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**EXAMINING POLITICAL LEGITIMACY IN SOUTH KOREA
AND SINGAPORE AND THEIR DIFFERENT REGIME
OUTCOMES**

Bachelor's Thesis

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I declare I have written the bachelor's thesis independently.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	4
INTRODUCTION	5
PART I.....	10
1. LEGITIMACY, AND TYPES OF LEGITIMACY	10
2. GOVERNANCE AND LEGITIMACY.....	12
3. GOOD GOVERNANCE AND MASLOW’S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS	14
3.1. Tier I: Biological and Physiological Needs	17
3.2. Tier II: Safety and Security Needs.....	17
3.3. Tier III: Love/Belongingness Needs	18
3.4. Tier IV: Esteem Needs.....	18
3.5. Tier V: Self-Actualisation Needs.....	19
4. METHODOLOGY	20
PART II	21
5. SOUTH KOREA.....	21
5.1. Tier I: Biological and Physiological Needs	21
5.2. Tier II: Safety and Security Needs.....	22
5.3. Tier III: Love/Belongingness Needs	26
5.4. Tier IV: Esteem Needs.....	27
5.5. Tier V: Self-Actualisation Needs.....	28
5.6. Summary.....	28
6. SINGAPORE	30
6.1. Tier I: Biological and Physiological Needs	30

6.2.	Tier II: Safety and Security Needs.....	31
6.3.	Tier III: Love/Belongingness Needs.....	33
6.4.	Tier IV: Esteem Needs.....	34
6.5.	Tier V: Self-Actualisation Needs.....	35
6.6.	Summary.....	36
PART III.....		37
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION		37
REFERENCES		40

ABSTRACT

As existing theories of democratisation are unable to sufficiently explain why South Korea democratised in 1987 while Singapore has yet to experience a democratic transition, an alternative approach to explain their differences in political regime outcomes is proposed. Adapting Maslow's hierarchy of needs to a political context, the difference in political regimes is explained by examining the extent to which governments are able to fulfil the needs of the public or the public interest; in other words, whether there is good governance. The needs of the populace are arranged in a hierarchical order as per Maslow's original model and the more needs that governance fulfils, the greater political legitimacy the government obtains, which helps to stabilise the government. According to this model, the South Korean government was destabilised as it had only partially fulfilled the economic half in the second tier of safety and security needs and neglected socio-political stability such that the government lost legitimacy. While the Singaporean government has managed to fulfil the needs of the populace in all tiers to a level enough to minimise challenges to its legitimacy.

Keywords: South Korea, Singapore, regime, political legitimacy, governance, hierarchy of needs

INTRODUCTION

This thesis seeks to answer the question why South Korea democratised in the late 1980s when Singapore failed to do so. The Republic of Korea was first proclaimed in 1948 and founded as a democratic state. However, its first president, Syngman Rhee, soon turned into an authoritarian leader using repression and coercion to maintain political power. The successors of Syngman Rhee were hardly different with authoritarian dictatorship presiding over the country in between bouts of popular movements for democratisation until 1987 when the ruling administration conceded to public demands for free and fair elections. Democracy was consolidated in 1992 when the first civilian president with no ties to the former regime was elected.

The Republic of Singapore was established in 1965 with the People's Action Party (PAP) comprising the ruling administration, following the struggle for independence from British colonial rule and the subsequent failed merger with the Federation of Malaya. In the first two decades after independence, the ruling government identified the need for technocratic rule guided by pragmatism working towards common economic growth as crucial for survival since not only did the country lack natural resources, its population was also divided among ethnic lines of the four main groups of Chinese, Malay, Indian, and others (mainly Eurasians). Although parliamentary elections in the country are regularly held and are considered free from irregularities and vote rigging, the PAP has dominated the government without having lost a single election since self-government in 1959 and has been routinely critiqued over its restrictions on press and civil liberties, earning the government the title of a semi-authoritarian regime and the country the classification of being only partly free (Singapore 2015).

Both countries shared a common economic narrative of starting out at the bottom of the world economies in the 1960s; they were considered part of the Third World and economically backwards with per capita GDP measuring \$155.59 in South Korea and \$427.87 in Singapore however by the late 1980s as the result of strong state intervention in the economy, both countries saw explosive economic growth in a single generation and a similar change in their socio-economic standards since the 1960s (see Table 1).

Table 1. Per capita GDP in current US Dollars

Year	1960 (\$)	1965 (\$)	1987 (\$)	1990 (\$)	2000 (\$)	2015 (\$)
South Korea	155.60	105.13	3627.60	6642.45	11947.58	27221.52
Singapore	427.88	516.29	7531.25	11864.28	23792.60	52888.74
United Kingdom	1380.30	1850.95	13118.59	19095.47	27769.93	43929.69
United States of America	3007.12	3827.53	20100.86	23954.48	36449.86	56115.72
OECD Average	1334.23	1836.82	15793.95	21241.59	21696.64	36810.24

Source: (World Bank Databank 2017)

The structural approach of democratisation, that modernisation causes structural changes in society such as urbanisation, propagation of ideas, more educated population, and the formation of civil society which will eventually lead to democratisation (Collier 1999; Huntington 1991; Lipset 1959; Moore 1966; Rueschemeyer, E. Stephens, & J. Stephens 1990), could possibly explain democratisation in South Korea as due to modernisation. However, the same cannot be said for Singapore as a stark contrast exists in the political paths of both countries despite their similar economic development. In a different model of democratisation, Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) attributed the Singaporean anomaly to the country's relatively low income inequality. Democracy is desired for its redistributive benefits hence a population already benefiting from the economic resources of the country will have little incentive to desire and pursue democratic change. However this does not fully explain the lack of democracy in Singapore, or even the democratisation of South Korea since at the point of its democratic transition in 1987, South Korea's income inequality was even lower than Singapore's and was continuing to decrease (see Figure 1).

Scholars of South Korean affairs have also pointed out the importance of the mass mobilisation of Korean civil society – the tripartite alliance of students, labour, and religious leaders (Kim 2000; Kim 2012), together with the participation of the previously indifferent middle class (Choi 1993; Kim 2012; Shin, Chang, Lee, & Kim 2011) – and a revived political society forming into a single unified and organised grand movement as responsible for South Korea's successful democratisation. Without this grand coalition movement, enough coercive power and high repression costs to pressure the regime to begin the liberalisation process would not have been obtained and the regime would have fallen back on military repression.

Singapore, although economically as developed as South Korea at the end of South Korea's final transition to democracy, lacked an important structural prerequisite of civil society that hindered the mass mobilisation of social movements that were common throughout South Korean history. This could be due to the ruling government's own creation of a civic society of government-linked organisations permeating all aspects of social, political, and economic life since the beginning. Government-linked grassroots organisations, voluntary welfare organisations, ethnic self-help groups, and official and semi-official feedback mechanisms which cooperate with the government in delivering social services to the populace were created as part of a multi-faceted strategy of political co-option to pre-empt independent political spaces from forming (Barr 2012; Rodan 2006) and simultaneously limiting the opposition from making headways into the public sphere.

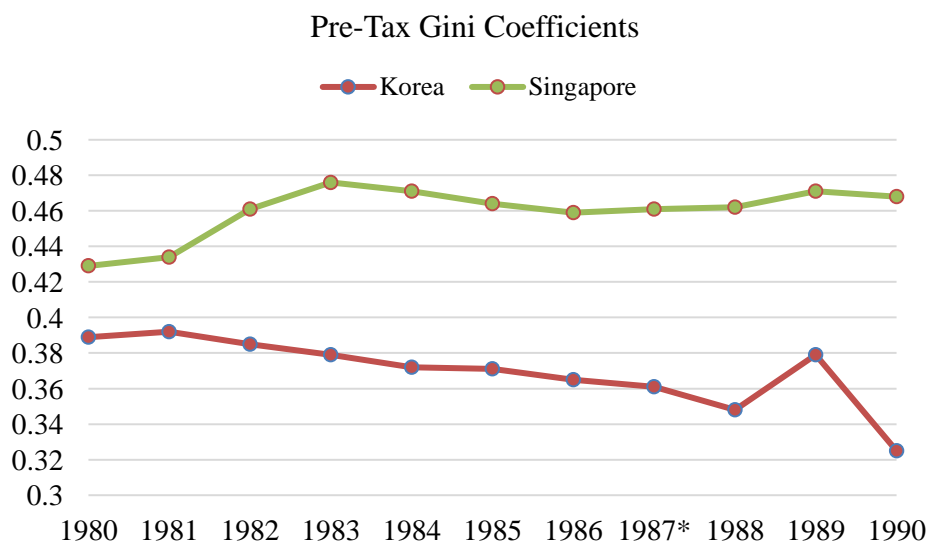


Figure 1. Income inequality measured by pre-tax GINI coefficient

Source: (Mukhopadhaya, Pundarik 2003; Kang, & Yun 2008)

During the period of rapid modernisation, the working class was more likely to be disadvantaged since rapid modernisation required depressed wages in order to compete in the international markets and attract foreign investments as the economy transitioned from being labour-intensive to capital-intensive such that labour would champion democracy in order to alleviate their poor socio-economic conditions (Lipset 1959; Moore 1966). This was true in South Korea where the labour movement played a visible role in the democratisation

movement, largely appearing after the enactment of economic policies under the Park regime that prioritised industrialisation over labour welfare and wages. The labour movement in Singapore however remains strikingly absent, it can be argued that the PAP's early eradication of all labour unions not friendly to the government, creation of a single friendly trade union confederation, and institutionalised labour laws criminalising strikes are responsible. However, it neglects that during Park Chung-Hee's leadership, South Korean labour laws were also repressing organised labour and leaders of strikes would be routinely imprisoned. The illegality of labour movements thus does not explain the relative lack of labour dissent in Singapore as compared to South Korea.

