

Electoral Integrity in East Asia

Pippa Norris

Abstract

Elections are essential to liberal democracies. Flawed electoral contests may diminish political trust and undermine democratic support. The Perceptions of Electoral Integrity survey shows a checkered record in East Asia, better in its northeast than its southeast sub-region. The sixth wave of World Values Survey provides empirical evidence for association between citizens' perception of electoral processes and their support for democratic institutions in East Asia.

Keywords: Electoral integrity, election quality, electoral malpractices, democratic support, political trust, East Asia.

Elections are the foundation-stone for liberal democracy—widely regarded as necessary although not sufficient for transitions from authoritarianism and building sustainable democratic governance. Even flawed contests can provide opportunities for mobilization by opposition forces and civil society reform groups.¹ Occasional election upsets, such as in South Korea in 1985 or Thailand in 1992, open the door to further processes of democratization. Yet, rather than inevitably strengthening democracy, even unintentional malpractices can diminish trust, destabilize states, and trigger violence. In some cases, flawed elections can be manipulated by ruling parties as a façade to reinforce the appearance of popular support, to fragment and under-cut the opposition, and to deflect international criticism of poor human rights records.

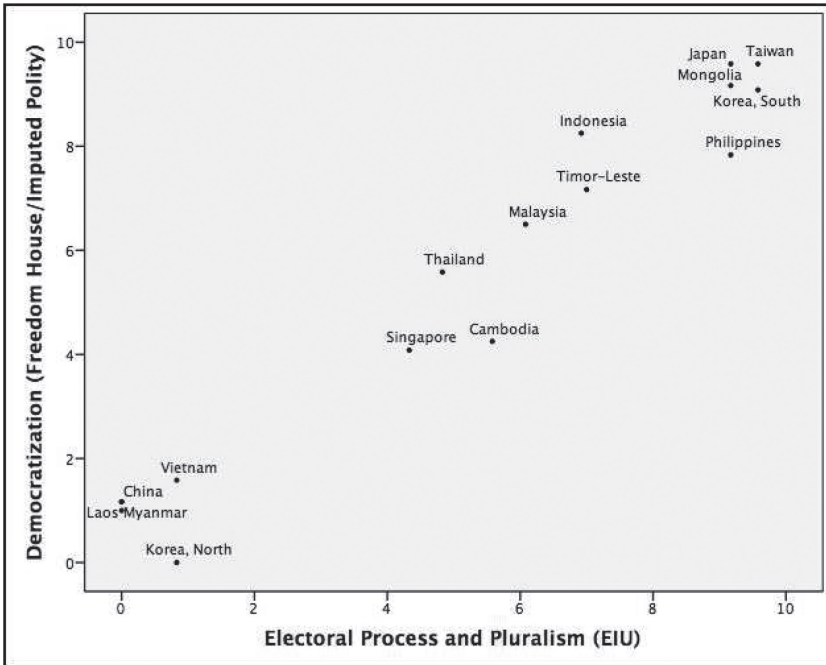
Major challenges to electoral integrity are evident worldwide, as well as in East Asia. The region contains a complex mélange of regimes and diverse arrangements for national elections for the legislature and executive. Figure

Pippa Norris is the McGuire Lecturer in Comparative Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and Professor of Government and International Relations at the University of Sydney. She directs the Electoral Integrity Project, based at both universities. <Pippa_Norris@hks.harvard.edu>

This essay is based on the author's chapter in the forthcoming Routledge *Handbook on East Asian Democratization*, edited by Tun-jen Cheng and Yun-han Chu.

¹ Staffan I. Lindberg, *Democracy and Elections in Africa* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

Figure 1. Democracy and Elections



Source: Quality of Government Dataset, 2015.

Note: Level of democratization is the combined measure of Freedom House and imputed Polity V. Electoral process and pluralism is from the Economist Intelligence Unit.

1, comparing measures of contemporary levels of democracy and electoral processes, provides a snapshot of the contrasts. Nations in the region include an absolute sultanate who hand-picks members of the Legislative Council (Brunei), unstable states where competitive contests have ended in military coup d'états (Myanmar, Thailand), one-party elections (Vietnam, North Korea, Laos, China at the village level), authoritarian states dominated by hegemonic ruling parties (Singapore since 1959, Malaysia since 1957, Cambodia since 1998), new-born but weak states (Timor-Leste), as well as fully-competitive multiparty states where governing and opposition parties have rotated in office or formed coalition governments during the third-wave era (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Mongolia). Moreover, even in states where multiparty competition flourishes, elections can still be deeply flawed throughout the electoral cycle, falling foul through incompetent electoral authorities, electoral laws and procedures favoring incumbents, district gerrymandering or malapportionment, inaccurate voter registries, a dearth of women or minority candidates, excessively high thresholds for ballot access by challengers, an uneven playing field in media or money, vote buying, ballot

stuffing, or intimidation at the ballot box, miserable levels of turnout, dishonest or inaccurate counts, and contentious outbreaks of violent protest challenging the legitimacy of the process and results.

To understand all these issues, the first part of this essay compares the quality of contemporary elections across eight diverse nation-states within the region where data are available to consider how East Asia rates compared with the rest of the world. Evidence draws upon the results of an expert survey, the third release of the Perception of Electoral Integrity (PEI-3.0). The issues revealed by the comparison are illustrated in more depth in Part II, through several selected case studies describing problems experienced in recent contests, including in the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Turning to micro-level analysis, Part III uses evidence from the sixth wave of the World Values Survey to compare ordinary citizens' attitudes toward electoral integrity in six societies—Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand—to see whether perceptions of integrity and malpractices by citizens living in these countries serve to damage civic engagement, harm confidence in elected institutions, and thus undermine democratic legitimacy. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the main findings and considers their implications for processes of democratization in the region.

Expert Perceptions of Electoral Integrity in East Asia

The core notions of “flawed” or “failed” elections, which lie at the heart of this essay, require clear standards and consistent benchmarks against which to judge the quality of any contest. To lay the groundwork, as conceptualized and defined elsewhere, the overarching notion of “electoral integrity” refers to *contests respecting international standards and global norms governing the appropriate conduct of elections*.² These standards have been endorsed in a series of authoritative conventions, treaties, protocols, case laws, and guidelines by agencies of the international community.³ Authority derives primarily from resolutions and treaties passed by the U.N. General Assembly, the U.N. Security Council, and U.N. human rights bodies, supplemented by agreement reaching within regional intergovernmental bodies such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization of American States (OAS), the African Union (AU), and the European Union

² See also, Pippa Norris, “The New Research Agenda Studying Electoral Integrity,” Special Issue, *Electoral Studies* 32, no. 4 (2014): 563-575, and Pippa Norris, Richard W. Frank, and Ferran Martínez i Coma, eds., *Advancing Electoral Integrity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

³ Domenico Tuccinardi, ed., *International Obligations for Elections: Guidelines for Legal Frameworks* (Stockholm: International IDEA; Carter Center, 2014), and Carter Center, *Elections Obligations and Standards Database: A Carter Center Manual*, Atlanta, <http://www.cartercenter.org/des-search/des/Introduction.aspx> (accessed February 2016).

