



AP Comparative Government & Politics 2000 Student Samples

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When recruiting young would-be politicians for the next generation of political elite, ~~the~~ ~~both~~ both China and India look for well-educated individuals with strong ~~the~~ ties and loyalty to their political parties. Despite these similarities, it is much easier to gain access to the political world in India than China, because of that country's numerous political parties and ~~more~~ more democratic structure.

Both India and China ~~use~~ factor education and party loyalty heavily into selecting their political elite. ~~the~~ In India, most successful politicians ~~are~~ have completed at least their bachelor's degrees, sometimes at Western Universities, and many have had successful careers in business, technology development, or education. China too, looks for intellectual talent in its would-be politicians, selecting those especially who exhibit strong administrative skills. ~~Both India~~

Both nations also pay close attention to party loyalty. In China especially, loyalty to the C.P and adherence to Marxist-Leninist-Maoist doctrine is considered paramount for any aspiring politician. In India too, party loyalty is important on the way up.

Although many Lok Sabha members are fickle where their party affiliation is concerned, aspiring politicians spend years in rank and file position before getting top positions.

2

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~~Despite these similarities~~

Despite these similarities, it is much easier to gain access to India's political elite than to China's. For one, the sheer number of political parties and the size of India's political ~~structure~~ ~~system~~ bureaucracy (14 million individuals) makes it easier to gain a position of power ~~in India~~ ~~than in China~~. This is in stark contrast to China, in which ~~there~~ any deviance from the CCP is considered traitorous, and in which the CCP is the only accepted political outlet. There is also the issue of education: although a higher percentage of China's population is literate, ~~that~~ it is far easier for a member of India's intellectual elite to make the transition from the world of business or education to the realm of politics than it is for a member of Chinese society.

Also in India is the interesting phenomenon seen elsewhere in ~~the~~ western democracies which ~~is~~ is a stark contrast to China and which makes ~~entry~~ entrance to India's political elite comparatively easier. Many Indian politicians, such as Congress's Jaglalitha, are former

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2

film stars, or are otherwise formerly famous in a realm outside politics. While common in India, this would be absurd in China.

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2

The recruitment of members into the political elite, meaning the ruling group of people in the political structure, in both the People's Republic of China and of the developing nation of Mexico, ~~it~~ relies heavily on party affiliation and also on individual personality. In recent years, it has become increasingly easier to become a member of the political elite of Mexico than it ~~was~~ in the PRC.

Party affiliation has been a necessity in becoming a member of the political elite of China since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came into power under Mao Zedong in 1949. The entire government, including the bureaucracy, Central Committee, Politburo, Standing Committee and National Party Congress, in addition to the parallel structures of the ~~state~~ ceremonial state government, have been members of the Communist Party. ~~Due~~ Due to the Chinese version of the USSR's "nomenklatura" system of merit elections, no one not affiliated with the party will be elected. It has been similar in Mexico, with the old Party of the Revolution, ~~the~~ PRI, holding all offices. They, like China, had a system of authoritarian government, called 'democradura' which was a mix of democracy and dictatorship. Elections were rigged if necessary, and fear tactics used on peasant voters, to ensure PRI victory.

Also important in both China and Mexico is individual personality. A man's rise to power is largely based in ~~the~~ both nations ~~on~~ in his strength of personal legitimacy. In China, Mao Zedong was quite capable of holding power as a result of his individual political

president was been selected through the dedazo system.

2

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strength, his ability to carry out his plans such as the Great Leap's collectivization of agriculture, the ~~new~~ false Glasnost of his 100 Flowers Campaign, and his ideological Cultural Revolution. His political skill as a man kept him in power, just as was true of Deng Xiaoping. In Mexico, a country long based on a system of caudillo political recruitment, the voters follow not a political party but an individual politician. Vicente Fox, ~~of~~ candidate for the PAN party, is currently close in the running with "PRI boy" Francisco Labastida, due to his appearance as a caudillo-like individual.

Although a strong personality has ~~been~~ remained important in Mexico, the party affiliation of the political elite is diminishing in importance, while it still grows strong in the PRC. The PRI seems to be participating in its own reform, as they are allowing elections to be more honest. In 1983, the PAN (in support of the business class interests) and PRD (working class) parties gained control of state governorships and mayorships, and in 1997, for the first time in PRI history they no longer dominated both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. In China, however, the system has not changed, and ~~the~~ the political party system remains authoritarian exclusive.

The elite recruitment of China ~~and Mexico~~ has remained the same, dealing in party affiliation and individual personality strength. In Mexico, the strength of the ~~party~~ legitimacy of the individual is still important, but party affiliation less so.

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2

Naturally, the recruitment of political elites is crucial in both Mexico and China as in any country.

Recently, Mexico has undergone a change in one facet of its elite recruitment. Former president Zedillo renounced the use of the method of "dedazo" for appointing the next president. Although this fact is only a minor portion of elite recruitment in Mexico, it illustrates a much bigger picture. Mexico is currently transitioning from an authoritarian state to democracy. Since the 1910 revolution, elite recruitment has been primarily based on lineage, but is now being challenged by the younger generation of politicians. The older politicians, or "Los Dinosaurios", typically remained in office until death, at which their children would enter the realm of politics. However, this new breed of ~~younger~~ younger politicians, "technocrats", educated in ivy league schools have been vying for power and assisting the implementation of reforms such as mandatory retirement ages for the older politicians. Thus, it appears that one method of political recruitment is to send potential politicians to United States schools to educate them in the practices of democracy to use upon their return to Mexico. However, this greatly conflicts with the former method of maintaining families in power. In addition, beyond the PRI, other parties such as the PAN + PRD have been gaining momentum and influence. Their methods of recruitment most resemble that of the United States because their parties are newer and have never held the

presidency. Thus, it has become easier for non-PR1 or non-family members to gain political elite membership in Mexico due to the reforms encouraging democracy.

Similarly, China, though a communist country, has also been experiencing reforms. The reforms deal more with allowing private enterprise and partial market economy rather than democracy. However, recruitment reforms are on the way. Previously, and still somewhat currently, China's elite recruitment was characterized by a hierarchical chain. As the lower ranks remained loyal, their leaders would experience promotions of some sort. It occurred this way directly up to the top of the chain. Because China has no definite method of transferring leadership, Mao's next highest in command, Deng, replaced him as the chairman - soon to be General Secretary. Lately, China has been lessening its rigidity on elite recruitment. Members outside the CCP inner circle have been gaining influence + positions due to the recent reforms. The government is now beginning to recognize achievement and merit as factors of recruitment rather than rank. Although these methods now exist, it is still extremely difficult to enter into China's politically elite.

Thus, Mexico + China both exhibit their own methods of elite recruitment as well as recruitment reforms, however, Mexico appears to maintain less stringent obstacles toward elite membership.