EVERYDAY NATIONALISM IN KOREA AND JAPAN: OUTGROUP HOSTILITY TOWARD NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the everyday reproduction of nationalism in digital spaces and its consequences for political behavior in East Asia. Moving beyond elite-centric accounts, I conceptualize nationalism as an emotionally charged, performative, and routinized phenomenon, expressed in mundane acts such as online comments, memes, and symbolic language. Drawing on mixed methods across four empirical chapters and two national contexts—South Korea and Japan—I examine how exclusionary nationalist sentiments are articulated, sustained, and politicized in the age of ambient digital communication.

For South Korea, I analyze nationally representative survey data to uncover how national pride interacts with political ideology to shape divergent patterns of political participation. While conservatives are more likely to participate when they feel proud of their nation, liberals engage more when national pride is low, reflecting contrasting motivational logic. The next chapter draws on large-scale text data from a major online community during the 2022 World Cup. The analysis shows that national solidarity often coexists with outgroup hostility—particularly toward Japan, Korea's primary national rival—and that such emotional expressions reinforce national belonging. The third chapter uses a survey experiment to test the causal impact of everyday nationalism. Participants primed with ingroup pride or outgroup hostility showed mixed responses, but routinely digital exposure to nationalist discourse correlated with stronger militaristic and ingroup-oriented preferences. The final chapter turns to Japan, where qualitative analysis of anonymous online commentary reveals that nationalism is frequently performed through collective derogation of Koreans, especially Zainichi Koreans. These expressions reinforce a sense of superiority and unity, but accompanying survey data yields limited evidence that such sentiments translate into political mobilization, underscoring a gap between identity expression and civic action.

Together, these findings demonstrate that everyday nationalism is not a dormant ideology but an active emotional practice that shapes political attitudes and behavior in asymmetric ways. The dissertation contributes to bridging nationalism studies and political behavior by illuminating the contingent and affective dimensions of national identity in digitally mediated societies.

To my loved family in Korea, human and feline.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic emerged as the most globally disruptive crisis in recent memory. While the virus transcended borders, the political and social responses to it quickly reasserted the primacy of the nation-state (Bieber, 2018, 2022). Countries closed their borders, implemented nationally distinct lockdown policies, and framed public health in terms of national success or failure. Rather than dissolving nationalist boundaries, the pandemic sharpened them—reminding individuals not only where they belonged, but also how belonging is structured through state authority, public discourse, and symbolic boundaries (Miller-Idriss, 2022; Zhouxiang, 2023; Hiko and Wang, 2021). What was ostensibly a global problem became, in its lived experience, a profoundly national one.

As a Korean graduate student studying in the United States, I became acutely aware of my national identity in new and unexpected ways. The early stages of the pandemic saw a sharp rise in anti-Asian sentiment, and I experienced firsthand what it meant to be marked as an outsider. At the same time, I also found myself feeling proud of Korea's internationally praised response to COVID-19, and of the global success of Korean popular culture—from *Parasite* and *Squid Game* to BTS. These contradictory emotions—feeling alienated and proud, vulnerable and nationally anchored—revealed that my relationship to the nation could not be reduced to a singular sentiment such as pride or identity. It was a composite of shifting emotions and situational alignments, shaped by external threat and internal resonance.

This personal experience led me to a broader question: what does the nation mean to people—not in theory, but in their lived, everyday sense of belonging? These moments exposed a gap between formal theories of nationalism and its affective, everyday dimensions. While political science has often conceptualized nationalism as a top-down ideology or elite-driven narrative, my own experiences suggested that it is also deeply personal, emotionally experienced, and socially mediated. Why do individuals respond to the idea of the nation with such varying emotions—pride, resentment, loyalty, or even shame? And how do those sentiments shape political thought

and action?

This dissertation emerged from those questions. It examines how people come to define the nation, how they emotionally relate to it, and how those attachments influence political behavior. Rather than treating nationalism as a stable belief system or a coherent ideology, I approach it as a lived identity practice—one that is contingent, affectively charged, and embedded in social context.

1.1 Reframing Nationalism: Contestation, Identity, and Political Meaning

Nationalism, once expected to decline in the age of globalization, has resurged as a central force shaping political conflict, civic identity, and transnational tensions. Across both democratic and authoritarian regimes, appeals to national belonging have restructured electoral competition, mobilized protest movements, and deepened ideological divides (Snyder, 2019; Cederman, Gleditsch and Buhaug, 2013; Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014). In East Asia, this resurgence is especially visible, as national identity is deeply rooted in historical memory, geopolitical rivalry, and emotional attachment to the state. In both Korea and Japan, the word for "nation"(국가/国家) combines the characters for "state/country"(국/国) and "family"(가/家), reflecting how national identity is not merely a political abstraction but something intimate and moral—experienced as part of one's self-understanding and reinforced through shared narratives and symbolic rituals.

Despite their structural similarities and cultural emphasis on homogeneity, Korea and Japan offer distinct pathways through which nationalism is experienced and politicized. In South Korea, national pride is shaped by rapid modernization, international visibility, and persistent colonial memory. Expressions of nationalism often take the form of visible civic engagement—ranging from protest to boycott—frequently anchored in moral narratives of justice, sacrifice, or resistance. In Japan, nationalist sentiment has evolved through cycles of postwar pacifism, conservative revisionism, and exclusionary digital discourse—particularly targeting Korean minorities and South Korea more broadly (Jo, 2022; Yoon and Asahina, 2021). These affective and linguistic constructions of the nation reveal that national identity is not uniform, but plural and contested.

This pluralism highlights a central insight of this dissertation: nationalism is not a coherent ideology but a multifaceted structure of identity that is interpreted, felt, and activated differ-

ently across social and political contexts. It encompasses symbolic markers (flags, history), moral frameworks (duty, honor), affective orientations (pride, anger), and group-based boundaries (in-group/outgroup). These elements are not evenly distributed, nor do they have consistent political effects. Instead, they are shaped by how individuals locate themselves within the "imagined community" of the nation (Anderson, 2006)—depending on their ideology, region, history, and perceived threat or exclusion (Brubaker, 2012; Bonikowski, 2016; Smith, 2013).

This becomes especially salient in moments of political crisis. During the 2016–2017 impeachment of President Park Geun-hye, South Korea witnessed mass mobilizations on both sides of the political divide. Protesters demanding impeachment framed their actions as a moral defense of democratic values and national dignity. At the same time, Park's supporters staged Taegukgi rallies, from the name of the Korean national flag, asserting that removing the president would undermine national stability. Both sides invoked the nation, both claimed moral authority, and both were emotionally committed to Korea's future—yet they envisioned the meaning of the nation in fundamentally different terms (Park, 2017; Cho and Hwang, 2021; Shin, 2016).

A similar divergence in national imaginaries can be observed in Japan, although expressed through different forms. Political controversies surrounding the reinterpretation or revision of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution (the clause limiting Japan's military capabilities), as well as official visits to Yasukuni Shrine,[1] have triggered starkly opposing public reactions. While conservative actors invoke these actions as necessary steps to reclaim national pride and sovereignty, progressive critics see them as threats to pacifist principles and a distortion of postwar democratic values. As in South Korea, both sides draw on emotional attachments to the nation, but they articulate competing visions of what the nation stands for and how it should relate to its past and future (Nakano, 2016, 2018; Kingston, 2020).

Rather than treating such moments as anomalies or deviations from a core national identity, this dissertation views them as evidence of nationalism's internal diversity. Nationalism is socially constructed, politically mediated, and shaped by lived experience. It is a site of contestation through

[1] A Shinto shrine that commemorates Japan's war dead, including Class-A war criminals, often seen as a symbol of militarism by neighboring countries.

which individuals negotiate their understanding of who "we"are, what the nation stands for, and how it ought to be defended or redeemed. This perspective provides the foundation for the chapters that follow, which examine how everyday expressions of nationalism vary across individuals, contexts, and modes of political participation.

1.2 Everyday Nationalism: Identity, Pride, and Social Performance

While nationalism is often studied as a macro-level ideology or a discourse produced by elites, it is also enacted, contested, and reproduced in the routines of everyday life. The literature on everyday nationalism highlights how the nation is made visible not only in official rhetoric or institutional symbols, but also in mundane acts of belonging—through speech, emotion, social media, and informal political expression (Billig, 1995; Szulc, 2017; Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008, 2019; Skey, 2011; Goode and Stroup, 2015; Antonsich, 2020; Edensor, 2020). These practices include everything from flag-waving at sporting events to online commentary about international disputes. They reflect the ways in which individuals come to interpret and perform their national identity in ordinary settings, often outside formal political arenas.

At the heart of everyday nationalism lies the experience of group membership. Social identity theory views national identity as one of many group-based identifications through which people define who they are and who they are not (Tajfel, 1981, 1978; Tajfel et al., 1971; Huddy and Khatib, 2007; Andreouli, 2010; Citrin and Wright, 2009). These identities are not neutral—they are emotionally and morally charged, often linked to perceptions of ingroup virtue and outgroup threat. As individuals locate themselves within the imagined community of the nation, they also draw boundaries around who belongs, who represents, and who threatens its values. National identity, in this sense, is never just about inclusion; it is also about exclusion, hierarchy, and difference (Brewer, 1999; Triandafyllidou, 1998).

National pride operates within this identity structure as a form of positive self-evaluation and collective affirmation. It reflects how individuals feel about their membership in the nation, but also how they perceive the nation's standing in the world and their own place within it. Prior research shows that pride can strengthen civic engagement, reinforce feelings of duty, or promote

status-affirming behaviors (Huddy and Khatib, 2007; de Figueiredo and Elkins, 2003). At the same time, lack of pride—or experiences of national disillusionment—can also motivate political action, particularly among those who perceive the nation as falling short of its moral ideals.

These emotional and symbolic attachments are shaped by context. People living in historically marginalized regions or holding oppositional political beliefs may relate to the nation through skepticism or conditional loyalty. Others, particularly those in dominant social or political positions, may view their identity as closely aligned with state legitimacy. Everyday nationalism therefore takes multiple forms: affirmational, resistant, performative, and strategic. It surfaces in how people talk about national success or shame, how they respond to international criticism, or how they morally justify protest and exclusionary attitudes.

This dissertation adopts a broad view of everyday nationalism—as a dynamic configuration of identity, pride, and group perception that shapes political behavior. It examines how individuals come to feel connected to or alienated from the nation, how those attachments are expressed in daily discourse, and how they translate into political participation, policy preferences, or symbolic opposition. By focusing on the interaction between identity, emotion, and context, the project provides a framework for understanding how nationalism becomes a lived and political practice, even in spaces that lie beyond the boundaries of formal politics.

1.3 Research Questions and Overview of the Argument

This dissertation begins from a simple yet often overlooked observation: individuals living in the same country can hold profoundly different understandings of what the nation is, how they relate to it, and what it demands of them. These divergent perceptions are not merely ideological—they are shaped by lived experience, group identification, and emotional attachment. Nationalism, in this view, is not a uniform ideology but a socially embedded identity structure that varies by context and is activated through everyday practices.

While much of the existing literature focuses on elite-driven nationalism or state-led discourses, this project centers on how ordinary individuals experience, interpret, and express their relationship to the nation. It asks:

How is nationalism experienced and expressed in everyday life, and how do these experiences shape political behavior?

To answer this question, the dissertation investigates four interrelated dimensions of everyday nationalism across different empirical contexts:

1. How does national pride affect political participation, and how does this relationship vary by political ideology and regional experience in South Korea?

2. How is nationalism expressed, moralized, and contested in digital discourse during moments of heightened national attention, such as international sporting events?

3. How do nationalist messages—particularly those emphasizing ingroup pride or outgroup grievance—influence political attitudes and policy preferences?

4. How is exclusionary nationalist sentiment constructed and circulated in anonymous online spaces, and to what extent does it translate into actual political engagement?

Across these questions, this dissertation argues that nationalism in everyday life is not static or uniformly mobilizing. Instead, it is a contingent identity orientation, shaped by ideology, region, history, and perceived group boundaries. Emotional attachments such as pride, resentment, or threat are not evenly distributed across society; they emerge through social positioning and are expressed through both structured and spontaneous political behavior. For some individuals, national pride motivates political engagement as a form of duty; for others, disillusionment with the nation serves as a catalyst for resistance or protest.

By combining structured survey data with digital text analysis and experimental designs, the project demonstrates how nationalism operates across different modalities of political life—from conventional participation to online expression and attitudinal shifts. The chapters that follow examine these dynamics across South Korea and Japan, offering a comparative lens on how national belonging is constructed, negotiated, and contested in the daily lives of citizens.

1.4 Case Selection: South Korea and Japan

This dissertation examines everyday nationalism through the cases of South Korea and Japan—two ethnonationally homogeneous societies that share structural similarities but diverge sharply in how nationalism is expressed, politicized, and performed. Both countries are consolidated democracies with high levels of digital connectivity, strong education systems, and deeply institutionalized national narratives. Yet their historical trajectories and modes of political engagement offer a valuable contrast for understanding how national identity is experienced in everyday life.

South Korea is characterized by a vibrant protest culture, where collective identity is often enacted through mass mobilization and moral narratives of civic duty. Events such as the 2016–2017 candlelight demonstrations and the 2019 boycott of Japanese goods illustrate how national sentiment can rapidly translate into public action. These moments are not merely elite-led—they are grassroots expressions of national identity shaped by shared history, regional inequality, and perceived moral grievances. Nationalism in Korea thus emerges not only through pride in global recognition and economic achievement, but also through opposition to perceived outgroups, including Japan, North Korea, and at times the national government itself.

Japan, by contrast, exhibits a more institutional and discursive form of nationalism, where exclusionary narratives are often mediated through online platforms. The rise of anonymous internet communities such as 5channel has created a space for the expression of anti-Korean sentiment and historical revisionism, often directed at Zainichi Koreans (ethnic Koreans residing in Japan) and South Korea more broadly. While public protest is less prominent, nationalism is embedded in media discourse, education, and political rhetoric—particularly within the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's conservative factions. These discursive expressions of nationalism operate at the level of everyday talk and online commentary, even when they do not lead to overt political engagement.