(EU).⁴ Following ratification, international standards apply universally to all endorsing countries throughout the electoral cycle, providing legal obligations for states, including during the pre-electoral period, the campaign, on polling day, and in its aftermath.

What electoral rights are recognized in international treaties? International IDEA, working in conjunction with the Carter Center, has compiled the most comprehensive and systematic set of obligations derived from international jurisprudence.⁵ The foundation for these standards rests upon article 21(3) in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR 1948), along with many subsequent international conventions, treaties, and agreements. It should be noted that, although clearly a perspective based on internationally sanctioned standards of human rights is close cousin to notions of democratic elections, these concepts do differ in several important regards, and our core concept does not derive its authority directly from democratic theory. Agreement about the principles which should govern the conduct of elections were specified in many foundational agreements, notably article 25 of the U.N. International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR of 1966), which specifies the need for:

- Periodic elections at regular intervals;
- Universal suffrage which includes all sectors of society;
- Equal suffrage, in the idea of one-person, one-vote;
- The right to stand for public office and contest elections;
- The rights of all eligible electors to vote;
- The use of a secret ballot process;
- Genuine elections; and that,
- Elections should reflect the free expression of the will of the people.⁶

The overarching concept of *electoral integrity* remains highly abstract, so that in practice, to measure and monitor standards, it can be usefully broken down into its component parts. In an influential framework, Andreas Schedler previously has suggested that problems of democratic elections involve a “menu of manipulation” that ranges sequentially in a series of steps from restrictions on the range of electoral offices, through the formation and

⁴ Avery Davis-Roberts and David J. Carroll, “Using International Law to Assess Elections,” *Democratization* 17, no. 3 (2010): 416-441, and David J. Carroll and Avery Davis-Roberts, “The Carter Center and Election Observation: An Obligations-Based Approach for Assessing Elections,” *Election Law Journal* 12, no. 1 (2013): 87-93.

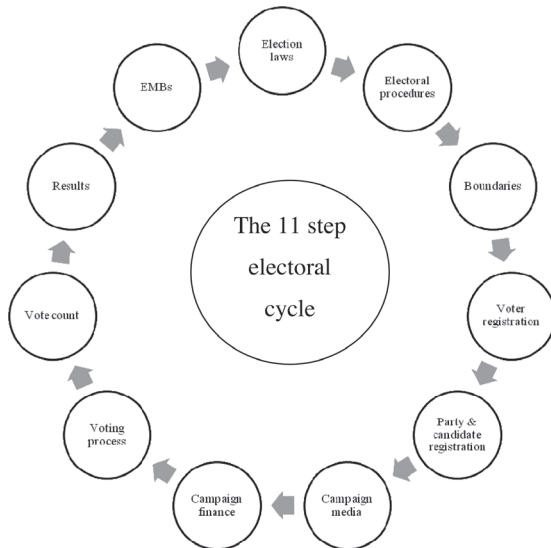
⁵ Domenico Tuccinardi, ed., *International Obligations for Elections: Guidelines for Legal Frameworks* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2014).

⁶ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner (December 16, 1966, entry into force March 23, 1976), <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm> (accessed February 2016).

expression of preferences, to the consequences of voting choices for office holders.⁷ Conceived in this way, breaking any single link in the process is capable of undermining the legitimacy of elections. Almost a decade ago now, the international community also moved toward understanding that electoral assistance and monitoring should not be focused purely upon election-day, or even on the short-term period of the official campaign. Instead, each election should be understood as a cyclical process involving a long series of sequential steps.⁸ The idea of an electoral cycle has now become the “gold standard” for the international community seeking to strengthen the capacity of election management bodies (EMBs) and to invest in long-term sustainable development.⁹

To operationalize the core notion, the electoral cycle can be deconstructed into a series of eleven sequential steps, illustrated schematically in figure 2. Diverse flaws can arise at any stage of the process. This includes from the design of electoral law, such as the use of overly restrictive or cumbersome nomination requirements for third parties in their efforts to gain ballot access. Electoral procedures also can be problematic, arising from the actions of

Figure 2. Steps in the Sequential Electoral Cycle



⁷ Andreas Schedler, “The Menu of Manipulation,” *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 36-50.

⁸ Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Handbook for Long-Term Election Observers: Beyond Election Day Observation* (Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR, 2007).

⁹ “Elections: A Continuous Cycle,” International IDEA: Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Stockholm (March 21, 2012), http://www.idea.int/publications/15_years_supporting_democracy/a_continuous_cycle.cfm (accessed February 2016).

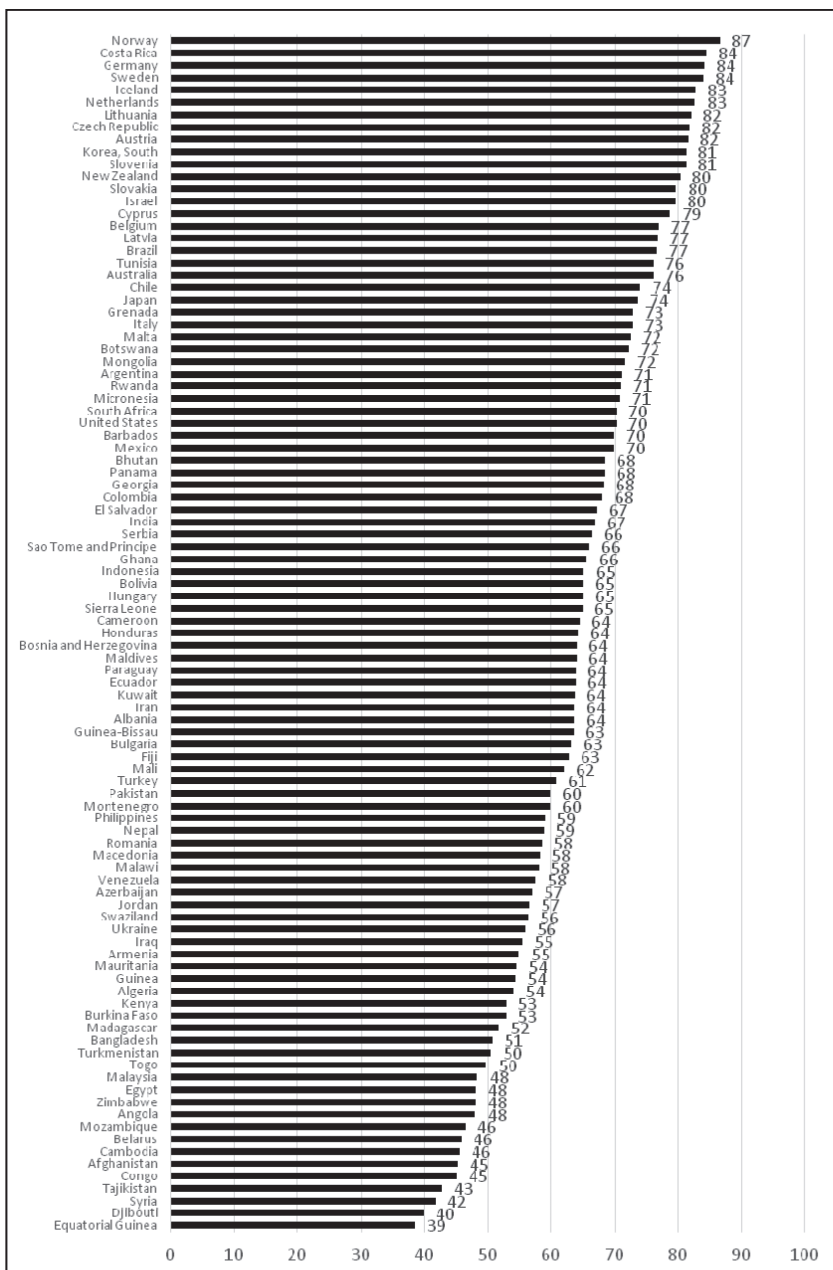
partisan or incompetent local officials. Integrity, too, is undermined by partisan gerrymandering or by malapportionment favoring incumbents in the process of redistricting constituency boundaries. Voter registration processes may exclude many citizens, such as transient or felon populations, or specific minority groups, exemplified by inaccurate and incomplete electoral rolls, or by intentional acts of voter suppression through onerous requirements. Party and candidate registration processes are also critical, with restrictions illustrated by excessively high thresholds for ballot access facing independent candidates or new parties.¹⁰ Campaign media can fail to provide a level playing field, such as patronage appointments eroding the independence of broadcasting regulatory bodies or incumbency predominance in purchased advertising. Political finance regulations pose another range of challenges, especially the sheer size of the war chests needed for successful challengers. Voting processes in polling places come under considerable scrutiny, including ballot irregularities, broken machines, or cases of fraudulent impersonation. Inaccurate counts or insecure ballot seals can undermine the vote tabulation process. The credibility of the results can suffer from undue delays in their announcement or by lack of transparency and audit processes in voting records. And, finally, election management bodies are vital to administering electoral processes and implementing the rules, and problems can commonly arise across any stage of the electoral cycle from authorities lacking know-how capacity, technical resources, or a culture of impartiality.

