into two groups, that is the generation born before democracy returned in 1986, after having been established in the 1950s and failing in 1960. For that reason the Korean democratic generation is comprised of Koreans who were ten years old or younger when Korea became a democracy again in 1986. Therefore the Korean democratic generation includes citizens born in 1976 or later, while the non-democratic generation is comprised of those born in 1975 or earlier.

Taiwan is similar. It became a democracy in 1990 after a long authoritarian period. For that reason the Taiwan democratic generation consists of those who were at least ten years old when democracy began in that country. This means those born in 1980 or later, while members of the non-democratic generation were born in 1979 or earlier.

Filipino generations are more complicated. Here they are simplified into two basic groups, the non-democratic and democratic generations. The Philippines became independent and democratic in 1946. For that reason the non-democratic generation is regarded as those Filipinos born in 1935 or earlier. A second non-democratic generation was born when President Ferdinand Marcos seized power and ruled as a dictator from 1972-1985. So the democratic generations consist of Filipinos who were born between 1936 and 1972, and those who were born ten years before Marcos was overthrown, that is those who were born in 1975 and later. For that reason, the Filipino democratic generations are rather long, comparable to Japan, that is the generations born between 1936 and 1972 and 1976 until now. Unlike Japan, however, Filipino democracy to this day is not consolidated.

Mongolia became a democracy in 1990. So the generation democratically socialized before age fifteen includes all Mongolians born in 1975 and after. If the period of early socialization required is at least five years after the establishment of democracy, the Mongolian democratic generation is made up of citizens born in 1980 and later, while the generation born before 1980 is the non-democratic generation.

As in Mongolia, Indonesian authoritarianism was enduring. Indonesia experienced its first democratic period from independence in 1945 until 1959, and restored democracy when Suharto's authoritarianism collapsed in 1998. So the first democratic generation was born between 1935 and 1959. The second democratic generation was born ten years before the Suharto regime fell. It comprises individuals born in 1988 and after. The authoritarian generation was born and grew to adulthood between 1960 and 1987.

Thai political generations are more complex. After the end of the absolute monarchy in 1932, democratic seeds were planted but grew only sporadically. This period lasted almost fourteen years, from 1932 to 1945. From 1946 to 1950 Thai democracy improved to the point that it was no longer called semi-democracy (Samudavanija 1989). Next came an authoritarian period until 1972. For a brief time, from 1972 to 1974, democracy returned but then regressed to semi-democracy and authoritarianism until 1990. Since then Thailand has become more democratic but has nonetheless been shaken by coups and by conflict among political forces that have made it unstable.

The general picture is that the Thai people experienced long periods of poorly-performing democracy, none of which resulted in a return to stable authoritarianism. For that reason Thailand is a semi-democracy (Samudavanija 1989). It is difficult to differentiate democratic and non-democratic generations after 1932, when Thailand decisively broke with the previous pattern of absolute monarchy. Those Thai who have experienced non-democracy most fully are those who were born about ten years before 1932, and probably those who were born and experienced non-democracy in the period 1959 to 1968. After that came a semi-democratic generation, or a generation that was several times destabilized by coups. Accordingly, we distinguish four political generations in Thailand, two democratic and two non-democratic. The first non-democratic generation was born in 1922 or earlier and the second includes Thais born in the longest non-democratic period, 1959-1968 (ten years before democracy began to grow again in 1978) (Samudavanija 1989). The democratic or semi-democratic generations were born from 1923 to 1958 and then in 1969 and after.

In contrast to Thailand, Malaysian politics has been relatively much more stable. There has never been a coup. Since independence in 1957 Malaysia has maintained a "quasi-democracy" with limited political freedoms while at the same time holding relatively open general elections (Ahmad 1989). The Malaysian political elite has been extremely sensitive to the possibility of communal conflict especially after the 1969 communal rioting. The government imposed martial law for almost four years at that time. Though lighter, repression continued under the ISA (Internal Security Act) and the economically discriminatory NEP (New Economic Policy), which is biased toward ethnic Malays. Only in 2011 was the ISA repealed.

In Malaysian history, democracy was stronger in the period from independence in 1957 until the 1969 riots. After that Malaysian democracy declined. For that reason, the Malaysian democratic generation includes citizens who experienced democracy from 1957 to 1969, that is those who were exposed to early socialization (up to age fifteen) for at least five years during this period. Consequently, the democratic generation includes those born from 1947 to 1969, while the non-democratic generation consists of those born before 1947 and those born after 1969 (1970-present).

Vietnam is a non-democratic country. Despite that fact, for our purposes we can differentiate Vietnamese in a crude way into two groups: the generation born before economic reform in 1986 under the leadership of Nguyen Van Linh, and the subsequent generation to the present. We assume that one of the effects of this reform was to create a more open politics. Economic development that produces general prosperity will in turn create a populace that



demands not only policies assuring economic survival but also political freedom (Inglehart 1998). For that reason, and in order to simplify Vietnamese political history, we distinguish between the reform generation, those who were born ten years before reform and later, and the pre-reform generation, those born in 1976 or earlier. We expect that members of the pre-reform generation will have a more positive attitude toward the existing authoritarian regime and will have a higher level of political trust compared to the reform generation as we find in the case of mainland China (Wang 2007).