The selection of these two cases is analytically useful for several reasons. First, both are high-income democracies with strong national institutions and state-building legacies, yet they differ in how nationalism is affectively mobilized and publicly performed. Second, their histories of colonization and conflict—with each other and with regional neighbors—make them ideal sites for

examining nationalism as a relational identity structured through outgroup perception. Third, both exhibit strong nationalist narratives rooted in ethnic essentialism, but these narratives are expressed through different political cultures, protest norms, and digital practices.

Finally, both countries exemplify a regional form of nationalism that is externally directed. Unlike many Western contexts where nationalism is often tied to immigration or internal diversity, Korean and Japanese nationalism frequently target neighboring states, reflecting unresolved historical grievances and ongoing geopolitical rivalry. This outward-facing orientation makes them especially well suited for studying how everyday nationalism constructs outgroup boundaries, mobilizes political sentiment, and produces affective expressions of national identity in both formal and informal spheres.

1.5 Methodological Approach

To analyze how nationalism is experienced and enacted in everyday life, this dissertation adopts a multi-method research design that integrates survey analysis, multilevel modeling, computational text analysis, and experimental methods. Each approach corresponds to a specific empirical context and research question, reflecting the theoretical premise that nationalism is not a singular ideology but a multifaceted orientation—expressed through structured opinion, spontaneous discourse, and situational judgment.

The study of everyday nationalism poses unique methodological challenges. Unlike institutional or elite-driven nationalism, everyday expressions of national identity are often informal, emotionally inflected, and context-dependent. They appear not only in answers to structured survey questions, but also in spontaneous online comments, moral judgments about the nation, and affective responses to symbolic events. Capturing these dispersed and heterogeneous expressions requires a research design capable of bridging quantitative precision with qualitative depth, and structured data with organic expression.

To address this, the project is organized around four empirical chapters, each employing the method most appropriate to the form and site of nationalism under investigation. Chapter 3 uses multilevel modeling to analyze nationally representative survey data from South Korea, testing how

national pride interacts with political ideology and regional identity to influence political participation. Chapter 4 turns to the online sphere, applying structural topic modeling and keyword analysis to user-generated discourse during the 2022 World Cup, uncovering spontaneous affective narratives about ingroup pride and outgroup hostility.

Chapter 5 adopts a survey experimental design to test the causal impact of different nationalist frames—specifically ingroup affirmation versus outgroup grievance—on political attitudes and policy preferences. This approach allows for stronger causal inference than observational methods and reveals how emotional framing shapes opinion formation. Chapter 6 combines computational and qualitative analysis of Japanese anonymous forums with survey-based data, investigating whether exclusionary digital discourse translates into actual political behavior.

Taken together, these approaches enable the dissertation to examine nationalism not only as a belief system or political attitude, but as a set of everyday practices: expressed emotionally, performed symbolically, and shaped by perceived inclusion or exclusion. By combining diverse data types and methodological tools, the project captures the layered and context-sensitive nature of nationalism as it is lived and acted upon across institutional, digital, and psychological domains.

1.6 Key Findings and Contributions

Across four empirical chapters, this dissertation demonstrates that nationalism in everyday life is not a unified belief system, but a context-dependent identity structure—expressed differently depending on political ideology, regional experience, and mode of expression. The sentiments attached to the nation—such as pride, resentment, or exclusion—are also not evenly distributed across individuals or consistently mobilizing. Instead, they are shaped by how people perceive their relationship to the nation and its boundaries, and how they choose to act upon that perception.

Chapter 3 explains how the sense of national belonging and civic duty is shaped by political ideology and regional identity in Korea. Because of these foundational differences, national pride does not universally promote political participation. Instead, its effect depends on political ideology: conservatives are more likely to engage when their pride is high, linking personal success with national achievement; liberals, in contrast, participate more when their pride is low, drawing on a

tradition of political resistance and a desire to correct national injustice. This highlights that the same survey response—whether one feels proud of their nation—can carry opposite meanings and lead to different political behaviors.

Chapter 4 delves into how nationalism is expressed in everyday online discourse in Korea. The analysis of online posts and comments during the 2022 World Cup shows that ordinary users expressed intense national sentiment and outgroup hostility, even without direct conflict or competition with Japan. A key finding is that Japan consistently appeared as Korea's main outgroup, with high attention and derogation. Structural topic modeling and keyword analysis reveal that international sporting events reactivated historical grievances and reinforced symbolic boundaries—an effect not found in responses to other countries without such histories. In contrast, discourse surrounding Korea's own team was full of pride and belonging, even after losses. These results suggest that sporting events do not uniformly provoke nationalism toward any rival, but instead reinforce deep-rooted perceptions of national ingroups and outgroups shaped by collective memory.

Chapter 5 uses a survey experiment to test whether everyday nationalism, like that observed in Chapter 4, influences political attitudes. Using real posts from online communities, the experiment finds that exposure to outgroup-based cues—such as mockery or defeat of rival nations—influenced attitudinal changes to trade policies involving Japan, the targeted country in the treatment, but did not increase exclusionary attitudes toward different groups of people in general. Additionally, individuals who regularly visit multiple online communities—thus more likely to be exposed to those messages of both ingroup- and outgroup-oriented nationalism—were more supportive of militarization and domestic charity. These findings suggest that habitual exposure to the narratives of everyday nationalism may shape long-term perceptions of ingroups and outgroups, and that the effects are context-dependent rather than universally triggered by a single message.

Chapter 6 examines both the meanings and effects of nationalism in Japan, where anti-Korean sentiment is prominent. Text analysis of posts from a Japanese anonymous forum shows a consistent pattern of exclusion and hostility toward Korea, often tied to historical and territorial grievances and used to affirm national superiority. Like the Korean case, this discourse reveals Korea as Japan's

primary outgroup. However, the accompanying survey analysis suggests that such attitudes do not always translate into political mobilization. Instead, online nationalist expression often functions as symbolic identity performance rather than a driver of political action, especially when not mediated through political ideology.

Taken together, these findings contribute to the study of nationalism in four key ways. First, they offer a theoretical contribution by highlighting the internal diversity of nationalist sentiment —how the same symbols or emotions can be interpreted and mobilized in contradictory directions, and how pride, grievance, or symbolic boundary-making shape political preferences and participation. Second, they provide an empirical contribution by using original, cross-national data—from Korean and Japanese online discourse to survey and experimental evidence—to uncover how ordinary people express nationalism in their own words and how these sentiments relate to political behavior. Third, the dissertation introduces a methodological contribution by combining multilevel models, text analysis, and experiments to capture nationalism across structured and informal domains. Finally, it offers a regionally grounded perspective by centering South Korea and Japan —two countries where nationalist discourse is increasingly mediated through emotion, memory, and digital culture. In doing so, the dissertation expands the empirical and theoretical scope of nationalism studies beyond Western contexts and formal political arenas.

1.7 Dissertation Structure

The dissertation is organized into six chapters, each contributing to the central argument that nationalism in everyday life is a dynamic and context-dependent form of identity—emotionally experienced, politically expressed, and socially constructed.

Chapter 2 lays the theoretical foundation, reviewing key debates on nationalism, patriotism, and national pride. It situates the study within the literature on everyday nationalism and social identity, and presents the conceptual framework used throughout the dissertation: nationalism as a multifaceted structure of identity shaped by emotion, memory, group boundaries, and symbolic meaning.

Chapter 3 explores how national pride influences political participation in South Korea, partic-

ularly through the lens of historical regional divides and ideological alignment. Using multilevel survey data, the chapter demonstrates that national pride does not uniformly drive engagement; rather, its effects are contingent on political identity, reflecting divergent meanings of loyalty and duty across partisan lines.

Chapter 4 examines everyday nationalism in digital discourse, focusing on Korean online communities during the 2022 World Cup. Through computational text analysis, it reveals how international sporting events trigger latent national sentiment, often expressed through outgroup hostility and moralized narratives of national competition—underscoring how nationalism is spontaneously performed in informal spaces.

Chapter 5 presents a survey experiment that tests the effects of different nationalist framings on political attitudes. It shows that outgroup-directed messages are more effective than ingroup-affirming appeals in shaping policy preferences, particularly in relation to militarization and national solidarity. The findings illustrate how emotional cues embedded in everyday discourse can influence public opinion in ideologically consequential ways.

Chapter 6 shifts the focus to Japan, analyzing anti-Korean discourse in anonymous online forums. By combining text and survey analysis, the chapter investigates the symbolic and affective structure of exclusionary nationalism, and finds that while these expressions are emotionally intense, they are not always linked to political participation. The chapter highlights how nationalism may serve as identity signaling rather than political mobilization in certain digital subcultures.

Chapter 7 concludes by synthesizing the dissertation's core findings and discussing their implications for the study of nationalism, democratic engagement, and regional politics. It reflects on how national identity is not only a product of historical memory or institutional design, but also a lived and emotionally mediated experience—shaped by the political context, enacted in everyday life, and increasingly expressed through digital media.

1.8 Chapter Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that nationalism must be understood not as a singular ideology, but as a dynamic set of social meanings and emotional alignments. These meanings

are often ambiguous, contradictory, and contested—not only across nations, but within them. As the chapters that follow demonstrate, individuals interpret their relationship to the nation through multiple lenses: as pride and as grievance, as loyalty and as protest, as inclusion and as exclusion. Before analyzing these diverse expressions empirically, the next chapter develops the theoretical tools necessary to account for this variation and to conceptualize nationalism as a lived identity shaped by group dynamics, historical memory, and political context.

Now, the next Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical foundations that guide this dissertation before turning to the empirical chapters. It reviews the conceptual debates surrounding nationalism, national pride, and everyday political identity, and develops a framework for understanding how national sentiment becomes socially constructed, emotionally experienced, and politically consequential. This theoretical grounding provides the lens through which the dissertation's core questions—about pride, participation, exclusion, and expression—are analyzed across empirical contexts.

CHAPTER 2

THEORIES OF NATIONALISM

This chapter reviews key theoretical frameworks and empirical studies that inform the dissertation's central concern: how nationalism, particularly at the individual level, is expressed and shapes perceptions and behaviors in contemporary East Asia. The literature review begins by clarifying the often overlapping and contested terminologies surrounding nationalism, including national identity, pride, and patriotism. It then moves to the concept of everyday nationalism, followed by a contextualization of nationalism in Korea and Japan. The chapter concludes by connecting nationalism to patterns of political participation, building a bridge between identity and behavior.

2.1 Concepts of Nationalism

Before examining the role of nationalism in political behavior, it is essential to clarify the conceptual distinctions among related terms. The political science literature often lacks consensus, frequently conflating nationalism with patriotism, national identity, and national pride. Scholars have noted that such terminological overlaps obscure important theoretical and empirical differences (McDaniel, Nooruddin and Shortle, 2016; Gangl, Torgler and Kirchler, 2016; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas, 2019). To address this confusion, this section outlines key definitional debates and situates this study's conceptualization of nationalism within a constructivist framework.

Efforts to disaggregate nationalism often focus on distinguishing inclusive versus exclusionary expressions—such as civic versus ethnic nationalism, or constructive versus blind nationalism (Schatz, Staub and Lavine, 1999; Fozdar and Low, 2015). Similarly, some works attempt to draw lines between patriotism, national identity, and national pride by associating the former with positive attachment and the latter with more ideological or exclusionary commitments (Smith and Kim, 2006; Blank, 2003; Mummendey, Klink and Brown, 2001). However, these normative distinctions are not always empirically supported, as many individuals do not clearly separate these terms in practice (Huddy and Khatib, 2007; Yoon, 2017; de Figueiredo and Elkins, 2003; McDaniel, Nooruddin and Shortle, 2016). Instead of treating them as strictly separate, this dissertation adopts a layered conceptual framework in which national identity, pride, and nationalism are closely in-

tertwined yet analytically distinguishable.

National identity plays a foundational role in shaping how individuals understand themselves as part of a national collective. It refers to the cognitive sense of belonging to a national group, which involves the construction of symbolic boundaries between ingroups and outgroups (Citrin and Wright, 2009). These boundaries help individuals determine who is included or excluded from the national "we," and they can influence political behavior, especially when intersecting with narratives of threat, pride, or grievance. National pride, in contrast, reflects an emotional attachment to one's country. It is often considered an affective response that emerges from identification with the national group. As such, national identity can be understood as a necessary—though not sufficient—condition for national pride (Smith and Kim, 2006). This distinction is important because national sentiments may not always be positive; individuals may retain a strong sense of national belonging while simultaneously feeling anger, disappointment, or even resentment toward their nation.

Despite this conceptual distinction, the relationship between national identity and pride remains contested. Some scholars treat national pride as a subcomponent of patriotism (Huddy and Khatib, 2007), while others view it as a synthesis of patriotism and nationalism (de Figueiredo and Elkins, 2003). Evans and Kelley (2002), for example, define national pride as "the feeling ... in the achievement or an admirable quality" of one's country, distinguishing it from more ideological or political commitments. Similarly, Ha and Jang (2015) frame national pride as a cognitive-emotional reaction, with identity providing the cognitive basis for national belonging and pride emerging as a potential emotional outcome. In line with this perspective, this dissertation adopts definition of national pride from Smith and Kim (2006, p. 127) as "the positive affect ... toward their country, resulting from their national identity."

For some researchers, patriotism and nationalism, while both involving positive affect, diverge in their normative and behavioral implications. Patriotism is typically characterized by a sense of duty or loyalty—what Smith and Jarkko (1998) terms "dedicated allegiance"—whereas the narrow definition of nationalism often entails beliefs in the superiority or exclusivity of one's national group. This dichotomy has led to the common distinction between "good" patriotism and "bad"

nationalism in scholarly discourse. However, in both public attitudes and academic usage, these concepts frequently overlap. It is often difficult to discern whether expressions of national dedication are accompanied by exclusionary or hierarchical sentiments. Individuals may conflate these feelings in practice, and academic terminology itself is frequently shaped by normative assumptions, further blurring the boundaries between the two.