Based on the above measures, what is the record of recent elections in East Asia and how do elections in the region compare with the rest of the world? In general, comparative studies of elections in the region suggest that we should expect a varied performance and this is indeed what we observe.¹¹ Figure 3 presents the overall summary 100-point Perceptions of Electoral Integrity index for 107 countries where data are available. The results suggest that South Korea, Japan, and Mongolia hold contemporary elections which display relatively high quality across all the components of the electoral cycle, compared with the rest of the world. Despite some issues which emerged after the survey in South Korea, the positive ranking of South Korea and Japan is hardly surprising, given high levels of economic development, the strength of public sector management, as well as the length of experience of democracy over successive multiparty contests. Nevertheless, the fact that the June 2013 Mongolian presidential election was well-rated by PEI experts and by international observers suggests that the process of democratization in this country has been progressing fast.¹² The result of the contest was a

¹⁰ Scot Schraufnagel, *Third Party Blues: The Truth and Consequences of Two-Party Dominance* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

¹¹ Aurel Croissant, ed., *Electoral Politics in Southeast & East Asia* (Singapore: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Office for Regional Co-operation in Southeast Asia, 2002).

Figure 3. Countries Worldwide Ranked by Perceptions of Electoral Integrity



clear victory for incumbent President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj (Democratic Party), with an 8-point lead over his main opponent, Badmaanyambuugiin Bat-Erdene (Mongolian People's Party). The Democratic Party also secured a bare majority of parliamentary seats. The outcome represented a step forward from the previous Mongolian contests in 2008, which had been marred by opposition protests, deadly violence, arrests, and a state of emergency.¹³

By contrast, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, and the Philippines were all rated relatively poorly by PEI experts. In Cambodia, for example, a series of elections since 1993 has been mired in controversy. The legislative elections on July 28, 2013, generated a close standoff between the Cambodian People's Party (CPP)—the dominant governing power since 1979—and the opposition Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP), founded in 2012 and led by Sam Rainsy, former finance minister. The outcome had been expected to be a foregone conclusion, comfortably returning the CPP, but the results confounded most pundits. The CPP secured 3,235,969 votes (49 percent of the popular vote) and 68 seats, down 22 from the 2008 elections. The opposition CNRP garnered 2,946,176 votes (44 percent) and 55 seats, 26 more than the Sam Rainsy and Human Rights parties combined in 2008. Following the close result, the opposition rejected the outcome and appealed to the U.N. on the grounds that voter rolls were inaccurate and the electoral authorities were not impartial, sparking violent protests.¹⁴

The quality of these contests can be examined in greater depth when broken down using similar 100-point standardized indicators across all stages of the electoral cycle, as illustrated in table 1. The results suggest that there are two stages which are weakest across most countries under comparison—namely campaign media and political finance. For reasons discussed in more detail later, table 1 highlights weaknesses across the board in Cambodia and Malaysia, more specific problems of campaign finance and voter registration in the Philippines, and challenges arising from violent street protests and the inconclusive outcome of the Thai general election in February 2014, ending in a constitutional crisis and military coup d'état. Other elections in the region saw mixed strengths and weaknesses, according to expert assessments, although South Korea and Japan scored relatively well across most stages, according to these evaluations.

So why do some of the observed national elections in the region display greater integrity than others, according to expert evaluations? Three alternative theoretical perspectives, each drawn from the broader comparative literature on

¹² OSCE, *Mongolia: Presidential Election 26 June 2013* (Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2013), <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/105150?download=true> (accessed August 30, 2014).

¹³ For background, see Pavel Maskarinec, "Parliamentary and Presidential Elections in Mongolia, 2012 and 2013," *Electoral Studies* 36 (2014): 186-191.

¹⁴ Duncan McCargo, "Cambodia in 2013 (No) Country for Old Men?" *Asian Survey* 54, no. 1 (2014): 71-77.

Table 1. Electoral Integrity in East Asia

Country	PEI index	Electoral laws	Electoral procedures	District boundaries	Voter registration	Party and candidate registration	Media coverage	Campaign finance	Voting process	Vote count	Results	Electoral authorities
Korea, South	81	68	91	73	90	80	66	72	82	96	88	86
Japan	74	66	89	60	80	74	64	67	72	85	83	80
Mongolia	71	65	83	70	69	72	60	56	72	87	76	77
Indonesia	65	69	70	71	52	72	63	47	66	75	63	74
Thailand	61	80	54	76	67	63	58	59	62	68	47	47
Philippines	59	69	68	61	41	70	61	36	53	68	61	64
Malaysia	48	33	54	28	37	58	38	37	65	56	53	46
Cambodia	46	43	51	45	30	50	43	35	48	65	40	42
Total	63	61	70	62	61	66	59	51	64	75	66	64

Source: PEI-3.0.

democratization, offer insights which may potentially help to explain general cross-national patterns as well as outlier cases. In the classic Lipset tradition, this includes sociological theories, emphasizing the importance of *processes of modernization* that can provide a more hostile or favorable terrain for processes of democratization and for organizing competitive elections in each society.¹⁵ Inhospitable conditions are exemplified by deep-rooted poverty and inequality, a legacy of intercommunal violence in deeply divided multicultural societies, or the curse of natural resources. In countries such as Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, or Thailand, these types of constraints can be expected to hamper well-meaning efforts by reformers to use elections to strengthen transitions from autocracy and the consolidation of democratic regimes. Systematic econometric evidence in multivariate models using global data, presented elsewhere, confirms that levels of economic development usually are associated with better quality contests (not least by providing the resources and infrastructure which help electoral management, as well as more literature and educated publics), while oil-rich states heavily dependent upon natural resources suffer from the usual curse of worse electoral integrity (through problems of corruption and state capture).¹⁶ In the region, similar observations can be made, although the limited number of cases means that the correlations fail to be statistically significant, and there are some observed countries where economic development and natural resources clearly fail to explain the PEI level of electoral integrity, notably the contrasts observed between Cambodia and Mongolia, both with low levels of per capita GDP but where Mongolia has vast access to natural resources.

