

The Comparative Analysis of Public Support for Developing Regional Regime in East Sea Rim (Sea of Japan) Region

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Abstract

The East Sea (or Sea of Japan) (ESR/SOJ) Rim region, in which five countries – Japan, China, Russia, and North and South Korea – have their own coastal areas, is complex and dynamic, with many emerging regional security concerns. In this paper, the author tries to show that there is the possibility of a maritime regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region by investigating the level of public support, in Japan and South Korea, for the formation of a regional regime. Based on the theoretical assumptions of constructivism, the author analyzes what kinds of individual's social position factors influence the level of support for regional regime formation by conducting a nested regression model of survey datasets. The results of the statistical analysis suggest that people with a high level of national pride in South Korea are more likely to support a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region. In contrast, for Japanese people, there is no relationship between people's national pride and the level of support for regional regime formation. The economic recession in Japan since the early 1990s has made public concern more about domestic policy than about foreign policy issues. Based on strong support of the bottom, public opinion towards regional regime formation, the South Korean government may play a leading role in developing a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region (when the process of negotiation begins) as in the case of Japan in nineteenth century.

1. Introduction

When we try to draw regional boundary lines to divide Asia into several sub-regions, for instance, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, and Central Asia, it is very

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difficult to draw clear lines with which most policy-makers and academics would agree. In terms of the meaning of region, it is represented as situated in a particular area and represented as different from the rest of the neighboring space. Since the act of representation is a mental process, all regions are arbitrary constructs that exist only at the conceptual level to justify the differentiation. The process of differentiation may be related to the increased awareness that, at a certain point in time, certain elements are present in higher quantities in some places and less in others. In this sense, regions are not only notions of space but also of time because they indicate a spatial situation placed in a particular time framework, as well as the spatial dynamics within this framework. Thus, any region that policy-makers or scholars define as such will have experienced a process of differentiation.

Related to the case selection for this research, the East Sea Rim (Sea of Japan, here after ESR/SOJ) region has been experiencing the process of differentiation since the 1990s because all five nations within the region – Japan (Western side of Japan), Russia (far Eastern area of Russia), China (three provinces of Northeastern region), and North and South Korea (Eastern side of Korean peninsula) – acknowledged the urgent necessity of collaboration in dealing with both security and development issues within the region. In particular, these five countries' decision-makers began to view the maritime issues as serious in the ESR/SOJ region. In other words, these five nations now recognize that there are multitudes of transnational challenges because this space represents an area of dilemma in which the two sides of a coin need to coexist: conflict and collaboration, peace and instability, historical enmity in the past and economic amity in the present.

For instance, in terms of the maritime issues in Asia, scientific and technological advances, combined with economic need and nationalism, have stimulated most of the coastal countries in Asia to claim 200 nautical miles exclusive economic zones. The consequence of this 'sea enclosure' movement¹ in Asia has been marine regionalism, where groups of countries have realized some of their mutual needs and interests based on physical geography and complementary uses (Valencia, 2000, 223).

Maritime issues are receiving more attention from all coastal countries in Asia because of the many emerging regional security concerns. In particular, the ESR/SOJ Rim region is a complex and dynamic region with many regional maritime security issues, such as environmental protection, illegal activities at sea, territorial conflicts among states, and resource management. Asian specialists list the following maritime problem areas requiring greater cooperation among regional countries of the East Sea Rim: piracy, smuggling, illegal immigration, transnational oil spills, search and

¹ The concept of the free seas is an historic one, dating back to the Greeks and the Romans. Under the free seas concept, navigation could expand as demand and capabilities warranted. The free seas concept was challenged by the British, who were claiming exclusive fishing rights off their coasts and were concerned with smuggling and protection of neutrality in their coastal waters. In this paper, 'sea enclosure movement' means that a state has the right to protect its interests by restricting the use of a certain areas (Alexander 1983).

rescue of incidents at sea, navigational safety, exchange of maritime information, illegal fishing, and management of resources in areas of overlapping claim (Morgan and Valencia, 1992, Weeks, 1995). These issues are all maritime safety problems of a civil, as opposed to a military, nature. Proposals for maritime cooperation can be formulated not against a single adversary but rather to deal with common problems of crime, human depredation, pollution, and natural disaster. Unfortunately, some of these maritime issues tend to be more offensive, inflammatory, and prone to conflict situations, and prone to inadvertent escalation.

Due to the complexity of the maritime issues in the ESR/SOJ regional areas, it is increasingly recognized that a certain type of regional mechanism (or regime) must be instituted to address these issues effectively. According to Barnett (1984), to build a regional regime, leading to cooperation among different countries, the notion of 'comprehensive security' must be spread to all civil societies (of the ESR/SOJ region). Comprehensive security implies that security should, and can be, achieved through a web of interdependence, including cooperation in economic development and scientific research, and a general enhancement of human interactions.

Given such a context of comprehensive security, military presence alone does not define security or generate long-term peace. Indeed, the failure to comply with the basic standards of good neighborliness can cause significant tension. In relation to maritime issues in the ESR/SOJ region, good neighborliness might include preventing or notifying neighbors about transnational pollution, or carrying out trans-boundary environmental clean ups and impact assessments. However, good neighborliness implies that governments cooperate when dealing with trans-boundary problems, as well as the development of civil societies in which the public support universal standards and disregard strong nationalism. From this perspective, good neighborliness within civil society and government will lead to the growing acceptance of the notion of comprehensive security. A positive development of a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region could be possible when the public and governments recognize the notion of comprehensive security.

