Electoral Studies 31 (2012) 393–405

Contents lists available at SciVerse ScienceDirect

Electoral Studies

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/electstud

Voice and trust in parliamentary representation

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 2 August 2011
Received in revised form 19 January 2012
Accepted 27 January 2012

Keywords:
Procedural fairness
Electoral systems
Proportionality
Political trust
Voice
Representation

ABSTRACT

In both social and political matters, individuals trust those they believe will treat them fairly. Individuals in democracies have little objection to abiding by policies instituted by parties they did not vote for because the system by which the parliament is formed is considered fair. However, even among democracies, some electoral systems are fairer than others. It stands to reason that trust in parliament is affected by the perceived fairness of the electoral system. This research demonstrates that actual or perceived provision of voice in parliamentary representation does increase individual trust in parliament. Systems designed with the intent to provide fair representation and those that provide the illusion of fair representation produce higher levels of trust in parliament.

1. Introduction

Miller (1974b) argues that "[p]olitical trust is the belief that the government is operating according to one's normative expectations of how government should function" and "at an abstract, conceptual level… becomes associated with questions of identification with, or estrangement from, political institutions, symbols and values." This clearly suggests a self-interested bias in individual trust in representative political institutions; a conclusion supported by further research (Hetherington, 1998; Miller, 1974a; Miller and Borrelli, 1991). It also suggests a broader view of individual causes of trust in representative institutions. If normative expectations are a root cause of trust in representative institutions, then the procedures which dictate how those representatives are determined, procedures which themselves are subject to normative judgment (Bowler et al., 2005), seem just as likely to influence trust as do self-interested electoral or policy outcomes.

Electoral systems are at the very heart of democratic representation. The normative perspective supporting either the majoritarian or the proportional vision of representation speaks volumes as to how representative any given system is intended to be. While the majoritarian vision views the electoral system as a means of concentrating political power in the hands of the majority, proportional systems focus instead on dispersal of political power and inclusivity in policy-making (Powell, 2000). In the balance between the "majority rule" and "minority rights" aspects of modern, representative democracy, majoritarian systems place the preponderance of consideration on majority rule, focusing citizen representation into concentrated political power in the hands of a dominating majority (Inman, 1993); proportional systems lean toward the minority rights aspect, utilizing citizen representation to disperse political power among numerous groups, thereby requiring more consensual and inclusive policy-making (Lijphart, 1999).

Theory reaching back centuries debates how fair each system is relative to the other; the preponderance of judgments being that proportional systems are more concerned with perceptions of fairness than are majoritarian systems.[1] Mill (1861), perhaps the most cited theorist on this issue, argues:

[1] While supporters of the proportional vision are more likely to speak of fairness in representation, it is important to note that the term 'fairness' itself can be the focus of normative debate (Rasinski, 1987) with both visions arguing that their view is fairer than the other.

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doi:10.1016/j.electstud.2012.01.006

> In a really equal democracy, every or any section would be represented, not disproportionately, but proportionately. A majority of the electors would always have a majority of the representatives; but a minority of the electors would always have a minority of the representatives. Man for man they would be as fully represented as the majority. Unless they are, there is not equal government, but a government of inequality and privilege: one part of the people rule over the rest: there is a part whose fair and equal share of influence in the representation is withheld from them; contrary to all just government, but, above all, contrary to the principle of democracy, which professes equality as its very root and foundation.

Arguments of this sort span forward and backward through time with proponents of proportional representation often referring to representational fairness. Lijphart (1981), in one of the more direct statements of the association of fairness and proportional representation writes "Fair representation = proportional representation." I also follow Mill and argue that electoral systems that provide more proportional representation of the citizenry are fairer than are those which produce less proportional representation.

Proportional systems, unlike their majoritarian counterparts, institutionalize procedures which provide a perception of fairness in representation and thereby provide grounds for individuals to be more trusting of representative institutions formed under these systems than under majoritarian. Proportional systems allow for a greater number of citizens to have a voice in the policy-making process. And unlike in majoritarian systems, voice is given to many simultaneously and, relatively, continuously compared to majoritarian systems (Powell, 2000). Even when policy outcomes are undesirable to certain individuals, the fact that voice is provided more frequently to a greater segment of society engenders a greater degree of trust in representative institutions.

While previous research (inconsistently) links electoral systems to trust in political institutions (e.g., Norris, 1999b; van der Meer, 2010), it is often tangential to the main point of the research with underdeveloped theoretical support. For the little research that does directly address this relationship, there is no unified overarching theory to support the proposed relationships. Marien (2011), for example, provides a thorough analysis of the relationship between various aspects of electoral systems and broad political trust, yet the theoretical grounding for the proposed relationships is non-integrated and as diverse as the list of explanatory variables. This paper provides solid and unified theoretical grounding as to why proportional systems should lead to greater levels of individual trust in parliament and a multifaceted empirical examination of the proposed thesis. As such, this paper also examines a more specific aspect of political trust than does Marien (2011). Specifically, I test whether systems that intend, portray or yield more proportional representation correspond with higher individual levels of trust in parliament. I find that across 41 democracies from around the globe, electoral systems that intend to deliver a proportional outcome, possess a higher absolute number of parliamentary parties, and deliver a higher degree of vote-seat proportionality all result in greater trust in parliament. Further, the significance of these predictors is in addition to self-interested considerations: accounting for whether an individual's preferred party is represented in government, voice in representation retains its explanatory value for trust in parliament.

Trust in representative institutions is undoubtedly affected by perceptions of the fairness of the procedures through which representatives are chosen. A citizen whose representative choice is denied (either through a consistently wasted vote or by being forced to choose the lesser of two objectionable parties) no longer feels his voice is heard in the democratic process. Voice in parliamentary representation, whether actual or perceived, increases trust in parliament as more citizens believe they have a voice in the policy-making process.

2. Trust and fair process

The literature on trust paints an impressively nuanced picture. One must first differentiate between social and political trust (Newton, 2007) and within political trust one must distinguish among five divergent layers (Norris, 1999c). The five layers of political trust range from diffuse to specific support (Easton, 1965, 1975) in the following order: political community, regime principles, regime performance, regime institutions, political actors. The target of this research is trust in parliament. Of the five "levels" of political trust, I therefore look specifically at trust in *regime institutions*; this, the fourth-level, is the second most specific, second only to political actors themselves. I therefore seek to analyze trust in this specific institution rather than trust in those who inhabit the institution – though the boundaries between these two levels are often indistinct (e.g., Bowler and Karp, 2004).