The lack of democratisation movements in Singapore has also been explained by the long-ruling administration's track record of successful economic performance and economic policies which benefitted the economic interests of all social classes since independence thereby providing legitimacy. The middle and business classes gained the most, owing their position to the state intervention in the economy such that their relative absence in democratic movements could be explained by them being contingent democrats who as beneficiaries in an undemocratic regime, democracy could instead have threatened their economic interests (Bellin 2000). However, legitimacy through economic performance failed in South Korea during the second and especially the third transition despite the Chun's administration's success in revitalising the economy. Like Singapore, South Korean society in general had benefited from the regime's economic policies, which rapidly modernised the country and saw increasing economic prosperity. Yet the South Korean middle class mobilised in the end more as a result of moral discontent over the regime's repressive actions instead of strategic preferences, or by democratic impulse. While the increasing discontent the Singaporean middle class has against the ruling party are more concerned with the perceived arrogance and elitist stance of the government that neglects their opinions despite the continued economic output of the government.

With this in mind – if neither modernisation, economic prosperity, nor strategic material preferences can account for differences in democratisation movements in both countries – this paper thus seeks to answer why South Korea democratised and Singapore did not by identifying what gives legitimacy to governments in the first place and rally mobilisations against authoritarian governments to fall or support its perseverance. The paper will be divided into three parts: Part I will provide the theoretical underpinning of the paper by identifying the

potential independent variables to be studied. This is done by: 1) surveying the literature distinguishing between output and input legitimacy, 2) defining governance, and how it is related to achieving legitimacy, and 3) constructing a model to explain people's motivation in according political legitimacy to governments which is adapted from Maslow's hierarchy of needs in motivation theory. Part II will trace the development of political legitimacy and government stability in the case studies of South Korea and Singapore by applying the model. The final Part III will compare the differences in political legitimacy and government stability in both countries, and provide a critique of the model. According to the model, the South Korean regime was found to be highly politically unstable and illegitimate as it had failed to provide good governance in fulfilling the needs of the populace such that it was unable to withstand challenges to the government and survive crises while the Singaporean regime enjoyed high legitimacy at the lower tiers of the model and through artful balancing of satisfying the needs at the higher tier with deliberative coercion, it was able to maintain sufficient levels of legitimacy at the higher tiers and remain stable.

PART I

This section explores the need for legitimacy and the dimensions of political legitimacy which can be accorded to regimes. Two dimensions of political legitimacy, input and output legitimacy are identified and the link between governance and legitimacy established. Having good governance can be viewed as a means of gaining political legitimacy as good governance fulfils the needs of the populace which in turn affects their motivation for supporting or opposing the government. By adapting Maslow's hierarchy of needs which explains human motivation, an alternative model to explain the populace's motivation in according political legitimacy to government is constructed.

1. LEGITIMACY, AND TYPES OF LEGITIMACY

Before elaborating on legitimacy, the definitions of regime and government will need to be set out. Adapting from Krasner's (1982) and Keohane and Nye's (as cited in Krasner 1983) definition of international regimes, regime will be defined as the set of implicit or explicit principles, rules, norms, and institutions that determine how government is constituted, organised, and how decisions are made. While government will be defined as the group of people who have the power to exercise political authority and are responsible for the direction and supervision of public affairs (Definition of Government 2017). Administration and public authority will be used synonymously with government in this paper. This distinction between regime and government is important as this paper is attempting to explain the difference in regime outcomes of South Korea and Singapore as a result of the differences in political legitimacy gained by their respective governments.

All kinds of political regimes, democratic and non-democratic ones, are dependent on the capacity of their governments to use coercion while wielding political legitimacy in order to maintain stability and ensure the functionality of the regime. Political legitimacy is described

as the people's recognition and acceptance of the validity of the rules of their entire political system and the decision of their government. Two things can thus be expected from political systems that are politically legitimate. Firstly, the political system will be more resilient and able to survive through crises, and secondly, the government is able to formulate and implement policies in an effective manner without needing to obtain approval from the ruled or employing coercion for every decision. (Warren 2008)

In order to maintain political legitimacy, the government needs to convince its citizens that they are benefitting in return for their compliance. Accordingly, legitimacy can be perceived as having two dimensions: 1) Input legitimacy (government by the people), and 2) Output legitimacy (government for the people). Input legitimacy depends on the mechanisms or institutional arrangements that will ensure that the governing process and political decisions are responsive to citizens' preference, in other words, the "will of the people" will be translated into political decisions. The people also trust that even if decisions are made by the majority, the mechanisms or institutional arrangements will still assure their interests. Examples of mechanisms or institutional arrangements providing input legitimacy include having elections and party competition. On the other hand, output legitimacy refers to the extent to which policy outcomes succeed effectively in solving common social problems – an objective component – and the extent to which citizens are satisfied with the content of government policy – a subjective component. (Scharpf, as cited in Scharpf 2003)

Political legitimacy can thus be found in both democratic and non-democratic regimes as long as the ruled or governed have trust in and accept that the political decisions are in their interests, and that their concerns can be solved by those who rule or govern them. Governments in democracies can face declining political legitimacy if political decisions are seen as counter to citizens' preferences, or ineffective in resolving citizens' concerns. However, for consolidated democracies where governments have a history of being capable of formulating and enforcing public policies to resolve problems of society, the citizens already have a developed commitment to democracy as their preferred type of political regime independent of the administration's performance. In contrast, new democracies or non-democratic regimes without the proven track record of performance face more challenges to their development of legitimacy. (Warren 2008)

2. GOVERNANCE AND LEGITIMACY

Although there are two aspects of governance, procedural and substantive, the argument of this paper will mainly follow the substantive aspect of governance that good governance acts in the interests of the people. Hence, governance is the activity or process of public authority to realise the public interest, or the management process of maximising public interest. Governance differs from government in that the main body of government can only be the power organs of government, while the main body of governance can be governmental or non-governmental organisation, and even joint entities of governmental and private organisations. Governance focuses on society as a whole while government focuses on the government itself. (Yu 2011) Good governance is thus one that contributes to the good of society (Perry, de Graaf, van der Wal, & van Montfort 2014), however the term good governance encompasses an extremely broad definition. On the one hand, good governance is equated with administrative and economic efficiency – the sound management of the country by utilising its national factor and resource endowments so as to create the greatest amount of public goods, and the distribution of these goods to promote human development and incentives for further wealth creation. While on the other hand, good governance relates to political issues such as respecting human rights, rule of law, effective participation, and political pluralism among many others. Comparing the working definitions of good governance between major multilateral agencies such as the UN, European Commission, OECD, and multilateral development banks such as the World Bank, Gisselquist (2012) identified good governance as consisting of seven components: 1) democracy and representation, 2) human rights, 3) rule of law, 4) efficient and effective public management 5) transparency and accountability, 6) developmentalist objectives, and 7) a varying range of particular political and economic policies, programmes, and institutions (e.g. elections, a legislature, free press, secure property rights).

Pursuing good governance can be seen as the main method for achieving political legitimacy. However whether good governance is pursued in all its aspects – political, economic, and administrative – or only in certain aspects determines the type and extent of input or output legitimacy accorded to it. Democracies are more likely to embody the procedural aspects of good governance such as representation, political participation, and accountability

and have greater input legitimacy; however they may not necessarily be efficient in resolving societal issues or ensuring social stability. Hence democracies are not a guarantee of good governance as a whole. Likewise good governance can exist without democracy as a precondition, albeit in a more economic and administrative sense of having output legitimacy, providing the stability and efficiency democracies may lack. But stability and efficiency as outputs do not necessarily convey the moral quality or normative status which democratic institutions have as authoritarian regimes can still achieve stability and efficiency through repressive means. Hence which aspects of good governance can thus provide a more stable political legitimacy to the public authority in the eyes of the people?

3. GOOD GOVERNANCE AND MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

In human motivational theory, Maslow's (1943; see Figure 2) hierarchy of needs is a familiar model. Depicted as a five-tier pyramid, Maslow states that people are motivated to achieve or maintain the conditions fulfilling certain needs and that the needs relate to each other in a hierarchical arrangement of pre-potency – taking precedence over others. The most pre-potent need will dominate the consciousness and organise the person to fulfil that need, at the same time minimising or causing to forget less pre-potent needs. Needs mostly need to be gratified in a hierarchical order from the bottom to the top, however the fulfilment of needs and progression in the hierarchy should be viewed more in percentages as opposed to absolute terms – although the fulfilment of the lower needs first enable the realisation of subsequent higher needs to be possible, a gradually fulfilling lower need gradually increases the motivation to fulfil the next higher need. Additionally, any given behaviour of a person can satisfy several needs at the same time. The first four levels from the bottom are “deficiency needs” as a person will feel anxious if those needs are not met and motivation to fulfil those needs is driven by the absence of those needs. While the fifth level is a “growth need” which can only be achieved if the deficiency needs are met as a prerequisite. However, a person need not necessarily achieve the fifth level at all as motivation for this need is driven by desire for personal growth as opposed to the absence of a need, hence people can live out their entire life without achieving self-actualisation as there is no felt anxiety if this need is left unfulfilled.