In this paper, the author tries to predict the possibility of establishing a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region by investigating the level of public support for regime formation in Japan and South Korea. Based on the theoretical assumptions of constructivism, this research focuses on analyzing those factors that influence the public's perception of regional regime formation by conducting statistical significance tests of hypotheses. It is worth while looking into how ordinary citizens view the contemporary need to form a regional regime that might reduce their own state's authority in the international political arena. Public opinion about forming a regional (or international) regime played an important role in the process of foreign policy decision-making, such as the case of European integration two decades ago (Marks, 2004).

This paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 examines the theoretical development of a regional regime and Section 3, after a brief examination of why an East Sea Rim

Regional Regime is now needed, analyzes the public opinion data sets of two leading but rivalry countries, Japan and South Korea, on ways of developing a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region. In the concluding section, the author addresses the prospects for regional regime building in the ESR/SOJ region, based on the implicit meaning of the data analysis result.

2. Theoretical overview of regional regime

What is international regime?

What is a regime, what are its functions, and why would governments want to form and participate in them? According to Krasner (1983), regimes are sets of implicit or explicit principles (beliefs of fact, causation, and rectitude), norms (standards of behavior defined in terms of rights and obligations), rules (specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action), and decision-making procedures (prevailing practices for making and implementing collective choice) around which actor expectations converge. A more applied definition treats regimes as multilateral agreements among states that aim to regulate national actions within an issue area (Young, 1983: 196–8). This definition implies that regimes can define the range of permissible state actions by outlining explicit injunctions. This definition draws a clear line between the concept of regime as cooperation and that of regime as a subset of cooperative behavior and that facilitates it, but cooperation can exist without a regime.

Regimes are created to solve dilemmas of collective goods. The conflicts or problems of international collective goods – for instance, shared environment problems, conflicts of shared natural resources or collective security costs – can only be addressed if states eschew the independent decision making that would otherwise make them ‘free riders’. Two different bases of regime formation are the dilemmas of common interest and common aversion (Stein, 1993: 309–11). According to Stein, regimes established to deal with the dilemma of common interests require collaboration while those created to solve the dilemma of common aversion require coordination (1993: 309–11). In terms of the necessity for international regimes, a major function of international regimes is to facilitate the making of mutually beneficial agreements among governments and thus to avoid structural anarchy and the situation of ‘each against all’ (Stein, 1993).

In general, regimes fill one or more of three critical needs: (1) they establish a clear legal framework with liability for actions, (2) they improve the quality and quantity of information available to states, and (3) they reduce transaction costs. They also provide a valuable mechanism for formulating and presenting a united stand on issues for outside actors. Regimes thus create the conditions for orderly multilateral negotiations, legitimate and de-legitimate different types of state action and facilitate linkage among issues. By clustering issues together over a period of time they foster continuous interaction between governments, thus reducing incentives to cheat, raising the costs of defection, and enhancing the value of reputation. And the marginal cost of

dealing with an additional issue is less with a regime, which is one reason why regimes often expand in scope (Keohane, 1984: 103–6).

Indeed, regimes alter the international environment so that cooperation is more likely. By establishing mutually acceptable standards of behavior for states to follow and by providing ways to monitor compliance, regimes create the basis for decentralized enforcement based on the principle of reciprocity (Jervis, 1983). ‘Reciprocation’ is the golden rule, with a reward. It is the belief that if one helps others, or at least fails to hurt them, they will reciprocate when the tables are turned. In this formation, states should avoid maximizing their interests in short-term for the sake of expected long-term (Valencia, 2000). In this paper, regimes are defined by multilateral agreement among states that aims to regulate national actions within an issue area.

Systemic theories of international regime

In terms of the origins of international (or regional) regimes, there are two central questions. First, why do governments choose to form regional regimes? Second, why do they choose the specific institutional forms that they do? Given the context of these two questions, systemic theories have highlighted the systemic conditions that facilitate regime formation. Systemic theories – neorealism, hegemonic stability theory, and neoliberal institutionalism – about regime formations tend to regard regimes as the product of interactions among rational, unitary, sovereign states (Gilpin, 1971, Gowa, 1994, Keohane, 1984). However, in order to answer a fundamental question – why regimes develop and how they change – each theoretical tradition tends to use different assumptions about international relations and prescribes different solutions to promote cooperation among states.

First, neorealists view competition among states as intrinsic to international relations. In order to survive in a self-help system, states must constantly strive to maximize their power against other states. Thus, they are not concerned about cooperation in international relations that produces asymmetric relative gains even if such cooperation produces absolute gains for all. Neorealists are thus pessimistic regarding the possibility for cooperation (Gowa, 1989). The neorealist position provides potentially useful insights into regime formation. For instance, it implies that cooperation should be more likely among allies than among adversaries, and more likely when alliance patterns are rigid (under bipolarity) than when they are flexible (under multi-polarity) (Gowa, 1994). However, neorealism’s shortcomings become clear when we move from the general issue of cooperation to regional integration more specifically. If states are motivated primarily by security concerns, it is not clear why they should choose to organize their trade relations regionally, when it is obviously their neighbors who are most likely to present a security threat. Moreover, neorealism has little to say about the institutional form of whatever cooperation does emerge, which implies that neorealism is better able to explain the failure of regional regimes than their emergence and institutional form.