Trust and the perception of fair treatment go hand in hand; one cannot trust that which he deems to be unfair. This simple principle challenges representative democracy. If we wish for citizens to trust their parliament, political systems must provide at least the perception of fair representation.

At the heart of the matter of fairness in representation are issues of *isegoria*, the equal opportunity of each citizen to have their voice heard (Dworkin, 2000). Under democratic governance, when we vote we seek representation of our political preferences (Urbinati and Warren, 2008). However, if a citizen's vote is wasted, i.e., fails to elect a representative, or he is pressured into selecting the lesser of objectionable alternatives due to mechanical or psychological barriers inherent to majoritarian electoral systems (Blais and Carty, 1991; Da Silva, 2006; Duverger, 1954), neither of these aims is fulfilled and his voice goes unheard.

The procedural fairness (also referred to as procedural justice) literature speaks volumes to the necessity of voice for perceptions of fairness, and thereby for trust. In representative democracy, citizens necessarily place the power to govern in the hands of representatives (cf., Montesquieu et al., 2002). By relinquishing control of their political lives

to others, individuals place themselves at risk of neglect, harm, or worse. Procedural fairness serves to provide a sense of control when one's ability to act on his or her own behalf is compromised (necessarily or otherwise) (van Prooijen, 2009) and to build trust when individuals must delegate authority to representatives, whom they do not personally know and whose actions they can neither directly specify nor restrain (Culnan and Armstrong, 1999; van den Bos et al., 1998).

The most important aspects of fair process are dignity and voice: to be treated as a respected member of society (Tyler and Blader, 2003) and to be given the opportunity to be heard (Folger, 1977; Lind et al., 1990; Lind and Tyler, 1988; Tyler and Lind, 1992). Even when outcomes are negative, the process by which those outcomes are reached is of considerable import; processes viewed as fair often lead to the perception that the outcome, even if negative, is also fair (Kim and Mauborgne, 2003; Lind and Tyler, 1988; Thibaut and Walker, 1978). Fair process is not, therefore, a means to self-interested outcomes (Walker et al., 1979); rather, it is a means of reducing uncertainty about the future (Lind and van den Bos, 2002). When the future holds uncertain policy outcomes resulting from the interaction of representatives whom constituents can neither know nor directly control, fair process in the election of those representatives is the only means by which citizens can be relatively assured of receiving voice in the policy-making process.

3. Fair process and representation

The crux of constitutional design is that individuals do not experience such; what individuals experience is the manifestation, the effects, of such design. Electoral systems are experienced via not only the act of voting, but also via the results of the vote. Perceptions of procedural fairness may influence trust at a number of points in the electoral process, from whether one is allowed to vote at all, to how the ballot is structured, to whether one is able to elect a chosen representative. The primary point that all electoral considerations aim toward, however, is this latter point, whether one is able to elect a chosen representative. Central to considerations of procedural fairness, and therefore trust in representative institutions, is whether the electoral system provides an individual voice in the policy-making process via their elected representative. As Urbinati and Warren (2008) note, "the strongest historical argument for fair representation has… [been based on] the proportional representation of individual interests. If all individuals have an equal claim to representation, their representatives should have presence in representative institutions in proportion to the numbers of individuals who hold interests they wish to be represented."

Perceptions of fairness of the electoral system, then, go beyond whether individuals who wish to elect "one of their own" have the opportunity to express that preference. Wasted votes, votes that fail to elect a representative, are the manifest expression of the unfulfilled desire to receive voice in the policy-making process. Rather, "[t]he fairness of the electoral method depends on whether substantial numbers of voters who wish to elect one of their own members or a person with their particular political outlook, can in fact do so" (Lijphart, 1981). This principle translates procedural fairness into representational language; in a democratic society where all citizens are politically equal, the dignity and voice of citizens is demonstrated through representation in representative institutions.

Fair process in representation, then, is achieved through gaining representation in parliament to the end that one's representative has influence in the policy-making process. This requires that as many people receive representation in parliament as possible, wasting the fewest number of votes possible; the *non-plus ultra* of one person, one vote. This criterion favors proportional representation systems over majoritarian systems.

Excluding block system variants of plurality systems (which often result in the lowest levels of proportionality), an increase in the number of seats in a constituency (the district magnitude) increases the proportionality of the seat distribution in parliament (Farrell, 2001) and decreases wasted votes. Perhaps more importantly, a greater proportion of individuals are represented (in the sense that they are represented by a representative of their selecting) in parliament under proportional electoral systems (Powell, 2000). As a result, in proportional representation systems the electoral process is more likely to encourage consensual governance as there is less chance that the system will manufacture, artificially or otherwise, a parliamentary majority (Lijphart, 1999; Powell, 2000; Sartori, 1976; Steiner et al., 2005). Under proportional representation systems a greater proportion of citizens are provided voice in the policy-making process.

In proportional representation systems more citizens view the electoral process as fair and thereby should trust representative institutions more (Banducci and Karp, 1999; Birch, 2008). However, it is not so much whether a system is proportional or majoritarian, but rather how representative the outcome of the system is or is perceived to be. As noted above, citizens are unlikely to perceive the system by reference to the institutional design itself; rather, perceptions are likely to be based on the perceived outcome of the system, whether the citizen gains a voice in the policy-making process via a democratically elected representative.

Accordingly, the system itself matters only insofar as it generates outcomes conducive to providing voice to the citizenry. This raises concerns that the appearance of fair process may serve to co-opt citizens into a fundamentally unfair system (cf., Cohen, 1989). Gandhi and Lust-Okar (2009), for example, note that elections may be used by authoritarian regimes to deceive citizens into believing they have voice in the system. This, in turn, serves to increase support for, or at least diminish resistance to, the regime. Clearly, whether this same concern applies to electoral variants within democracies is debatable; though as Mill's quote above demonstrates, there are certainly those who would suggest that citizens in non-proportional systems are being co-opted, via suffrage, into a fundamentally unjust system.