In light of these conceptual entanglements, this dissertation adopts a broad concept of nationalism, conceptualized as a layered and multifaceted construct that includes national identity (the subjective sense of belonging to a national community), perceptions of ingroups and outgroups, and emotional attachment (including pride, anger, and grievance). This broad conceptualization partially draws from classical understandings of nationalism as a state of mind or *idée-force* that evokes psychological attachment to a community. Kohn (2017) describes nationalism as a succession of changes in communal psychology shaped by shared language, territory, and tradition, while Anderson (2006) famously characterizes the nation as an "imagined community." Although these foundational theories were closely tied to the project of state-building, their insights into the emotional and symbolic construction of national belonging remain highly relevant. This dissertation adopts that psychological dimension—nationalism as a layered and affective sentiment—but moves away from a state-centric view. Instead, nationalism is understood here as a diffuse and flexible phenomenon shaped by structural contexts and individual interpretation.

While certain expressions of nationalism may involve superiority or exclusion, such features are understood as contingent manifestations rather than defining criteria. Importantly, nationalism is treated here not as elite rhetoric, but as an individual- and public-level sentiment that varies across people and settings. This layered structure is illustrated in Figure 2.1. Rather than treating nationalism as a fixed or inherently exclusive ideology, this study adopts a broader framework in which national pride and identity form the foundational components, and narrower expressions—such as patriotism or superiority-based nationalism—emerge as contingent manifestations.

As a socially embedded identity, nationalism is responsive to contextual cues and varies across individuals (Burke, 2003). Like other social identities—such as gender, race, or religion—national

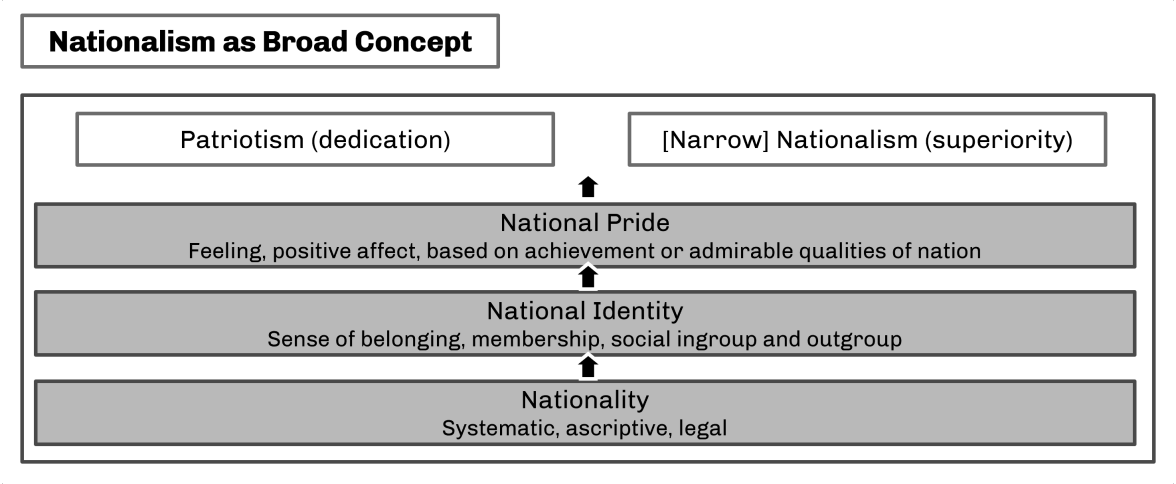

Figure 2.1 Layered Structure of Nationalism as a Broad Concept

identity may become salient or recede depending on the political environment. Its activation influences a range of behaviors, from voting and protest to exclusionary attitudes toward outgroups (Smith, 2013). This broader conceptualization allows for variation in how nationalism is experienced and expressed, and supports the empirical focus of this study on how different dimensions of nationalism emerge in everyday settings, especially in relation to political ideology and media exposure. This framework will be further elaborated through the lens of everyday nationalism in the following sections, which underscores how national sentiment is produced, expressed, and refracted in ordinary life.

This conceptualization also highlights how nationalism interacts with various identity-based dimensions, including ideology and regional attachment. Given its layered and context-sensitive nature, the effect of nationalism on political behavior is not uniform but contingent on how individuals interpret and enact their national belonging. Building on this framework, this dissertation hypothesizes that the influence of nationalism on political activity varies by political ideology and regional affiliation. These contingent effects are empirically tested in subsequent chapters, where I examine how different facets of nationalist sentiment shape participation across social and political contexts.

2.2 Nationalism and Political Participation

Having defined nationalism as a layered and context-sensitive construct, it is important to consider how this concept functions both as a cause and a consequence of political attitudes and behavior. Across various academic fields, nationalism has been treated both as a dependent and independent variable. When researchers consider national pride as a phenomenon to be explained, they often focus on country-level differences using multinational survey results, such as those from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). Some studies analyze nationalism at the individual level, examining the influence of demographic variables like age, gender, education, duration of national membership, and racial majority or minority status (Evans and Kelley, 2002; Dimitrova-Grajzl, Eastwood and Grajzl, 2016). Other research highlights country-level factors, such as the timing of national elections (Nakai, 2018) or economic inequality (Solt, 2011), as significant determinants. In South Korea, similar demographic factors—age, gender, education, and income—also influence nationalism (Chung and Choe, 2008). Personality traits and perceptions of income inequality further correlate with nationalism (Wang and Weng, 2018; Chi, Kwon and Rhee, 2014). While the same question is asked to the respondents to measure nationalism in multinational surveys, the levels and meanings of nationalism vary significantly across countries. This variation suggests that nationalism is not a uniform concept but context-dependent, shaped by differing historical, cultural, and social factors. This is further reflected in how certain variables that significantly influence nationalism in one country may have little or no impact in another. For example, while economic inequality may strongly shape nationalism in one nation, it may play a negligible role in another due to differing national histories or sociopolitical structures.

In addition to being studied as a dependent variable, nationalism has been analyzed as an independent variable affecting political attitudes and behaviors. For instance, Gustavsson and Stendahl (2020) found that nationalism positively correlates with political trust in the United States and the Netherlands. De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright (2012) observed that nationalism increases institutional political participation, such as voting, while decreasing extra-institutional activities like boycotts. Hjerm (1998) highlighted that the sources of nationalism influence xenophobic attitudes

differently—pride derived from political achievements tends to reduce xenophobia, whereas cultural pride tends to increase it. Studies in Asia also reflect this complexity; Shu and Nakamura (2006) discovered that nationalism had a mixed impact on Koreans' perceptions of Japan and China.

Specifically in South Korea, nationalism not only correlates with personal happiness (Ha and Jang, 2015) but also influences voting behavior, particularly economic voting patterns (Kim and Lee, 2020). However, most studies treat nationalism as a single-dimensional variable, overlooking its complex interactions with other factors. Its effects can vary significantly depending on the broader national and regional context in which it is experienced. For instance, while a high level of nationalism may drive greater political engagement in regions with strong historical narratives of national struggle or achievement, its impact may be weaker in regions lacking such historical framing. These variations highlight the context-dependent nature of national pride, emphasizing the need for a more nuanced analysis of its role in political behavior.

In sum, nationalism functions as both a cause and a consequence of political behavior, with its effects shaped by a range of contextual, historical, and identity-based factors. Recognizing its contingent and multifaceted nature, this dissertation focuses on how nationalism interacts with other social and political dimensions—particularly political ideology and regional attachment—to influence participation.

Political participation is often treated as an essential element in the functioning and legitimization of a political system. It encompasses a wide range of voluntary actions that allow citizens to engage in the selection of leaders and the shaping of public policy. These actions span from voting and party membership to protesting, lobbying, and public discourse (Halder and Campbell-Phillips, 2020; Badie, Berg-Schlosser and Morlino, 2011). In democratic contexts, such engagement is not merely a right but a necessary practice that upholds the principles of representation, accountability, and consent (Almond and Powell, 1966; Verba, 1967; Almond and Verba, 2015). The types of political engagement have expanded from conventional activities like voting and campaigning to include unconventional actions such as demonstrations, civil disobedience, and protests. Scholars like Miller (1992) suggest that these "elite-challenging" behaviors may operate as democratic di-

rect action rather than signs of disorder, reflecting the increasing acceptance of diverse participation modes in both democratic and transitional societies.

However, participation is unevenly distributed across populations. Socioeconomic factors—particularly education, income, occupation, and urban residence—strongly correlate with higher political engagement (Verba, Nie and Kim, 1978; Lane, 1959). Education fosters political knowledge and efficacy, while income and occupational status provide the resources and networks conducive to activism. Even marital status and mobility influence participation, with settled and married individuals more likely to engage than their single or transient counterparts (Lipset et al., 1969). These factors were also emphasized in Halder and Campbell-Phillips (2020) review, which synthesizes findings from a variety of political systems and contexts to show how structural inequalities persistently shape access to and enthusiasm for participation.

Individual-level psychological drivers also play a critical role in shaping political participation. People are drawn into politics not only for instrumental reasons—like achieving policy outcomes—but also for expressive ones, such as gaining identity, meaning, or a sense of belonging (Lasswell, 1986; Lane, 1959). Reference groups like families, peers, and civic associations play crucial roles in socializing individuals into participatory norms (Halder and Campbell-Phillips, 2020). Participation is framed as both a form of personal empowerment and a community obligation.

Institutional and contextual factors also shape patterns of political participation. Robust party systems, charismatic candidates, and clear ideological differentiation among parties can enhance voter turnout and political engagement. Moreover, campaigns that employ face-to-face mobilization and personalized outreach strategies tend to be more effective in boosting participation rates than those relying solely on mass media channels (Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet, 1968; Cutright and Rossi, 1958). However, political engagement remains uneven across the population; complex policy issues and abstract ideological appeals often fail to resonate with a broader public, thereby limiting both the scope and depth of participatory behavior (McClosky, 1964; Badie, Berg-Schlosser and Morlino, 2011).

Finally, apathy and disengagement—particularly among marginalized or under-resourced groups

—stem from perceived inefficacy or systemic exclusion. As Dahl and Stinebrickner (1963) notes, when individuals believe their actions have no political impact, they often withdraw from participation altogether. Apathy may thus result from structural inequalities as well as cultural norms discouraging political agency. Halder and Campbell-Phillips (2020) argue that apathy is not always rooted in ignorance or disinterest but can be a conscious, rational response to alienation or exclusion from the political process.

This broader foundation sets the stage for examining nationalism as a mobilizing force. Nationalist sentiments—especially in the context of contested identities or perceived threats to national integrity—can activate participation even among ordinarily disengaged populations. Nationalism often intersects with identity, political opportunity structures, and emotional resonance to catalyze political action.

In line with this framework, the dissertation's first empirical analysis focuses on South Korea, where nationalism interacts with regional and ideological identity to shape political participation. Regionalism in South Korea is deeply rooted in historical patterns of political favoritism and economic development, and it continues to structure partisan alignments and political behavior. In particular, the Gyeongsang and Jeolla regions have long stood as symbolic opposites: Gyeongsang has traditionally been a conservative stronghold, while Jeolla has represented progressive resistance, stemming from starkly different experiences under authoritarian regimes (Choi, 1999; Na, 2003). Drawing on research in political psychology that highlights the mobilizing effects of both positive and negative emotions—such as pride, dissatisfaction, and anger—this study examines how national perception and emotional attachment influences political engagement in regions with contrasting historical relationships to the state (Mackie, Devos and Smith, 2000; Haidt, 2003). Specifically, I hypothesize that nationalism functions as a form of emotional expression that reinforces participation differently depending on regional experience and ideology in Chapter 3. For clarity, each hypothesis is labeled with an "H" followed by the chapter number and its sequential position within that chapter (e.g., H3.1 refers to the first hypothesis in Chapter 3).

H3.1: The higher national pride of people in the Gyeongsang region will be associated with

greater political participation.

H3.2: The lower national pride of people in the Jeolla region will be associated with greater political participation.

Recognizing the limitations of using current residence as a proxy for regional identity—especially in a highly mobile society like South Korea—this study also considers political ideology as a moderator. Given that historical regional divisions have increasingly mapped onto partisan divides, political ideology may better capture how individuals interpret their national pride in relation to political behavior (Lee, 2001). Therefore, I also test the following hypotheses:

H3.3: The higher national pride of politically conservative individuals will be associated with greater political participation.

H3.4: The lower national pride of politically liberal individuals will be associated with political participation.

Another empirical analysis about nationalism influencing political participation turns to Japan in Chapter 6, where nationalism has long been intertwined with political ideology—particularly with the postwar rise of conservative and revisionist movements. Unlike the Korean case, where regional cleavage plays a prominent role, the Japanese context highlights a close connection of nationalism activist groups with conservative and far-right political ideology. Conservative forms of nationalism in Japan often emphasize outgroup threats and national superiority, while liberal and unaffiliated individuals tend to associate national identity with pacifism, democratic accountability, or critical reflection (Hall, 2021; Kimura, 2018*b*,*a*). As a result, national pride in Japan may motivate political action in ideologically divergent ways, depending on how individuals interpret their relationship to the state and nation.

I therefore hypothesize that national pride will more strongly mobilize conservative individuals in Japan, who see political engagement as a means to defend or restore the national ingroup. In contrast, among non-conservatives—particularly those who are unaffiliated or politically disengaged—national pride may be less relevant or even disconnected from participatory motivations. Instead, political action in this group may be driven by resistance to conservative nationalism, especially

when national pride is low. These expectations lead to the following hypotheses:

H6.1: Among politically conservative Japanese individuals, higher national pride will be associated with greater political participation.

H6.2: Among non-conservative Japanese individuals, national pride will not be associated with greater political participation.

While the previous sections examined how nationalism operates as a political sentiment that influences participation across different contexts, another body of literature has shifted attention toward how nationalism is experienced and reproduced in everyday life. Moving beyond its role as an independent variable, this approach highlights the cultural and discursive foundations of nationalism as it is embedded in routine practices, media, and interpersonal interactions.