Second, hegemonic stability theory uses public-goods theory in the field of international politics. It maintains that the free-rider problem will lead to the under supply of international public goods ‘unless the group is privileged so that a single state has sufficient interest in the good to be willing to bear the full costs of its provision’ (Snidal, 1985: 581). With respect to regional regimes, the theory implies that a regional hegemon is a necessary condition for regime formation. Although some authors have tried to use this theory to explain regional regimes (McKeown, 1983), hegemonic stability theory is not well-suited to explain the formation and change in regional regime. For instance, theoretically, it assumes that hegemons are necessary for regime formation when two pre-requisites are fully met: first, regimes must support the provision of public goods; second, collective action must be impossible (Snidal, 1985). These two assumptions are not met in practice: most regimes (trade regimes in particular) are characterized by excludability are not designed to support the provision of public goods; and as many authors have observed (Lake, 1993, Kahler, 1992), collective action among varying numbers of states is possible in the absence of hegemon. Since regional trade regimes generally involve excludable goods and relatively small numbers of states, there is no reason to assume that a hegemon is necessary for regional regime formation. In short, this theory is only a theory about necessary conditions because it can tell us when governments will be able to form regional regimes but not why they would choose to do so.

Third, neoliberal institutionalism (NLI hereafter) is more optimistic regarding the prospects for cooperation than are the neorealism or hegemonic stability theories. Unlike neorealists’ emphasis on relative gains, NLI emphasizes absolute gains and thus the possibility for mutual benefits from cooperation. Unlike hegemonic stability theory, NLI emphasizes the possibility of institutional solutions to collective action problems. These institutional solutions to collective action problems are the heart of NLI theories of regime formation (Keohane, 1984). According to Keohane, there are two aspects of international regimes: ‘functionalism and contractualism’ (Keohane *et al.*, 1993). With respect to functionalism, NLI explains regimes in terms of the functions they serve: for instance, enabling states to overcome market failures and capture cooperative gains by providing rules around which actors increase the provision of information, monitoring, and enforcement. NLI is contractual in that it tends to portray regimes as cooperative, and arrangements are voluntary. In this context, NLI tends to regard regimes as welfare-improving institutions. In other words, NLI implies that regimes are Pareto-improving² – if they were not, states that could simply refuse to join. What Pareto improvement of any regime implies is that there should be absolute gains from a situation of cooperation among states.

However, by emphasizing absolute gains and institutional solutions in explaining international regime formations, NLI takes a middle position on regime theories,

² Pareto improvement is defined such a situation as if there is no way to rearrange things to make at least one person better off without making anyone worse off.

between neorealism and hegemonic stability theory. Although NLI has some advantages in explaining international regimes compared to the other two theories, it has also limits when looking into such a complex phenomena: international or regional regime formations and changes. For instance, NLI's assumptions of Pareto improvement and joint gains are not quite appropriate in explaining regimes formations because regimes may become exploitative (Snidal, 1991). Moreover, regimes may not only be exploitative but also be welfare harming rather than welfare enhancing. According to Viner (1950), customs unions can be either welfare enhancing or harming – for their own members as well as the world as a whole – depending on the balance of trade creation and trade diversion. NLI cannot explain the choice of particular institutional forms; according to Martin (1992), there exists a wide range of potentially Pareto-improving institutions. However, if none of the theories has strength in explaining regional regimes, both at the beginning and the end, what other theories could be appropriate to look into the possibility of developing a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region.

Beyond the limits of systemic theories: constructivism

Like other systemic theories of regional regimes, constructivists believe that an objective world can be studied systematically. Unlike neorealism, but like some neoliberal institutionalists, constructivists believe that ideas affect choice. But, they differ from neoliberal institutionalists in two ways: (1) while NLI argues that interests are structurally given, constructivism claims that interests are constituted through communication, interaction, and persuasion, and (2) while NLI takes a position of methodological individualism, constructivism seeks to specify the dynamic relationship between agents and structure. Hence, while for neoliberal institutionalists ideas are a given property of individuals that may influence individual choice, constructivists believe that ideas have structural characteristics (Zehfuss, 2002). According to Adler (1997), ideas – understood more generally as collective knowledge institutionalized in practices – define what is cognitively possible for individuals. Identities and interests of political agents are socially constructed by collective interpretations about the world. These collective understandings are in turn the outcome of interacting individuals who act purposively on the basis of their personal beliefs.

With respect to the study of regional regimes, constructivism contests the neorealist/neoliberal assumptions of a fixed international system based on sovereign territorial states. According to Ruggie (1992), state territoriality has become ‘unbundled’ as a result of the diffusion of understandings across national boundaries, high levels of communication, economic interdependence, and cooperative practices. Moreover, constructivism emphasizes the need to analyze norms and understandings underlying particular regimes and to identify the actors who dominate the definition of these collective understandings (Snidal, 1991). Rather than considering regimes as rational responses to market failure or particular constellations of interests, constructivism views regimes as subject to interpretation and persuasion. For constructivists, not only do they acknowledge the importance of the system – in this paper, the regional regime

– but also try to catch the importance of agents – for instance, state government, NGOs, and the ordinary people – in their understanding of regional regimes.

In terms of constructivists' emphasis on understanding the active role of agents in constructing regional regimes, it is usually not possible to formulate systematic predictions about who are the key agents: for instance, government leaders negotiating the deal, global and regional networks, epistemic communities, mobile capital, bureaucracies, or interest groups? In addition, constructivists have done little systematic empirical research in order to map prevalent collective understandings, to compare regionally delineated collective understandings, and to specify the interaction between global and regional societies.