Mainland Chinese can be divided into two generations: before the 1980 reform and after (Wang 2007). This distinction admittedly is based primarily on the economy but we suspect that it may have an impact as well on political openness. For that reason we distinguish two political generations of mainland Chinese: the reform generation, those born ten years before the 1980 reform and later; and the pre-reform generation, born in 1969 or earlier.

Singapore is similar to China. The generation of freedom fighters in that country very probably has a more positive orientation toward the existing authoritarian regime and a higher level of political trust compared to the subsequent generation. This is because the freedom fighters' generation and its predecessors experienced the struggle for independence that gave birth to autocracy under Lee Kwan Yew. They understand better why autocracy may have been a reasonable choice during that time. Members of the subsequent generation, who did not experience directly the struggle for independence, and have enjoyed a higher socio-economic level, tend to be exposed to global information that assigns a positive meaning to democracy. For that reason, they are probably less supportive of the existing authoritarian regime. Their level of political trust is probably also lower. For that reason we divide Singaporeans into the generation that was born ten years before separation from Malaysia, which occurred in 1965, and the subsequent generation (Worthington 2002). In other words, Singaporeans are divided into a group born in 1956 or earlier and a group born after 1956.

Institutional performance is understood as individual evaluations of regime performance, that is democracy and the government, in each ABS wave 3 country. Performance is measured by the extent to which the individual feels satisfied with the implementation of democracy, the degree of democraticness of a country, and how the individual evaluates implementation connected to democracy. All of this is described in detail below.

## **Regime Type and Generational Difference**

Before analyzing the importance of the effect of differences in political generations and institutional performance on regime support, we must first explain what we mean by regime support.<sup>1</sup> Regime support in this study comprises four groups of measures: support or preference for democracy, commitment to democratic values, support for the existing regime, and political trust.

Among the East Asian states included in the ABS 3, using Freedom House measures, there are a number of states that have succeeded in becoming fully free democracies for an extended period of time, for at least several decades: Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. We call these states consolidated democracies. In addition there are countries that have become democracies but are not yet fully free, the Philippines and Thailand, and countries that have become fully free but only in the last decade, Mongolia and Indonesia. In these countries free elections are held on a regular basis, so they are properly labeled electoral democracies. The remainder are unfree states—mainland China, Vietnam, Singapore, and Malaysia—though Malaysia is less authoritarian than Singapore, and much less authoritarian than China and Vietnam.

As stated at the beginning of this paper, according to the political culture perspective regime support is strongly influenced by early socialization. Individuals who are born and grow to adulthood in a democratic system will tend to have positive attitudes toward democracy, while individuals born under authoritarian regimes will tend to have positive attitudes toward authoritarianism. According to this view, Japanese, Koreans, and Taiwanese whose democracies are long-lived are expected to be stronger supporters of democracy than Indonesians, Filipinos, Mongolians and Thais, who have only briefly or intermittently experienced full freedom. Further, individuals who live in authoritarian regimes—mainland China, Vietnam, Singapore, and Malaysia—are expected to support democracy even less strongly. Those countries have not yet produced a generation consisting of a substantial number of citizens who have enjoyed a long period of early democratic socialization.

Table 1 displays mean scores of individual attitudes toward democracy as the preferred regime according to country and regime type.<sup>2</sup> In general individuals in a number of ABS 3 countries in East Asia prefer democracy over other regime types even though there is variation in that support in each regime type and country. Preference for democracy in consolidated democracies (Japan, Korea, and Taiwan) in general is stronger than in electoral democracies (Philippines, Indonesia, Mongolia, and Thailand) and non-democracies (Singapore and Malaysia).

We see a stronger difference in level of commitment toward democratic values.<sup>3</sup> Even though individuals from different regime backgrounds in general share a commitment toward these values, citizens of consolidated democracies have a stronger commitment than do citizens of electoral democracies or inhabitants of non-democracies (Table 1). Citizens of electoral democracies also tend to have a stronger commitment toward democratic values than do inhabitants of non-democracies.

This pattern indicates that individuals who have lived for a long time in consolidated democracies tend to have a stronger commitment to democratic values than those who live in electoral democracies or under authoritarian rule. In other words, individuals who have experienced more democratic socialization tend to have more positive attitudes toward the corresponding values than do individuals who have experienced less democratic socialization.

Table 1 about here

A larger difference is visible in support for the existing regime and in political trust, but the direction is reversed.<sup>4</sup> Support for existing regime and in political trust in general is higher among those who live in non-democracies compared to those who live in electoral democracies. This is even truer for those who live in consolidated democracies. Inhabitants of non-democratic states in general have more positive attitudes toward their regimes. Moreover, trust toward political institutions among inhabitants of non-democratic states in general is higher than in democratic states.<sup>5</sup>

Individuals' support for the current regimes in Vietnam, mainland China, and Malaysia is higher than in Indonesia, Philippines, Mongolia, and Thailand. It is even higher compared to Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. The same is true regarding political trust. Vietnamese, mainland Chinese, Singaporeans, and Malaysians in general display a higher level of political trust compared to Indonesians, Filipinos, Mongolians, and Thais. It is even higher compared to Japanese, Koreans, and Taiwanese (Table 1).