2.3 Everyday Nationalism

Another strand of research conceptualizes nationalism not as a political attitude or behavior, but as a set of practices embedded in the routines of everyday life. Billig (1995) introduces "banal nationalism" to distinguish the nationalism permeated in social structures from the national propaganda by political elites. While state nationalism emphasizes elite-driven narratives and top-down messaging, banal nationalism refers to how these narratives are subtly diffused into daily life and embedded in symbols, habits, and routines (Goode, 2020). Building on this, "everyday nationalism"(or "everyday nationhood") goes a step further: it conceptualizes nationalism as something not only consumed by the public but also produced and reinterpreted by ordinary individuals themselves (Goode and Stroup, 2015; Ichijo, 2020; Knott, 2015). Even when elites initiate or shape nationalist messages, everyday nationalism draws attention to how these messages are refracted through individual experiences, emotional responses, and sociopolitical contexts. Plus, the public can also generate their own messages or symbols that ignite nationalist sentiment in others, highlighting their active role in shaping national discourse from below. In this way, everyday nationalism foregrounds the agency of the public in sustaining, reshaping, or even resisting dominant national narratives. While this perspective does not deny the role of elites, it shifts the analytical focus toward how nationalism is produced, reproduced, and enacted by ordinary individuals in

everyday contexts.

Recent extensions of the everyday nationalism literature emphasize not only its routinized character but also its affective and performative dimensions. Nationalism is not merely embedded in social structures but is enacted through emotional displays, rituals, and symbolic performances that reinforce group boundaries and collective belonging (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008; Skey, 2011). This perspective highlights nationalism as something people do rather than merely believe, with emotional investments such as pride, shame, resentment, or anger shaping its everyday expressions (Brubaker, 2012; Bonikowski, 2016). Emotional nationalism, in this view, is not static but activated dynamically by political and social stimuli, revealing how affective performances contribute to the reproduction of national identity even in mundane settings.

Building on these perspectives, studies of everyday nationalism have explored cases such as international sports events (e.g., sports nationalism in Depetris-Chauvin, Durante and Campante (2020); Mylonas and Tudor (2021)), protection of traditional food (e.g., gastronationalism by DeSoucey (2010); Ichijo (2020); Wright and Annes (2013); Kim (2010*b*)) or Internet memes (Stolarski, 2021). These cases also illustrate how the role of political elites or institutions remains significant —not only by producing nationalist messages, but by shaping the broader environment in which national sentiments are expressed. Governments may, for example, initiate policies that protect national food heritage or host major international events that symbolically elevate the nation (Kim, 2010*b*; Kavetsos and Szymanski, 2010). Yet, these efforts interact dynamically with the public's response. Rather than simply receiving top-down messages, individuals absorb, reinterpret, and often amplify or contest them in ways that reflect their own social positions, emotions, and everyday experiences.

While the concept of everyday nationalism powerfully captures how national narratives are embedded in routine life, it also presents definitional ambiguities. Scholars have pointed out that the term lacks conceptual coherence: sometimes referring to emotions, other times to identity markers, discursive practices, or symbolic boundaries. Even foundational works, such as Skey (2011), adopts "national belonging," or "nationhood" instead of "nationalism" in the title, highlighting the

inconsistency in how the concept is used and understood. In some cases, the label "everyday nationalism" is applied to highly diffuse phenomena—such as national top-level domains (e.g., .kr [for South Korea] or .jp [for Japan]) or the labeling of cuisine as "foreign" or "ours" in TV programs—raising questions about conceptual boundaries.

In response to these ambiguities, this dissertation adopts a broad constructivist definition of nationalism as a layered state of mind shaped by differentiation of ingroup and outgroups, emotional attachment, and sometimes accompanied by superiority or dedication—following earlier outline of the concept. Within this broad framework, "everyday nationalism" does not refer to a specific emotional content such as pride or resentment, nor to a single type of identity claim, but instead captures the full spectrum of meanings and expressions associated with national belonging. It designates the origins and expressions of national sentiment as grounded in ordinary life: produced through daily interactions, enacted in routine practices, and subject to reinterpretation at the individual level. Nationalist narratives may be generated by both elites and the public, but their meaning and impact are filtered through the context of everyday social experience. This approach embraces the conceptual ambiguity of everyday nationalism, treating it as a strength rather than a limitation. While acknowledging the fluidity of the concept, this dissertation focuses primarily on two core dimensions: identity, as expressed through the drawing of symbolic boundaries between ingroups and outgroups; and emotional attachment, including both pride and grievance, as central to how individuals relate to the nation.

Given the conceptual openness and multidimensional nature of everyday nationalism—as previously defined to include identity, emotional attachment, and context-dependent expressions—it becomes necessary to adopt a flexible empirical approach. Rather than relying on a single measurement or data type, this study intentionally draws from diverse variables and samples across different chapters to capture multiple facets of how national belonging and sentiment are constructed and enacted in everyday life. Since survey data may simplify complex sentiments into fixed choices, this study adopts various analytic models to uncover underlying variations in the sentiments to the nation. I also employ multiple items to separate emotional and cognitive dimensions of nationalism

in the survey experiment. In addition, self-collected text data from online platforms captures more spontaneous and expressive forms of nationalist discourse generated and absorbed by the ordinary public. Together, these methods offer complementary insights into how everyday nationalism is articulated across different contexts.

One key context in which these multidimensional expressions of everyday nationalism become especially salient is international sports. These events have been widely recognized in the literature as emotionally charged arenas where national identity is symbolically performed and contested by broad public. During Sporting Mega Events (SMEs) where the representatives of nation-states compete with other nation-states, the preponderance of national flags, official names of other nations, national anthems, and chants all represent the everyday symbols of a nation's existence (Goode, Stroup and Gaufman, 2022; Van Hilvoorde, Elling and Stokvis, 2010). One notable characteristic of sports events is their easy access. The early remarks of Hobsbawm (1992, p. 143) resonate with the role of sports in creating a collective space to create and diffuse nationalism, as they let "even the least political or public individuals [can] identify with the nation." From the entries of the competitors, people reconfirm their worldview that nations exist as the unit of this global event and make a clear distinction between where they belong vis-a-vis the "other."

Another characteristic of sports tournaments is that they put the relationship of us and others as direct competitors. With these rivalries with other countries, international sports games infuse the image of other nations as outgroups to the ordinary public, and the people reconfirm their national belonging to their own national teams (Bertoli, 2017; Lee, Lee and Yang, 2018; Bertoli and Yin, 2022; Van Hilvoorde, Elling and Stokvis, 2010). The black-and-white distinction of winners and losers and simple scoring systems also make it easier to evaluate which nation is superior to others (Watson, 2017). That is why and how a soccer event aimed to promote community spirit in the European Union ended up strengthening nationalism in each participating country (Hargreaves, 2002), and the World Cup qualification games ignited interstate aggression and conflicts (Bertoli, 2017).

Traditional studies of sports nationalism emphasize the public's role in consuming national nar-

ratives via mass media, particularly through the symbolic performances of athletes and broadcasts that allow individuals to identify with the nation (Billings et al., 2013; Billings, Devlin and Brown, 2016). However, the rise of the internet has expanded this dynamic by enabling ordinary people not only to consume but also to actively produce and circulate nationalistic content during international sporting events. Scholars have noted that digital platforms—especially social media—have played a critical role in the resurgence and reconfiguration of nationalism in contemporary politics (Eriksen, 2007; Mihelj and Jiménez-Martínez, 2021). It is true that the internet spaces sometimes have been strategic means for right-wing or populist parties and leaders to spread their nationalistic rhetoric more easily (Caiani and Parenti, 2009; Guo, 2018; Udupa, 2019; Waisbord and Amado, 2017). However, in both electoral and cultural contexts, ordinary users have contributed to the growth of online nationalism by engaging in emotionally charged discourse, spreading memes, and participating in ideological battles (Kreis, 2017; Norris and Inglehart, 2019; Lim, 2017). This interactive and participatory environment has transformed the landscape of everyday nationalism, allowing for a more bottom-up, user-generated mode of national expression.

This participatory affordance of the internet is particularly visible during international sporting events, where users engage in nationalistic discourse in real time and at scale. During and after sporting events, people can and do freely and voluntarily share information, react, and display sentiments about their own and other nations on the internet. There are numerous real-time threads, web pages, highlight video clips, and social network posts where large numbers of people normally gather and express their ideas for everyone to read. From these group discourses, we can observe how everyday nationalism is being consumed and produced at the collective level. It does not remain at the level of individual self-identification but moves forward to the collective social identity, which has not been underlined enough in everyday nationalism studies. This emerging phenomenon with abundant data directly produced by the public is where sports permeate everyday nationalism in the most expressive formats, which is one of the focuses of this dissertation.

These theoretical and contextual discussions set the stage for a closer examination of how everyday nationalism is expressed and reproduced in specific national contexts. In South Korea, such

expressions have become particularly visible in recent years, fueled by both digital media and popular culture. The following section focuses on the Korean case to explore how online discourse—especially during international sporting events—reflects the dynamics of everyday nationalism and its emotional dimensions.

2.4 Everyday Nationalism in South Korea and Japan

Current Korean society is experiencing a rise of nationalism and national pride in various aspects, as seen in the newly coined terminology "guk-ppong." A compound of the nation ("guk," 국) and slang for narcotic drug ("ppong," 뽕), it first became widespread online and in newspapers and has recently been the subject of academic research (Jeong, 2020; Kim, 2019; Song, 2020). The word means that people feel as happy as taking drugs when they see their nation's achievements in the global world, such as in sports, arts, or cultures. The term is both used in positive and negative contexts, to praise achievements and express ingroup satisfaction in the former case, and to criticize those who blindly admire Korea in the latter. There are numerous YouTube channels producing these "guk-ppong"videos, with millions of views for each, which demonstrates the salience of nationalism, especially in terms of affective sentiments among Korean people.

However, this substantially "new" nationalism in Korea does not arise in isolation. Like other types of social identity, everyday nationalism presumes the presence of others—often referred to as "ingroups" and "outgroups"—as the national identity requires boundaries for emotional attachment to function. Some scholars expect natural antagonism between the ingroup and outgroup (Bonikowski et al., 2019; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas, 2019). In many Western cases, nationalistic discourses target internal minorities—such as immigrants or racial groups—as national outgroups, using rhetoric that they do not belong to the nation and harm their original "nation-ness" (Blank, 2003; Mummendey, Klink and Brown, 2001; Tajfel et al., 1979; Bracic, Israel-Trummel and Shortle, 2022). In contrast, in countries like South Korea and Japan, where internal ethnic or racial minorities are less salient in public discourse, nationalism is often constructed through contrast with foreign others. For instance, pride in Korean popular culture is reinforced by foreign admiration of K-pop or K-dramas, while anger toward international criticism often activates

collective defensiveness (Lee and Kim, 2020). In this research, I argue that the most distinctive outgroup in Korean nationalism is Japan—a neighboring country that shares a deep and ambivalent history marked by cultural rivalry, colonial memory, and geopolitical tension. In the Japanese case, far-right nationalist sentiment has long targeted the Zainichi Korean population. However, this hostility is rarely framed solely in terms of domestic citizenship or immigration status. Rather, the perceived outgroup status of Zainichi individuals is closely tied to their Korean origin, and the animosity often extends beyond Zainichi to South Korea as a whole (Asahina, 2019). This further supports the interpretation of nationalism in Japan and Korea as being shaped primarily through inter-state, rather than purely domestic, ingroup–outgroup distinctions.

Bordering with their territorial waters, Korea and Japan have continued their interactions before the modern state building. The recorded history between Korea and Japan goes back more than 1,000 years and includes multiple rounds of war. However, the countries also share a lot of similarities such as level of economic development, political democracy, and various aspects of culture. According to data from the World Bank's World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS), South Korea and Japan each rank among the top five trading partners for the other country for the most of the years.[1] Despite these similarities and ongoing economic interdependence, unresolved historical issues—especially based on Japan's colonization of Korea in the early 20th century—continue to shape the collective memory and national identity of both countries (Jo, 2022; Deacon, 2022). This shared but adversarial history has become a foundation for collective memory and nationalist narratives, particularly in Korea, where colonial experience and resistance have been central to constructions of national identity (Saaler, 2020, 2023). During Japan's efforts to assimilate Koreans into mainland Japan during colonization, the belief in ethnic homogeneity as a single minjok (referring to both nation and ethnicity) became the core spirit of the Korean independence and resistance movement (Shin, 2006). The strict division, which initially emerged between the "pure Korean us" and the "others," referring to the Japanese living in Korea, played a crucial role in the development of ethnic nationalism in Korea (Park, 2002; Han, 2015; Han and Hundt, 2023). While it seems

[1]World Bank. 2024. "Country Snapshot: Japan."World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS). Accessed May 11, 2025. https://wits.worldbank.org/CountrySnapshot/en/JPN/textview.

silent in everyday lives, this ingroup-outgroup perception is anlayzed to be persistent and strongly expressed when they face a chance where nationalism is provoked, leading the Korean people to consider Japan as a possible threat to the dignity and pride of their nation.

One prominent example is the large-scale boycott of Japanese products in 2019. Sparked by Mitsubishi's refusal to acknowledge its use of forced Korean labor during World War II—and further inflamed by dismissive remarks from Japanese politicians—the so-called "No Japan"movement gained momentum rapidly. Driven by spontaneous public participation and coordinated largely through online platforms, the boycott demonstrated the real-world power of digitally mobilized everyday nationalism. For instance, Japanese beer, which had previously dominated the foreign beer market in Korea, saw its sales drop by more than 90% (An, 2019). This episode illustrates how latent nationalist sentiment can be activated by external triggers and how everyday nationalism, when collectively expressed, can escalate into organized public action, often involving strong anti-outgroup sentiment.

The increasing prominence of online platforms has allowed everyday nationalist sentiments to transcend individual experiences and develop into collective movements. Events such as the "No Japan" boycott illustrate how digital spaces amplify emotional reactions and transform scattered expressions of nationalism into coordinated political and economic actions in everyday life. This underscores the significance of the internet not only as a site of nationalist discourse but also as a catalyst for collective action in contemporary South Korea.

Building on the preceding discussion, Chapter 4 examines how everyday nationalism is expressed and amplified during international sports events in South Korea—particularly through digital discourse. Prior research highlights that online spaces become especially active during Sporting Mega Events (SMEs), serving as arenas for emotionally charged expressions of national pride and outgroup hostility (Goode and Stroup, 2015; Van Hilvoorde, Elling and Stokvis, 2010). Given the centrality of Japan as a historical and emotional outgroup in Korean nationalist narratives, this chapter focuses on the 2022 World Cup as a moment of heightened national sentiment. By analyzing posts and comments from Korean online communities during the tournament, I investigate how

users talk about their own country (Korea), their primary outgroup (Japan), and other non-salient foreign nations. The following hypotheses guide this analysis:

H4.1: Sporting Mega Events (SMEs) will enhance positive bias toward the national ingroup.