If governance is the activity or process of public authority to realise the public interest, and public interest is seen as the collective needs of people, good governance can be viewed as the fulfilment of these needs, and the populace according legitimacy depending on the governance of governments – fulfilment of the tiers/their needs. An alternative five-tier pyramid of people's motivation with regards to according political legitimacy to public authorities can then be constructed (see Figure 3). Like the original hierarchy, people have needs which they are motivated to fulfil, but having good governance is expected to fulfil those needs. The bottom tiers need to be met before people will be motivated to pursue the higher need. For each fulfilled

need by governance, political legitimacy is accorded while if a need is left unfulfilled, as the absence of the need drives motivation to fulfil the need, political legitimacy decreases over time and an alternative public authority is sought to fulfil that need. Governments which fulfil more tiers will be more stable and better able to survive legitimacy crises even when certain needs are lost due to the surrounding political or economic circumstances.

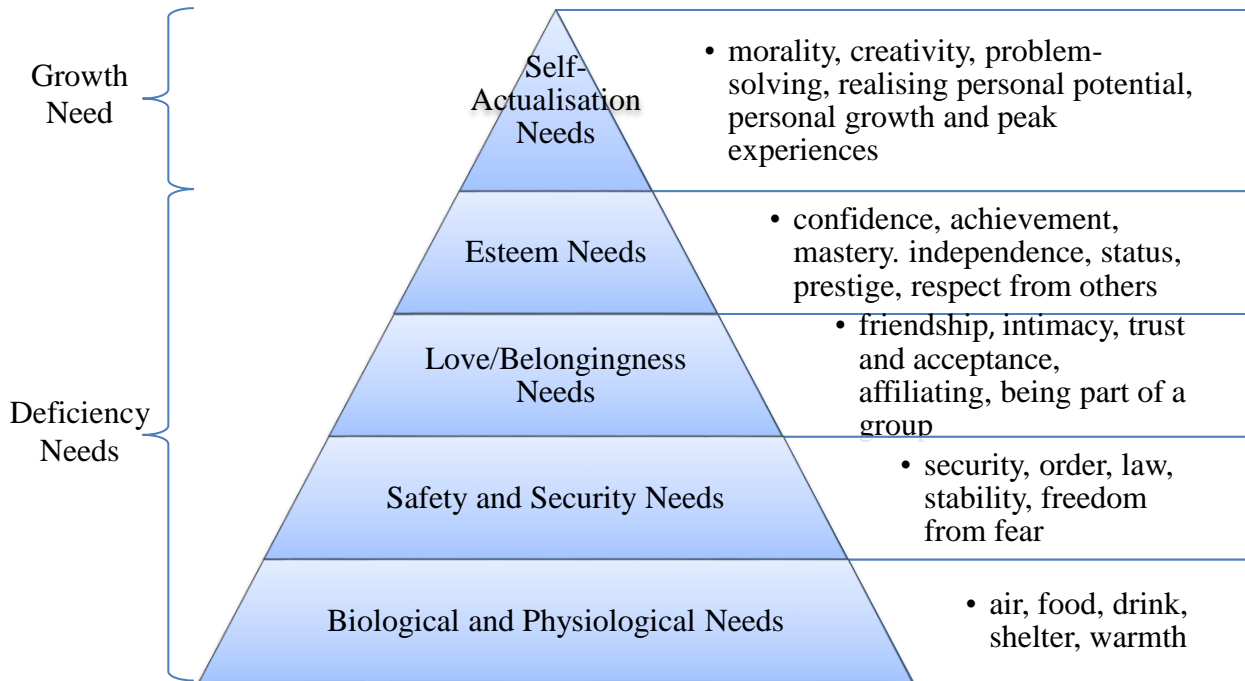


Figure 2. Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Source: (Maslow 1943)

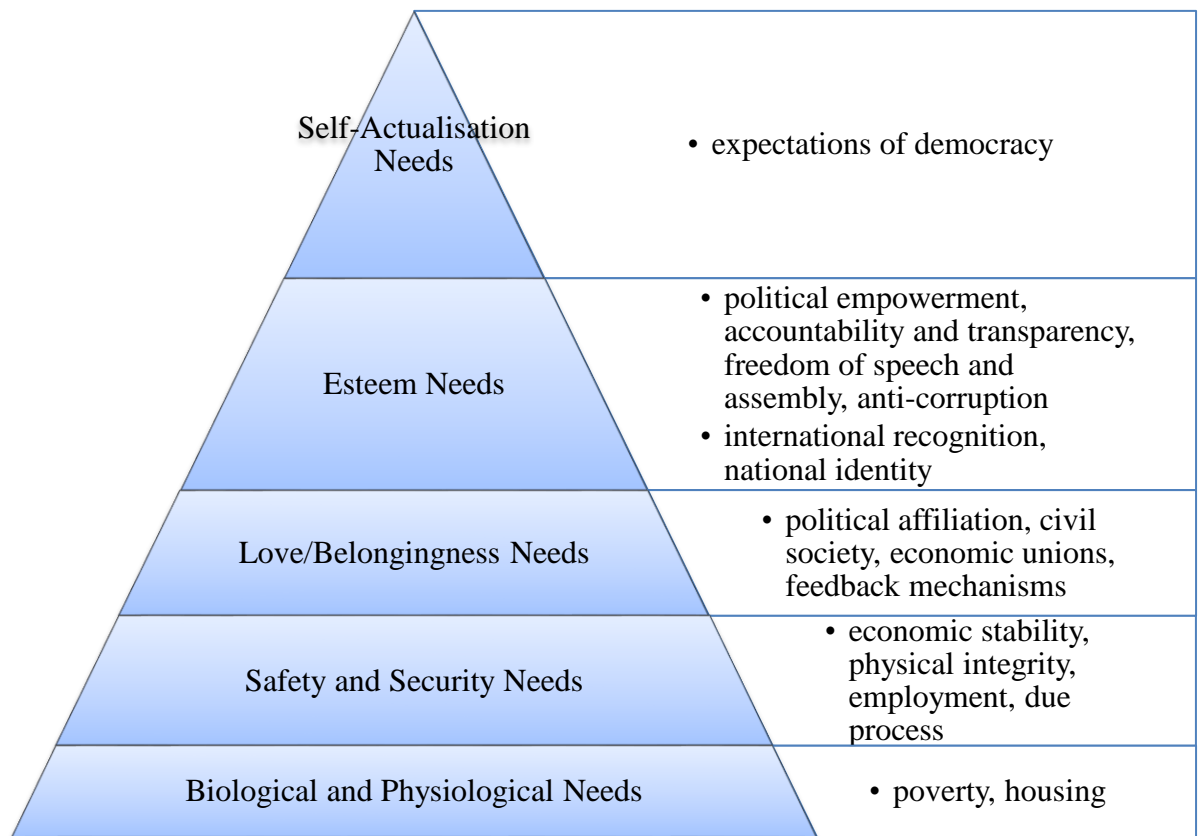


Figure 3. Adapted hierarchy of motivation and political legitimacy

The fulfilment of each tier by governance should be thought of in percentile increments. Actions by the government relating to the needs of a tier fulfils that tier to a certain percentage and unless all needs in the tier are addressed, the tier will not be fully satisfied and full political legitimacy from that tier not accorded. However, the bottom tier does not need to be fully satisfied in order for public motivation to pursue the needs of the higher tier to occur. Instead, as the bottom tier is gradually fulfilled, motivation to start fulfilling the higher tier and expectations of good governance in that tier increases. Each act of governance can also simultaneously fulfil different tiers regardless of the hierarchical order and the higher tiers can be fulfilled to a greater percentage than the lower tiers at any given time (see Figure 4). However unless the lower tiers are fulfilled to a certain threshold and maintained at the threshold, motivation to fulfil that need will continue to dominate and political legitimacy still lost even if the needs of the higher tiers are fulfilled. Hence a government, although fulfilling the higher needs to a large extent but failing to maintain the fulfilment of the lower needs at a certain threshold, will face greater challenges to its political legitimacy and be less stable in periods of

crisis than a government which has fulfilled the lower needs to the threshold but not fulfilled the higher needs.