In addition, accounts rooted in international relations underscore the role of the world community, including *multilateral organizations and donor agencies* seeking to strengthen processes of democratization and electoral integrity in Asia. The most common strategies used in this process involve opening barriers to the diffusion of global norms through the free flow of information across national borders; providing technical assistance and development aid to electoral processes; building the capacity of electoral management bodies; sending international teams of observers to monitor elections; and applying diplomatic pressure to threaten or punish regimes that violate standards.¹⁷ Cross-national evidence also confirms that exposure to globalization and regional neighborhood effects matters for the quality of national elections; countries usually have better rated contests in regions where this is common.¹⁸ The role of the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) illustrates this process. The organization was established in 1997 as a network

¹⁵ Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53, no. 1 (March 1959): 69-105.

¹⁶ Pippa Norris, *Why Elections Fail* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

¹⁷ Daniella Donno, *Defending Democratic Norms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

¹⁸ Norris, *Why Elections Fail*.

of twenty-two domestic civil society organizations from fifteen countries across Asia. The organization's flagship programs are elections observation missions (EOMs) in Asian countries. ANFREL has been prolific: it has carried out approximately fifty EOMs, or on average 3.5 EOMs per year since its inception. In addition, ANFREL provides training and capacity-building programs with its member organizations, and advocacy regarding elections and democracy-related policy issues. By contrast, however, among regional intergovernmental organizations, at least until recently, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has lagged behind equivalent bodies in strengthening democratic governance and human rights, at least compared with the role of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Latin America or the Organization for Security and Economic Cooperation (OSCE) and the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe. Due to the political composition of member states, ASEAN has favored focusing primarily upon promoting economic and security cooperation in Southeast Asia rather than human rights. Traditionally emphasizing nonintervention in member states, ASEAN often has been silent and passive on major political developments in the region. OAS has worked on election observation since 1962. By contrast, it was only in 2007 that ASEAN formally signed a charter committing member states to respect the principles of democracy and human rights. There are some signs that the political role of ASEAN may have been changing over recent years, however, although the organization has never conducted any observer missions, and ASEAN's impact will not be equivalent to the transformational role played by the European Union when offering the "carrots" of membership to post-communist states.¹⁹ Both structural and international factors can be treated as conditions that either constrain or provide important opportunities for domestic reformers seeking to strengthen electoral institutions in East Asia.

Finally, *institutional* theories emphasize the role of overarching constitutional arrangements in a country (especially power-sharing institutions and type of electoral system), the organizational structure, governance capacities, and the bureaucratic ethos of electoral management bodies, as well as the quality of electoral laws and administrative procedures. In particular, among the constitutional arrangements and structural features of regimes in Asia, the general quality of elections is likely to be influenced by electoral systems, especially the use of winner-take-all single-member plurality districts (which increase the incentive for candidate fraud in competitive races, where a few votes make all the difference). This pattern generally has been observed worldwide.²⁰ Table 2 shows the electoral systems used in the contests under comparison, where the case of Cambodia suggests that

¹⁹ Vanessa Johanson Alpern, *Promoting Electoral Integrity in Southeast Asia: ANFREL and ASEAN* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2012).

²⁰ Norris, *Why Elections Fail*.

Table 2. Elections and Electoral Systems under Comparison

Country	Election under comparison	Dates	Electoral system
Korea, South	Presidential	Dec. 19, 2012	President: plurality vote
Japan	Legislative	Dec. 16, 2012 H of R Dec. 13, 2014 H of R July 21, 2013 H of C	House of Representatives: a mixed electoral system; 300 members elected through plurality single member districts; 180 through closed-party list proportional representation. House of Councilors: 96 members in a mixed electoral system; 146 by Single Non-Transferable Vote, and 96 in party list PR.
Mongolia	Presidential	June 26, 2013	Presidential elections: Direct popular vote in a two-ballot absolute majority system.
Indonesia	Legislative Presidential	April 9, 2014 July 9, 2014	House of Representatives: 560 members are elected by open list proportional representation. President: Direct popular vote in a two-ballot absolute majority system.
Thailand	Legislative	Feb. 2, 2014	House of Representatives: Mixed electoral system. 375 members are elected by plurality vote in single-member constituencies; 125 members are elected through closed-list proportional representation.
Philippines	Legislative	May 13, 2013	House of Representatives: Mixed electoral system. 233 members are elected by plurality vote in single-member constituencies; 58 members are elected through closed-list proportional representation.
Malaysia	Legislative	May 5, 2013	House of Representatives: 222 members are elected in single member plurality districts.
Cambodia	Legislative	July 28, 2013	National Assembly: 123 members elected by Proportional Representation.

proportional representation (PR) elections alone do not inevitably safeguard against electoral malpractices, although the dangers of malapportionment and gerrymandering by the ruling party are clearer in the Malay first-past-the-post (FPTP) elections. Other states in the region use either pure majoritarian/plurality rules or mixed parallel electoral systems. In the latter cases, it would be useful to examine in further research the indicators of electoral malpractices within each country, such as incidents of vote buying or ballot stuffing, across both types of electoral systems.²¹ Another related issue concerns laissez-faire deregulation of campaign spending (producing an uneven playing field in party and candidate competition). Thus, Japan cleaned up its use of money in politics during the early 1990s, following a series of major scandals, but many other states in the region have not followed suit by implementing effective regulations and oversight agencies.²² Moreover, global comparisons suggest that electoral administration is usually influenced both by governance capacity and by the informal norms which shape the professionalism and impartiality of public servants.²³ In particular, the quality of elections reflects the overall effectiveness of governments—monitored by factors such as the quality of the civil service and public services, the independence of public sector agencies from political pressures, and the quality of policy formulation and implementation. Where public administration is based upon a cadre of well-trained, experienced, and competent officials, electoral authorities can call on these resources to manage effective, efficient, and impartial contests. Where these qualities are lacking, however, so that the public sector is undermined by partisan politics and patronage appointments, the quality of electoral management is likely to suffer, along with the general delivery of public goods and services. The informal ethos and effectiveness of public sector management has been found to be more important for electoral integrity than the structural independence of electoral administrative agencies.²⁴

Case Studies of Electoral Integrity

Given the limited number of cases, it remains difficult to test the relationships based on comparing states in East Asia. But a few varied examples drawn from recent contests in the region illustrate some of the common malpractices which are observed in several Asian countries, including the cases of the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, damaging electoral legitimacy, but with different degrees of severity for regime stability.