H4.2: SMEs will intensify hostile bias toward the outgroups that have historically been perceived as adversaries by the nation.

H4.3: SMEs will not significantly influence bias toward outgroups that have not previously been targeted as hostile.

Having examined how everyday nationalism is publicly expressed in different forms—ranging from ingroup pride to outgroup hostility—Chapter 5 turns to the question of how these messages shape various national sentiments to the readers and their political attitudes. While digital discourse reveals the emotional contours of nationalism, it remains unclear how exposure to these expressed nationalism affects individuals' perceptions and behaviors. Drawing on experimental literature on national identity priming and affective cues, this chapter tests whether ingroup-oriented and outgroup-oriented messages elicit distinct responses in nationalism, tolerance, and foreign policy preferences (Steele, 1988; Cohen et al., 2007; Ko and Choi, 2022). The following hypotheses reflect these theoretical expectations. The three sets of hypotheses for each of the three dependent variables tested in the Chapter 5 are as below:

H5.1: Exposure to nationalist messages—whether based on ingroup affirmation or outgroup hostility—will increase national pride and sense of belonging.

H5.2: Exposure to ingroup-oriented messages will be associated with lower levels of intolerance toward outgroups.

H5.3: Exposure to outgroup-oriented messages will be associated with higher levels of intolerance toward outgroups.

H5.4: Exposure to ingroup-oriented messages will not affect support for national military expansion.

H5.5: Exposure to outgroup-oriented messages will increase support for national military expansion.

While the previous chapter tests the causal effects of nationalist messages on political attitudes, Chapter 6 takes a more exploratory approach by analyzing Japanese online discourse. Rather than testing formal hypotheses, this chapter investigates the narrative structure of everyday nationalism as it appears in user-generated posts on a textboard dedicated to discussions about South Korea. Given prior findings that Japanese nationalism often centers on anti-Korean and anti-Zainichi sentiment, the analysis focuses on how terms related to Japan and Korea co-occur with other linguistic elements. This allows for a deeper understanding of how national ingroups and outgroups are discursively constructed and emotionally charged in everyday digital spaces.

2.5 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter laid the theoretical and conceptual groundwork for the dissertation by critically reviewing key debates around nationalism, national identity, and political participation. It moved beyond state-centered or elite-driven definitions and instead conceptualized nationalism as a layered, multifaceted phenomenon—one that encompasses identity, emotional attachment, and perceptions of ingroups and outgroups. Drawing on the literature on banal and everyday nationalism, the chapter emphasized that nationalism is not merely an ideological stance, but a socially embedded practice reproduced through mundane actions, affective performances, and discursive framings.

In particular, the chapter highlighted the importance of context in shaping how nationalism is experienced and expressed. Focusing on South Korea, it examined how political ideology, regional histories, and collective memory influence the ways people identify with the nation and engage in political life. At the same time, it introduced a comparative lens by showing how similar theoretical frameworks can be extended to the Japanese case, where nationalism also manifests in digital discourse and public sentiment—albeit through different historical and sociopolitical pathways.

Finally, the chapter set up the empirical agenda of the dissertation by outlining how everyday nationalism is studied across multiple methods: textual analysis of public discourse, survey-based causal inference, and cross-national comparison. By distinguishing between different emotional expressions of nationalism—such as ingroup love and outgroup hate—it provided a framework for understanding not only how nationalism is reproduced in daily life, but also how it shapes political

attitudes and behaviors in East Asian democracies.

The following chapter begins the empirical analysis by focusing on the South Korean case. Chapter 3 examines how nationalism interacts with regional identity and political ideology to motivate political participation, highlighting the ways in which national identity and sentiment is interpreted and mobilized differently across social and historical contexts.

CHAPTER 3

NATIONALISM CONTINGENTLY SHAPING PARTICIPATION

3.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter builds on the previous discussion of nationalism as a multifaceted and context-dependent phenomenon. While nationalism is often studied in terms of ideology or identity, it also functions as an emotional force, shaping how individuals relate to the state and to one another. Among the emotional dimensions of nationalism, national pride—defined as a positive emotional attachment to one's country—offers a particularly revealing lens. National pride is not simply a reflection of allegiance or satisfaction; it embodies how individuals internalize the idea of the nation, its history, and its political trajectory. In this chapter, I focus on national pride as an affective expression of nationalism, asking how its presence or absence motivates or demobilizes political action within a politically and regionally divided society like South Korea.

What role does national pride play in shaping political behavior, and why do individuals interpret the concept of "nation" in fundamentally different ways? In recent years, national pride has become an increasingly salient issue worldwide, challenging early expectations that globalization would lead to a decline in nationalism and the rise of cosmopolitan identities (Nussbaum, 1994; Beck, 2002; Bieber, 2018). South Korea is no exception. From the surge of the Korean Wave (Hallyu) to internationally recognized cultural products such as K-pop (Korean pop music genre) and K-dramas like Squid Game or the movie Parasite, South Koreans have embraced a renewed sense of national pride (Joo, 2011). Beyond culture, political events such as the candlelight protests that led to the impeachment of President Park Geun-hye and South Korea's widely praised response to the COVID-19 pandemic have reinforced this national pride in the political realm.

At first glance, national pride appears to be a unifying sentiment, a collective attachment to the nation that fosters solidarity and engagement. However, a closer look at South Korea's recent political movements reveals that national pride is far from a singular concept—rather, it is deeply contested and politically charged. The 2016–2017 impeachment protests provide a striking example: the candlelight demonstrations, which saw millions of citizens rallying for President Park's

removal, framed their actions as a movement to restore democracy and protect the nation from corruption. Yet, at the same time, the Taegukgi rallies, held by Park's supporters, carried the national flags of Korea and also claimed to be fighting to "save the country," arguing that the impeachment was a politically motivated attack on national stability (Cho and Hwang, 2021). Both sides invoked national pride, both sides claimed they were acting in defense of the country, yet their understandings of what the "nation" meant were fundamentally different.

This pattern has not remained in the past. In 2024, similar dynamics re-emerged as calls for the impeachment of President Yoon Suk-yeol sparked a new wave of protests. Once again, two opposing groups filled the streets—one demanding his removal in the name of protecting democratic nation, and the other rallying against impeachment, claiming to defend the country's legitimacy. These events raise critical questions: if national pride can fuel entirely opposite political movements, what determines its political direction? What explains these starkly different interpretations of nationhood, national identity, and patriotism?

Political science literature has long examined national pride as both an explanatory and an outcome variable. Comparative studies have explored cross-national variations in national pride using multinational survey data (Evans and Kelley, 2002; Solt, 2011), while others have focused on ethnicity and minority status, linking pride to political empowerment and identity (Nakai, 2018; Wimmer, 2017). Additionally, scholars have analyzed national pride's association with xenophobia, political trust, and participation (De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright, 2012; Gustavsson and Stendahl, 2020; Hjerm, 1998). However, despite this growing body of research, national pride is still often treated as a monolithic feeling—either present or absent—rather than a politically contingent sentiment rooted in one's social context.

This chapter builds on recent work that reconceptualizes nationalism as a fluid, everyday practice shaped by intersecting identities. Rather than viewing pride as a uniform response to the nation, I approach it as an emotional expression of nationalism that is filtered through individuals' positionality within the nation-state. In the South Korean context, where historical cleavages and political favoritism have long divided the country along regional lines, national pride carries different mean-

ings—and political implications—depending on where individuals locate themselves in the national narrative. In other words, regional identity shapes whether national pride reinforces trust and loyalty toward the state or mobilizes critical engagement against it. This is why the analysis in this chapter turns to regionalism, not as a mere demographic factor, but as a historically constructed identity that conditions the political effects of national pride.

South Korea provides a particularly compelling case due to its historically entrenched regionalism, which has shaped political affiliations, economic inequalities, and perceptions of the state (Park, 2010; Kim, 2010*a*; Chung, 2015). Gyeongsang and Jeolla, in particular, have long stood as opposing political regions, with Gyeongsang benefiting from authoritarian-era economic policies and remaining a conservative stronghold, while Jeolla has been historically marginalized and aligned with progressive movements. Given these regional histories, this study explores how national pride interacts with political regionalism to influence political participation.

Rather than assuming national pride functions as a uniform driver of political engagement, this research posits that its effects are highly contingent on individuals' political and regional identities. By analyzing how different groups interpret national pride in opposing ways, this study seeks to provide a more nuanced, contextual understanding of how national sentiment shapes political action. This research contributes to a deeper theoretical understanding of national pride, moving beyond simplistic definitions to examine its role in reinforcing, challenging, or reshaping political participation in a divided society.

At the same time, while regional identity has long structured political competition and state-society relations in South Korea, it is increasingly mediated by ideological divisions. Historical patterns of regionalism—such as the conservative dominance in Gyeongsang and progressive resistance in Jeolla—have become closely aligned with partisan identities and political attitudes. In contemporary politics, ideological orientation may thus serve not only as a proxy for regional socialization but also as an independent axis of identity through which individuals relate to the nation. As regional attachments become more diffuse due to internal migration and demographic change, political ideology may offer a more consistent and analytically precise lens for understanding how

national pride is internalized and translated into action.

This chapter examines how national pride both motivates and discourages political participation, depending on individuals' political ideology and regional identity. Rather than exerting a direct and uniform influence, national pride functions as a contingent emotional mechanism shaped by one's place within South Korea's historical and political divides. The findings reveal that political ideology plays a particularly strong moderating role: liberal-leaning individuals, whose identity is historically linked to resistance and marginalization, are more politically active when they feel less national pride, while conservative-leaning individuals, who associate national pride with state legitimacy and social order, are more likely to engage when they feel proud of their nation. These results underscore the contextual nature of national sentiment, showing that pride does not simply unify or divide, but interacts with deeper political identities to shape divergent patterns of participation.

3.2 Regional Identity and the Meaning of Nationalism

National pride is often imagined as a shared emotional bond that unites citizens across differences. But what happens when the nation itself has long been experienced unevenly across regions? In South Korea, national identity has been historically fractured by regionally rooted political and economic inequalities. Far from being a neutral demographic factor, regional identity has shaped how people understand the state, their place within it, and what it means to take pride in the nation. This legacy stems from the favoritism shown toward certain regions—most notably Gyeongsang—during the authoritarian regimes of the 1960s and 70s, which left deep scars and fueled the emergence of political regionalism (Kim, 1997; Park, 2001). These divisions have endured over generations, forming distinct affective orientations toward the state that continue to shape how national pride is felt and politically expressed.

To understand how regional identity shapes national pride and political participation in South Korea, it is essential to first grasp the structure and historical significance of the country's regional divisions. South Korea is composed of nine provinces ("Do") and several metropolitan cities that function as separate administrative units. Among these, Gyeongsang (now split into North and

South Gyeongsang Provinces) and Jeolla (now North and South Jeolla) stand out as the most politically symbolic regions, deeply embedded in the country's modern political history (Kim, 1997).

These provinces were formalized during the Joseon Dynasty, based on the geographical and demographic factors, but their political salience intensified during the late twentieth century. While this historical and administrative overview helps us understand the basic structure of Korea's regional divisions, it is not merely the boundaries themselves that matter for political behavior. Rather, what is politically meaningful is how these regional divisions have been repeatedly reinforced and reinterpreted through national development strategies, elite politics, and public sentiment over time.

The political and emotional salience of the regional divisions in Korea is far more significant than their bureaucratic function. Among them, Gyeongsang and Jeolla have come to symbolize opposing ends of the nation's political spectrum. These identities are not simply geographic but carry deep historical and affective weight. The roots of this regionalism can be traced to the authoritarian development era of the 1960s and 70s, when state-led economic programs disproportionately favored the southeastern Gyeongsang region—home to then-President Park Chung-hee—under the banner of national development (Kim, 1997; Park, 2001). This uneven investment not only advanced regional economic disparities but also established political loyalty through material benefit, reinforcing the region's long-standing conservative alignment. In contrast, Jeolla was systematically marginalized, excluded from major development initiatives, and symbolically positioned as an opposition region, fostering a legacy of political resistance and progressive identity.

Scholars identify three interrelated factors that contributed to the emergence and persistence of Korean regionalism (Chung, 2015). First, region-specific historical and cultural traditions have nurtured emotional identification with one's region, sometimes reinforcing negative perceptions of others within the same nation. These identities are cultivated over generations through local education, media, and intergroup comparison, and often mirror nationalistic attachments to the nation itself, but at the sub-national level. Second, the unequal distribution of economic resources during the authoritarian era created a powerful association between political regimes and regional economic outcomes, particularly in Gyeongsang. There, economic growth was closely tied to national

development narratives and legitimized state authority, reinforcing regional pride and conservative political loyalty (Heo, 2017). Third, regionally biased elite recruitment and appointments—even after democratization—deepened perceptions of exclusion in underrepresented regions. Government posts, party leadership, and bureaucratic promotions have frequently skewed toward certain regions, sustaining the view that national institutions are aligned with specific localities (Kim, 1990). These biases are not merely symbolic; they inform policy direction and continue to shape how people perceive the fairness and representativeness of the national government.

As a result, regionalism in Korea is not merely a residual effect of authoritarianism, nor just a pattern of electoral behavior. It is a socially and politically constructed cleavage that continues to shape how individuals relate to the nation itself. Unlike in many other democracies, where political alignment is grounded primarily in class or ideology, South Korean partisanship is still often filtered through a regional lens, entangled with historical experiences of favoritism and exclusion.

Importantly, this divide persists even among younger generations, who did not directly experience the developmental state or authoritarian rule. In a survey of university students from major cities in the eastern (Gyeongsang) and western (Jeolla) regions, significant differences emerged in voting behavior, partisanship, political ideology, and attitudes toward North Korea (Park, 2010). These findings demonstrate that regionalism is not just a legacy of the past but a living axis of political identity in South Korea.

Against this backdrop, national pride in South Korea cannot be understood as a neutral or universally shared sentiment. Rather, it is an emotional response that is deeply shaped by individuals' historical and regional experiences with the state. In Gyeongsang, where economic development and national leadership were tightly intertwined, pride in the nation may reflect a sense of personal validation and loyalty. In contrast, individuals in Jeolla, whose historical relationship to the state has been marked by exclusion and marginalization, may experience national pride as more conditional, conflicted, or even as a site of resistance.