Unlike from the other systemic theories, constructivists tend to speculate political and social reality as some combined material world, with normative-representational fields (Wendt, 1999: 170–171). For constructivists, although the material world exists, it has a meaning. This meaning is socially constructed, develops through social interaction and may be different for each observer (Zehfuss, 2002). Social interaction generates structures of collective meaning. Through such structures, actors acquire identity, which is the basis for interest formation, which, in turn, is the basis for action. In the process of establishing a regional regime, identity, for constructivists, is regarded as regional identity which is the cornerstone for building regional regime. Regional identity is a characteristic of an area that is differentiated from the neighboring space. Therefore, regional identity is a normative-representational element of regionality. Regional identity thus generates regionality, and through awareness or political projections, it gets more regionizing. This repeated process may enhance the sense of difference from the rest of the world, which in turn sharpens the sense of regional identity and strengthens a specific regionality.

After a specific regionality is fully represented within a certain region, the necessity of regional regime formation increases, and the process of institutionalization would begin with multilateral negotiations at the citizen's level (for instance, NGOs) to the government's level. Once a certain type of regional regime is established, it begins to influence the policy-making process within its jurisdiction area. All four processes in the cycle of establishing a regional regime include multilateral negotiations which consist of agents' tugs-of-war to produce a cohesive idea. As the cohesiveness of a certain idea increases from the level of the individual to the level of collective meaning, such an idea would become regional identity.

Hence, this paper tries to shed some light on what factors of ordinary citizen's attributes influence his/her perception about establishing a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ by analyzing two countries, Japan and South Korea. In this paper, the author categorizes individual attributes into three groups of variables: (1) social position (age, gender, levels of education, and income), (2) patriotic level (so-called national pride), and (3) the level of tolerance toward other cultures (called multiculturalism). Which factor plays the role of catalyst in the process of regional regime formation?

Who has the higher level of support for regional regime formation in ESR/SOJ region?

ESR/SOJ region: many problems with no solution

The East Sea Rim/(Sea of Japan) region has long been an unstable and complicated region in which each country tends to have very different conflicting interests, and, due to more than a couple of thousand years of history, conflicts or wars took place more frequently than cooperation or peaceful resolutions. During the Cold War, international relations in the region were heavily influenced by the bipolar system. With the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, relations among five regional states – Japan, China, Russia, and North and South Korea – have tended towards a unique style, which shows a cycle of enmity and amity. For instance, in the East Sea (Sea of Japan), South Korea and Japan have claimed territorial ownership since World War Two over an island called Tokdo (in Korean) or Takeshima (in Japanese). In 1996, controversy over ownership raised extreme tension between the two Koreas and Japan,³ and South Korea conducted air and naval exercises around the disputed rocks in a clear attempt to warn Japan to drop its claim.⁴

The dispute over ownership of the rocks led both countries to formally declare an exclusive economic zone of 200 nautical miles. Both Japan and South Korea have included the rocks within their exclusive economic zones. The problem was further complicated by nationalism and Japan's colonial occupation of Korea, as well as by fish and possible mineral and petroleum wealth in the waters and seabed surrounding the rocks. In 1998, with the failure of negotiations between the two countries, Japan terminated its fisheries agreement with South Korea. South Korea then removed all restrictions on South Korean fishing boats operating in Japan's claimed waters. In response, Japan began intercepting South Korean boats fishing within its territorial seas. This incidence in turn sparked the South Korean public, resulting in anti-Japanese demonstrations and the recall of the Japanese ambassador to Tokyo (1999).

Not only has the ESR/SOJ region suffered from territorial conflicts for a long time, but also, recently, a high level of political instability rooted in North Korea's development of weapons of mass destruction, including long-range missiles. With respect to North Korea's nuclear weapons program, even though this problem cannot be limited to the ESR/SOJ region – the US recognizes it as global risk and is actively involved – it has been one of two main obstacles to developing regional regime.⁵

However, the ESR/SOJ region has experienced large scale economic development in just one generation, and the economic capability of the region cannot be disregarded

³ North Korea got involved, warning not to seek 'territorial expansion'.

⁴ Source: World Atlas Website, <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/eastsea.htm> (accessed on 14 June 2012).

⁵ The other obstacle means that ordinary people tend to have a bad image of neighboring countries, rooted in the long period of conflicting history.

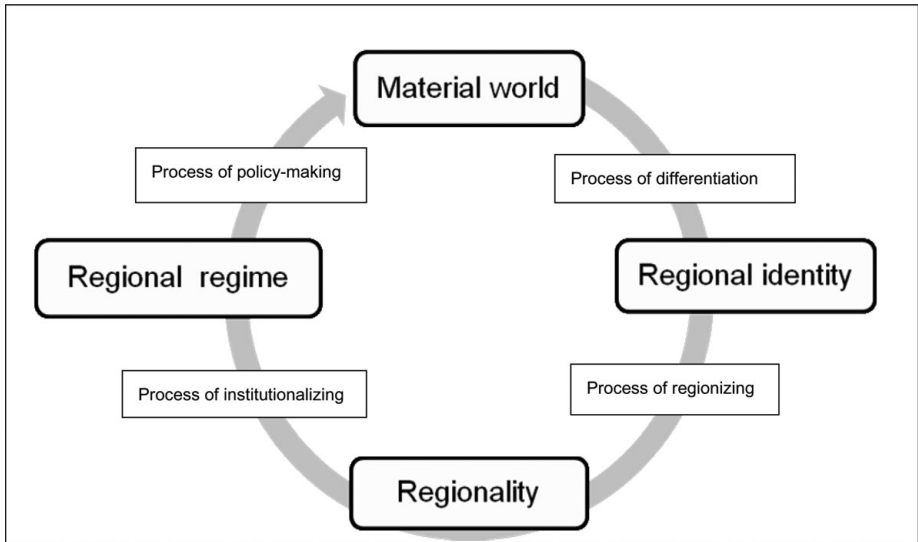


Figure 1. The process of establishing a regional regime

in the international economy. In particular, East Asia's three dragons expanded their trade size by over 25% on average for a decade. Yet, Japan has been facing economic recession since 1991 to 2009. It seems to imply that each country has common economic interests, which would lead them to build a regional regime. Yet, when they put some political issues on the table, formation of a regional regime would face to serious obstacles.

