

# **Influence of Introduction of Single-Member District System on Mayoral Election**

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In 1994, the election system of Japanese House of Representative was changed from the multi-member district system (MMD) to the single-member district system (SMD) with proportional representative system as a result of a political reform. At the time, many statesmen and researchers expected that the new electoral system (SMD) would change the Japanese party system into the two-party system which conforms to Duverger's Law. In contrast, however, almost all researchers on Japanese local politics alleged that the two-party system doesn't affect mayoral elections considering increasing number of independent mayors who has no backed up from specific party. In Japanese local elections, the conservative and progressive party, (ruling party of the Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP) and opposite party of Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) respectively in the National Diet ) generally support the same candidates, for gubernatorial and mayoral election, which is so called "Ainori" coalition.

But it seems to make little sense that the introduction of the new electoral system makes no change in local politics as many scholars have pointed out. The reason of no effect on the local politics simply comes from a fact that many constituencies for elections of the House of Representatives and those for the mayor elections are overlapped. In addition, under the single non-transferable vote (SNTV) system, local politicians, especially mayors, were not able to behave independently from national politics. Therefore, my research focuses on the effects of the new electoral system on local politics.

This paper is composed of ten chapters. In chapter of introduction, overview of this paper and three contributions are described. Among them, chapter 4 especially indicates the framework of this research which is classified based on strength of LDP and relations between electoral boundaries and municipalities. For case studies, cases of four single-member districts; Kanagawa's 12th district (ch.5), Tokyo's 21st district (ch.6), Fukui's 1st district (ch.7), Kyoto's 4th district (ch.8) , are examined.

The examinations revealed the followings; all candidates for Fujisawa Mayoral Election in 2008 were new faces and "independents", that is, free from official party affiliations. However, since they still relied on specific parties and Diet members of the SMD system, their election strategies have been affected by party confrontation between the ruling and opposition parties (ch.5). In Tokyo's 21st district, strategies for a DPJ Diet member are made based on relations between him and the mayor of the city matched to his electorate (ch.6). In Fukui's 1st district where LDP has strong support base, mayoral election candidate keen for support from LDP Diet members (ch.7). DPJ Diet candidate' campaign system is not firmly unified one in which individual candidates keep their autonomy, although local party organizations actively work (ch.8). On the other hand, it is found that Diet members commonly make an appeal to voter based on their characteristics. In conclusion, it is indicated that campaign strategies for Diet members influence on mayoral elections. "Ainori" coalition is not only an issue of local politics, but one of outcomes of election campaign strategies among Diet members.