These patterns demonstrate that individuals who are more socialized in democratic systems on the one hand tend to have a higher level of commitment toward democracy, but on the other tend to be critical of the existing regime and political institutions. Individuals who are more socialized in non-democratic systems tend to have a less strong commitment toward democracy, and tend to be more positive toward existing regimes and political institutions. This attitude in the democratic states perhaps indicates the existence in East Asia of what Norris labels the "critical citizen" syndrome, i.e. a high level of commitment or support for democracy as a system but a tendency to be negative or critical toward the existing regime and political institutions (Norris 1999).

Are these patterns consistent if we examine generational variation in each country, that is, the generation which has lived in a democratic system compared to that which has lived in a non-democratic system in the same country? These differences are clear in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, but not so clear in the Philippines and Thailand. Democracy in these two latter countries has existed for a long time but has never consolidated. For this reason the impact of generational change is also not meaningful. Democracy in Indonesia and Mongolia indicates greater progress than in Thailand and the Philippines, even though the former democracies are relatively new. Consequently, the effect of generational change on regime support in those two countries is also not significant.

Table 2 demonstrates the differences in democratic preference, democratic values, existing regime support, and institutional trust from two generations in a number of countries. In the case of consolidated democracies (Japan, Korea, and Taiwan), for the most part the generational difference significantly shapes differences in political orientations, that is in support for regime. In Japan and Korea, generational difference, that is between the democratic and non-democratic generations, does not have a significant influence on democratic preference. In Taiwan, however, the generational difference has an influence not only on commitment to democratic values but also on democratic preference. In these three countries, the democratic generation, compared to the non-democratic generation, displays a higher level of support for democratic values.

The opposite pattern may be seen in support for existing regimes and political institutions. In these three consolidated democracies, citizens from the democratic generation tend to exhibit lower levels of support for the existing regime. They also tend to have lower levels of institutional trust compared to the non-democratic generation. This fact is consistent with the cross-sectional analysis that perhaps indicates a critical citizen phenomenon as previously described. In these three consolidated democracies, the non-democratic generation tends to have a weaker commitment toward democracy but to strongly support the existing regime and to have a high level of institutional trust. Conversely, the democratic generation in consolidated democracies displays stronger support for democracy but weaker support for the existing regime and institutional trust.

The critical citizen pattern is not perceptible in the generational differences in electoral democracies such as the Philippines, Indonesia, Mongolia, and Thailand. It is also not seen in Malaysia, which is at least a quasi-democracy in electoral terms. In these countries in general we do not see a significant generational effect on regime support. Regime support does not differ significantly by generation. This is also the case for non-democratic Vietnam. In that country, there is no significant difference in regime support from the pre-reform to the reform generation.

Mainland China is different. Unlike Vietnam, in mainland China there is a significant difference in support for the existing authoritarian regime and in institutional trust between the pre-reform and reform generations. The pre-reform generation tends to support the existing regime more strongly than the reform generation. And the reform generation also tends to have less institutional trust than the pre-reform generation. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Wang 2007).

A pattern similar to mainland China appears in the attitudes of Singaporeans. In this small, economically highly advanced country, the generational difference significantly influences regime support. The Singaporean political generation born before the 1965 separation tends to support more strongly the existing autocratic regime than does the post-separation generation. Moreover, the post-separation generation has a stronger commitment to democracy than the pre-separation generation. This pattern is the same as in the consolidated democracies (Japan, Korea, and Taiwan), even though Singapore is not a democracy, let alone a consolidated democracy.

We may tentatively conclude that in a number of East Asian states individuals have in general positive attitudes toward democracy, toward the existing regime, and toward political institutions. Nonetheless, there are meaningful variations from one regime and state to another. Support for democracy and its values tends to be stronger in consolidated democracies than in electoral democracies. Conversely, support for existing regimes and level of institutional trust is stronger in electoral democracies than in consolidated democracies. In electoral democracies, citizens tend to have a weaker commitment to democracy and to be less critical of the existing regime and political institutions. This difference in pattern has perhaps been caused by the differences in political socialization among the two citizenries. Citizens in consolidated democracies may live more democratic lives than citizens of electoral democracies. In

electoral democracies, democracy does not yet function as well and is less stable. As a result, citizens also experience lower quality democracy.

The influence of this difference in political socialization is clearly visible when we examine political generational differences. In consolidated democracies, the clear difference between the democratic and non-democratic generations significantly influences attitudes toward democracy, existing regime, and institutional trust. In our electoral democracies, however, the generational difference effect is blurred. The Philippines and Thailand have long been democracies but their democracies have never consolidated. Even worse, Thai democracy is often interrupted by military coups. Indonesia and Mongolia, even though fully free, have not long enjoyed that status. Large numbers of their citizens still come from the non-democratic generation whose members were not democratically socialized during their adolescence. For that reason the generational difference is still small in these two countries.

Table 2 about here

Generational differences and their influence on regime support are apparent in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Mongolia, China, and Malaysia. They are not visible in other countries, however. For that reason, our further analysis will focus on these seven countries, to determine whether the effect of the generational difference is still important after considering institutional performance.

### **Institutional performance**

As already stated, according to the institutional perspective individuals experience a relearning process regarding new institutions to which they were not exposed during their early socialization. Even after they have become adults, and without having experienced democracy previously, individuals will have a positive attitude toward democracy if they positively evaluate democratic performance in their own country. The analysis below shows how important political institutional performance is for regime support.