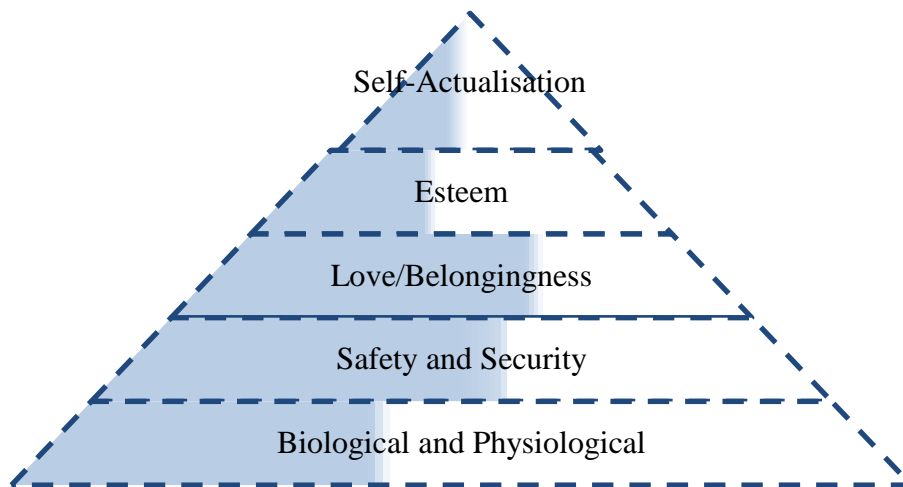


Figure 4. Percentage of fulfilment of needs. Needs are fulfilled in percentages and might not be fulfilled in a hierarchical order by governance. Shaded portions on the left of the pyramid indicate the extent or percentage of the need which has been fulfilled for the respective tier

3.1. Tier I: Biological and Physiological Needs

The very basic needs of human beings are access to food, water, and shelter. However just having access is not enough if this access is not guaranteed since without a guarantee that these basic needs will be satisfied and maintained, other needs will continue to be ignored or suppressed. Furthermore, guaranteed access to the basic needs should not be for its own sake, but adequate and conducive enough to provide access to other aspects of life and to pursue a more comfortable life. Good governance in this tier would equate to providing adequate housing and reducing poverty and starvation.

3.2. Tier II: Safety and Security Needs

Safety and security needs relate to enabling people in a society to feel secure and safe. This can be done in several different ways such as providing military security in the form of a strong army to secure the country from external threats, providing economic security in the form of a stable economy and providing access to resources, finance, and markets which support acceptable wealth and power levels in the state, and providing political security with stable

governments and institutions (Buzan 1991), or even not subjecting citizens to government repression and coercion. Good governance in order to fulfil these needs will need to address both economic and political aspects such as by providing functioning public and private institutions, employment, property rights, physical integrity such as freedom from political killings, torture, imprisonment, and due process. Note that although principles of the rule of law are included here, the institutions guaranteeing rule of law are absent from here as the security of people although observed, are not guaranteed. This tier, together with the previous tier, are mainly linked to output legitimacy as it can be seen as relating to an effective and efficient governance able to provide an adequate standard of living to the people.

3.3. Tier III: Love/Belongingness Needs

Love/belongingness needs relates to forming partnerships and cooperation with other people. At the societal level this can be equated with forming or belonging to economic unions, political unions, interest groups, and the formation of civil society. Citizens participating in feedback mechanisms such as through formal institutions or informal consultations are also included in here since it relates to a cooperation and outlet of interaction between the populace contributing their opinions and the authorities giving the opportunity to provide feedback. However, the authorities need not necessarily acknowledge and act on public opinion. In this tier and subsequent tiers, the needs shift from concentrating on the individual's physical and material well-being to the individual as a member of society; as a social being, these needs are a greater connection and cooperation with other members of society or the government.

3.4. Tier IV: Esteem Needs

Esteem needs relates to obtaining respect from others. At the individual level this can be being recognised for achievements done and feeling valued. At the societal level this is being valued as a member of society whose opinions matter hence having political empowerment where the will of the people will be translated into political decisions, government accountability and transparency of processes and institutions, equity, freedom of speech and assembly, and anti-corruption measures/integrity of the government. At the national level, this can be having national pride in the country's achievements and the country's standing in the

international community. A significant difference between Tier III and Tier IV is the extent of impact people have in influencing political decision making and controlling their own economic, social, and political development. Tier III is concerned with having the opportunity to participate but not influencing, while Tier IV requires that people can not only participate, but also wield significant influence to determine or affect political decision outcomes. Hence Tier IV accords more input legitimacy since it reflects “the people’s will” to a greater extent with government being responsive and addressing the people’s needs.

3.5. Tier V: Self-Actualisation Needs

Self-actualisation relates to the fulfilment of the fullest potential of the individual. As democracies are believed to be the better form of all alternative regimes since democracies are characterised by their constitutional and institutional guarantees of people’s rights, government accountability and replaceability for underperformance, reflection of the people’s will and “government of the people, by the people, for the people”, democracies are aspired to as encompassing the highest form of political legitimacy for governments. Democracies are the form of regime best able to create an environment where people can not only achieve their fullest potential, but also be conducive to fulfilling all their previous needs tiers. However, what exactly constitutes democracy in this tier, whether procedural or substantive, is left undefined as the expectations of democracy which is the subjective beliefs and norms the populace holds about the benefits of democracy. Such subjectivity also implies a possible overlap of needs in the previous tiers if they coincide with the expectations of democracy. However like the original hierarchy of needs, not all regimes will become democracies since motivation for this need is driven by the desire for growth instead of an absence such that the motivation for fulfilling this need will not dominate the consciousness as much compared to previous tiers if previous tiers have not been adequately fulfilled.

4. METHODOLOGY

The historical-comparative approach, a mixed-methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative methods, was used in analysing the case studies of South Korea and Singapore. This approach relies on examining historical events to provide explanations of phenomena. Sources of data collected mainly concentrated on qualitative secondary sources and historical data, and quantitative data obtained from statistical sources such as the World Bank, CIRI Human Rights Data Project, Singstat, Transparency International, and World Values Survey. As the aim of the paper is to examine the legitimacy differences in the respective public authorities of South Korea and Singapore, only the decade corresponding to South Korea's democratic transition in 1987 and the present day political situation of Singapore are examined. Collected data was organised into the adapted hierarchy of motivation and political legitimacy of the government depending on whether governance meets each tier in the hierarchy of political legitimacy.

Each tier of the adapted hierarchy of motivation and political motivation is operationalised as follows:

Tier I: Poverty rate, increase in household average income

Tier II: To determine economic stability – inflation rate, GDP per capita growth, unemployment rate; to determine socio-political stability – acts of physical repression (e.g. torture, killings, and imprisonment) and judicial repression (e.g. lawsuits)

Tier III: Government regulation of unions, interest groups; opportunities to participate in political institutions

Tier IV: Political influence wielded by citizens, government's response to citizen demands

Tier V: Perception of regime as democratic, democratisation movement activeness

PART II

In this section, the case studies of South Korea and Singapore will be examined in order to identify the extent of legitimacy accorded to their respective regimes by the means of governance fulfilling the public needs as defined by the adapted hierarchy of motivation and political legitimacy. The South Korean regime was found to have left all tiers unfulfilled with the exception of the bottommost tier such that it was highly lacking in political legitimacy while the Singaporean regime was found to have minimally fulfilled each tier such that it had greater political legitimacy and was more stable overall. However, as each tier remains incompletely fulfilled, the regime still faces challenges to its legitimacy.

5. SOUTH KOREA

5.1. Tier I: Biological and Physiological Needs

South Korea in the first decade following independence was fraught with abysmal living conditions, which were exacerbated by the Korean War. The Korean War, lasting from 1950 to 1953, left behind a less economically developed south struggling to cope with reconstruction amid high poverty and employment rates, starvation and famine, and the mass displacement of people by war. However this had all changed drastically by the 1980s. Despite a limited public assistance programme started in 1961 which operated on a strict, means-tested and family-support principle and of which only a small fraction of the population met the eligibility criteria, poverty in South Korea was soon declining quickly thanks in part to the rapid export-oriented industrialisation from the 1960s (Yi, & Kwon 2008; see Figure 5). The industrialisation of the country had the effects of decreasing poverty in the urban areas and of increasing incomes for the working population such that by the 1980s, only 9.8 percent of all households were

considered to be below the poverty line from 40.9 percent in 1965, and by 1991 the absolute poverty rate was down to 7.6 percent.

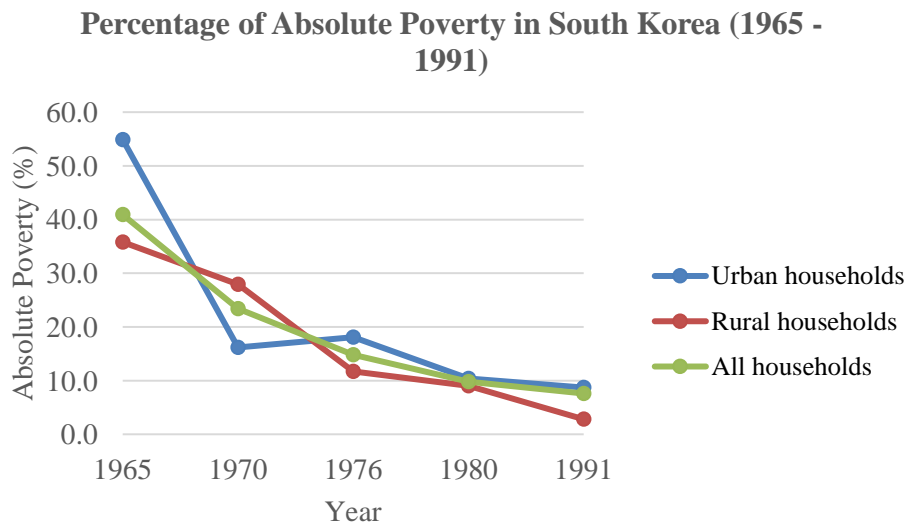


Figure 5. Incidence of absolute poverty (percentage). Note: The absolute poverty line was 121,000 won per month (at 1981 prices) for a five-person household.