²¹ Fabrice Edouard Lehoucq and Iván Molina Jiménez, *Stuffing the Ballot Box: Fraud, Electoral Reform, and Democratization in Costa Rica* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

²² Pippa Norris and Andrea Abel van Es, *Checkbook Elections: Political Finance in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

²³ Norris, *Why Elections Fail*.

²⁴ Ibid.

The Philippines

The May 13, 2013 mid-term elections to the Philippine House of Representatives shows fragmented multiparty competition in which technical problems of electoral administration and issues of corruption further weakened public confidence in the integrity of the process. The House of Representatives used a mixed electoral system. In total, 234 members were elected through single-member districts and 58 were elected through closed party list proportional representation, designed to reflect ethnic communities and independent candidates where the major parties are not allowed to run. Other contests held on the same day were for half the Senate seats, as well as gubernatorial and local elections. The outcome was seen as a considerable success and boost in support for President Benigno Aquino (Liberal Party), who had held the presidency since June 2010. Members of the ruling Liberal Party and its allies swept the Senate, winning nine of the twelve contested seats. Candidates and parties allied with the administration also performed well in the House of Representatives and claimed the majority of gubernatorial and mayoral seats across the archipelago. Thus, the Liberal Party received 38 percent of the popular vote in single-member districts in the House of Representatives, winning 110 members (37 percent), making it the largest party. Opposition parties were highly fragmented, with the United Nationalist Alliance winning 11 percent of the vote, and support scattered across a wide number of unaffiliated local parties. The election was competitive—with almost three dozen parties standing for the House of Representatives, as well as independents. In total, the Philippine Commission on Elections (Comelec) reported that on May 13, 2013, over 18,000 candidates stood for election at all levels of office.²⁵ Nevertheless, this contest was marred by several problems. As one review noted:

Delays in the transmission of election results gave rise to considerable controversy, with charges of vote-rigging—especially in the contest for Senate seats—raising doubts in some quarters about the credibility of the elections. Vote-buying remained common. Overall, more than 70 people were reportedly killed in election-related violence. Entrenched “political dynasties” and established local bosses retained control over countless mayoral, gubernatorial, and congressional seats, with significant numbers of municipalities seeing incumbent mayors running unopposed.²⁶

²⁵ “2013 Election Results,” iRehistro: Commission on Elections (May 2013), <http://www.2013electionresults.comelec.gov.ph/> (accessed February 2016).

²⁶ John Sidel, “The Philippines in 2013: Disappointment, Disgrace, Disaster,” *Asian Survey* 54, no. 1 (2014): 64-70.

It was the second when Comelec had switched from paper ballots to electronic balloting machines using Precinct Counting Optical Scans. Observers reported that this produced a series of technical glitches, including initialization errors, machine breakdown due to hardware problems, ballot rejection by the machine, and transmission problems to the canvassing centers and Comelec servers.²⁷ There also were complaints that the software source code produced by Smartmatic for the electronic machines was not available for scrutiny and independent verification well ahead of polling day. Attempts to use techniques of electoral forensics led to claims of irregularities, although the evidence remains under dispute.²⁸ In the past, Philippine contests have been heavily dependent upon traditional political cultures and practices, characterized largely by favoritism and personalism, money politics and corruption, the pursuit of pork-barrel and perk, election fraud, and election-related violence. The 2013 elections, although having genuine competition among multiple parties, continued to display many of these flaws.

Indonesia

Indonesia illustrates an increasingly successful democratic state and the largest Muslim-majority society in the world, but elections remain flawed, especially in the role of money in politics and shortcomings in voter registration processes. Indonesia held legislative elections on April 9, 2014, followed a few months later by a presidential contest on July 9, 2014. In the legislative elections—the fourth since the end of authoritarian rule in 1998—560 seats were contested in the House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, DPR) by open list proportional representation.²⁹ Simultaneously, three tiers of regional legislatures were elected—132 seats in the Regional Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, DPD) and more than 19,000 seats in two tiers of regional houses of representatives.³⁰ Voter turnout was 67 percent, or 124,972 million votes out of 185,826 million registered voters³¹—including about 22 million first-time voters.³²

²⁷ “2013 Mid-Term Automated Elections: From Bad to Worse; Comelec Is Now Anointer of Presumed Winners,” Automated Elections Systems (AES) Watch (May 18, 2013), <https://aeswatchblog.wordpress.com/2013/05/18/2013-mid-term-automated-elections-from-bad-to-worse-comelec-is-now-anointer-of-presumed-winners/> (accessed February 2016).

²⁸ “Philippine Elections Tainted by Allegations of Automated Fraud,” Global Voices (May 25, 2013), <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2013/05/25/philippine-elections-tainted-by-allegations-of-automated-fraud/> (accessed February 2016).

²⁹ Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU Parline (2013), http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2147_E.htm (accessed February 2016).

³⁰ Election Guide, Indonesia 2014, <http://www.electionguide.org/elections/id/2398> (accessed February 2016).

³¹ Ibid.

³² “Indonesians Vote in Parliamentary Polls,” *BBC News Asia* (April 9, 2014), <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-26917708> (accessed February 2016).

In the presidential contest, there was a two-ballot system requiring one of the candidates to gain an absolute majority of votes. Popular Jakarta governor Joko Widodo (Jokowi) was nominated as presidential candidate for the Indonesian Democratic Party—Struggle (PDI-P). Despite some resistance within his own party, under his leadership the party made gains.³³ The PDI-P won 19 percent, or 109 seats, a significant increase from the previous elections, beating the Golkar party for the first time since 1999. Another winner of the legislative election was the Gerindra party, whose vote share almost tripled from 4.5 percent to 11.8 percent, mainly due to the popularity of its leader, former-General Prabowo Subianto.³⁴ Overall, the legislative election resulted in a fragmented parliament, perpetuating the tradition of coalition politics.

In the run-up to the election, discrepancies in the voter registration lists were uncovered, leading to fears of electoral manipulations on election-day.³⁵ For the first time, no independent international observers monitored the elections, in itself taken by many as a sign of a maturing, more stable, and less politically violent election process.³⁶ Only Indonesian-based observer organizations remained active. Money politics continued to be a major challenge for electoral integrity in the campaign, with independent organization Jaringan Pendidikan Pemilih untuk Rakyat (JPPR) reporting vote buying in over one third of the observed polling places in twenty-five provinces.³⁷ Indonesia Corruption Watch received three hundred reports of vote buying.³⁸ The lack of effective regulation of political finance in this country is documented in detail elsewhere.³⁹ Further evidence indicated that some legislative candidates manipulated vote counting in a number of ways.⁴⁰ Independent vote brokers with changing loyalties remain instrumental for all political parties to get out the vote.⁴¹ Despite these problems, the General

³³ Yuki Fukuoka and Chanintira na Thalang, “The Legislative and Presidential Elections in Indonesia in 2014,” *Electoral Studies* 36 (2014): 210-239.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ “Bad Data List of 75m Voters Risks 2014 Elections, Observers Say,” *Jakarta Globe* (September 24, 2013), <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/bad-data-list-of-75m-voters-risks-2014-elections-observers-say/> (accessed February 2016).