To demonstrate how realistic the institutional argument is relative to the argument for political generational differences, we conducted a multivariate analysis of regime support. In this paper regime performance is primarily about how the practice of democracy is perceived by the individual, whether that performance is believed to be good or bad. This is connected in turn to the individual's level of satisfaction with the implementation of democracy, the individual's evaluation of how democratic his or her government is at present, and how free and fair the most recent general election is perceived to have been.<sup>6</sup> Quality of governance is connected to how well the government is perceived to have performed administratively.<sup>7</sup> Further, governmental performance is connected to several measures: how satisfied the individual feels with the performance of the president or prime minister; how likely it is that the government will be able to deal successfully with pressing problems; how difficult it is to access public services such as obtaining an identity card; to obtain police assistance when needed; and how safe the individual feels in his or her community.<sup>8</sup>

Economic condition in this study is the individual's assessment of the national economy and his or her own personal economic situation.<sup>9</sup> All of this is connected to the individual's evaluation of the conduct of democracy, government, and economic life. If this institutional performance is more important than early political socialization or differences in democratic (reform) and non-democratic (pre-reform) generations, we expect the effect of the generational differences to become not significant after assessment of institutional performance in the multivariate analysis below.

In addition, support for democracy, the existing regime, and institutional trust is also believed to be influenced by social capital (Putnam 2003). In this study, social capital is understood as interpersonal or social trust.<sup>10</sup> In the political cultural perspective, regime support is also believed to be greatly influenced by a participant political culture or political attitudes, i.e., political interest, political information, and political discussion (Almond and Verba 2003).<sup>11</sup>

Political socialization, especially political generational change, is greatly influenced by socio-economic factors. In the political culture perspective, modernization theory variant, socio-economic changes influence changes in political orientation. In a still-materialist culture, struggling with economic survival or security, orientations toward non-democratic politics or toward conventional political institutions are stronger than in a post-materialist culture. In this latter type, orientations toward personal freedom and equality represent the core of democracy (Inglehart 1997). In this study, differences in socio-economic condition are understood as differences in level of education.

Support for democracy is also effected by religion, and for that reason religiosity is considered an important influence on support for democracy. Religious people are believed to tend to reject democracy<sup>12</sup> (Putnam 2003).

Tables 3-5 report the results of regression analyses that demonstrate the effect of generational difference relative to institutional performance on the components of regime support. After considering institutional performance, i.e. governmental performance, governance quality, and economic condition, plus political attitudes, social capital, and some demographic factors, generational difference is apparently not significant for democratic values for all the democracies in this study (Table 3). Generational difference does continue to be significant for commitment to democratic values in Singapore, however, despite the institutional factors. This is an exception that requires further investigation.

In all the democracies studied, the positive effect of the democratic generation on commitment toward democratic values visible in the bivariate analysis disappears. Apparently this relationship loses significance after incorporating factors of institutional performance, political attitudes, social capital, and several socio-economic values. Institutional performance appears to be more meaningful for commitment to democratic values in a number of East Asian countries studied here, with the exception of non-democratic Singapore. In Singapore, generational difference still significantly effects commitment toward democracy despite the influence of the other factors included in this multivariate analysis.

Nonetheless, the relationship between institutional performance and commitment toward those democratic values is negative. Individuals who evaluate democratic and governmental performance positively tend to have a low level of commitment toward democratic values. In other words, individuals who judge democratic and governmental performance to be poor tend to positively evaluate democracy. It is also true that individuals who have a high commitment toward democratic values tend to be unsatisfied with how democracy is conducted, or tend to negatively evaluate the quality of government and governmental performance, in their own country.

Table 3 about here

The influence of political generational differences is also inconsistent with support for the existing regime. It is significant in Japan, Taiwan, and China. The democratic generation in Japan, Taiwan, and Mongolia tends to have a negative attitude toward the existing regime. In China, the post-1970s reform generation tends to have a negative attitude toward the current regime (Table 4). But the effect of this generational difference is not significant in the other countries studied. The resistance of the reform generation or the democratic generation toward the current regime is not specific to non-democratic countries like China but also characterizes democratic countries like Japan, Taiwan, and Mongolia.

Table 4 about here

Nevertheless, in general the effect of institutional performance on support for the existing regime is seen to be more significant and more consistent than the effect of generational differences (Table 4). It is also positive. Individuals who evaluate positively governmental performance, governmental quality, and economic condition more strongly support the existing regime, whether it is a democratic country like Japan, Korea, or Taiwan or an autocracy like China and Singapore.

The effect of generational differences on institutional trust as another component of regime support is also not significant in nearly all of the cases studied after considering the impact of institutional performance (Table 5). In all democracies, the effect of these political generational differences was not important. The generational effect was important, however, in two authoritarian cases, Singapore and China. In those two countries, despite the impact of institutional performance, political attitudes, social capital, and a number of demographic factors, the generational difference was still important in influencing trust toward political institutions. The influence was also negative, which means that the post-separation generation in Singapore, and the post-reform generation in China under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, tends not to believe in current political institutions compared to the previous generation in these two Chinese-culture countries.

Table 5 about here

Nonetheless, as in the case of the pattern of influence on support for the existing regime, the influence of institutional performance is much stronger and more consistent for almost all countries studied. Individuals who evaluate the quality of government, governmental performance, and economic condition strongly positively tend to also have high trust in

political institutions in each of the countries. Conversely, individuals who evaluate the condition of the economy as poor, the quality of government as low, and the performance of the government as unsatisfactory do not believe in those political institutions. This finding holds for all individuals, from whatever generation of origin—democratic, reform, non-democratic or pre-reform.