Source: (Yi, & Kwon 2008)

5.2. Tier II: Safety and Security Needs

Prior to the 1980s inflation had been increasing and the economy contracting, however macroeconomic stabilisation measures adopted by the Chun regime (You 2015) following Chun’s military coup in 1980 proved successful in controlling inflation and ensuring that the economy was back on track with its previous high growth rates (see Figures 6 and 7). In 1980, inflation stood at 28.7 percent while there was negative GDP per capita growth of -3.41 percent. However, by 1987, inflation had stabilised to 3.05 percent and the economy was growing at a rate of 11.17 percent. The unemployment rate was also on the decline from 5.18 percent in 1980 to 3.09 percent in 1987 (see Figure 8).

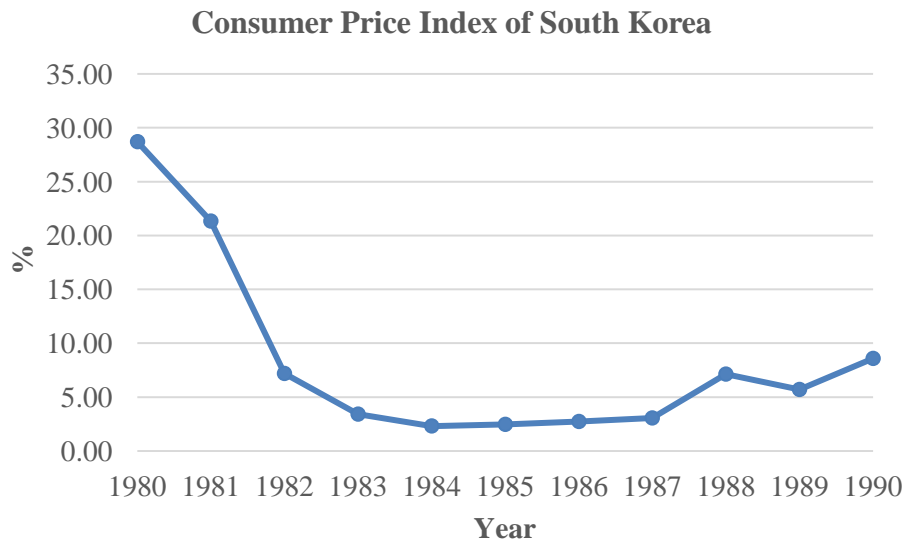


Figure 6. Annual consumer price index in South Korea

Source: (World Bank Databank 2017)

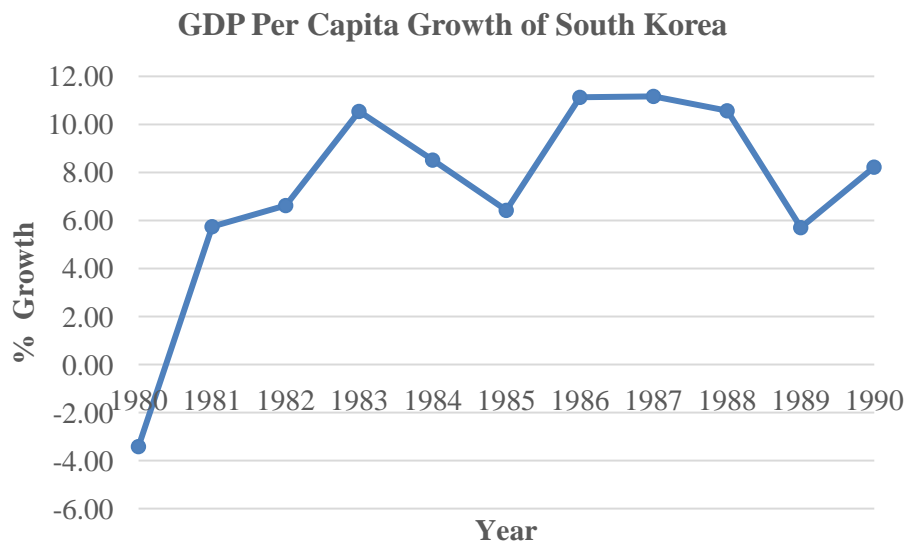


Figure 7. Annual GDP per capita growth in South Korea

Source: (World Bank Databank 2017)

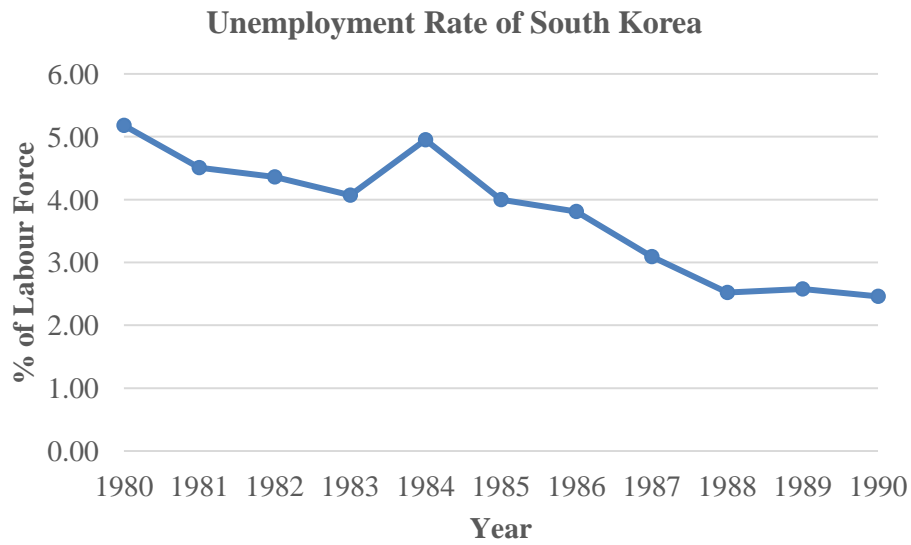


Figure 8. Unemployment rate in South Korea

Source: (World Bank Databank 2017)

Although the economy was prospering and secured, the same cannot be said about the socio-political security felt at that time (see Figure 9). Chun started his rule with a bloody quelling of an uprising in Gwangju. In 1980, following the assassination of former president Park, a growing demand for democratisation was occurring in South Korea's major cities. While the military managed to end most of the protests, Gwangju proved to be a challenge with protestors temporarily gaining the upper-hand when random beatings and arrests of demonstrators and innocent civilians by the military rallied ordinary citizens, who were both angered by the brutality and had an underlying resentment against the inequality of industrialisation and development across the country, to join in with the student demonstrators against the regime. The situation escalated rapidly into bloodshed as demonstrators were shot at and the full force of the army was brought down to suppress the demonstrators. Official figures of the death toll stood at 200 with another 1000 more injured (Flashback: The Kwangju Massacre 2000). Strong state repression was the norm especially in the first few years of Chun's rule. Having illegitimately usurped the presidency, Chun needed to secure and establish his control with the use of coercion and oppression against dissidents (Kim 2004). The National Security Law and Emergency Law were actively abused to prosecute dissidents with false accusations of being North Korean spies, plotting treason against the nation, arrests of hundreds, disappearing mysteriously, dying under suspicious circumstances, torture, and jailing. The

human rights violations were justified as protecting the country from communism by labelling the victims “leftists”. The newly renamed Korean Central Intelligence Agency, the Agency for National Security Planning, also had its powers expanded and was used to create an environment of fear with citizen surveillance, telephone tapping, correspondence interception, house arrests, and stopping and questioning civilians in the streets. According to Kim (2014), although principles of representative democracy or rule of law existed in South Korea at this time, they existed only on paper. Between 1981 and 1987, 1512 people were prosecuted, with 13 sentenced to death and 28 receiving life sentences.

In 1987, the year of South Korea’s successful democratic transition, the death of university student Park Chong Chol at the hands of police torture and interrogation and the attempted cover-up by the regime led to moral outrage among the public and in particular, rallied the previously uninvolved middle-class to join in the democracy movement. The death of Yi Han Yol after being injured critically by police tear gas bomb fragments further contributed to the movement by demonstrating the illegitimate, violent, and repressive nature of the regime (Kim, 2004; Shin, Chang, Lee, & Kim 2007).