There is no doubt that the ESR/SOJ region is now experiencing large-scale transformation of the political systems. As survival is not a prime concern of the powerful states any more, their quest for relative gains has become less consistent. Most governments within the region now prefer maximizing their states' own wealth than to claiming their territorial sovereignty. Emphasis on increasing economic interdependence within the region makes inappropriate conflicts too costly. This change leads all related countries within the region to agree on the necessity of building a regional regime which may alleviate tension provoked by their territorial claims and different ideas about other political issues.

What factor does influence public opinion about regional regime formation?

Based on the theoretical assumptions of constructivism illustrated in Figure 1, the first base camp for regional regime formation seems to be that the majority of ordinary citizens within a region recognize the necessity of establishing a regional regime, so they can share the collective meaning of region (i.e. regional identity). The degree of feeling of necessity represents people's level of support. However, in order to investigate into



Figure 2. East Sea Rim (Sea of Japan) map

public opinion in Japan and South Korea about a regional regime, the level of support for establishing a regional regime is operationalized and used as a dependent variable in this paper. The survey dataset used in this paper is the '2007 Soft Power in Asia' dataset, which is a multi-country public opinion survey, conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs in collaboration with the East Asia Institute (South Korea). The survey examines the current and potential use of soft power in East Asia. The total sample size of the Korean survey is 1,029 respondents who are over 18 years old, and for Japan, 1,000 respondents were asked in December 12, 2006.

First, in terms of measuring the level of public support for regional regime formation in the ESR/SOJ region, survey respondents in Japan and South Korea were asked two questions: (1) 'Do you think East Asian countries, including South Korea, China, and Japan, should or should not integrate into a regional community, similar to the European Union?' and (2) 'Should or should not there be an East Asia free trade area including China, Japan and South Korea?' The first question is designed to ask respondents' opinion about establishing a regional regime which has the political/legal authority to control/manage its member-states and the second question is all about establishing a collaborating economic zone which is not related to any political issues. Since the European Union was created from sharing collective economic interests first and then moved on to the political issues, these

Table 1. *Public support for regional regime in South Korea, 2007*

Support for free trade area	Support for establishing Yes	Regional community No	Total
Yes	337 78.19	94 21.81	431 100
No	12 30	28 70	40 100
Total	349 74.1	122 25.9	471 100

Note: * Each cell includes frequency and percentile.

Table 2. *Public support for regional regime in Japan, 2007*

Support for free trade area	Support for establishing Yes	Regional community No	Total
Yes	160 48.78	168 51.22	328 100
No	35 29.66	83 70.34	118 100
Total	195 43.72	251 56.28	446 100

Note: * Each cell includes frequency and percentile.

two questions are used as a dependent variable by making two variables into one.⁶

Table 1 shows, in South Korea, that over 71% of respondents support establishing a regional regime, not only in the political arena but also in the economic arena. Table 2 shows that, in Japan, only 35% of respondents are likely to support establishing a regional regime in both the political and economic arena. Interestingly, while Koreans are willing to establish a regional regime like the EU style of institution, the Japanese are more likely to support establishing a regional regime such as a free trade zone. In other words, the Japanese are more likely to establish a regional regime dealing with only economic issues, but, for Koreans, a regional regime must have authority to deal with both political and economic issues. The Japanese do not like to get any interference from a superimposed institution.

⁶ The dependent variable is generated by adding the answers to two questions and its range of values are 2 (high level of support), 3, and 4 (low level of support) with large number of missing values (about 50% of total response is missing values). Because a regional regime in this paper implies a superposed institution dealing with both economic and political issues in the region, only respondents answered two questions are valid and the others are regarded as missing values.

It seems to be appropriate for the Japanese not to support establishing a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region because they hate to recall their unsuccessful experience in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when they fought against Asian countries with a dream of making Asia as a single jurisdiction country. After winning the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, Japan's newly risen self-confidence came with growing resentment against purported denial of the fruits of its victories. In this unsettled mindset, the Japanese have a sort of skepticism about international politics in which unfair and cutthroat global order exist (Calichman, 2008). Thus, the Japanese do not believe that a regional regime can resolve political problems within the ESR/SOJ region.

In contrast, most Korean respondents want to build a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region, although they had historically uncomfortable memories about the Japanese colonial occupation period and Japanese efforts to build an Asian empire under the rule of a Japanese emperor. South Korean grievances against Japan make them more active and positive characters in international relations. Since South Koreans now have self-confidence in the state's economic development and democratization process, they think, once the process of a regional regime formation begins, South Korea is able to play an important role on the same footing as Japan and China. South Koreans tend to think that it will not take long before the two Koreas are unified into one, because people from both Koreas regard themselves as *Hanminjok*, a homogenous nation. Koreans have a strong and active image of the unified Korea which will have more territory, a larger population, and more natural resources than a divided Korea.