Even though they did not experience early political socialization or become adults in a democratic era or system, they tend to support democracy as practiced in their country, and believe in its institutions, provided that they evaluate positively their current political institutions. That system is not necessarily democratic. It could be a democracy or a non-democracy. What is important is its performance. If the performance is good the government will be supported regardless of system and regardless of where and when individuals experienced socialization. Adults, born in a non-democratic political generation, will support the current democratic system or regime if that regime performs well. Also the reverse, the generation socialized in a democratic regime will tend to support a non-democratic regime as in Malaysia today if that non-democratic regime performs well. Both the Malaysian generation socialized during the democratic regime before the 1969 communal rioting and the generation later socialized under authoritarianism support the current authoritarian regime if they believe that it is performing well.

Besides institutional performance, social trust also represents an important factor for institutional trust (Table 5). It is more important than generational difference. The most important component of the socio-economic factor, education, has a consistent influence on regime support. Education positively strengthens democratic values, but also becomes a source of criticism toward the existing regime and political institutions. As in the case of individuals who have a high level of commitment toward democracy, individuals with high education tend not to be satisfied with governmental performance and tend not to believe in political institutions.

The influence of religiosity on regime support is limited and inconsistent. But it would be interesting to examine further the fact that religiosity in Singapore tends to be related negatively to democratic values. This pattern is not seen in any of our other cases.

## **Conclusion**

How important are political generational differences for regime support in East Asian society? How important is the effect of early political socialization on support toward regimes after individuals reach adulthood? Is it true that early political socialization shapes political orientations even for adults who subsequently live in a regime different from the one in which they grew up? Are individuals incapable of relearning in new political environments not experienced during early political socialization?

From this analysis of public opinion survey data in a number of East Asian states with a wide variety of contexts—from consolidated democracy and electoral democracy to non-democracy—our first important finding is that individuals in this region in general have a



positive attitude toward democracy, tend to support the regime they are currently experiencing, and tend to believe in their political institutions.

But there is a meaningful difference in their orientations. Citizens who live in consolidated democracies tend to have a strong preference for democracy and for democratic values compared to citizens of electoral democracies like Indonesia, Mongolia, Thailand, and the Philippines, or the subjects of authoritarian regimes like Vietnam, China, Singapore, and Malaysia. The probable cause of this difference is that there are more citizens of consolidated democracies who have been democratically socialized for longer periods of time compared to their colleagues in electoral democracies, not to mention authoritarian regimes. This finding demonstrates that the political system in which one lives influences his or her political orientation.

Nonetheless, citizens of consolidated democracies tend to be critical of the performance of the democracy in which they live. They prefer democracy and have a stronger commitment to its values. Because of that they tend to be critical about democratic practice, about how democratic governmental performance deals with problems considered important by the citizenry, for example in the economy. Criticism and incremental or gradual improvement, by trial and error, is possible in a democracy. In the end democracy can save itself from destruction. Even if disturbed it can restore itself.

Non-democracies are different. Their subjects tend to be confident in their regime and its institutions. Space for criticism and dissatisfaction that can lead to improvement is more closed. For that reason, political change may be marked by great and often radical upheavals, consuming many victims. The perspective of early political socialization explains how difficult are change and regime improvement. Once socialized within a system, whatever the system, the individual tends to be oriented and to act in accordance with the values and the norms of that system.

Nonetheless, the facts of this study demonstrate that differences in political generations do not close the space for orientation and adaptation toward other systems. What is more determinative is apparently not early political socialization but how the individual evaluates the performance of the system in which he or she lives. If there is system change, and the new system is felt to perform better, he or she will tend to support the new system, and also the reverse. For that reason it is difficult for Japan to renounce democracy because the regime performs well there. Perhaps it is also difficult to imagine how democracy can emerge in China or Singapore because their subjects believe that their non-democratic system works well. A democracy can collapse if the government does not perform well, as can an autocracy.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (Mean Scores) of Democratic Preference, Democratic Values, Existing Regime Support and Political Trust in Some East Asian Countries

Country	Democratic Preference		Democratic Values		Existing Regime		Political Trust	
	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev
<i>Consolidated Democracies</i>								
Japan	.7852	.17329	2.9662	.43913	2.4539	.50475	2.3447	.41097
Korea	.7625	.14940	2.7983	.39946	2.3705	.53831	2.1859	.48271
Taiwan	.7348	.16077	2.7336	.31575	2.5855	.45063	2.3624	.43254
<i>Electoral Democracies</i>								
Mongolia	.6786	.20562	2.5171	.40520	2.6349	.59181	2.2452	.43966
Philippines	.6346	.18875	2.4423	.44859	2.6119	.55099	2.4684	.58175
Thailand	.7482	.13673	2.5201	.38977	3.1544	.44398	2.6976	.54260
Indonesia	.7177	.14981	2.4809	.27703	2.8786	.41648	2.6668	.47475
<i>Non-democracies</i>								
Mainland China	NA		NA		2.8969	.35841	3.0925	.37594
Singapore	.7498	.14016	2.5076	.40353	3.0988	.36039	2.0855	.32486
Vietnam	.7329	.08351	2.4472	.32740	3.2811	.47895	3.2863	.44598
Malaysia	.7195	.18288	2.3730	.40092	3.0598	.55060	2.9837	.56183
Total (countries)	.7292	.17157	2.5997	.42804	2.8141	.54205	2.6795	.58751
F-scores (countries)	108.830***		376.316***		580.555***		1201.657***	