From an affective perspective, national pride functions not merely as a personal sentiment, but as an emotional position within the nation—a reflection of how individuals perceive their relationship

to the state. Crucially, both high and low levels of national pride can trigger political engagement, albeit through different mechanisms. In historically marginalized regions such as Jeolla, low national pride may signal dissatisfaction, disillusionment, or moral outrage. As research in political psychology shows, negative emotions such as anger or perceived injustice can be powerful motivators for political action, particularly when individuals feel that the nation has failed to live up to shared moral or democratic ideals (Mackie, Devos and Smith, 2000; Conover and Feldman, 1986; Haidt, 2003). Even if low pride is not equivalent to acute anger, the very willingness to express a lack of pride reveals a critical awareness of the nation's shortcomings, which in turn can fuel resistant forms of participation.

Conversely, in regions like Gyeongsang that have historically benefited from state-led development, high national pride tends to be associated with positive affective bonds, a sense of inclusion, and identification with national success. In such contexts, national pride reinforces self-esteem, group belonging, and a sense of civic duty, all of which are shown to increase political engagement and overcome collective action problems (Spinner-Halev and Theiss-Morse, 2003; Groenendyk, 2011; Gable and Harmon-Jones, 2010; Brown and Pickerill, 2009). Here, pride serves as a form of ingroup attachment and moral obligation—not just a feeling of admiration, but a commitment to national participation framed as patriotism (Huddy, 2013).

These divergent emotional logics suggest that national pride is not a singular or uniform sentiment. Instead, it is deeply contingent on one's historical and regional relationship to the state. Whether expressed as resistant dissatisfaction or loyal affirmation, pride functions as an emotional engine of political action, structured by regional histories, collective memories, and moral interpretations of the nation.

3.3 Hypothesis and Models

Building on the preceding discussion, this chapter focuses on two regions that best represent the emotional and political cleavages embedded in South Korea's regionalism: Gyeongsang and Jeolla. These regions are not only the most historically and symbolically salient, but also offer the clearest contrast in terms of how national pride is likely to be shaped by experiences of state favoritism or

exclusion. Their divergent regional identities, forged through decades of economic and political inequality, make them an ideal case for examining how the same national sentiment—pride—can lead to distinct patterns of political engagement.

Gyeongsang, as the primary economic and political beneficiary of South Korea's authoritarian regimes, has developed strong affiliations with conservative politics. The region received concentrated economic investment during the industrialization era, most notably through the construction of the Gyeongbu Expressway and the Saemaul Undong movement, which symbolized the state-led modernization programs of the 1970s (Choi, 2012; Douglass, 2014). The expressway, connecting Seoul to Busan, a major city in the southern Gyeongsang region, significantly boosted economic growth in the area, while rural modernization programs further advanced its economic standing. These benefits were closely tied to the fact that three successive authoritarian presidents hailed from Gyeongsang, reinforcing the region's status as a political stronghold of state-driven economic development under the banner of national progress. As a result, Gyeongsang developed a long-standing political allegiance to conservative parties that were seen as the architects of South Korea's rapid modernization.

In stark contrast, Jeolla, despite being geographically adjacent to Gyeongsang, experienced relative economic neglect during the same period. The region was systematically excluded from the central government's economic development policies, leading to deepening economic disparities (Park, 2010; Kim, 2010*a*). More significantly, Jeolla became the focal point of authoritarian political repression, culminating in the Gwangju Uprising of 1980, where citizens protesting against military rule were violently suppressed (Na, 2003). This event, which later became a catalyst for nationwide democratization movements, reinforced Jeolla's identity as a region of resistance against authoritarianism. Consequently, Jeolla has historically aligned with liberal and progressive political movements, opposing the political establishment that was largely centered in Gyeongsang (Chung, 2015).

Based on these historical contrasts and the theoretical framework outlined above, this study presents two hypotheses to test how national pride operates within these regional contexts. Rather

than assuming a uniform effect of pride across the country, the hypotheses reflect the expectation that pride will function differently in regions historically aligned with or alienated from the state:

H3.1: The higher national pride of people in the Gyeongsang region will be associated with greater political participation.

H3.2: The lower national pride of people in the Jeolla region will be associated with greater political participation.

In the analysis, Seoul is used as a comparison case, though not as a strict control. As the capital city with a population exceeding 9 million—approximately 17% of the national population—Seoul serves as the political, economic, and educational hub of South Korea. A significant portion of its residents were not born in the city, leading to a weaker historical attachment to regionalist identities compared to Gyeongsang and Jeolla. According to a recent study, the local identity of contemporary Seoulites (people living in Seoul) appears relatively vague due to the city's highly dynamic process of mass migration and population movement (Song, 2024). These characteristics make Seoul a useful comparison against regions like Gyeongsang and Jeolla, where regionalistic identities have remained historically entrenched and politically significant.

To empirically test these hypotheses, I employ a multilevel model with varying slopes and intercepts, assuming that regional contexts influence the effect of national pride on political participation. This model accounts for the possibility that individuals from different regions perceive nation differently, leading to region-specific effects on political participation. The equation for the multilevel model is as follows:

$$y_{pol.participation} = \alpha_{region} + \beta_{region} x_{nat.pride} + \boldsymbol{\beta_{ind}} \boldsymbol{X_{control}} + \epsilon \tag{3.1}$$

The $y_{pol.participation}$ and $x_{nat.pride}$ mean the main dependent and independent variables of interest in this research, the level of political participation and national pride, each. This multilevel model allows for both the intercept α_{region} and slope β_{region} of national pride to vary across regions, testing whether national pride exerts significantly different effects on political participation depending on regional context. If national pride's influence is truly contingent on region, the model should yield

significantly different slopes (β_{region}) across regions. The bold-typed matrix ($X_{control}$) represents the set of individual-level controls with the vector of their coefficients (β_{ind}). The demographic controls include sex, age, marital status, employment, education level, and household income, often cited to affect the level of political participation in numerous research of political behavior and democracy (Nie and Andersen, 1974; Coffé and Bolzendahl, 2010; Kam and Palmer, 2008). I also included some variables about perception, which will be elaborated more in the next part.

The multilevel model is used in this study because it accounts for upper-level variances (i.e., the regional context of South Korea) in explaining individual-level differences in political participation (Gelman and Hill, 2006; Steenbergen and Jones, 2002). Given that the theoretical framework assumes that the effect of national pride is contingent on regional factors, a multilevel model is not only appropriate but also necessary to assess whether these effects are statistically distinct across regions (Weldon, 2006).

A potential alternative approach would be an unpooled model, which estimates separate regressions for each region. However, this method is less suitable given the uneven distribution of respondents across regions, leading to small sample sizes in certain areas. In such cases, an unpooled model risks being skewed by outliers or failing to yield statistically meaningful results for underrepresented regions. By contrast, the multilevel model accommodates hierarchical data structures and provides more reliable estimates by mitigating small-sample bias (Gelman and Hill, 2006).

Despite the strong historical and political significance of regionalism in South Korea, the assumption that current residence alone captures regional sentiment presents several limitations. The region variable used in this study is based on where respondents currently reside, but it does not account for critical factors such as birthplace, length of residence, or personal identification with the region. Given South Korea's high internal migration rates, individuals living in Gyeongsang or Jeolla may not necessarily have long-standing ties to those regions.

Crucially, regional identity is not simply a function of where one lives, but of where one has been shaped. Political attitudes, perceptions of the state, and emotional attachments to the nation are often developed through socialization within a specific regional context—through family nar-

ratives, local schooling, regional media, and community interactions. In this sense, the formative environment where individuals grow up plays a more powerful role in shaping how they emotionally relate to the nation, compared to their current administrative location. This perspective aligns with the concept of everyday nationalism, which emphasizes how national sentiment is produced through routine, embodied experiences in daily life. Therefore, relying solely on current residence may obscure the deeper regional influences that shape how national pride is internalized and politically expressed. In light of these limitations, it becomes necessary to consider alternative pathways through which national pride is shaped and expressed.

This raises the possibility that political ideology, rather than geographical region, serves as a more precise moderator of national pride's effect on political participation. As discussed earlier, regionalism in South Korea has been historically intertwined with political ideology: Gyeongsang has been a conservative stronghold, while Jeolla has been a base for liberal political movements. Given this alignment, it is possible that the political attitudes and historical grievances associated with regionalism are already embedded within individuals' ideological orientations rather than being exclusively tied to their place of residence. In fact, animosity toward certain regions—a central characteristic of South Korea's regionalist divisions—has increasingly been incorporated into political ideology, influencing partisanship and political attitudes regardless of where individuals physically reside (Lee, 2001). If this is the case, national pride's effect on political engagement may be contingent on political ideology rather than regional identity.

To explore this alternative explanation, I propose the following revised hypotheses, replacing regional factors to the political ideology:

H3.3: The higher national pride of politically conservative individuals will be associated with greater political participation.

H3.4: The lower national pride of politically liberal individuals will be associated with greater political participation.

To test these alternative hypotheses, I use an OLS linear regression model with an interaction term between national pride and political ideology. Unlike the multilevel model, this approach

does not assume hierarchical levels between variables, and the models are tested at individual level. However, to account for potential residual effects of regionalism, I included region dummies in the model. The equation is specified as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} y_{pol.participation} = \alpha + \beta_1 x_{nat.pride} + \beta_2 x_{pol.ideology} + \beta_3 (x_{nat.pride} \times x_{pol.ideology}) \\ + \boldsymbol{\beta_{ind} X_{control}} + \sum_r \delta_r D_r + \epsilon \end{aligned} \tag{3.2}$$

The interaction term ($\beta_3(x_{nat.pride} \times x_{pol.ideology})$)allows for assessing whether the effect of national pride on political participation differs across ideological orientations. If the alternative hypotheses hold, β_3 should be negative for liberals and positive for conservatives, indicating that national pride enhances political participation among conservatives but suppresses it among liberals. The sum $\delta_r D_r$ denotes region-fixed effects, included as dummy variables for all seven regions.

3.4 Data and Variables

The main data source used for the analysis in this research is the Korean General Social Survey (KGSS), specifically the rounds conducted in 2016 and 2018.[1] These are the only two rounds of the survey that ask questions about experiences in various political activities, as the survey questionnaire constantly changes based on the salience of certain issues in Korean society. The KGSS is a comprehensive survey project run by the Survey Research Center (SRC) under Sungkyunkwan University. It covers a wide range of issues, including politics, culture, and social values, since 2003. It is broadly used in social science studies and has been utilized in research papers on national pride in South Korea (Chi, Kwon and Rhee, 2014; Chung and Choe, 2008; Wang and Weng,

[1]The 2021 round of the Korean General Social Survey (KGSS) included two questions regarding respondents' participation in two specific types of political demonstrations: candlelight vigils advocating for the impeachment of President Park and Korean flag demonstrations opposing the impeachment. However, the distribution of participants and non-participants for each activity was highly skewed, with less than one percent of respondents indicating that they had participated in either demonstration at least once. Furthermore, only four respondents reported attending candlelight vigils more than three times, and all four also claimed to have participated in Korean flag demonstrations more than three times—despite the fact that these two movements represent fundamentally opposing political positions. This unexpected pattern raises concerns about the reliability of these survey questions as valid measures of political engagement at the public level. Given these limitations, I have opted to use data from the two earlier rounds of the KGSS survey, which provide a broader range of questions related to political activities, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis.

2018). The cumulative data are freely available on their website and in the ICPSR data bank (Kim et al., 2023).

The unit of analysis is the individual, with data comprising responses from 1,051 Korean respondents in 2016 and 1,031 in 2018. The seven regions surveyed are Seoul, Gyeonggi, Gangwon, Chungcheong, Gyeongsang, Jeolla, and Jeju.[2]

3.4.1 Dependent Variable

The main dependent variable of political participation is a combined index of responses from different types of political actions. The nine included activities are signing petitions (SIGNPET), boycotting certain products (AVOIDBUY), attending protests (JOINDEM), attending political rallies (ATTRALLY), contacting politicians or officials (CNTCTGOV), donating or raising funds (POLFUNDS), posting political materials on social media (POLSNS), posting political comments on online news or community websites (POLREPLY), and participating in online group activities (PARTCYBR). All these question items are categorized under the "Political Actions" tab in the questionnaire forms in the given order. The original responses for each item are 4-level: "Have done it in the past year (1)," "Have done it in the more distant past (2)," "Have not done it but might do it (3)," and "Have not done it and would never do it (4)." [3] I re-coded each answer in reverse, to make higher values represent higher level of participation.

To capture the underlying structure of participating in various political activities, I applied Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to nine observed variables. This approach aligns with previous

[2] Although Seoul is officially a special city (teukbyeol-si) and not one of the nine provinces (do), it is categorized as a separate region in this survey. Among them, Chungcheong, Gyeongsang and Jeolla are divided into north and south provinces.

[3] The reasons for excluding voting as part of political actions are twofold. First, the questions about voting are asked in a separate section in the original questionnaire, reflecting the idea that voting is a different type of political action. Each round of the surveys ask whether the respondents voted or not in the national elections in the year when the survey was conducted. In the survey taken in 2016, the question was whether the respondent voted in the 20th South Korean Legislative Election on April 13th, 2016; in 2018, it was whether the respondent voted or not for the 2018 nationwide local elections on June 13th, 2018. As this research focuses on more active forms of political action than voting, it makes sense to include only variables from the Political Action section. Second, there is a validity problem with the self-reported data on voting. In the 2016 survey, 76.2% of respondents claimed they voted in the legislative election, while the actual voting rate was only 58%. In 2018, the survey data showed 80.9% self-reported voting, compared to the actual rate of 60.2%. This significant difference suggests a high level of social desirability bias (Nederhof, 1985) among Korean respondents regarding whether they voted, possibly due to the perception of voting as a civic duty. Therefore, adding the voting items to the index is not meaningful. Nonetheless, I included the voting question in the dependent variable index and tested the models in the Appendix, but the results did not show distinguishable differences.

research that has employed similar methods to operationalize political participation, recognizing it as a multidimensional construct (Gruszczynski et al., 2013). The first principal component (PC1) accounted for approximately 52% of the total variance, making it the dominant factor summarizing shared variability across the indicators.[4] Given its strong explanatory power and the relatively uniform contributions of the original variables, I constructed an index using PC1 scores, *Weighted Participation Index*, based on their principal component scores (Jolliffe, 2002).