³⁶ “No Foreign Observers for This Year’s Elections,” *Jakarta Post* (March 29, 2014), <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/03/29/no-foreign-observers-year-s-elections.html> (accessed February 2016).

³⁷ “Nine Takeaways from Indonesia’s Legislative Elections,” Asia Foundation (April 14, 2014), <http://asiafoundation.org/in-asia/2014/04/16/nine-takeaways-from-indonesias-legislative-elections/> (accessed February 2016).

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Norris and Abel van Es, *Checkbook Elections*.

⁴⁰ Edward Aspinall, “Money Politics,” *Inside Indonesia* 116 (2014), <http://www.insideindonesia.org/weekly-articles/money-politics-2> (accessed February 2016).

⁴¹ Edward Aspinall, “When Brokers Betray: Clientalism, Social Networks, and Electoral Politics in Indonesia,” *Critical Asian Studies* 46, no. 4 (2014): 545-570, DOI: 10.1080/14672715.2014.960706.

Elections Commission (KPU) was lauded by observers for its increased professionalism,⁴² and with some exceptions in Aceh, the election remained largely peaceful.⁴³

In the following presidential campaign, two candidates were put forward by party coalitions. While former-General Prabowo campaigned on his personality as a leader and appealed to authoritarian sentiments among parts of the electorate,⁴⁴ Jokowi's campaign emphasized his achievements as Jakarta governor. Negative campaigning took a toll on both candidates.⁴⁵ On election-day, the majority of polling institutes called the election for Jokowi, based on exit polls and quick counts. Yet, four survey institutes issued quick counts naming Prabowo as the winner. These polling institutes were found to be aligned with the Prabowo campaign, the conflicting counts allegedly a tactical manipulation of public opinion to buy time to intervene in the official vote count conducted by the KPU.⁴⁶ Yet, the maneuver failed, not least because the Indonesian EMB had committed to placing online the scanned images of the official reports from every single polling place. Several crowdsourced quick count initiatives were instrumental in nudging public opinion by confirming Jokowi.⁴⁷ The KPU announced Jokowi as the winner with 53.1 percent of the vote, and although Prabowo alleged "systematic, structured, and massive fraud" and rejected this result, it was confirmed by the Constitutional Court.⁴⁸ The Indonesian legislative elections were rated better than the presidential contest by the PEI index, and experts agreed that the most relevant problems related to finance and voter registration.

⁴² "Elections Commission Performs Professional Work: Observer," *Antara News* (July 22, 2014), <http://www.antaraneews.com/en/news/94980/elections-commission-performs-professional-work-observer> (accessed February 2016).

⁴³ See "*Pacific Scoop: Violence Overshadows Indonesian Elections in Troubled Aceh*," Pacific Media Center (April 11, 2014), <http://www.pmc.aut.ac.nz/articles/pacific-scoop-violence-overshadows-indonesian-elections-troubled-aceh> (accessed February 2016).

⁴⁴ Edward Aspinall and Marcus Mietzner, "Indonesia Politics in 2014: Democracy's Close Call," *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies* 50, no. 3 (2014): 347-369.

⁴⁵ Yuki Fukuoka and Chanintira na Thalang, "The Legislative and Presidential Elections in Indonesia in 2014," *Electoral Studies* 36 (2014): 210-239.

⁴⁶ Aspinall and Mietzner, "Indonesia Politics in 2014."

⁴⁷ Inaya Rakhmani, "Technology for Transparency," *New Mandala* (July 21, 2014), <http://asiapacific.an.edu.au/newmandala/2014/07/21/technology-for-transparency/> (accessed February 2016). See also, Uuf Brajawidagda and Akemi Takeoka Chatfield, "Roles of Social Media in Open Data Environments: A Case Study of the 2014 Indonesian Presidential Election Voting Results," 25th Australasian Conference on Information Systems, December 8-10, 2014, Auckland, New Zealand.

⁴⁸ "Prabowo-hatta Rejects Election Result," *Jakarta Post* (July 22, 2014), <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/07/22/prabowo-hattarejects-election-result.html> (accessed February 2016).

Malaysia

Malaysia illustrates a country which scored particularly poorly almost across the board on the PEI indices, but especially on money, media, voter registration, electoral laws, and district boundaries. One reason is that the ruling Barisan Nasional (National Front or BN) federal government, a multiparty coalition based on ethnic politics, has enjoyed several financial advantages compared with opposition parties. Politicians have grossly unequal access to funds, in part because, unlike in most countries, parties raise revenues by owning corporations such as television stations and newspapers, and there are lax requirements for transparency and oversight.⁴⁹ Leaders usually gain power in party factions through distributing patronage and largesse. In addition, the fairness of district boundaries in the Malay elections received the worst score of any of the 127 elections in the PEI database, because of malapportionment in the first-past-the-post single-member plurality electoral system. In the May 2013 general elections, BN won 47 percent of the vote in the Malaysian federal parliament (Dewan Rakyat), but swept up 60 percent of the seats. By contrast, the opposition coalition Pakatan Rakyat (PR) won 51 percent of the vote but only 40 percent of the seats. Violating the basic one-person-one-vote principle, a ballot cast in Malaysia's smallest electoral district (Putrajaya, with about 15,700 voters) is nearly ten times as influential as a vote in the largest electoral district (Kapar, with about 145,000 voters).⁵⁰ There is often a "winner's bonus" of seats awarded in Westminster electoral systems, but the partisan nature of malapportionment in Malaysia goes far beyond practices observed in other countries with equivalent FPTP systems. The aftermath of the election saw calls for the electoral commissioner to step down and the leader of the opposition, Anwar Ibrahim, reacted by calling for two days of protests, claiming the contest was the "worst electoral fraud in our history."

Thailand

Thailand exemplifies the most serious problems when elections were derailed by partisan rancor and street violence, catalyzing a military coup that suspended the government and prospects for democratic stability.

Thailand's derailed snap election of February 2, 2014, saw the violent disruption campaign of the opposition People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) and the subsequent disenfranchisement of millions of voters.⁵¹ Full

⁴⁹ Edmund Terence Gomez, "Monetizing Politics: Financing Parties and Elections in Malaysia," *Modern Asian Studies* 46 (2012): 1370-1397.

⁵⁰ Kai Ostwald, "How to Win a Lost Election: Malapportionment in Malaysia's 2013 General Election," *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs* (2013): 521-532.