\*\*\* $P < .001$ , \*\* $P < .01$ , \* $P < .05$

Table 2. Generational Difference and Regime Support in Some East Asian Countries (Anova Analysis)

Generation	Democratic Preference		Democratic Values		Existing Regime		Political Trust	
	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev
<i>Japan</i>								
Democratic	.7844	.17822	2.9815	.43708	2.4135	.49956	2.3252	.41162
Non-Democratic	.7913	.13518	2.8621	.43979	2.7286	.45216	2.4779	.38149
N	1880		1880		1880		1880	
F-score	.334		15.653***		85.580***		29.458***	
<i>South Korea</i>								
Democratic	.7617	.11707						

Post-independence	.7585	.14521	2.5523	.39859	3.0870	.36539	2.0547	.30989
Pre-independence	.7320	.12502	2.3906	.38789	3.1501	.32949	2.1839	.35997
N	800		800		800		800	
F-score	5.145*		24.326***		4.568*		23.381***	
<i>Vietnam</i>								
Reform	.7296	.08238	2.4538	.34156	3.2528	.47119	2.3520	.34116
Pre-reform	.7343	.08401	2.4442	.32112	3.2936	.48210	2.3880	.34111
N			1191		1191			1191
F-score	.797		.214		1.837		2.821	
<i>Mainland China</i>								
Democratic	NA		NA		2.8264	.35013	2.1924	.32100
Non-democratic					2.9236	.37044	2.3073	.33823
N					3413		3413	
F-score					50.773***		84.196***	

\*\*\* $P < .001$ , \*\* $P < .01$ , \* $P < .05$

Table 3. Regression for Democratic Values

	Japan	Korea	Taiwan	Mongolia	Singapore
(Constant)	2.438*** (.106)	3.565*** (.112)	3.562*** (.112)	2.731*** (.119)	4.434*** (.154)
Democratic (reform) generation	.024 (.033)	-.021 (.027)	-.044 (.030)	.026 (.028)	.096** (.035)
Democratic performance	.053* (.025)	-.084** (.032)	-.083** (.032)	.036* (.028)	-.163*** (.035)
Governance quality	-.031 (.033)	-.248*** (.034)	-.249*** (.032)	-.094** (.033)	-.315*** (.047)
Government performance	-.075*** (.021)	-.070** (.021)	-.070** (.021)	-.084** (.026)	-.165*** (.026)
Economic condition	-.051* (.023)	.008 (.022)	.010 (.022)	-.027 (.027)	-.013 (.026)
Political attitudes	.162*** (.020)	.038 (.022)	.038 (.022)	.064* (.025)	.021 (.021)
Social trust	.013* (.008)	.004 (.008)	.003 (.008)	.006 (.011)	-.003 (.008)
Education	.032*** (.006)	.015* (.007)	.016* (.007)	.015** (.005)	.005 (.005)
Religiosity	-.007 (.012)	-.019 (.012)	-.020 (.012)	-.021 (.012)	-.044** (.014)
Gender: Male	.065** (.021)	.003 (.024)	.004 (.024)	-.003 (.024)	-.013 (.023)
N	1693	1045	1045	1107	1000
R-square	.118	.150	.151	.061	.249

\*\*\* $P < .001$ , \*\* $P < .01$ , \* $P < .05$

Table 4. Regression for Support for Existing Regimes

	Japan	Korea	Taiwan	Mongolia	Singapore	Malaysia	China
(Constant)	1.030** * (.108)	1.058*** (.129)	.929*** (.094)	.760*** (.152)	1.026*** (.133)	.768*** (.135)	.853*** (.087)
Democratic (reform) generation	-.143*** (.034)	-.033 (.035)	-.071** (.027)	-.087* (.037)	-.050 (.031)	.007 (.028)	-.046** (.015)
Government performance	.239*** (.021)	.106*** (.027)	.173*** (.023)	.179*** (.034)	.203*** (.022)	.237*** (.027)	.161*** (.023)
Governance quality	.475*** (.032)	.456*** (.042)	.420*** (.034)	.326*** (.043)	.410*** (.039)	.519*** (.039)	.463*** (.026)
Economic condition	.040 (.023)	.079** (.029)	.066** (.020)	.184*** (.035)	.061** (.023)	.088*** (.022)	.088*** (.008)
Political attitudes	-.079*** (.021)	.007 (.028)	.017	.020 (.033)	-.001 (.018)	-.004 (.023)	.004 (.953)
Social trust	.019* (.009)	.017 (.010)	.015 (.008)	.070*** (.014)	.004 (.007)	-.001 (.011)	.013 (.545)
Education	-.019*** (.007)	-.036** (.009)	-.017** (.006)	-.031*** (.006)	.002 (.005)	-.022** (.006)	-.007 (.004)
Religiosity	.010 (.012)	.004 (.016)	.035* (.014)	.002 (.016)	.017 (.013)	-.023 (.023)	-
Gender: Male	-.003 (.021)	-.020 (.031)	-.016 (.023)	.062* (.032)	.056** (.020)	-.024 (.027)	.018 (.014)
N	1693	1045	1195	1107	1000	1031	2212
R-square	.305	.230	.343	.243	.267	.431	.277