Unlike conventional composite indices that assume equal weighting, PCA assigns optimal weights based on the variance captured by each component (Vyas and Kumaranayake, 2006). I standardized the values of all input variables (mean = 0, SD = 1) to ensure comparability, then computed the index as a weighted sum of these standardized variables using the PC1 loadings as weights (Filmer and Pritchett, 2001). Importantly, the resulting index retains its PCA-derived variance, rather than being further standardized. This allows the index to reflect the true scale of variation in the underlying construct, aligning with the eigenvalue structure of PC1 (Kolenikov and Angeles, 2009). The final index was then used as the dependent variable in my models to assess its relationship with national pride contingent on regional variances.

As a robustness check, I also constructed an alternative measure using a simple sum of political activities an individual has participated in, *Number of Participated Activities*. This measure collapses the original four-category scale into a binary classification where participation is coded as 1 = have participated, 0 = have not participated. Unlike the PCA-derived index, which captures the latent structure and relative intensity of participation, this simple sum provides a more direct count-based operationalization of political participation (Leighley and Vedlitz, 1999), ensuring that the results are not driven by the weighting scheme of PCA. The correlation between the PCA-based index and the summed participation measure is 0.8771 with the level of p-value less than 0.001, confirming that both approaches capture similar underlying patterns of political engagement. The results from the models using this alternative measure are highly consistent with those obtained using the PCA-based index, further reinforcing the robustness of the findings. Full model estimates

[4] A more detailed description of the PCA results is available in Appendix.

for this robustness check are provided in the Appendix for reference.

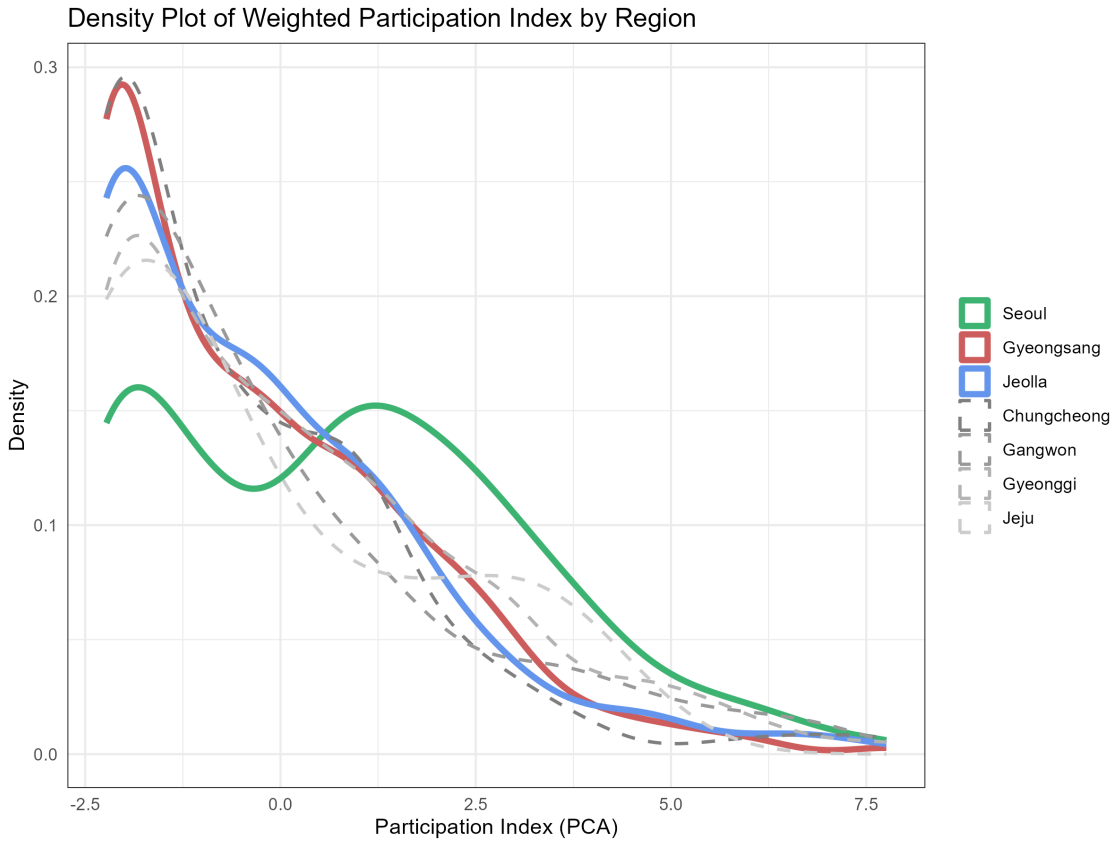

Figure 3.1 Weighted Participation Index Distribution by Region

Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 present the regional variation in the dependent variable, the Weighted Participation Index. Figure 3.1 illustrates the density distributions of the index across seven regions. The distributions are generally right-skewed, indicating a trend of low political participation. However, Seoul exhibits a notably different pattern: its density curve is shifted further to the right compared to other regions, suggesting a higher level of political engagement. In contrast, Gyeongsang and Jeolla display similar distributions centered around lower participation scores, with all the other regions except Seoul.

Figure 3.2 complements this observation by displaying the regional means and confidence intervals of the *Weighted Participation Index*. Seoul's mean participation score is significantly higher than those of all other regions. While Gyeongsang and Jeolla show lower average levels of participation compared to Seoul, their means are not significantly different from other non-capital regions.

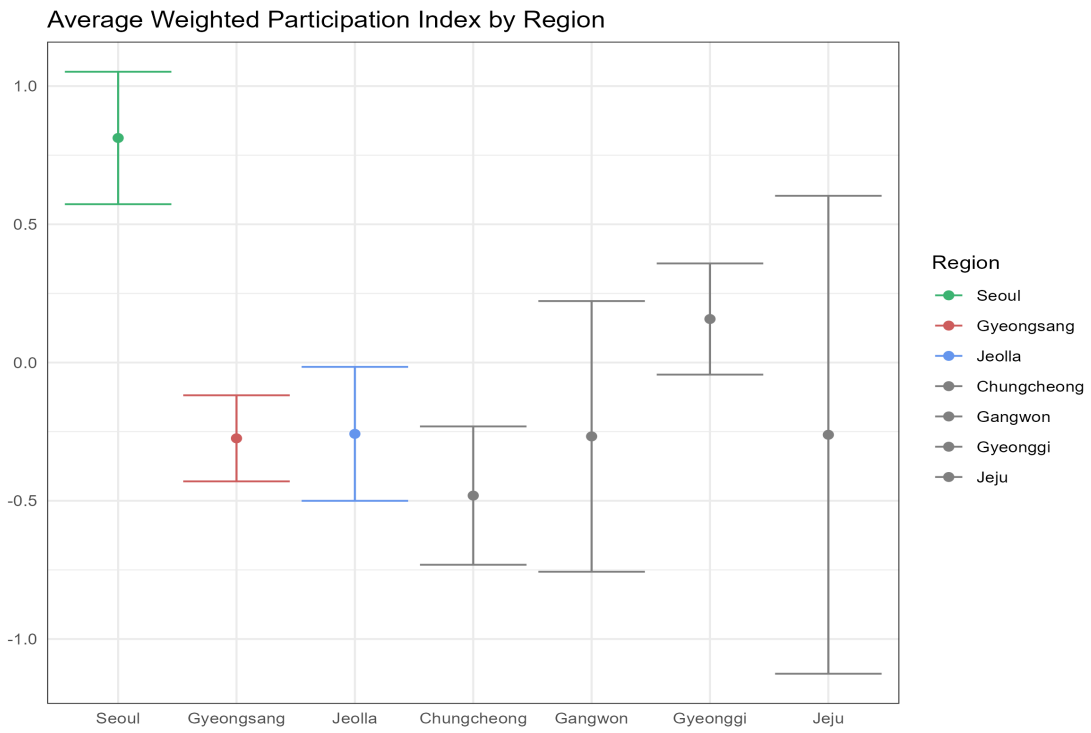

Figure 3.2 Average Weighted Participation Index by Region

These patterns indicate that although regional identities and political ideologies vary across South Korea, actual political participation remains generally low outside the capital.

3.4.2 Independent Variable

The main explanatory variable, national pride, is the self-reported answer to the question, "How proud are you of being South Korean (KRP)?" Originally, the 4-scale answers were: "very proud (1)," "somewhat proud (2)," "not very proud (3)," and "not proud at all (4)." I again recoded the variable in reverse so that 4 represents the highest level of pride, treating the variable as continuous in subsequent models.

Prior research has typically treated national pride as a singular variable influencing political attitudes and behaviors. However, its effects may diverge significantly across different national and cultural contexts. In this study, national pride is not assumed to represent a uniform emotional state, but rather a contextually contingent sentiment—even within a single country—shaped by the interplay of personal history, regional experience, and political worldview. Accordingly, the interpretation of this variable is grounded in a theoretical framework that views national pride not as

a singular affect but as a politically embedded emotion with multiple meanings. This conceptual ambiguity implies that similar responses may carry different meanings, especially in contexts like South Korea, where regional identities are deeply politicized. The operationalization of national pride, therefore, demands caution and a sensitivity to its varied interpretations.

In the South Korean context, for example, identical levels of self-reported pride may reflect divergent meanings depending on individuals' regional and ideological positions. A high level of national pride might express affirmation and loyalty in historically dominant regions, while in marginalized areas, it may represent a more ambivalent or even defiant stance. Conversely, lower levels of pride may indicate political apathy in some cases, but in others, they may signal dissatisfaction or a resistant form of engagement.

Figure 3.3 Distribution of Korean National Pride by Region

Figure 3.3 presents the regional distribution of national pride, which appears surprisingly similar across regions at first glance. In most regions, the majority of respondents report being "some-

what proud," followed by "very proud." However, Seoul stands out in several ways. While 55% of Seoul respondents are "somewhat proud," only 25% report being "very proud"—a lower proportion than in both Gyeongsang (34%) and Jeolla (33%). More strikingly, the proportion of Seoul respondents who answered 'not proud at all' is nearly 3 times higher (2.4%) than that of Gyeongsang (0.8%) or Jeolla (1.8%).

In contrast, Gyeongsang and Jeolla—despite their sharply divergent political orientations and historical narratives—show nearly identical patterns: around 48% "somewhat proud" and 34% "very proud," with minimal proportions reporting low national pride. While these descriptive patterns suggest that the overall level of reported national pride is similar across regions, such aggregated measures may mask deeper differences in the emotional and political meanings attached to national pride, especially in politically complex urban centers like Seoul.

The second explanatory variable, *Political Ideology*, is measured on a five-point scale from "very liberal (1)" to "very conservative (5)," capturing respondents' self-placement on the ideological spectrum. It is treated as a continuous variable in all subsequent models.

Figure 3.4 presents the regional distribution of political ideology. The data reveal noticeable, though not extreme, regional differences in ideological orientation. In Gyeongsang, 27.4% of respondents identify as "somewhat conservative" and 6.7% as "very conservative," together making it the region with the highest conservative leaning. In contrast, Jeolla displays the strongest liberal tendencies, with 10.1% of respondents identifying as "very liberal" and 38.8% as "somewhat liberal." This liberal orientation is more pronounced than in any other region.

Seoul, which serves as the baseline category in regression analyses, shows a pattern somewhat in the middle of Gyeongsang and Jeolla. While it also leans liberal—with 35.3% "somewhat liberal" and 5.2% "very liberal"—its distribution centers more on the neutral category (37.8%) than either extreme. Compared to Jeolla, Seoul exhibits less ideological polarization; compared to Gyeongsang, it is more liberal but with a smaller proportion of respondents at the conservative end (only 18.4% "somewhat conservative" and 3.3% "very conservative").

These findings indicate that regionalism in South Korea continues to manifest in subtle ide-

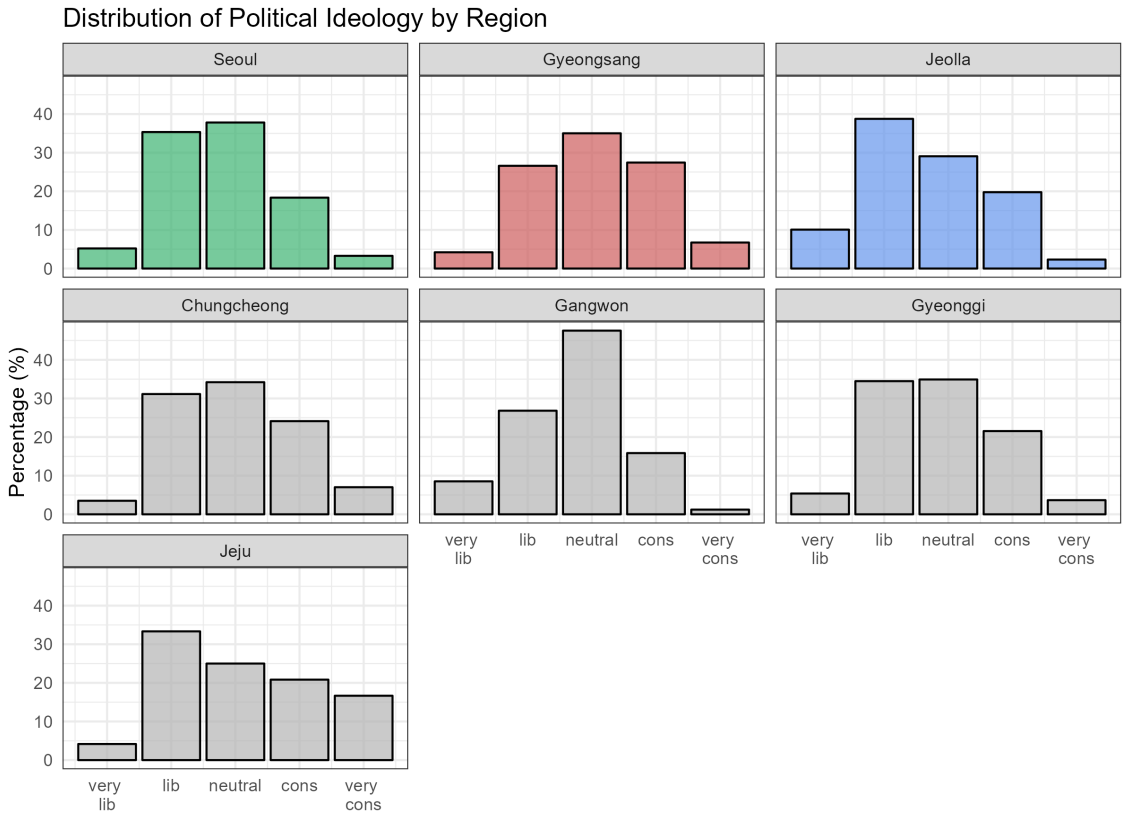

Figure 3.4 Distribution of Political Ideology by Region

ological leanings. However, the overall distribution does not suggest intense polarization: most respondents identify as "somewhat liberal," "neutral," or "somewhat conservative," rather than occupying ideological extremes. Moreover, the differences in regional ideological means, while not presented here, were not statistically significant. Nevertheless, the presence of consistent patterns —such as Gyeongsang's conservative and Jeolla's liberal orientations—suggests that political ideology may still intersect with regional identity in meaningful, if nuanced, ways.