Most relevant to this point are systems that maintain the disproportionality of majoritarian systems while providing the illusion of proportionality. The number of parties gaining representation should be somewhat irrelevant for trust in representative institutions if those parties

are perceived to be *ex-ante* excluded from influencing policy-creation via the artificial creation of a single-party parliamentary majority. This is most apparent in the difference between mixed-member proportional (MMP) systems, where the proportional representation component of the election compensates for the vote-seat disparities that arise in the majoritarian component, and mixed-member majoritarian (MMM, also known as parallel) systems, where the proportional representation component is parallel to the majoritarian component and therefore does little to compensate for the vote-seat disparity generated by such. In MMM systems, the vote-seat proportionality remains relatively low even while increasing the number of parties represented in parliament (Powell, 2000). To the citizen who is unaware of the potentially low level of vote-seat proportionality, representation of "his" party may convince him that his voice is heard and thereby increase his trust in parliament.

The number of parties that gain representation is a visible (though partial; see Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Ferrara, 2011; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Stoll, 2011; Taagepera, 1999) outcome of the electoral system (Duverger, 1954; Lijphart, 1994). A less visible outcome, but one that is more relevant in terms of procedural fairness, is vote-seat proportionality. Vote-seat proportionality tends to be highest in proportional representation (including single transferrable vote systems (STV)) and MMP systems (e.g., Powell, 2000; Powell and Vanberg, 2000). Perfect vote-seat proportionality (a highly improbable result even under the most permissive electoral system) results in equal voice in parliament among the electorate. Proportionality and political trust should go hand in hand; individuals trust parliament more in those systems that are more proportional as the system provides more proportionate voice.

There are, then, two related but divergent outcomes of an electoral system that are likely to influence perceptions of procedural fairness: the absolute number of parties represented in parliament and vote-seat proportionality. The former is the more concrete and visible while the latter is more abstract. Unfortunately, the former is also more manipulable as the above discussion of MMM systems explains. It is likely that both will explain trust in parliament as both provide a measure of perceived voice in parliament.

There are three aspects of the electoral system that must, then, be examined: the intention of the electoral system itself to provide proportionate voice, the perceived outcome of the electoral system in providing voice, and the reality of the outcome of the electoral system to provide voice. I argue below that these three aspects can be measured in terms of whether or not the electoral system is designed to produce a proportional outcome, the absolute number of parties represented in parliament, and the vote-seat proportionality of parliament, respectively.

Three predictions can be derived from the above discussion:

1. a system designed to produce a proportional outcome will be positively related to trust in parliament;
2. the absolute number of parties will be positively related to trust in parliament;
3. the proportionality of the electoral system will be positively related to trust in parliament.

4. Data and measurement

The individual-level data for this project are taken from the 1995, 1999 and 2005 World Values Surveys (WVS), using the most recent case where a country was surveyed in multiple waves. The country-level data is taken from the Database of Political Institutions (DPI; Beck et al., 2001), World Governance Indicators (WGI; Kaufmann et al., 2009), CIA World Factbook, Gallagher's Election Indices, and Freedom House's Freedom in the World Report. The sample of countries was limited by the availability of data and was further restricted to only democratic countries. I restrict the analyses to only democratic countries (those deemed to be "free" as determined via reference to the Freedom House measure described below), in order to remove the possible confounding issues related to electoral authoritarianism. The analyses below utilize data from 41 countries.

The dependent variable in this project is trust in parliament. This variable is taken from the WVS and is introduced with the question: "I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?" This question is then qualified with "Parliament". The variable ranges from 1 to 4 and is coded so that a higher score indicates a higher level of trust in parliament. Fig. 1 plots the mean value of trust in parliament for each country. As is apparent from the plot, Peru possesses impressively low levels of trust in parliament while Iceland does quite well. As might be expected, the Nordic countries score toward the top of the plot while the Eastern European countries rank toward the bottom.

The intent of the electoral system is perhaps the most important aspect of any relationship between a country's electoral system and trust in parliament. Generally speaking, systems designed to provide fair voice to a greater range of the electorate do so (Farrell, 2001; Powell, 2000; Rae, 1967). To represent the intent of the electoral system to deliver a proportional electoral outcome, I construct a dichotomous indicator that emphasizes whether or not the intent of the electoral system is to produce either a largely majoritarian outcome (by creating a single-party parliamentary majority via artificial inflation of the seat-share of one party to the detriment of others) or a largely proportional outcome (by more proportionately translating votes into seats in parliament). A 0 indicates the former while a 1 indicates the latter. Table 1 provides a list of the countries used in the following analyses categorized into those which intend a largely majoritarian outcome and those which intend a largely proportional outcome. Germany, Hungary and New Zealand, three MMP systems, and Ireland and Malta, two STV systems, are added to the PR countries as countries whose electoral system is intended to produce a relatively proportional outcome. Japan, Lithuania and Mexico, three MMM systems, and Chile, a PR system country with only 2-member districts, are classified with the more traditional majoritarian countries as those intended to produce more majoritarian outcomes.

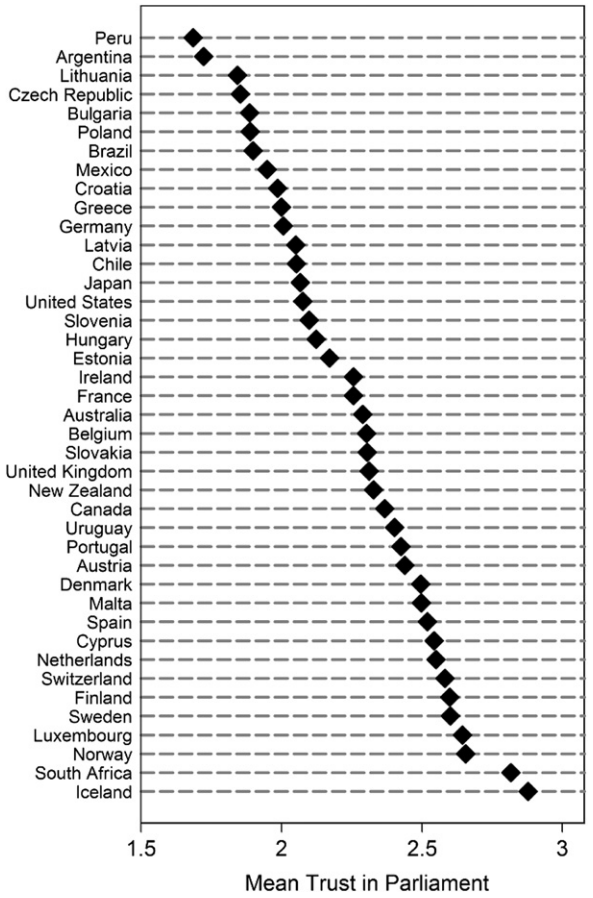

Fig. 1. The mean level of trust in parliament by country.