\*\*\* $P < .001$ , \*\* $P < .01$ , \* $P < .05$

Table 5. Regression for Trust in Political Institutions

	Japan	Korea	Taiwan	Mongolia	Singapore	Malaysia	China
(Constant)	.501*** (.067)	.572*** (.081)	.566*** (.066)	.427*** (.085)	.642***(.124)	.066 (.098)	.487*** (.072)
Democratic generation	-.029 (.021)	-.008 (.022)	.038* (.019)	.031 (.021)	-.123*** (.029)	.023 (.020)	-.028* (.013)
Government performance	.098*** (.013)	.081*** (.017)	.106***(.016)	.076*** (.019)	.058** (.020)	.118*** (.019)	.064** (.019)
Governance quality	.229*** (.020)	.284*** (.026)	.289*** (.024)	.146*** (.024)	.336*** (.036)	.323*** (.028)	.412*** (.022)
Economic condition	.108*** (.014)	.081*** (.018)	.067*** (.014)	.161*** (.020)	.041 (.022)	.178*** (.016)	.125*** (.012)
Political attitudes	-.013 (.013)	-.046* (.018)	-.020 (.014)	.024 (.018)	.018 (.017)	.000 (.017)	-.038*** (.011)
Social trust	.029*** (.005)	.039*** (.006)	.018** (.006)	.036*** (.008)	.031*** (.007)	.032*** (.008)	.034*** (.005)
Education	-.001 (.004)	-.017** (.005)	-.026*** (.004)	-.016*** (.004)	.008 (.004)	-.013** (.005)	-.007* (.003)
Religiosity	.007 (.008)	-.003 (.010)	.026** (.010)	.009 (.009)	.032** (.012)	.022 (.017)	-
Gender: Male	.020 (.013)	.004 (.019)	-.008 (.016)	.021 (.018)	-.034 (.019)	.013 (.019)	-.010(.012)
N	1693	1045	1195	1107	1000	1031	2212
R-square	.243	.292	.349	.221	.267	.442	.334

\*\*\* $P < .001$ , \*\* $P < .01$ , \* $P < .05$

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## END NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> In the analysis, the responses “don’t know” and “no response” are set in the missing values, and series means are applied to replace the missing values.

<sup>2</sup> Democratic preference over other regimes is an index constructed of nine items. Complete wordings of the items are as follows: 1) Here is a scale of 1 to 10 measuring the extent to which people think democracy is suitable for our country. If “1” means that democracy is completely unsuitable for [name of country] today and “10” means that it is completely suitable, where would you place our country today? Responses were recoded in two categories: 1-5 = unsuitable, 6-10 = suitable. 2) Which of the following statements comes closest to your own opinion? 1) Democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government; 2) Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one; 3) For people like me, it does not matter whether we have a democratic or a nondemocratic regime. This item is recoded: 1 = democracy is always suitable, 0 = others. 3) Which of the following statements comes closer to your own view? 1) Democracy is capable of solving the problems of our society; 2) Democracy cannot solve our society’s problems (recoded: 1 = democracy is capable, 0 = otherwise). 4) If you had to choose between democracy and economic development, which would you say is more important? 1) Economic development is definitely more important, 2) Economic development is somewhat more important, 3) Democracy is somewhat more important, 4) Democracy is definitely more important. It is recoded: 1 = democracy is more important, 0 = economic development is more important. 5) “Democracy may have its problems, but it is still the best form of government.” Recoded: 1 = agree, 0 = disagree. 6) We should get rid of parliament and elections and have a strong leader decide things. Recoded: 1 = disagree, 0 = agree. 7) Only one political party should be allowed to stand for election and hold office. Recoded: 1 = disagree, 0 = agree. 8) The army (military) should come in to govern the country. Recoded: 1 = disagree, 0 = agree. 9) We should get rid of elections and parliaments and have experts make decisions on behalf of the people. Recoded: 1 = disagree, 0 = agree. These scores are added to construct a 0-1 point scale of a democratic preference index. Reliability statistic (Cranbach Alpha) of the items is .578.

<sup>3</sup> Complete wordings of the ten items are as follows: The government should consult religious authorities when interpreting the laws; Women should not be involved in politics as much as men; Government leaders are like the head of a family, we should all follow their decisions; The government should decide whether certain ideas should be allowed to be discussed in society; Harmony of the community will be disrupted if people organize lots of groups; When judges decide important cases, they should accept the view of the executive branch; If the government is constantly checked [i.e. monitored and supervised] by the legislature, it cannot possibly accomplish great things; If we have political leaders who are morally upright, we can let them decide everything; If people have too many different ways of thinking, society will be chaotic; When the country is facing a difficult situation, it is ok for the government to disregard the law in order to deal with the situation. Responses to each item are on a 1-4 point scale: strongly agree to strongly disagree. The reliability statistic (Cranbach Alpha) of the items is .723. A 1-4 point scale of a democratic value index is constructed from the items.