To investigate the statistical significance of the three sets of independent variables – social position (age, gender, levels of education, and income), patriotic level (so-called national pride), the level of tolerance towards other cultures (called multiculturalism) – this research uses a Nested Regression Model which is designed for conduct F-test of a restricted model compared to a full model (Allen, 1997). Thus, one full model and two restricted models are examined by F-test.⁷

In terms of age factor, it is expected that there is a different pattern between the young and the old within each country. The young have become the dominant group in society, and they do not have any experience or memory of the war. Since the late 1990s, severe economic recession has tended to force the young to focus on securing their economic welfare first, which moves any interest in politics to the economy. Moreover, because of the historical legacy of the Cold War between 1950s and 1990s, the old tend to regard their own state's authority as the most important value to preserve, with more extreme loyalty than those born after the 1990s. The old have strong patriotism which was inculcated through the public school system controlled by the authoritarian government in South Korea and strong bureaucracy in Japan.

⁷ The null hypotheses of nested regression model are to look into a specific independent variable's validity on a dependent variable.* Full model of nested regression model: $y = \alpha + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \beta_3x_3 + \beta_4x_4 + \beta_5x_5 + \beta_6x_6 + \varepsilon$ * Null hypothesis: $H_0 : \beta_1 = \beta_2 = \beta_3 = \beta_4 = 0$ (restricted model 1)

In terms of gender, most males in Asian countries of Confucian culture are taught social responsibility, to protect their country and their home – this is recognized as a social duty for men in both countries.⁸ It is a pre-requisite process for leaders and citizens of potential member-states of a regional regime to bear in mind the autonomous status of the other countries. In the context of the patriotic feelings and experiences of a strong state-centered society in South Korea and Japan during the Cold War era, it is expected that the old and male will tend to be more likely to support the establishment of a regional regime than are females and the young.

With respect to social position variables, the author has the simple expectation: reducing trade barriers by economic collaboration among member-states favors citizens with relatively high incomes and education (Gabel, 1998). Like the neoliberal institutionalism's assumption, people and governments are expecting either absolute or relative economic gains from member-states' efforts to protect their markets and open their market to each other exclusively. Yet, there would be some variation between two countries. For South Korea, although the Korean government has followed the way of Japanese economic development and policy orientation, South Koreans seem to have a higher level of belief in revitalizing the national economy than do the Japanese. Since the economic structure of Japan is more stabilized and too large to make a quick turn compared to the Korean economy, the Japanese people regard any potential economic benefits from a regional regime to be small. This implies that at no matter what level of income people are in Japan, they won't think that a regional regime would improve or invigorate the national economy. It is expected that only in South Korea will the rich be more likely than the poor to support the establishment of a regional regime.

In terms of education, people with a high level of education are more likely to understand or tend to acknowledge the globalization (or glocalization) phenomena in the current world, which implies that they tend to support establishing (in particular, economic) a regional regime, which might protect internal markets and lift other regional market barriers easing export of their products. Moreover, international economic openness (controlled by a regional regime) rewards those with high levels of human capital. It increases the international substitutability of labor as firms are more able to shift production across borders, and this intensifies job security, particularly for less skilled workers. This implies that possibly positive impact on less skilled workers (in poor and low level of education) and that it will be good for more educated and better-off workers.

However, although the economic structure of Japan is too stable to change, there are some variations in job security among different industrial sectors. For instance, because of the long-term and national wide-scale economic recession, people working in the first industrial sector (agriculture, fishing industry, and so on) and the third sector (sales, small size business owners, or related jobs) have found it harder to survive economically. In contrast, people working in the second industrial sector, in particular,

⁸ The man's social duty is obviously influenced by Chinese Confucianism.

in IT, the financial market, or working at Multi-Nationality Corporations, tend to have better and securer economic positions. Therefore, in Japan and South Korea, people with a high level of education are more likely to support establishing a regional regime. Also, people with a high level of education have the tendency to think more broadly, for instance, about global environmental problems, North Korea's development of WMDs, and so on. There seems to be a positive correlation between level of education and level of support for a regional regime which is expected to contribute to communal benefits within the region.

Second, in terms of national pride as an explanatory factor for the level of public support for a regional regime, it is necessary to understand that national pride has both a positive and negative impact on the level of public support. National pride was generally defined as 'individuals' feelings of pride directed towards the nation-state based on their national identity' (Smith, 1994). However, national pride is different from nationalism. The difference is that national pride is mainly about individual attitudes towards the nation-state, while nationalism contains not only individual attitudes but also an ideology which is about unity among members of a society (Billig, 1995). In the similar context, Hjern suggests that nationalism and national pride operate at different levels: national pride at an individual level and nationalism at the whole society level (Hjern, 1998). In order to measure an individual's national pride, survey respondents were asked to answer a question, 'In terms of your identity, how much do you think of yourself as (*nationality*)?'

Generally speaking, an individual's level of national pride has a negative relationship with the level of regionalism (McLaren, 2006; Fort and Webber, 2006). Thus, Japanese people with a high level of national identity are expected to be less likely to support regional regime formation in the ESR/SOJ region simply because they don't need any upper level of regional authority over state authority in Japan. In contrast, People with high level of national pride in South Korea are more likely to support regional regime formation because a regional regime can be operated as a transnational government which has the authority to resolve any conflicts within its jurisdiction territory. In addition to common benefits from a regional regime, South Korean people, especially the younger generation, tend to have active and positive characteristics in dealing with international issues. In other words, they have much confidence in their own personality and are more likely to be involved in the international arena without any timidity.