The clearest sign that one receives voice in parliament is whether or not one's vote-choice receives a seat in parliament, a necessary but not sufficient condition for fair voice in representation. Any seats received by a voter's party of choice provides that voter a voice in parliament, even if that voice is not in proportion to what it should be. The simplest and most obvious indicator of perceived voice in parliament is, then, having one's vote-choice receive at least one seat in parliament. A further benefit of this concept is its ability to cross-cut the intent of the electoral system (as a higher number of parties are likely in MMM, MMP, and pure-PR systems) and to thereby rule out that I merely capture another, non-voice-related aspect of the electoral system. To capture this concept, whether one perceives oneself to have a voice in parliament, I count the absolute number of parties in parliament (ANPP). The data used to calculate this measure is taken from the DPI. At the country-level, this measure is significantly though weakly correlated at 0.132 with the intent of the system. Fig. 2 plots the absolute number of parties in parliament for each country.

Though it is unlikely that most individuals will be aware of whether their vote-choice receives a vote-proportionate number of seats, the possible impact of such should nevertheless be explored. From a group-based perspective, proportionate voice is an invaluable political commodity. Knowing that one's political perspective receives a vote-proportionate voice in parliament will serve to engender trust in the institution. This concept is operationalized using a measure of proportionality based on Gallagher's Disproportionality Index (Gallagher, 1991):

$$DISPROPORTIONALITY = \left[\frac{1}{2}\sum(Vote_i\% - Seat_i\%)^2\right]^{1/2}$$

where $Vote_i\%$ is the percent of the popular vote and $Seat_i\%$ is the percent of the seats the ith party obtains. This index measures the disparity between the proportion of votes parties receive in a given election and the seats they are awarded in parliament as a result. I subtract this index from 100 to generate a measure of proportionality. This revised index is a measure of how fairly votes are translated into parliamentary seats. Fig. 3 plots this measure for each country. As noted above, this variable is expected to closely align with the intent of the electoral system. Indeed, the country-level correlation between the two variables is a significant and substantial 0.610. As expected, France and The United Kingdom, possessing distinct variants of majoritarian systems, rank at the bottom of the scale with the lowest levels of proportionality while the Nordic countries, possessing pure-PR systems, rank toward the top.

Though distinct concepts (Dulebohn et al., 2009), perceptions of procedural and distributive fairness are strongly interlinked (Blader, 2007; Walker et al., 1979). Procedural fairness often influences perceptions of distributive fairness, with fair procedure likely to produce the perception of fair outcomes; even if those outcomes are against one's self-interest (Lind and Tyler, 1988; Walker et al., 1979). However, in the absence of fair process, self-interested outcomes often determine perceptions of fairness. Previous research provides evidence that electoral winners are less cynical, more trusting, and more satisfied

Table 1
Categorization of countries by intent of proportionality of electoral system.

Non-proportional intent	Proportional intent			
Australia (2005)	Argentina (2005)	Estonia (2000)	Malta (2000)	South Africa (2005)
Canada (2000)	Austria (2000)	Finland (2000)	Netherlands (2000)	Spain (2005)
Chile (2005)	Belgium (2000)	Germany (2005)	New Zealand (2005)	Sweden (2005)
France (2000)	Brazil (2005)	Greece (2000)	Norway (1995)	Switzerland (2005)
Japan (2005)	Bulgaria (2005)	Hungary (2000)	Peru (2005)	Uruguay (2005)
Lithuania (2000)	Croatia (2000)	Iceland (2000)	Poland (2005)	
Mexico (2005)	Cyprus (2005)	Ireland (2000)	Portugal (2000)	
United Kingdom (2000)	Czech Republic (2000)	Latvia (2000)	Slovakia (2000)	
United States (2005)	Denmark (2000)	Luxembourg (2000)	Slovenia (2005)	

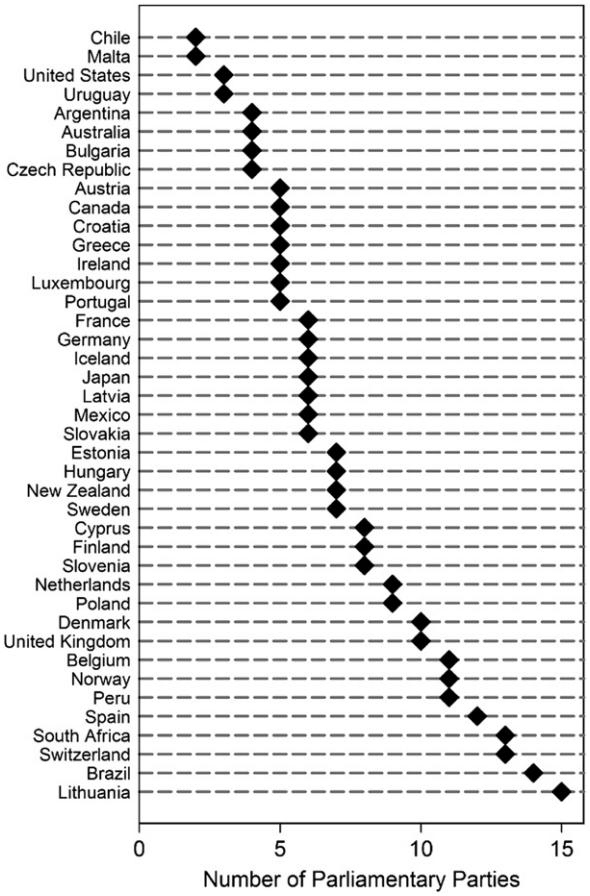

Fig. 2. The number of parliamentary parties by country.

with democracy than are electoral losers (Anderson and Guillory, 1997; Anderson and LoTempio, 2002; Banducci and Karp, 2003; Norris, 1999b). As countries with proportional outcomes are more likely to lead to governments in which an individual's interests are represented in the policy-making process (Powell, 2000), in order to ensure that the proportionality measures I use to indicate perceptions of procedural fairness do not, in actuality, capture the effect of distributive fairness in the absence of procedural fairness, I directly control for electoral self-interest by accounting for whether an individual's party preference is in government. This variable, whether an individual is an electoral winner, is a categorical variable with 0 indicating that an individual's preferred party is not in government and 1 indicating that an individual's preferred party is in government. To determine an individual's party preference, I reference the following question from the WVS: "If there were a national election tomorrow, for which party on this list would you vote?" The party or parties in government at the time of the survey are determined via reference to the DPI.