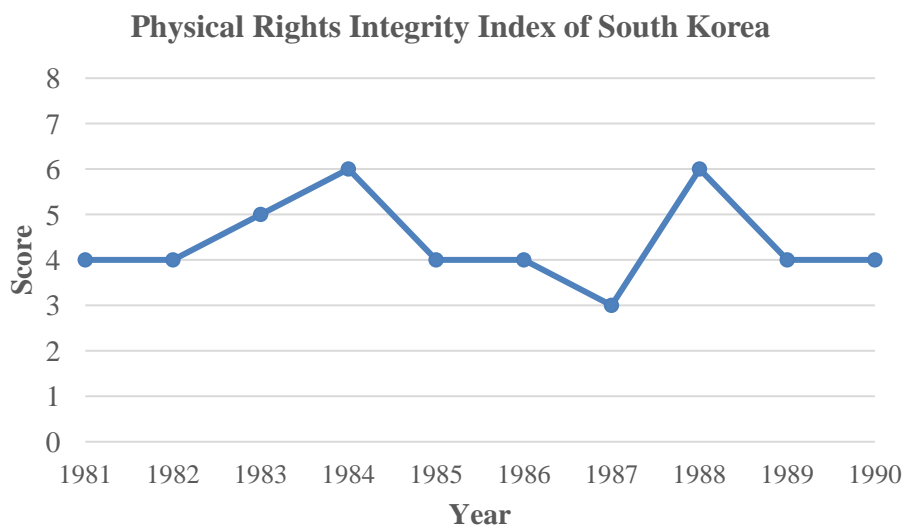


Figure 9. Physical rights integrity index of South Korea. Additive index constructed from the Torture, Extrajudicial Killing, Political Imprisonment, and Disappearance indicators. 0 - no government respect for these four rights, 8 - full government respect for these four rights

Source: (CIRI Human Rights Data Project 2017)

5.3. Tier III: Love/Belongingness Needs

Under the prior Park regime, an umbrella labour organisation, the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) had been created to control trade unions and ensure their docility in politics. The FKTU's main function was to moderate union demands and implement government policy as opposed to representing workers' interests. Strikes were prohibited in the state sector, public enterprise, local government, utilities, or any other businesses regarded as important to the national economy (Park 2001). Besides keeping the previous authoritarian measures on labour affair, Chun also tried to further limit the political power of trade union movements by requiring unions to obtain the consent of 30 workers per workshop or 20 percent of total workshop members in order to organise union movements, prohibiting third-party intervention in labour disputes, and giving government the power to refuse the establishment of trade unions (Shin 2003). In the 1980s, organised labour was not only politically repressed, it was also organisationally weak and an economically subordinate actor in society with the state determining workers' wages and working conditions instead of labour unions. Eventually however, independent shop-level unions started organising outside of the FKTU umbrella and labour strikes were occurring over issues for better working conditions and pay (Buchanan, & Nicholls 2004). Prior to 1984, the labour movement had been apolitical as they were more concerned with their socio-economic plight and basic workers' rights. However following Chun's policy liberalisation after 1984, the involvement of students in the industries as workers helped to politicise the labour movement who now demanded government recognition of independent unions as bargaining agents, easing of repressive and authoritarian labour and security legislation restricting the political activities of unions and other social groups, and a long-term basis for protecting their rights as opposed to purely economic needs such as improved basic labour conditions from employers (Buchanan, & Nicholls 2004; Shin, Chang, Lee, & Kim 2007).

Chun's 1984 relaxation of political control created a much freer environment as political prisoners were released and the ban on political activities lifted, previously fired professors or expelled students were allowed to return to universities (Kim 2004; Shin, Chang, Lee, & Kim 2007). Civil society was intended to reform slowly, however after years of repression, the appeasement policy backfired as civil society was rapidly resurrected in all sectors of society ranging from student groups, youth organisation, to labour unions and other groups (Kim 2000). With the freer atmosphere, students also took the opportunity to reorganise and prepare for

further action (Shin, Chang, Lee, & Kim 2007) with the first nationwide student organisation, the National Student Coalition for Prodemocracy Struggle, forming since the student uprising in 1960.

5.4. Tier IV: Esteem Needs

Despite demands from social movement groups in late 1985 and 1986 for a revision of the constitution and direct presidential elections, Chun declared in 1987 that he would no longer tolerate discussions on constitutional revision and instead would uphold the current constitution (Shin, Chang, Lee, & Kim 2007). This unilateral decision on Chun's part to terminate public discourse on constitutional revision sparked outrage and mass mobilisation as university professors, artists, writers, actors, religious leaders spoke out against this while students, labour, and other groups of civil society started violent anti-government protests in major cities across the country – organising massive pro-democracy movements against the regime in 1987 (Kim 2004).

Corruption was also rampant in Chun's administration (see Tables 2 and 3) despite Chun having justified his military coup d'état on a slogan of anti-corruption. Besides the ruling party being implicated in numerous corruption scandals, Chun, his family, and relatives were also involved and Chun later convicted of raising slush funds of \$890 million and of receiving \$273 million in bribes (You 2015). Chun was also invited to the White House in America as the first formal visit of a Korean head of state to America, and the first invited state visit by then newly elected U.S. President Ronald Reagan despite only half a year passing since Chun's violent crackdown during the Gwangju Uprising in 1980. This move by Chun and the U.S. government was criticised by dissident groups as legitimising what they felt was an unjust and illegitimate regime (Shin, Chang, Lee, & Kim 2007).

Table 2. Average annual number of public officials indicted for bribery and embezzlement in South Korea. Ratio A: Ratio of number of public officials indicted for corruption to number of public officials indicted for a crime. Ratio B: Ratio of number of public official indicted for corruption to number of people (officials and civilian) indicted for a crime

	Bribery	Embezzle	Sum	Ratio A	Ratio B
Park (1961-72)	73	157	230	17.2	0.12
Park (1973-79)	120	72	192	16.1	0.06
Chun (1980-1987)	116	43	159	14.3	0.04
Roh TW (1988-1992)	82	25	107	5.4	0.02

Source: (You 2015).

Table 3. Corruption ratings in South Korea from 1980 to 1992. 0 - totally corrupt, 10 - totally clean

	BI 1980-83	CPI 1980-85	CPI 1988-1992
Corruption Rating	5.75	3.9	3.5

Source: (You 2015)

5.5. Tier V: Self-Actualisation Needs

The democratisation movement in South Korea has a long history of being active since the First Republic under Syngman Rhee and has been successful in toppling undesirable governments such as the Rhee and Chun administrations, or of being repressed under the Park administration.

5.6. Summary

Although the Chun administration had high output legitimacy in terms of fulfilling the physiological needs and providing economic security by both growing the economy and

controlling inflation, the arbitrary use of violent coercion and repression threatened social security and reduced political legitimacy such that it played a significant role in South Korea's democratisation movement as events of torture contributed to increased public outrage and mobilised society, in particular the middle class, against the repressive government. Civil society, although active and well organised by the end of 1987, had suffered from repression in the intervening years such that it exploded back into life when it had the opportunity to in 1984 following liberalisation. Corruption was rampant with low government accountability, however what was most politically delegitimising was Chun's decision to suspend dialogue for political changes and refusal to accept political participation in developing the country. Chun's administration was thus legitimately unstable with love/belongingness and esteem needs left unfulfilled and safety and security needs only partially fulfilled.

6. SINGAPORE

6.1. Tier I: Biological and Physiological Needs

In 2016, Singapore was ranked seventh in the world for having the highest average wealth per adult at US\$277 000 (Huang 2016). The average income level of households has been increasing continuously in the past decade (see Figure 10) and home ownership rates are among the highest in the world with 87.2 percent of the population owning their own home in 2010 (Key Indicators on Resident Households 2017). Officially, there is no minimum wage or poverty line in the country however among the public discourse, invisible poverty exists of the working poor – people who work but earn very low wages – and the elderly poor – people who have earned minimal wages throughout their working life and are now either unemployed or retired (Chan 2013). In terms of welfare, Singapore’s model is similar to the 1980s South Korean one with an emphasis on the family as opposed to the state being the main social provider. Government aid exists, albeit minimally, in the form of subsidised supportive services such as subsidised healthcare and job training instead of direct cash benefits (Chon 2010).

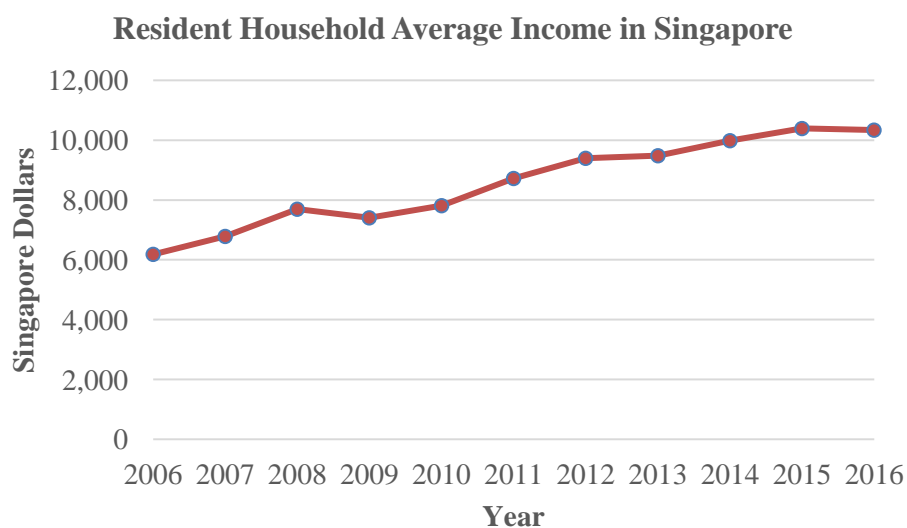


Figure 10. Resident household average income in Singapore

Source: (Key Indicators on Resident Households 2017)

6.2. Tier II: Safety and Security Needs

Although the domestic economy has contracted and is experiencing reduced growth over the past 5 years (see Figure 11), overall GDP per capita in Singapore remains among the world's highest (see Figure 12), inflation has been managed in the past 5 years (see Figure 13), and unemployment has been on a downward trend (see Figure 14).