Another reason is that Korean people have uncomfortable memories of colonial occupation by Japan in the nineteenth century. Most Koreans think that the policy of seclusion by *Ha Eung Lee* who was father of *Go-jong* (the 26th King of *Cho Sun* dynasty, 1863–1907) made their country undeveloped, and stopped it being prepared for foreign country invasions. Such an uncomfortable history leads the Korean people to be proactive – and, sometimes if thought necessary, aggressive – in international arena.

Finally, in terms of relationship between individual's acceptance of multiculturalism and support for regional regime formation in the two countries,

multiculturalism is defined as the state of both cultural and ethnic diversity within the demographics of a particular social space, in which all cultures and sub-cultures are equally respected without a particular culture or religion as the predominant one (Acharya, 2009). In order to measure the level of acceptability, survey respondents were asked to indicate whether he/she favored or opposed each of the following: (a) More student exchanges between Asian countries, (b) Large numbers of people from other Asian countries living and working in Japan/South Korea, and (c) Greater emphasis on studying other Asian languages in Japanese/Korean schools. With respect to people's preference for multiculturalism, the author expects a positive relationship between people's acceptability of multiculturalism and their support for regional regime formation. It is a logical inference to say that a regional or international regime would always tend to approve cultural relativism, otherwise, no regime would be formed.

Analysis of survey datasets

In this paper, the author uses nested regression statistics (hereafter, nested regression model) to analyze survey datasets because this will allow us to test not only the significance level of the coefficients for the independent variables, but also to test the explanatory power of different groups of independent variables: three different groups of independent variables (individual social position, level of national pride, and level of acceptability of multiculturalism). The nested regression model allows us to compare the explanatory power of different groups of independent variables by comparing R-squared values of different models.

Table 3 shows what factors drive Korean people's opinion about establishing a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region. Given the result of Nested Regression Model for Korean survey respondents, two independent variables, acceptability of multiculturalism and the level of national pride, have statistical significant meaning. According to the full model of the analysis (Model 3 in Table 3), while the national pride factor has a positive relationship with Korean people's level of support for regional regime formation, the multiculturalism factor has negative relationship with level of support. This result confirms the hypothesis of the national pride factor. But, related to the multiculturalism factor, there is negative relationship with the level of support for regional regime formation, which was not expected in the hypothesis.

Korean people have considerable confidence regarding their role in international politics, especially regarding the relationship between Korea and Japan. Therefore, Korean people with strong national pride tend to support the building of a regional regime. Generally speaking, there seems to be a positive relationship between multiculturalism and the level of support for regional regime formation; however, this is not true in South Korea. Related to the multiculturalism factor, is the bad image of foreigners who are, in particular, workers from underdeveloped countries, students, or teachers who want to teach English in Korea without a teaching certificate. Since these foreigners conduct a diverse range of crimes in Korea, Korean people tend to feel antagonistic towards foreigners and their cultures up to 2009. Thus, Korean people

Table 3. *Nested regression model of Korean support for establishing regional regime*

Dependent variable (support for regional regime) (↓)	Model 1: Individual social position				Model 2: National pride				Model 3: Support for multiculturalism					
	Coefficient	Standard error	t	P> t	Coefficient	Standard error	t	P> t	Coefficient	Standard error	t	P> t		
Gender (1 = male, 2 = female)	0.009	0.034	0.270	0.788	-0.018	0.031	-0.580	0.565	-0.018	0.031	-0.580	0.561		
Age (↑)	-0.003	0.001	-1.970	0.049	-0.002	0.001	-1.910	0.056	-0.002	0.001	-1.410	0.159		
Income (↑)	0.000	0.001	0.590	0.552	0.000	0.000	0.390	0.698	0.000	0.000	0.550	0.582		
Education (↑)	0.093	0.018	5.270	0.000	0.103	0.016	6.340	0.000	0.103	0.016	6.380	0.000		
National Identity (↓)					0.254	0.019	13.650	0.000	0.256	0.019	13.760	0.000		
Multi-culturalism (↓)									-0.014	0.007	-2.070	0.038		
cons	2.547	0.124	20.620	0.000	1.570	0.134	11.750	0.000	1.639	0.137	11.930	0.000		
N	919				919				919					
R-squared	0.0454				0.2071				0.2108					
Adjusted R-squared					0.2028				0.2056					
F-test	10.8700			Prob > F	47.70			Prob > F	40.61			Prob > F	0.0000	

Table 4. *R-squared change in NRM for Korea*

	F	df	df	Prob.>F	R-squared	Change in R-squared
Model 1	10.87	4	914	0	0.0454	
Model 2	186.2	1	913	0	0.2071	0.1617
Model 3	4.3	1	912	0.0383	0.2108	0.0037

have a low level of tolerance toward different cultures. Table 3 show that the explanatory power of the multiculturalism aspect is much smaller than that of national identity.⁹

Unlike the initial hypothesis for the education factor, the result of the NRM implies that people with a low level of education are more likely to support establishing a regional regime in South Korea.

One reason why uneducated people are more likely to support building a regional regime is rooted in the 'Effect of the Bubble economy in South Korea', beginning at the end of the 1990s until 2007. During the period of intensive development of the economy in the 1960s and 1970s, the exporting-oriented structure of the Korean economy provoked huge gaps in income between the social upper and lower classes so that the children of lower-class families did not have the same opportunities to go to college as did children from the upper classes. People with a low level of education tended to support building a regional regime as they believed this could open the Korean markets to other countries and they would get better jobs (for instance, if the Korean government signed free trade agreements (FTAs) with foreign countries). The economic difficulties of the people drive central government to collaborate for further economic development with neighboring countries together.