In addition to the above variables, the literature suggests that the analyses control for a number of other variables: age, education, gender, generalized trust, Left–Right identification, political interest, and religiosity at the individual level (e.g., Norris, 1999a); and corruption (e.g., Catterberg and Moreno, 2006; Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005), the duration of time a country has been deemed continuously "free" (e.g., McAllister, 1999), and the Gini index of income inequality (e.g., Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005; Uslaner, 2000) at the country-level.[2]

Age is a direct measure of an individual's age taken from the WVS. The education variable from the WVS is coded slightly differently between the 1995 and 1999 and the 2005 surveys. Further, I view the rank ordering of technical education below university-preparatory education as unwarranted. I therefore recode the education variable into six categories: no or incomplete primary (elementary) education, complete primary education, incomplete secondary school (technical or university-preparatory), complete secondary school (technical or university-preparatory), university education without degree, and university education with degree. A higher value indicates a higher level of education. Gender is a categorical measure of how an individual classifies him/herself: male (coded as 1) or female (coded as 0). Generalized trust is a categorical variable indicating a respondent's response to the question: "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?" An individual whom responded that most people can be trusted is coded 1 while an individual whom responded that one need be very careful is coded 0. An individual's Left–Right identification is measured on the standard 1–10 scale, inclusive, with 1 indicating the most left-wing and 10 indicating the most right-wing identification. The question from the WVS asks: "In political matters, people talk of 'the left' and 'the right.' How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?"

Political interest is a standardized summated rating scale composed of two items inquiring into how important one considers politics to be and how interesting one finds politics. The scale yields a Cronbach's alpha of 0.722 with an average interitem correlation of 0.566. A higher value on the scale indicates a higher level of political interest.

Religiosity is a standardized summated rating scale composed of four items: how important one considers religion to be, how often one attends religious services, how religious one considers oneself to be, and how important God is in one's life. The scale yields a Cronbach's alpha of 0.861 with an average interitem correlation of 0.608. A higher value on the scale indicates a higher level of religiosity.

To account for corruption I invert the "control of corruption" measure from the WGI (Kaufmann et al., 2009). The control of corruption variable reported in the WGI captures "perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as 'capture' of the state by elites and private interests" (Kaufmann et al., 2009). I take the

[2] Both an individual's perception of their financial situation and a country's GDP per capita are also commonly controlled for. However, the financial satisfaction question in the WVS is missing from almost half the countries included in the analyses and is therefore excluded. GDP per capita is excluded due to the high correlation of this variable with the duration of time a country has been deemed to be free (0.85 using logged GDP/Capita – PPP).

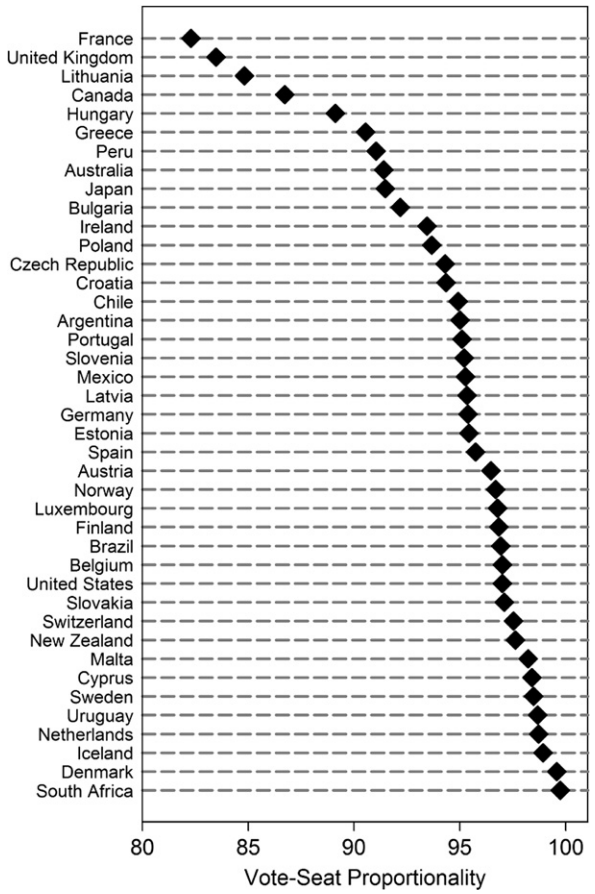

Fig. 3. The vote-seat proportionality of the electoral system by country.

inverse of this measure as an indicator of expert perceptions of corruption in a given country. A higher value on this measure indicates a higher level of expert-perceived corruption.

Greater income inequality results in the perception of an unfair society. As representative institutions create the policy that results in such unfair societies, they are likely to receive at least some measure of blame. The Gini index captures the degree of income inequality in a society, ranging from 0 (indicating complete equality) to 1 (indicating complete inequality), inclusive. These values for this measure are taken from the CIA World Factbook.

Finally, I control for the duration of time, in years, a country has been a democracy. This measure is determined by reference to the Freedom House Freedom in the World country ratings and is the sum of the total number of consecutive years a country has been rated "free" since 1972.

Table 2 provides a summary of the variables used in the below analyses.

5. Analysis

The procedural fairness theory of political trust requires that I combine individual- and country-level data in the same model. Further, as the variable is an ordinal four-category response, this suggests that an ordered logistical mixed model is the most appropriate analytical tool for determining the effect of representational voice on individual trust in parliament. A mixed model approach offers two key benefits to the following analyses: first, mixed models decompose the relationship between variables into separate level-1 (individual-level) and level-2 (country-level) components and thereby reduce the loss of information encountered with a strictly aggregate-level analysis. Second, mixed models account for the misestimation of standard errors that may result from the interdependence of individual responses within the same country (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). I therefore make use of the GLLAMM command (specifying a binomial family and ordered logit link function) in STATA 11 to analyze the data (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal, 2008). Table 3 displays the results for the models predicting trust in parliament. Models 1, 2, and 3 separate out the intended, perceived (number of parties), and actual (vote-seat proportionality) voice variables, respectively, while model 4 examines each measure in the context of a single equation.

Table 2
Variable summary.

