

Incentives of Multi-Term Incumbents:
Mayors and Local Government Consolidations in Japan

Akihiko Kawaura

Professor
Faculty of Policy Studies
Doshisha University

Abstract

This paper investigates the incentives of the multi-term elected official by focusing on the payoff she can derive from the office. The hypothesis that a long-serving official is less willing to make a decision which would result in the loss of her own position is tested with data from Japan's local government consolidations. The empirical analysis of 3,212 municipalities finds that a multi-term mayor would constitute an obstacle for the municipal mergers if the combination of localities requires her municipality to become a subordinate merger partner.