<sup>4</sup> Complete wordings of the five items are as follows: Over the long run, our system of government is capable of solving the problems our country faces; Thinking in general, I am proud of our system of government; A system like ours, even if it runs into problems, deserves the people’s support; I would rather live under our system of government than any other that I can think of; Compared with other systems in the world, would you say our system of government works fine as it is, needs minor change, needs major change, or should be replaced. Responses to each item are on a four-point scale, recoded as: 1 = very negative response and 4 = very positive response. A 1-4 point scale of an existing regime support index is constructed from the items. The reliability statistic (Cranbach Alpha) of the items is .802.

<sup>5</sup> Trust in courts, national government, parliament, the military, police, civil service, party, and election commission. Responses to each item are on a four-point scale, recoded so that 1 indicates none at all and 4 indicates a great deal of trust. The response for each item is scaled 1-4, and recoded as follows: 1 = none at all and 4 = a great deal of trust. A 1-4 point scale of an institutional trust index is constructed from the items. The reliability statistic (Cranbach Alpha) of the items is .891.

<sup>6</sup> Democratic performance here consists of four items. Here are the complete wordings of the items: 1) On the

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whole, how free and fair would you say the last national election was? Completely free and fair (4), free and fair with minor problems (3), free and fair but with major problems (2), not free or fair (1). 2) On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in [Country]? Very satisfied (4), fairly satisfied (3), not very satisfied (2), or not at all satisfied (1). 3) In your opinion how much of a democracy is [Country Name]? A full democracy (4), a democracy with minor problems (3), a democracy with large problems (2), or not a democracy (1). 4) Where would you place our country under the present government? (1 = completely undemocratic, 10 = completely democratic). This 10-point scale was recoded into four categories (completely undemocratic = 1-2, somewhat undemocratic = 3-5, somewhat democratic = 6-8, and completely democratic = 9-10). From these four items was constructed a 1-4 point scale of a democratic performance index, in which 1 means very bad and 4 very good. The reliability statistic (Cronbach Alpha) of the items is .647.

<sup>7</sup> Not all items of governance quality in ABS are included here. Selection is based on positive interitem correlations in the reliability test. Complete wordings of the items included in this work are as follows: All citizens from different ethnic communities in Country X are treated equally by the government; Rich and poor people are treated equally by the government; People have basic necessities like food, clothes, and shelter; People are free to speak what they think without fear; How often do government officials withhold important information from the public view?; How often do you think government leaders break the law or abuse their power?; To what extent is the legislature capable of keeping government leaders in check?; How well do you think the government responds to what people want?; How much do you feel that having elections makes the government pay attention to what the people think?; How widespread do you think corruption and bribe-taking are in your local/municipal government? Would you say ...? How widespread do you think corruption and bribe-taking are in the national government [in capital city]? Would you say ...? In your opinion, is the government working to crack down on corruption and root out bribery? Responses to each item were scaled 1-4 and recoded, where 1 means very negative, and 4 is very positive in evaluating governance quality regarding the specific item. The total number of items is 12, from which is then constructed an index scaled from 1-4, where 1 means that the quality of government is very poor and 4 means very good. The reliability statistic of the items (Cronbach Alpha) is .765.

<sup>8</sup> Government performance is a 1-4 point scale index, constructed from 5 items. Complete wordings of the items are as follows: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the [name of president, etc. ruling current] government? In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? How likely is it that the government will solve the most important problem you identified within the next five years? Based on your experience, how easy or difficult is it to obtain the following services? Identity document, help from police when you need it. Generally speaking, how safe is living in this city/ town/ village – very safe, safe, unsafe or very unsafe? The responses to each item are on a 4 point scale and recoded. 1 means very negative, 4 very positive. The reliability statistic (Cronbach Alpha) is .476.

<sup>9</sup> Economic condition in this study is an index scaled from 1-5, where 1 means very negative and 5 is very positive regarding the economic situation and prospect, constructed from 6 items as follows: 1) How would you rate the overall economic condition of our country today? 2) How would you describe the change in the economic condition of our country over the last few years? 3) What do you think will be the state of our country's economic condition a few years from now? 4) As for your own family, how do you rate the economic situation of your family today? 5) How would you compare the current economic condition of your family with what it was a few years ago? 6) What do you think the economic situation of your family will be a few years from now? The responses to each item were scaled 1-5 and recoded. The items are very highly correlated and therefore they were added to construct the index. The reliability statistic (Cronbach Alpha) of the items is .824.

<sup>10</sup> There are 5 items for social trust used here: Most people can be trusted (1) and You must be very careful in dealing with people (0), Most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance (0) and Most people would try to be fair (1), Trust with relative (1) and otherwise (0), Trust with neighbor (1) and otherwise (0), and Trust with other people (1) and otherwise (0). A 0-5 point scale of a social trust index is constructed from the items. The reliability statistic (Cronbach Alpha) of the items is .579.

<sup>11</sup> Interested in politics (3 = very interested, 1 = not at all), follow politics and government (1 = never, 3 = everyday), use internet (1 = never, 3 = almost daily), discuss politics with family members or friends (1=never, 3

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= frequently). A 1-3 point scale of a political attitude index is constructed from the items. The reliability statistic (Cranbach Alpha) of the items is .554.

<sup>12</sup> About how often do you practice religious services or rituals these days? Recoded: 1 = never, 4 = every day.  
Would you describe yourself as very religious, moderately religious, slightly religious, not religious at all?  
Recoded: 1 = not at all, 4 = very religious. A 1-4 point scale of religiosity is constructed from the items.  
Correlation of the items is .40.