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. dev.	Min.	Median	Max.	Range
Individual-level							
Age	34,344	45.02	16.99	15	44	98	83
Education	34,344	3.69	1.40	1	4	6	5
Electoral winner	34,344	0.38	0.49	0	0	1	1
Gender	34,344	0.50	0.50	0	0	1	1
Generalized trust	34,344	0.32	0.47	0	0	1	1
L–R identification	34,344	5.50	2.17	1	5	10	9
Political interest	34,344	−0.01	0.90	−1.57	0.05	1.79	3.36
Religiosity	34,344	−0.01	0.84	−1.80	0.14	1.31	3.11
Trust in parliament	34,344	2.27	0.82	1	2	4	3
Country-level							
Absolute number of parties	41	7.15	3.31	2	6	15	13
Proportional intent	41	0.78	0.42	0	1	1	1
Proportionality	41	94.56	4.27	82.31	95.39	99.74	17.43
Corruption	41	−0.25	0.86	−1.50	−0.35	1.28	2.78
Duration of democratic governance	41	20.78	10.78	1	26	33	32
Gini	41	34.74	9.16	24.70	32.97	57.78	33.08

Table 3
Ordered logistical mixed models of trust in parliament (log-odds).

Trust in parliament	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.
Individual-level								
Age	**−0.002**	0.001	**−0.002**	0.001	**−0.002**	0.001	**−0.002**	0.001
Education	−0.005	0.008	−0.008	0.008	−0.007	0.008	−0.003	0.008
Electoral winner	**0.517**	0.022	**0.541**	0.022	**0.543**	0.022	**0.538**	0.022
Gender	0.020	0.021	0.019	0.021	0.016	0.021	0.018	0.021
Generalized trust	**0.347**	0.024	**0.331**	0.024	**0.342**	0.024	**0.342**	0.024
L–R identification	**0.031**	0.005	**0.031**	0.005	**0.030**	0.005	**0.032**	0.005
Political interest	**0.404**	0.012	**0.393**	0.012	**0.406**	0.012	**0.404**	0.012
Religiosity	**0.224**	0.014	**0.219**	0.014	**0.228**	0.014	**0.215**	0.014
Country-level								
Proportional intent	**0.597**	0.027	–	–	–	–	**0.437**	0.043
Absolute number of parties	–	–	**0.046**	0.003	–	–	**0.045**	0.004
Proportionality	–	–	–	–	**0.055**	0.003	**0.012**	0.004
Corruption	**−1.019**	0.032	**−1.072**	0.032	**−0.881**	0.034	**−0.684**	0.032
Duration of democratic governance	**−0.038**	0.003	**−0.050**	0.002	**−0.011**	0.003	**−0.013**	0.003
Gini	**0.017**	0.001	**0.004**	0.001	**0.017**	0.001	**0.011**	0.002
Individual-level observations	34,344		34,344		34,344		34,344	
Country-level observations	41		41		41		41	

Note: **Bolded** terms are significant at $p \leq 0.05$; non-bolded terms are non-significant, $p > 0.05$.

Models 1, 2, 3, and 4 all indicate that each measure of voice is positively and significantly related to trust in parliament. Electoral systems which intend to produce a proportional outcome, produce a greater absolute number of parliamentary parties, and generate a higher degree of vote-seat proportionality lead to a higher level of trust in parliament. Models 1 and 4 provide support for prediction 1; a system designed to produce a proportional outcome is positively and significantly related to trust in parliament. Models 2 and 4 provide support for prediction 2; the absolute number of parties in parliament is positively and significantly related to trust in parliament. Models 3 and 4 provide support for prediction 3; the vote-seat proportionality of the electoral system is positively and significantly related to trust in parliament.

Based on Model 4, Figs. 4–6 plot the probability of an individual reporting that they have either "quite a lot of confidence" or "a great deal of confidence" in parliament across the range of values of each measure of voice. Each figure clearly indicates that the probability of trusting parliament increases along with each measure of voice in representation.

Consistent with previous research and theory, electoral self-interest also proves to be a positive and significant predictor of trust in parliament. Electoral self-interest clearly plays a part in one's trust in parliament.

The remaining control variables are largely in line with what one might expect. Education and gender are insignificant. Age is negatively and significantly related to trust in parliament. Generalized trust, Left–Right identification, political interest and religiosity are positively and significantly related to trust in parliament; quite substantively so for political interest and religiosity. As theory predicts and previous research finds, corruption is negatively and significantly related to trust in parliament. Consistent with previous research, duration of democratic governance is negatively and significantly related to trust in parliament. While previous research largely focuses on economic inequality and generalized trust and finds a negative relationship, the analyses here curiously demonstrate that economic inequality is positively and significantly related to trust in parliament.

5.1. Causal direction

When considering the impact of electoral systems on individual attitudes using cross-sectional data, the question inevitably arises as to whether causality is, in fact, going the other direction. In this case, the question looms: are countries possessing individuals with higher levels of trust in parliament more likely to implement proportional systems? This is certainly plausible and I will not rule out this possibility *ex-ante*.

For the sake of providing at least some empirical evidence that the electoral system does have an impact on trust in representative institutions in its own right, I look to the New Zealand Election Study (NZES). In response to "the destabilizing effects of party system dealignment, increasing disproportionality of election outcomes, and a succession of governments which many believed had ignored public opinion in their efforts to reform the economy" (Vowles, 1995), New Zealand switched from a first past the post (majoritarian) electoral system in the 1993 election to a MMP system in the 1996 election.[3] Unfortunately, the NZES only provides a pre- and post-electoral reform question on whether one can "trust the government to do what is right most of the time." Using this question then, I make the explicit assumption that the relationship between voice and trust in government and voice and trust in parliament is similar; the following results should be considered with this in mind. This

[3] A referendum on whether to retain the MMP system was conducted simultaneous with the 2011 election. The new Zealand electorate chose to retain the current MMP system by a margin of 57.77% of the valid vote to 42.23%.