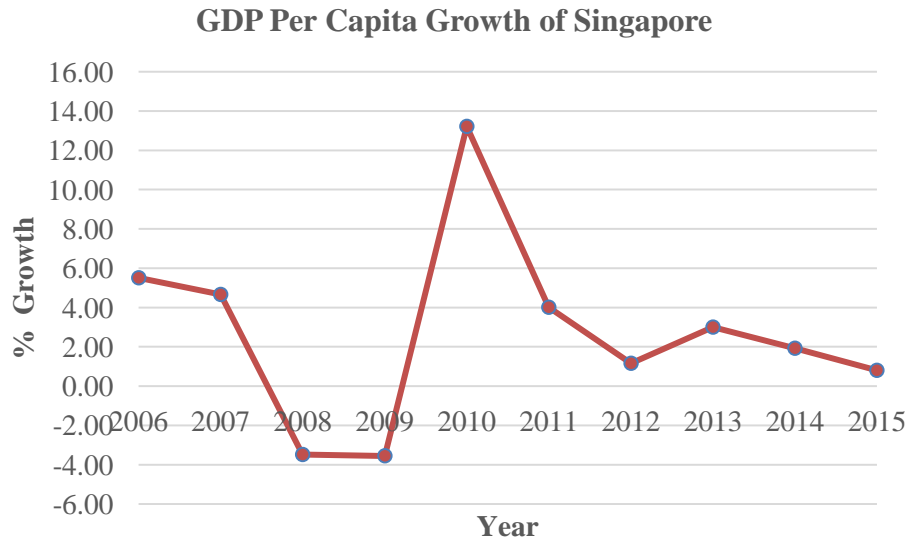


Figure 11. GDP per capita growth of Singapore

Source: (World Bank Databank 2017)

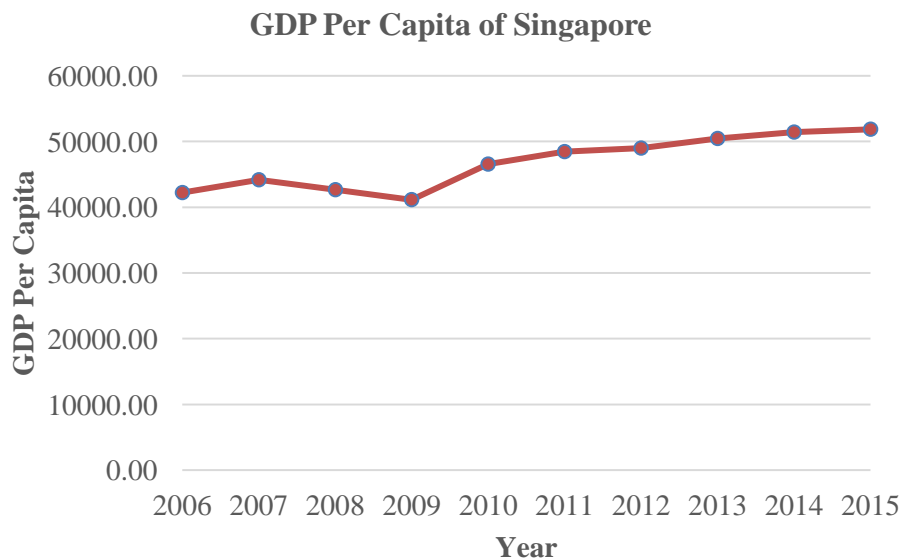


Figure 12. GDP per capita of Singapore

Source: (World Bank Databank 2017)

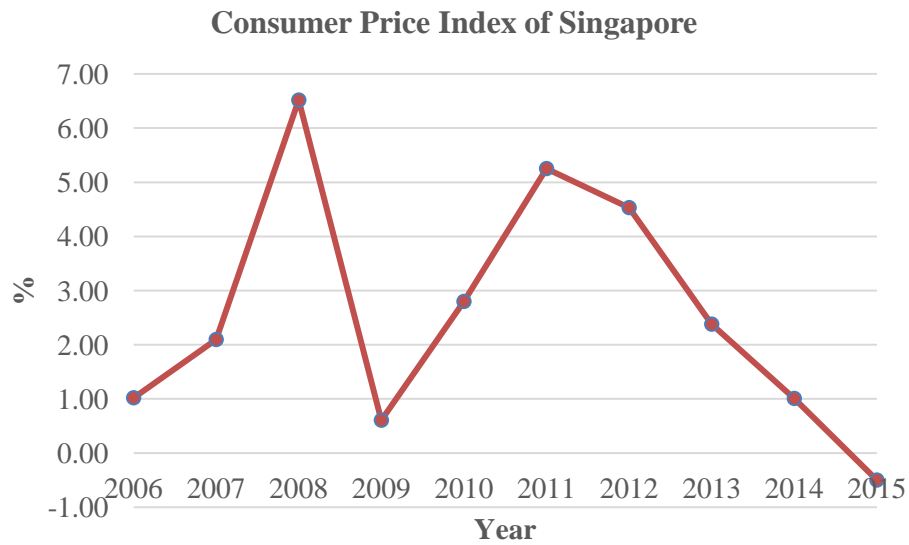


Figure 13. Consumer price index of Singapore

Source: (World Bank Databank 2017)



Figure 14. Unemployment rate of Singapore

Source (World Bank Databank 2017)

Socio-politically, the country is generally regarded as safe and secured in terms of the populace being protected from arbitrary state violence and aggression (see Figure 15). Due process exists in the criminal justice system and law and order upheld, there is an absence of extrajudicial killings, torture, political imprisonments and unaccounted disappearances. However, political opponents of the ruling party and dissenters of the regime have routinely been subjected to lawsuits by the state, which uses institutionalised and judicial means to

suppress and punish dissenters. Opposition party leaders such as Joshua Benjamin Jeyaretnam from the Worker’s Party and Chee Soon Juan from the Singapore Democratic Party have been bankrupted through litigation in 2001 and 2011 respectively and legally disqualified from political candidacy on the grounds of bankruptcy (Andrews 2015).

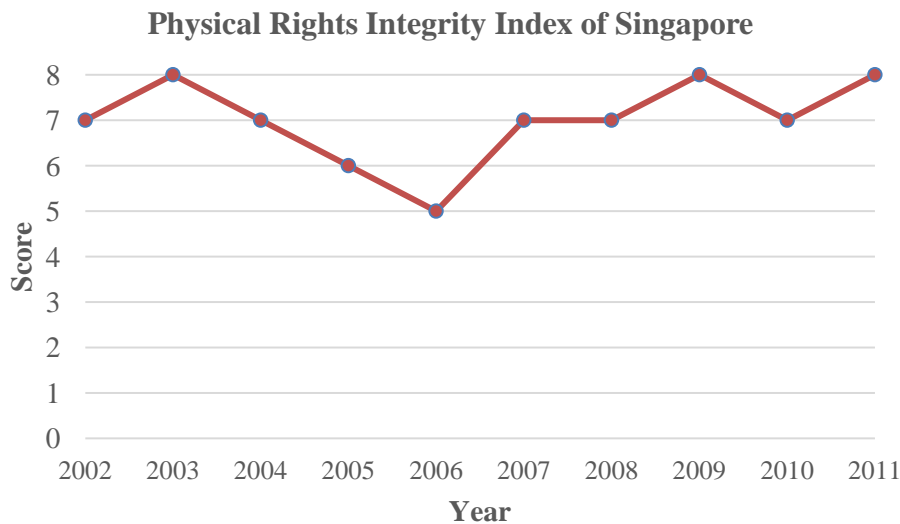


Figure 15. Physical rights integrity index of Singapore. Additive index constructed from the Torture, Extrajudicial Killing, Political Imprisonment, and Disappearance indicators. 0 - no government respect for these four rights, 8 - full government respect for these four rights
Source: (CIRI Human Rights Data Project 2017)

6.3. Tier III: Love/Belongingness Needs

Civil society has been criticised as being non-existent in Singapore (Hussin 2000). Instead of autonomous non-governmental organisations and groups representing citizen interests, civil society has been replaced by a government created “civic society” with all organisations and societies regarded as having links to the government and working in cooperation with the government to promote public policy and deliver social services to the people (Barr 2012; Kadir 2004). The Societies Act (1966) requires that all civil service organisations (CSO) register themselves before being allowed to operate and the strict delineation between political organisations and non-political organisations prohibits CSOs from pursuing activities outside of their legal scope by venturing into political advocacy – enabling government control over the development of pressure groups (Ortmann 2010) and that political

challenges would only be possible through electoral politics (Rodan 2006). Labour unions have also been co-opted by the government earlier on with all labour unions being subsumed under a government-linked umbrella organisation, the National Trade Union Congress (NTUC), which gave the state control over errant labour unions and promoted the acceptance and support of economic policies (Kadir 2004; Khong 1995).

Although civil society remains tightly regulated, extensive communication channels exist between the people and the government through grassroots organisations such as the community centres, citizen consultative committees, resident committees, and people's associations, which exist to provide opportunities for feedback and participation in political decisions, and also as a way for the government to generate public support for its policies (Kadir 2004).

6.4. Tier IV: Esteem Needs

Singapore ranks seventh in the world in the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index although corruption standards in Singapore have been slipping over the past decade from 9.4 in 2005 to 8.4 in 2016 (see Figure 16). Public discontent over the government's justification of paying high salaries to political leaders to deter corruption is increasingly being questioned when there is a perceived lack of government accountability over official corruption and non-performance (Yeo 2010). In 2005, the misappropriation of funds by the chief executive officer of the National Kidney Foundation, a charity under the purview of the Ministry of Health, and defence of his high pay caused moral outrage and a public demand for an apology. In 2008, against public opinion calling for a public resignation, the Prime Minister defended the Minister of Home Affairs over a security lapse where a terrorist escaped from a high detention centre for national security threats.

Freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association remain restricted on national security grounds with mainstream media being regulated and public demonstrations illegal without a permit from the government and limited to a defined public space specifically set aside by the government. However although these freedoms are restricted, they are not prohibited as citizens still have their freedoms of expression and association as long as they remain apolitical; in a sense, freedom is regulated. Additionally, the government has recognised the public desire for greater political participation and made changes to the political institutions

such as allowing more unelected opposition members to enter the PAP-dominated parliament as Nominated Members of Parliament to satisfy demands for more parliamentary debates (Heng 1997; Wong, & Huang 2010).

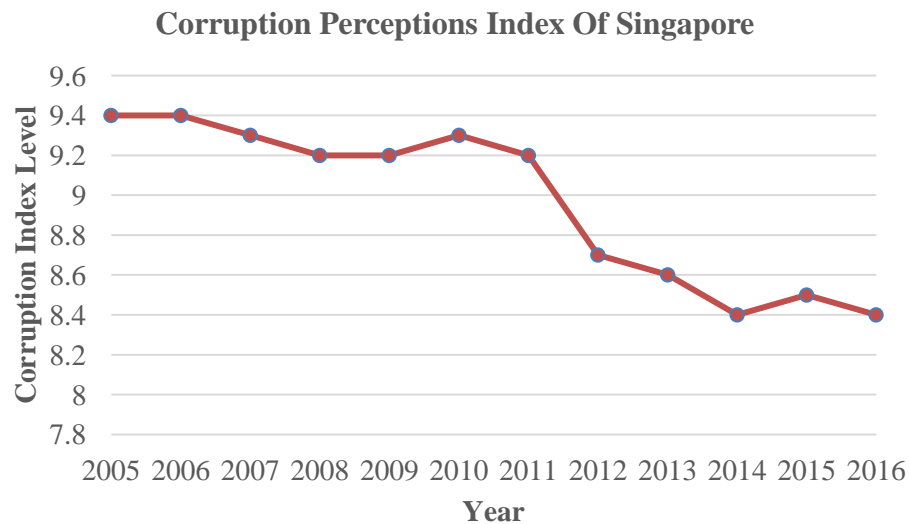


Figure 16. Corruption perceptions index of Singapore. 0 - highly corrupt, 10 - very clean
Source: (Transparency International 2016)

6.5. Tier V: Self-Actualisation Needs

The Singapore populace generally hold the perception that their country is somewhat democratic ($M = 6.9$, $SD = 1.67$) with 65 percent of the population rating the country over 7 out of 10 (see Figure 17). There is a relative absence of a democratisation movement in Singapore and except for the occasional critique over the lack of democratisation in the country from individuals, there has been no unifying movement for democracy in Singapore since independence.

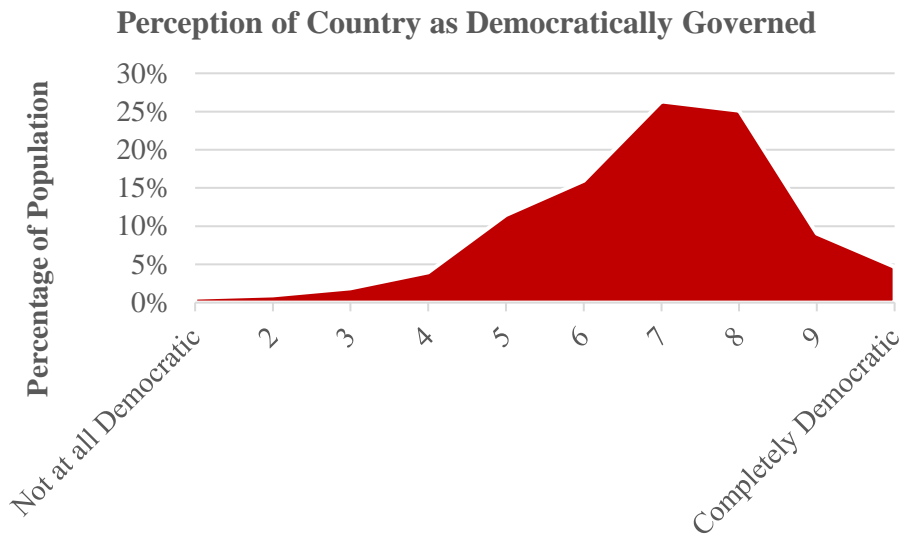


Figure 17. Perception of country as democratically governed in Singapore

Source: (World Values Survey Wave 6, Singapore 2012)

6.6. Summary

The PAP government mainly enjoys high output legitimacy at the two lowest tiers of biological and physiological needs and safety and security needs. Although not completely fulfilling them, the needs are satisfied enough to provide a stable legitimacy at these lower levels and survive challenges to legitimacy. The formation of an independent civil society is suppressed although not repressed with the government encouraging participation in its own alternative version of civil society in the form of civic society and the right to association tolerated as long as it remains apolitical. More importantly, the government has managed to portray itself as willing to engage the people in political participation through its various grassroots feedback mechanisms, albeit in a tightly controlled environment, and although public opinion largely remains uninfluential in political decisions, the government has relented in several aspects of public demands and by doing so afforded itself more political legitimacy than it could have acquired with outright refusal or suppression.

PART III

This section compares the extent to which governance in South Korea and Singapore fulfilled the needs of their populace and the differences in political legitimacy accorded to their respective government and the stability of the government.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

At the lowest tier of biological and physiological needs, both countries were able to satisfy that need such that there were no strong challenges to the legitimacy of the government at that tier. However, in the second tier of safety and security needs, an important distinction exists between South Korea and Singapore. Both countries were able to provide an economically secured environment however economic output legitimacy failed in South Korea as providing a secured socio-political environment was neglected unlike in Singapore. Both countries utilised repressive methods to keep dissenters in check. However, there was a key difference in their application of repression. Violent and arbitrary repression was used more often in the case of South Korea while the PAP government in Singapore favoured instrumental repression to punish dissenters and political opponents such that as long as people stayed apolitical, their physical safety remained guaranteed. Hence, the lack of sufficient fulfilment of this tier in South Korea proved to be politically destabilising to the government as economic output could not be used as the sole means of political legitimacy here such that outrage against the illegitimacy of the government subsequently exploded. Further differences in the type of repression between the two governments can be found at the higher tiers. The formation of civil society was actively repressed in South Korea although allowed to reform after 1984. In Singapore, the formation of civil society was controlled by the government who dictated its form with the creation of civic society. The Singaporean PAP government also has greater input legitimacy than the South Korean Chun regime as political participation is encouraged although

it is tightly controlled by the government and regulated in accordance to the government's benefits.

The differences in stability of the governments could then be attributed to the government in Singapore sufficiently fulfilling output legitimacy accorded at the lower levels and the subtle approach of managing input legitimacy at the higher levels by combining public engagement and displays of periodic responsiveness in order to negate the effects of soft oppression and sustain its legitimacy levels at the higher tiers. This could account for the public's toleration of their curtailed civil and political freedoms as although their needs are not entirely fulfilled, they are sufficiently satisfied to only minimally challenge the government and also believe that their country is somewhat democratic such that the government is still seen as legitimate and remains stable overall. However as the needs are not entirely fulfilled and the absence of fulfilment will continue to drive motivation for governance to fulfil the need, the government will face increasing challenges to legitimacy if the needs remain unfulfilled such that the government is only as stable as it is able to balance repression and good governance to maintain the needs above a minimum threshold.

Although this paper proposes a model of motivation and political legitimacy as an alternative means and attempt to explain the differences in political regime outcomes between South Korea and Singapore in terms of government legitimacy, the model is not without its flaws as it cannot sufficiently explain the differences in the challenges to legitimacy of both governments. The basic assumption of the model assumes that needs are hierarchical and motivation for higher needs cannot occur without first fulfilling the lower needs. This leaves unexplained the motivations of the student movement in South Korea who were at the forefront of all democratisation movements and whose motivations were not constrained by the absence of the fulfilment of their lower needs as assumed by the model, or the change in motivation in the labour movement from basic socio-economic needs to desiring democratic institutions, refuting the definite hierarchy of the model and neglecting the complexity of social interaction between actors and the values placed on democracy. The model also lacks objectivity as it is highly subjective in determining the limits of legitimacy accorded by the populace and assuming that a minimum satisfaction threshold exists which provides stability to governments. The issue of legitimacy having a subjective and objective component also further imposes restrictions on the usefulness of the model in determining the extent legitimacy is accorded by the people to governments as although an act of governance could have resulted in more

legitimacy gains from an objective perspective, the subjective perspective of the populace might differ and less legitimacy credit is given. Furthermore, the measurements used to support the arguments present an oversimplification of the needs in each tier since it is difficult to explicitly delineate what type of measurements each tier constitutes and where the boundaries of measurement types exist in each tier. This also implies that measurements could be subjectively assumed to be relevant to each tier without any empirical support and the possibility of governance meeting all needs in a tier impossible if the measurements of needs cannot be even properly defined. In addition, although the same measurements were used as far as possible in both case studies, the lack of exact corresponding information available for both countries resulted in different supporting measurements used such that the legitimacy of both governments cannot be directly compared as their supporting measurements are inequivalent.

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