According to Table 5, the old with a high-income level are more likely to support establishing a regional regime in the ESR(SOJ) region than the young with a low income level. The results of the NRM for Japanese respondents are well coordinated with what the initial hypotheses expected. In relation to multiculturalism factor, it is confirmed that people with a high level of tolerance toward other cultures (multiculturalism) are more likely to support building a regional regime in Japan. However, individual national pride – which is the most influential factor in driving public opinion about a regional regime in South Korea – does not affect the dependent variable in the case of Japan. The coefficient for national pride is 0.000, which implies that there is no relationship with the dependent variable. As mentioned above, this result of NRM in Table 5 confirms that the national pride factor seems to be rooted in the generation gap between the old and the young, which implies that the younger generation does not have experience of the historically difficult time of World War II.

⁹ Table 5 shows that the change value of R-squared between Model 2 (for national identity) and Model 3 (for multiculturalism) is small (0.0037) enough to say that there is no relationship between dependent variable and an added independent variable.

Table 5. *Nested regression model of Japanese support for establishing regional regime*

Dependent variable (support for regional regime) (↓)	Model 1: Individual social position				Model 2: National pride				Model 3: Support for multiculturalism			
	Coefficient	Standard error	t	P> t	Coefficient	Standard error	t	P> t	Coefficient	Standard error	t	P> t
Gender (1 = male, 2 = female)	0.012	0.026	0.460	0.645	0.012	0.026	0.460	0.646	0.009	0.026	0.330	0.745
Age (↑)	-0.025	0.011	-2.260	0.024	-0.025	0.011	-2.260	0.024	-0.022	0.011	-2.010	0.044
Income (↑)	-0.027	0.007	-3.850	0.000	-0.027	0.007	-3.850	0.000	-0.025	0.007	-3.650	0.000
Education (↑)	-0.010	0.010	-1.020	0.310	-0.010	0.010	-1.020	0.310	-0.007	0.010	-0.710	0.479
National Identity (↓)					0.000	0.008	0.000	0.996	0.000	0.007	0.000	1.000
Multi-culturalism (↓)									0.089	0.019	4.800	0.000
_cons	2.546	0.075	34.090	0.000	2.546	0.099	25.640	0.000				
N	981				981				981			
R-squared	0.023				0.023				0.045			
Adjusted R- squared	0.019				0.018				0.039			
F test	5.6700		Prof > F	0.0002	4.53		Prof > F	0.0004	7.71		Prof > F	0.0000

Table 6. *R-squared change in NRM for Japan*

	F	df	df	Prob.>F	R-squared	Change in R-squared
Model 1	5.67	4	976	0.0002	0.0227	
Model 2	0	1	975	0.9961	0.0227	0
Model 3	23.07	1	974	0	0.0453	0.0226

According to Tables 4 and 6, the range of R-squared changes across the models represents which factor is the most influential in driving people's opinion about regional regime formation. In Korea, national pride is the key factor influencing attitudes toward a regional regime, whether in favor or against.¹⁰

When we compare the results of two countries in the ESR/SOJ region, individual social position plays a more determinant role in driving people's attitudes toward building a new regional regime in South Korea than in Japan. This implies that the deep and long period of economic depression in Japan since 1990s led to a loss of confidence for a rosy future in the Japanese. And losing confidence in the future leads the Japanese people to think pessimistically on other countries' suggestions for cooperation when dealing with collective common problems.

Conclusion

Maritime issues are getting more attention from all coastal countries in Asia due to the many emerging regional security concerns. In particular, the ESR/SOJ region in which five countries – Japan, China, Russia, and North and South Korea – have complex relationships with each other in many economic and political issues. Developing a new regional regime in this area is considered an important agenda by potential member-states governments and the public. To shed light on the possibility of establishing a regional regime in the ESR region, the author takes the theoretical assumptions of constructivism to analyze public attitudes toward a regional regime in two countries, Japan and South Korea. Constructivism emphasizes the need to analyze the norms and understandings underlying particular regimes and to identify the actors who dominate the definition of these collective understandings (Snidal, 1991). Rather than considering regimes as rational responses to market failure or particular constellations of interests, constructivism views regimes as subject to interpretation and persuasion.

Given the context of constructivism's assumptions, this study acknowledges the important role of citizens' opinion on state's foreign policy decision-making process, then uses this theoretical metaphor to analyze what social position factors drive both Korean and Japanese ordinary citizens' thinking about the development of a regional regime as an institution for addressing collective action problems in the ESR/SOJ

¹⁰ Table 4 shows that there is huge increase (0.1617) of the R-squared value in Model 2 which includes the second group of independent variables in the regression analysis.

region. What this study finds is that, like the Japanese strong/active nationalistic attitude towards the outside world in the late nineteenth century, South Korean people support the building a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region with strong national pride. But, the individual attribute of multiculturalism does not affect people's attitude toward regional regime in South Korea.

In contrast, Japanese citizens do not take national pride as a non-negotiable epistemological standard in evaluating state's foreign policy decision-making process, such as regional regime formation in ESR/SOJ region. Moreover, individual social position factors do not have any impact on driving the Japanese people's opinion about a new regional regime emerging in their front yard – Sea of Japan. With caution, what can we infer from the results of the statistical analysis for the two countries? In the process of building a regional regime in the ESR/SOJ region in the near future, South Korea may take a leading role in initiating the institutionalization of the regime with a high level of political legitimacy from the bottom of society – the public support.

About the author

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