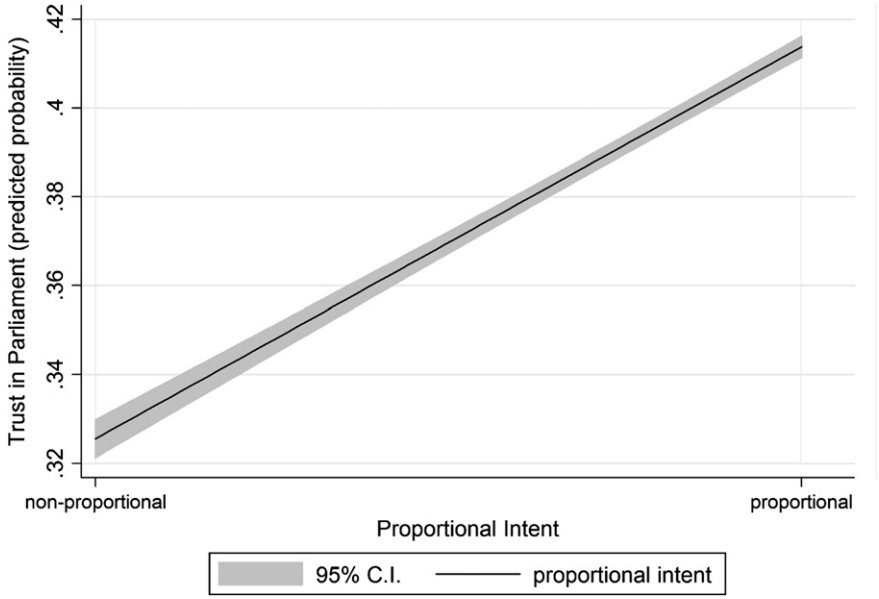

Fig. 4. The effect of the proportional intent of the electoral system on the probability of reporting either "quite a lot of confidence" or "a great deal of confidence" in parliament.

question is asked in the NZES every 3 years from 1993 to 2008. However, the 1996 study does not provide a substantial amount of time between the election and the survey (even when solely considering the post election survey) for the new system to flourish and certainly not enough time to allow the consequences of the electoral change on voice through representation to be noted; it takes time for parties and candidates to adapt and for the system to settle (Reed and Thies, 2001) and political trust must be given time to develop (Schoon and Cheng, 2011). Immediately following the transition to MMP, political life in New Zealand appeared to carry on as usual: "Despite the adoption of proportional representation, many aspects of the politics of New Zealand initially resembled life under a majoritarian electoral system" (Barker et al., 2001; see also, Vowles, 2008). The system, however, did begin to change following this transitional election (Vowles, 2008). I therefore expect that any change that does occur in trust

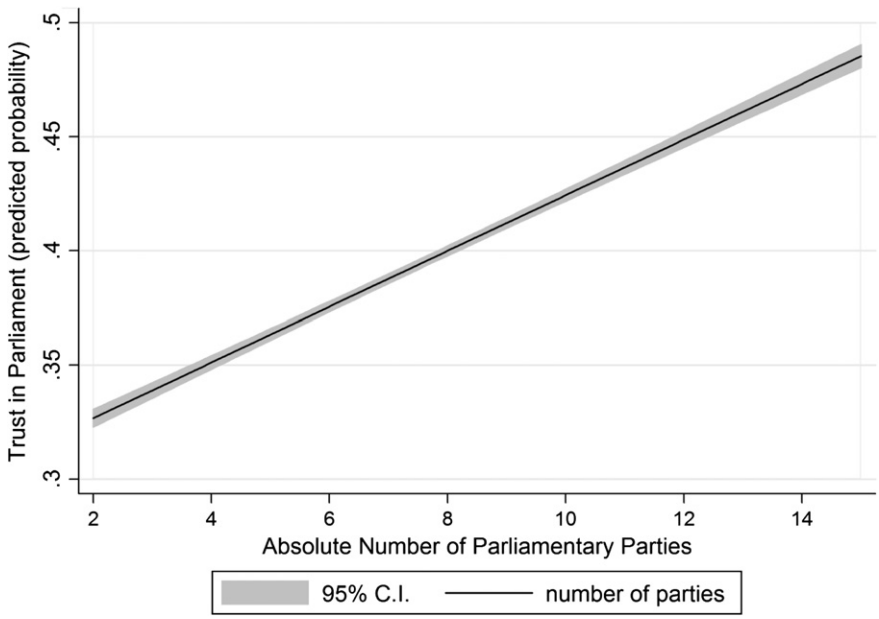

Fig. 5. The effect of the absolute number of parliamentary parties on the probability of reporting either "quite a lot of confidence" or "a great deal of confidence" in parliament.

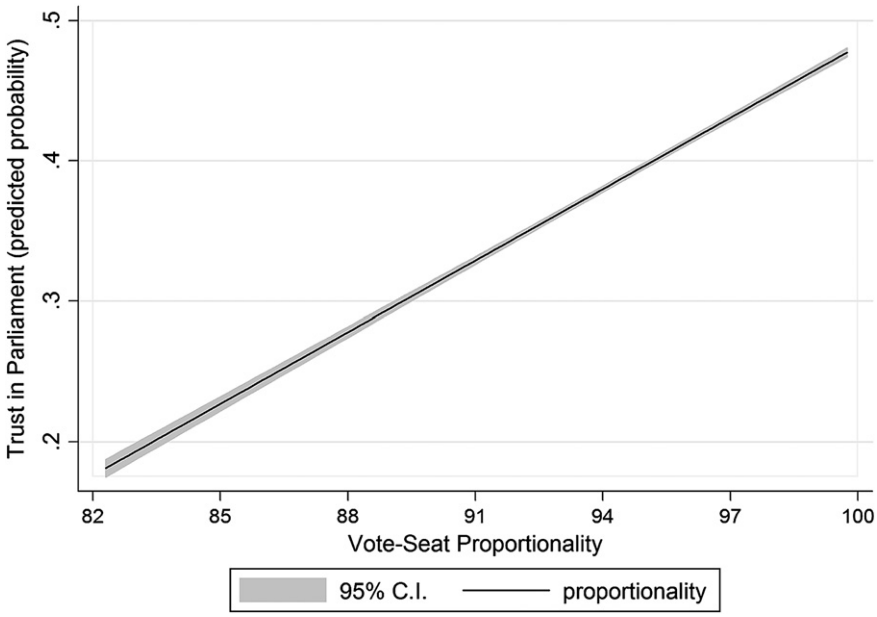

Fig. 6. The effect of the vote-seat proportionality on the probability of reporting either "quite a lot of confidence" or "a great deal of confidence" in parliament.

will be most evident in and after the 1999 data. Fig. 7 plots the proportion of people who agree or strongly agree that one can "trust the government to do what is right most of the time."