⁵¹ Max Grömping, "Thailand's Opposition Rejects Elections" (2013), <http://electoralintegrity.blogspot.com.au/2013/12/thailands-opposition-rejects-elections.html> (accessed February 2016).

results of the vote count were not released by the Election Commission of Thailand, and only partial information was provided about a lower-than-usual turnout of 47 percent and a higher number of spoilt ballots.⁵² The election deepened Thailand's political crisis—with the constitutional court annulling the contest on March 21, 2014, and the military staging a coup d'état on May 22, 2014, Thailand's second coup in a decade.⁵³ International watchdog organizations have registered a significant deterioration of the human rights situation in Thailand since the coup.⁵⁴

Despite the proliferation of party bans,⁵⁵ institutional engineering, and the politicization of courts,⁵⁶ popular sentiment seems still strongly in favor of electoral democracy, as election results and turnout since 2001 have shown. Yet, there is a non-negligible and politically powerful minority that rejects elections outright. This coalition argues that politicians are corrupt, and voters are easily bought and too ignorant to distinguish between good and bad politicians.⁵⁷

The results of the PEI survey suggest that elections in Thailand are by and large well-administered in the technical aspects, and that the existing legal framework does not significantly favor incumbents. Election fraud, vote buying, or other forms of manipulation seem to be less problematic and on par with other countries in the region.⁵⁸ The PEI experts identified the opposition movement's intimidation campaign, and the breakdown of the rule of law, as the main problems fatally undermining democratic processes.⁵⁹

⁵² Chris Baker, "Thai Election by the Numbers," *New Mandala* (February 7, 2014), <http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/newmandala/2014/02/07/thai-election-by-the-numbers/> (accessed February 2016), and Aim Sinpeng, "Politics of Electoral Protest in Thailand," *New Mandala* (February 7, 2014), <http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/newmandala/2014/02/07/politics-of-electoral-protest-in-thailand/> (accessed February 2016).

⁵³ "Thailand Military Declares a Coup," *Wall Street Journal* (May 22, 2014), <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303749904579576941085019938> (accessed February 2016).

⁵⁴ See "Thailand: Human Rights in Free Fall," Human Rights Watch (2015), <http://www.hrw.org/news/2015/01/29/thailand-human-rights-free-fall> (accessed February 2016). See also, "Freedom in the World 2015: Thailand," Freedom House (2015), https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/thailand#.VNAuY_mUdbz (accessed February 2016).

⁵⁵ Aim Sinpeng, "Party Banning and the Impact on Party System Institutionalization in Thailand," *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* 36, no. 3 (2014): 442-466.

⁵⁶ Björn Dressel, "Thailand: Judicialization of Politics or Politicization of the Judiciary?" in *The Judicialization of Politics in Asia*, ed. Björn Dressel (London: Routledge, 2012), 79-97.

⁵⁷ Kevin Hewison, "Thailand: The Lessons of Protest," *Asian Studies: Journal of Critical Perspectives on Asia* 50, no. 1 (2014): 1-15.

⁵⁸ Max Grömping, "Electoral Integrity in Thailand," *New Mandala* (May 1, 2014), <http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/newmandala/2014/05/01/electoral-integrity-in-thailand/> (accessed February 2016).

⁵⁹ It must be noted that the survey results were collected before the Constitutional Court's annulment of the election. This event and the subsequent coup are not reflected, therefore, in the experts' assessments.

Do Ordinary Citizens Care about Electoral Integrity?

So far, we have described the quality of elections in the region as assessed by experts, but are any malpractices a technical and abstract matter of limited concern for ordinary citizens? And what are the consequences of any perceived electoral malpractices for political culture, including trust in parties, parliaments, and governments, political participation, and satisfaction with the performance of democracy? Here, we can turn to evidence drawn from six Asian societies included in the sixth wave of the World Values Survey: Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. This represents a diverse set of cases where different challenges face each election, exemplified by massive sit-in street protests and civil disobedience in the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong over controversial attempts by the Communist party to restrict candidate nominations for the Legislative Council and Chief Executive; challenges to one-party predominance and growing popular support for the opposition in Singapore; malapportionment and closer contests challenging the ruling party in Malaysia; problems of vote buying and electoral violence in the Philippines; and regime instability and breakdown in Thailand.

The sixth wave of the World Values Survey (2010-2014) contained a special battery of questions about electoral integrity, designed to gather public opinion toward these sorts of problems. The questions asked respondents how often several statements described elections in their own country, as listed below. Each response was measured using a Lickert-type 4-point agree-disagree scale. The items were recoded in a consistent direction, where a higher code represented greater integrity. These items, designed to reflect common issues in elections described in everyday language, avoided more technical matters which could be poorly understood, such as attitudes toward specific laws, regulations, or electoral procedures. The questions also asked respondents about their *perceptions*, rather than their direct experience. One reason was that respondents might be reluctant to acknowledge first-hand involvement in some problems, such as bribery or violence, due to fear of retribution, legal penalties, or moral norms. When subject to principal component factor analysis, responses to the following questions fell into two scales, measuring electoral integrity and its converse, electoral malpractices, as illustrated in table 3.

In your view, how often do the following things occur in this country's elections?

1. Votes are counted fairly;
2. Opposition candidates are prevented from running;
3. TV news favors the governing party;
4. Voters are bribed;
5. Journalists provide fair coverage of elections;

6. Election officials are fair;
7. Rich people buy elections;
8. Voters are threatened with violence at the polls;
9. Voters are offered a genuine choice at the ballot box.

Accordingly, how did the Asian societies compare against these measures? Table 4 shows how responses varied across the region. The results echo many of the issues highlighted in the region by experts, for example, problems of money in politics, lack of impartial officials, political violence, and TV bias in the Philippines; serious problems of money and media in Taiwan; and similar problems in Thailand. It should be noted that electoral integrity and malpractices are separate dimensions, hence, a country such as Taiwan can do relatively well on one set of indicators while rating poorly on the other. Moreover, according to these specific indices, the public in Singapore seems more positive toward its elections (for example, concerning the lack of financial malfeasance and the role of electoral officials) than might be expected if questions had been asked more directly about malapportionment of district boundaries or the general fairness of electoral laws.

And do public perceptions effect civic engagement through attitudes, including confidence and trust in elected political institutions, satisfaction with democracy, and willingness to obey the law voluntarily, as well as behavior,

Table 3. Dimensions of Survey Items

<i>How often in this country's elections...:</i>	Electoral malpractice	Electoral integrity
Voters are bribed	.814	
Rich people buy elections	.792	
Voters are threatened with violence at the polls	.738	
TV news favors the governing party	.601	
Opposition candidates are prevented from running	.593	
Election officials are fair		.774
Journalists provide fair coverage of elections		.685
Voters are offered a genuine choice in the elections		.675
Votes are counted fairly		.669

Source: World Values Survey, sixth wave, 2010-2014.

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Factor Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Table 4. Public Perceptions of Integrity and Malpractices in Six Asian Elections

Country	Electoral Integrity index, WVS sixth wave	Votes are often counted fairly	Journalists often provide fair coverage of elections	Election officials are often fair	Voters are often offered a genuine choice in the elections
Singapore	77	93%	68%	86%	77%
Taiwan	76	92%	58%	71%	88%
Hong Kong	74	88%	75%	79%	68%
Thailand	74	78%	55%	72%	76%
Malaysia	72	80%	64%	71%	69%
Philippines	72	63%	75%	52%	85%
Total	74	83%	66%	73%	78%

Country	Electoral Malpractice index, WVS sixth wave	Opposition candidates are often prevented from running	TV news often favors the governing party	Voters are often bribed	Rich people often buy elections	Voters are often threatened with violence at the polls
Singapore	46	31%	48%	15%	13%	11%
Malaysia	52	24%	55%	36%	25%	17%
Hong Kong	55	37%	40%	35%	37%	19%
Thailand	58	41%	52%	58%	63%	22%
Philippines	68	42%	57%	79%	78%	67%
Taiwan	69	58%	84%	77%	84%	33%
Total	58	38%	56%	48%	49%	28%

Source: World Values Survey, sixth wave, 2010-2014.

including propensity to vote and willingness to engage in protest activism? Feelings of political legitimacy were measured and analyzed using several indicators from the World Values Survey, tapping into multidimensional notions of system support. This included overall satisfaction with the performance of democracy and respect for human rights in each county, as well as confidence in elected political institutions (parties, parliaments, and governments). Testing the effects of mass perceptions of electoral integrity on each dimension increased confidence in the robustness of the results. Models controlled for many micro-level social and demographic characteristics which commonly have been found to shape political orientations. This includes the standard characteristics of age (in years), sex (male), education (educational

qualification 9-point standardized scale), household income scale, and urbanization (an 8-point scale for the size of urban-rural communities).⁶⁰ Models also controlled for many political attitudes which the previous literature often has associated with feelings of political legitimacy, including the winners-losing thesis, national pride, democratic values, political interest, and life satisfaction.⁶¹ “Winners” were classified by the party that respondents said they would support in the next general election. Citizens then were classified into “winners” and “losers,” depending upon which party or parties were returned to government in the most recent presidential or parliamentary election immediately prior to the survey fieldwork.

The results in table 5 confirm that, even after applying many standard social and attitudinal controls, mass perceptions of electoral integrity in East Asia are positively associated with several indicators of political legitimacy, including satisfaction with democracy, evaluations of respect for human rights in their country, and confidence in elected institutions such as parties and parliaments. This confirms a pattern in the region which is observed more generally around the world. By contrast, perceptions of electoral malpractice are negatively associated with measures of satisfaction with democracy, confidence in elected institutions, and willingness to obey the law voluntarily. The control variables behaved as expected, for example, supporters of the winning parties, not surprisingly, typically expressed greater satisfaction with how democracy worked in their country and more confidence in elected institutions.

Moreover, similar patterns could be observed, not just for attitudes, but also for patterns of political participation. Further analysis using similar multivariate models (not displayed here) also confirmed that perceptions of electoral integrity were observed to be significant predictors of the propensity to vote, while perceptions of electoral malpractice were strongly associated with protest activism. This micro-level evidence provides confirmation of what might be expected, given the massive street protests observed in countries such as Thailand and Cambodia following problems experienced in recent contests. Thus, overall mass perceptions of electoral malpractices and integrity do appear to matter for several common indicators of political legitimacy, the cultural foundation for regime stability.

Conclusions

Therefore, the evidence presented here leads to several key conclusions. First, the recent history of East Asia shows that elections have a checkered record in the region. Certainly, some contests meet international standards, according to the PEI evaluations of experts. But others fall far short, displaying a range of

⁶⁰ The results of the multivariate analysis models were checked through tolerance statistics to confirm that they were all free from problems of multicollinearity.

⁶¹ Pippa Norris, *Democratic Deficit* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Table 5. Mass Perceptions of Electoral Integrity Strengthen Political Legitimacy

	Satisfaction with democracy		Respect for human rights		Confidence in elected institutions		Obey law					
	b	S.E.	Sig.	b	S.E.	Sig.	b	S.E.	Sig.			
PERCEPTIONS OF ELECTION QUALITY												
Perceived electoral integrity	.016	.003	***	.006	.001	***	.214	.020	***	.040	.023	N/s
Perceived electoral malpractice	-.011	.003	***	-.001	.001	N/s	-.066	.018	***	-.122	.021	***
ATTITUDINAL CONTROLS												
Voted for winning parties	.259	.084	**	-.014	.029	N/s	4.40	.600	***	2.03	.693	**
National pride	.327	.060	***	.136	.021	***	4.23	.426	***	-2.26	.491	***
Importance of living in a democracy	.270	.019	***	-.025	.007	***	-.289	.141	***	1.69	.162	***
Confidence in elected institutions	.014	.002	***	.007	.001	***				.007	.002	**
Interest in politics	.073	.046	N/s	-.025	.016	N/s	-2.84	.324	***	1.58	.372	***
Life satisfaction	.108	.017	***	.014	.006	*	.484	.125	***	-.062	.144	N/s
SOCIAL CONTROLS												
Sex (male)	-.097	.079	N/s	.070	.027	**	-.400	.562	N/s	-.476	.648	N/s
Age (years)	-.002	.003	N/s	.000	.001	N/s	-.079	.021	***	.072	.024	**
Income scale	-.005	.018	N/s	-.014	.006	*	.201	.132	N/s	.116	.152	N/s
Education	.037	.019	*	.009	.007	N/s	-1.37	.133	***	.834	.153	***
Urbanization	.026	.019	N/s	.021	.007	***	.531	.136	***	-2.17	.155	***
Constant	.985			1.76			41.7			84.5		
Adjusted R ²	.138			.078			.213			.121		

Source: World Values Survey, sixth wave, 2010-2014.

Note: The OLS regression models monitor satisfaction with the performance of democracy, respect for human rights, confidence in elected institutions, and voluntary compliance with the law as indicators of legitimacy. The models pooled the six Asian societies under comparison. All models were checked for multicollinearity. *=.05 **=.01 ***=.001.

problems across different stages in the electoral cycle, especially problems of money and media. Second, in general, better quality contests around the world are usually associated with higher levels of economic development, greater integration into the global community, and political institutions which combine power-sharing arrangements (especially PR electoral systems), effective and impartial public administration, and competent electoral management bodies. The region displays certain exceptions to these general patterns, but the cases often describe several common institutional weaknesses in East Asia, exemplified by malapportionment and gerrymandering in Singapore and Malaysia, lack of technical capacity and weak regulation of money in politics in the Philippines, and the breakdown of democratic multiparty contests and the military coup in Thailand. Finally, turning to the public, evidence from the region demonstrates similar patterns to those generally observed elsewhere, namely that perception of electoral malpractice and integrity are significantly linked with feelings of political legitimacy, such as satisfaction with the performance of democracy and institutional trust in political parties, governments, and legislatures. This suggests that countries in the region, and intergovernmental organizations such as ASEAN, should give greater attention to sharing best practices and providing technical assistance to improve the quality of elections in East Asia, while reform movements, opposition parties, and NGOs seeking to strengthen democracy within each society should maintain pressures for further legal and institutional improvements to electoral processes and procedures. Prospects for change in East Asia remain uncertain, notably due to the hegemonic power of China, which seems to have observed the lessons of the Arab Uprisings by cracking down further on supporters of liberalization. Intergovernmental organizations reflect the political composition of member states, and states within the region are currently finely balanced between autocracies and democracies. If several leading states see decisive electoral breakthroughs for opposition parties in the near future, however, including Singapore and Malaysia, and if both Thailand and Myanmar abandon military rule, this could tip the balance of the whole region more firmly away from autocracy and strengthen prospects for sustainable democratization in East Asia.