Fig. 7 illustrates that trust in government appears constant between 1993 and 1996, increases dramatically between the 1996 and 2002 surveys, and then levels out again from 2002 to 2008. While by no means conclusive evidence that electoral systems affect trust, this pattern is certainly supportive of such a claim.

6. Discussion

The Occupy movement, the rise of radical right-wing populist parties in Europe and the Tea Party in the United States, the Arab Spring, and the protests in Russia over potential election fraud; all of these phenomena indicate that citizens desire that their voices be heard. The rise of populist rhetoric on the Right and the Left and around the world testifies to the widespread desire for voice in the political system.

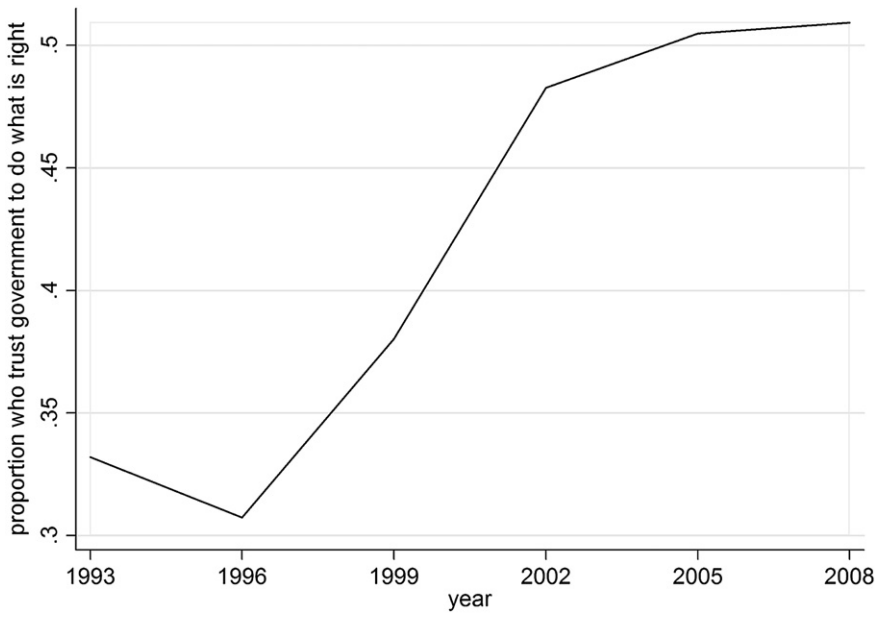

Fig. 7. The proportion of NZES respondents who agree or strongly agree with the statement that one can "trust government to do what is right most of the time."

The analyses in this paper support the view that voice matters for trust in representative institutions. An electoral system designed to produce more proportionate outcomes, a higher number of absolute parties in parliament, and a more proportionate vote-seat outcome all predict a higher individual level of trust in parliament. These three variables are analyzed to provide three different operationalizations for voice in parliament: intended, perceived, and actual, respectively. Only considering all three together can we begin to understand the effect of voice on trust in parliament. The analyses reveal that intended, perceived, and actual voice in parliament all predict higher individual levels of trust in parliament.

That the absolute number of parties in parliament increase trust in parliament provides a cause for concern that merely the appearance of fair process may serve to co-opt citizens into a system that is less than fair (cf., Cohen, 1989). Previous research notes that elections may be used by authoritarian regimes to deceive citizens into believing they have voice in the system in order to increase support for, or at least diminish resistance to, the regime (Gandhi and Lust-Okar, 2009). Though I do not aim to suggest that the deception propagated upon citizens in non-democratic countries and that propagated on citizens in democratic countries is equivalent, it is nevertheless garnering trust through deception. My primary concern is for those systems that give the illusion of voice in the policy-making process via a non-compensatory mixed-member electoral system. In these mixed-member systems, the PR component allows minority parties to receive seats in the parliament, but rarely to the degree that produces vote-seat proportionate outcomes. In adopting this form of electoral system (commonly known as mixed-member majoritarian or mixed-member parallel), constitutional designers, knowingly or not, may serve to deceive the public into believing they are receiving voice in the policy-making process. To some degree in some countries such voice may contribute to parliamentary debate. However, even if this is so, the voice of those represented by minority parties is unlikely to be nearly as loud as it should be.

Voice in parliament is clearly valuable for those who wish to influence policy outcomes. Procedural fairness may, then, serve to explain Lijphart's (1999) conclusion that proportional systems serve to promote consensual politics. Hollander-Blumoff and Tyler (2008), for example, find that perceptions of procedural fairness increases integrative bargaining and encourages acceptance of negotiated agreements (see also, Tyler, 1994). Electoral systems that provide a greater proportion of a country's citizenry with voice may engender increased trust in representative institutions as well as a more congenial and consensual political system that produces "kind and gentle" policy outcomes.

The procedural fairness thesis serves to connect numerous concepts that are often discussed in relation to electoral systems. Clarity of responsibility, accountability, effective government, and proportionality are all addressed by the concept of voice in representation. Individuals require that their voice is heard if they are to trust representative institutions. Being able to elect a selected representative is the first step in receiving voice (proportionality). Being able to evaluate whether one's representative is actually providing that voice (clarity of responsibility), whether a representative who fails to provide that voice can be replaced with one who may do better (accountability), and whether that voice is heard and acted on (effective government) are all also necessary in order that citizens have voice in government. Much of the literature on these concepts and electoral systems examines the trade-off between these concepts. Perhaps what is needed at this point is discussion on how these concepts provide voice to the citizenry and how best to maximize this voice, especially if our aim is to maximize trust in representative institutions.

This paper posits a causal pathway from voice in representation to perceptions of procedural fairness to trust in representative institutions. Unfortunately, current cross-national surveys, such as that used in this paper, do not directly inquire whether respondents believe their electoral system to be fair. I therefore rely on an indirect examination of this causal pathway, analyzing the relationship between various indicators of voice in parliamentary representation and trust in parliament. It is my hope that future cross-national surveys will include an item or items that will allow for a more direct examination of this thesis.

This paper is just a first step in determining the impact of voice on political trust. Comprehensive procedural fairness continues from the election process through to the process of government formation. In Dahl's (1989) language, the "decisive stage" is in the formation of the government. At the least, given the current resources available, the analyses in this paper need to be extended to trust in government and to consider the various processes and institutions that influence the formation of government.

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