3.4.3 Control Variables

The control variables consist of self-reported demographic information. Gender, marital status, and employment are coded as dummy variables where 1 represents female and 0 male (*Female*); 1 for those who are employed and 0 for those who are not (*Employed*); and 1 for those who are married and 0 for those who are not (*Married*). The *Age* variable represents the respondents' age at the time of the survey. *Education* and *Income* are composed of 9 and 12 levels respectively, in as-

cending order, so that higher values indicate higher education and household income levels. Based on previous research on political engagement, it is generally expected that higher socioeconomic status, represented by household income and education level, will increase the level of political participation. Conversely, since the political actions in the dependent variables require either outdoor activities (such as protests and rallies) or online activities (like posting political comments or participating in online political groups), age is anticipated to function as a deterrence factor of overall political activities in this analysis.

For the control variables concerning perception other than national pride, I included answers to questions about the assessment of the current Korean government (CURGOV) and how satisfied respondents are with the economic condition of their family (SATFIN). Although feelings of deprivation and grievances toward the national economy are related to the development of regional sentiment and national attachment, the survey data from 2016 and 2018 do not contain this question item.[5] From this limitation, I included respondents' evaluation of their personal economic status as a substitute for economic grievance. One potential concern with using this variable is a possible high correlation with the income variable, assuming it reflects their objective financial status. However, the significance and effect size of income did not decrease after including the subjective economic assessment control, as shown in the later part of the analysis. The evaluation of the current government, apart from political ideology, is included due to the characteristics of the political actions in the dependent variable—such as protests and boycotts. Since the primary purpose of these activities is often resistance, it is expected that dissatisfaction with the current government can increase participation regardless of ideological bias or regional sentiments. The satisfaction level with their economic status is coded from 1 (very satisfied) to 5 (very dissatisfied), so that higher values indicate higher levels of grievance (*Econ. Grievance*). On the other hand, evaluation of the current government is coded from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good), and I expect that the variable (*Favor Gov.*) will have a negative effect on participating in the political activities included in the dependent variable.

[5]The question about their satisfaction with the current economic state of Korea (SATECO) has been included in the KGSS survey until 2014, except in 2009 and 2010, but was removed from 2016.

The dummy variable of *Year* (when the survey rounds were conducted) was included in the models to account for potential temporal variations. However, the effect was not statistically significant, indicating that timing did not contribute meaningfully to explaining the variance in the dependent variable. As a result, while the year of the survey round was controlled for in the model, it was omitted from the presentation of the analysis results for clarity.

3.5 Analysis Results

3.5.1 Multilevel Models

To test the first set of hypotheses regarding the regional contingency of national pride, I estimate multilevel linear models with varying intercepts and slopes at the regional level. Table 3.1 shows the results of the data analysis using varying intercept and slope models at the regional level with different control variables included. In multilevel modeling, fixed effects estimate the average relationship between predictors and the outcome across the entire sample, while random effects capture how these relationships vary across higher-level units—in this case, regions. The variance components reported in the model reflect how much of the outcome variation is attributable to regional differences (intercepts) and to differences in how national pride influences political participation across regions (slopes).

The summarized results indicate that the fixed effect of Korean national pride does not appear to be significant, except when it is the sole variable in the model. The variance components of the intercept and national pride slope at the regional level in Table 3.2 are estimated to be 1.0354 and 0.0619, respectively, with the variance of residuals being 3.4608. These values suggest that more than 20 percent of the variation in political participation is explained at the regional level, indicating substantial between-region differences. However, the vast majority of this explanatory power comes from regional differences in baseline participation levels (intercepts) rather than from differences in how pride matters across regions (slopes). Therefore, the expectation that national pride would exert regionally contingent effects on participation is not supported in this model specification.

Regardless of the respondents' regions, some demographic variables show strong explanatory power in political participation. Considering the level of measurement for each variable, the largest

Table 3.1 Results of Multi-level Models

	Dependent variable:		
	Weighted Participation Index		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	-0.422^{***}	-0.089	-0.071
	(0.114)	(0.116)	(0.122)
Female		0.089	0.114
		(0.091)	(0.091)
Age		-0.018^{***}	-0.019^{***}
		(0.003)	(0.003)
Married		0.102	0.131
		(0.098)	(0.099)
Employed		0.387^{***}	0.374^{***}
		(0.095)	(0.096)
Education		0.302^{***}	0.303^{***}
		(0.038)	(0.038)
Income		0.040^{***}	0.042^{***}
		(0.009)	(0.009)
Favor Gov.			0.019
			(0.042)
Econ. Grievance			-0.053
			(0.042)
Constant	-117.285	-141.171	-133.780
	(92.886)	(88.745)	(96.915)
Observations	2,051	1,832	1,803
Log Likelihood	$-4,420.840$	$-3,766.597$	$-3,705.950$
Akaike Inf. Crit.	8,855.681	7,559.194	7,441.901
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	8,895.063	7,630.865	7,524.359

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

The survey year

Table 3.2 Variance Components of Multi-level Model (Model 3)

	VAR	SD	COR	Perc.
Region (Intercept)	1.0354	1.0175		0.2271
Region (National Pride)	0.0619	0.2489	-0.979	0.0136
Residual	3.4608	1.8603		0.7593

effect can be found in individual education level: a higher level of education substantially increases political engagement. While both employment and income levels also tend to increase political participation, the size of the coefficients is not substantial relative to the range of dependent variable. The age of the respondent tended to decrease political participation as expected, while employment increased participation. Marital status or gender of the respondent did not significantly affect political participation. Interestingly, neither the perception of the current government nor personal economic status showed significant effects on political participation, nor did they substantially affect the effects of other variables when comparing the second and third models in the table.

The different intercepts and slopes at the regional level are captured by the random effects from the multi-level model. The random effects of the model with all control variables (Model 3) are summarized in Figure 3.5 with confidence intervals at the $p < 0.05$ level. The left side shows the estimates of varying slopes and right side varying intercepts, with each regions marked on the y axis. When the confidence intervals are not crossing 0, it is considered that the region-level intercepts and slopes are statistically significant. As noted from the intervals, however, the only two regions that show a statistically significant random effect for the main independent variable of *National Pride* are Seoul and, unexpectedly Chungcheong, marginally over the significance threshold. All the other regions, including the two of interest, Gyeongsang and Jeolla, show neither slopes nor intercepts with statistical significance.

Each value of the random effects in Seoul suggests that respondents living in the capital region generally reported higher levels of political participation compared to those in other regions, as shown in the statistically significant positive value of the estimated intercept (1.42). However, the negative estimation of the slope (-0.30) indicates that their participation tends to decrease as national

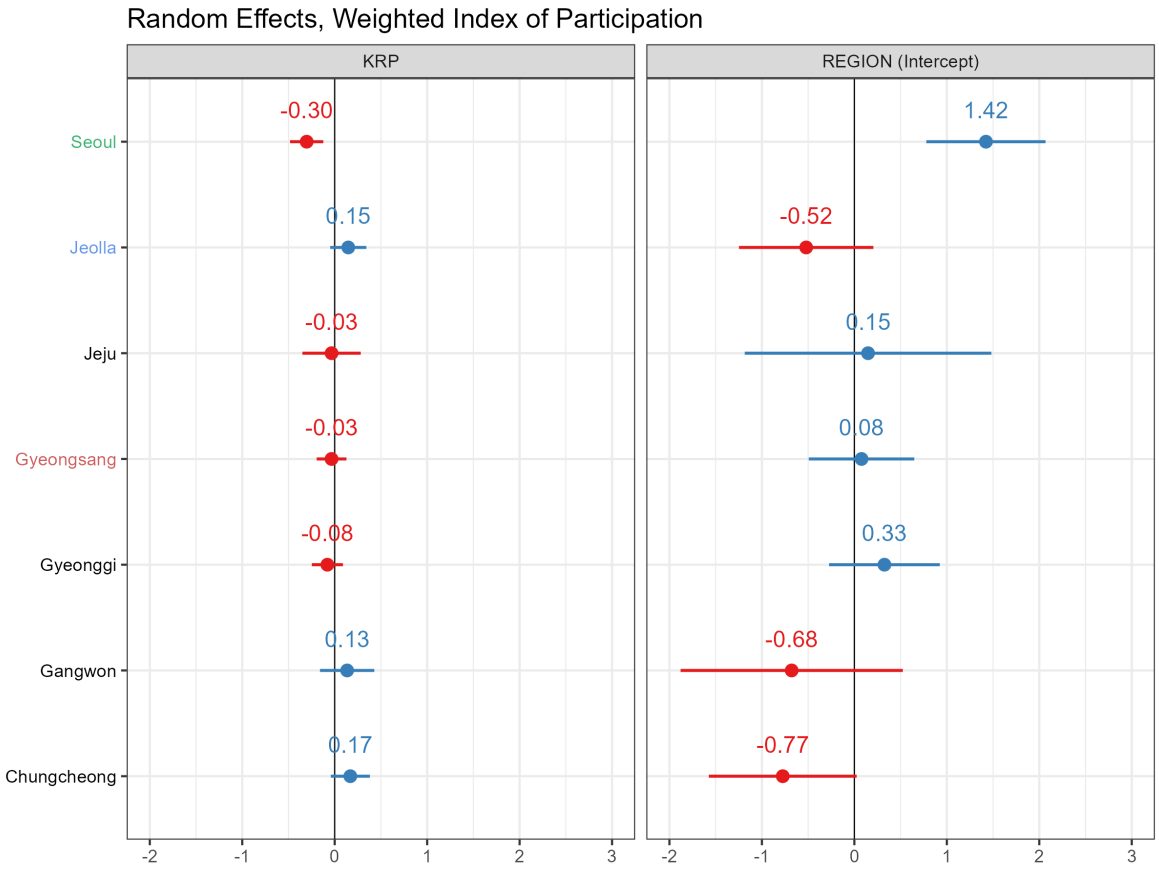

Figure 3.5 Random Effects, Intercepts and Slopes by Region

pride increases, indicating a pattern consistent with resistant political engagement. This trend may reflect the unique political environment of Seoul, where political events are more visible, accessible, and immediate. As the administrative and symbolic center of South Korea, Seoul hosts the majority of national-level protests, demonstrations, and civic actions—especially those organized by liberal and progressive groups, such as the mass impeachment rallies in 2016–2017 (Lee, 2018*b*).

Moreover, residents of Seoul may have greater exposure to political institutions, media discourse, and direct experiences with the functioning of the state, leading to a more critical and nuanced perception of national politics. In such urban and politically saturated contexts, national pride may function less as a source of loyalty and more as an indicator of one's stance toward political legitimacy. Therefore, low national pride in Seoul may be tied not to disengagement, but to a politically aware and oppositional form of participation, shaped by both proximity to political power and a culture of civic mobilization. In Chungcheong, the result is the opposite, as the intercept is

the lowest negative value, while national pride has a positive effect on political participation.

Figure 3.6 Predicted Number of Participated Activities, Multilevel Model

To better visualize the regional differences in the impacts of national pride, the prediction plot with all control variables set at their mean or median is provided in Figure 3.6. I included the three regions of research interest. The large area with the confidence intervals overlapping shows that the effect of national pride is not statistically different for the three regions. The direction of the regional effect of national pride on political participation, although insignificant, also does not follow the hypotheses–it was expected that the national pride would increase political engagement in Gyeongsang and decrease in Jeolla, but the slope for these two regions are in opposite directions. More problematically, Seoul, with the largest effect size of national pride, was expected to lack regional sentiments attributed to the low level of shared regional history and identity. In contrast, the two main regions that stand as symbols of regionalism in Korea did not show a distinguishable effect of national pride.

The analysis indicates that, while there are some observable regional differences as shown in the variance components, the hypothesized region-contingent effects of national pride on political participation are not strongly supported. Although Koreans living in Seoul generally participated in more political activities and exhibited a significant relationship between national pride and lower participation, this pattern is hard to be interpreted as a simple dismissal of regional dynamics.

In summary, while certain demographic variables, such as education level, show strong explanatory power, the role of national pride appears to be more nuanced and context-dependent than initially hypothesized. The random effects captured in the multilevel model highlight some regional variations, but they do not conclusively support the idea that national pride's influence on political participation is systematically differentiated between traditional regional strongholds like Gyeongsang and Jeolla.

3.5.2 Interaction Models

Building on the findings that regional identity alone does not strongly condition the relationship between national pride and political participation, I moved on to test the second set of hypotheses with interaction models. While the traditional regional strongholds of Gyeongsang and Jeolla did not show the expected patterns, it is possible that *Political Ideology*, which has long been intertwined with regionalism, may serve as a more direct moderator. In this alternative framework, the effect of national pride on political participation is expected to vary depending on individuals' ideological orientations rather than merely their region of residence.

Given the substantial proportion of variance attributed to regional intercepts observed in the multilevel models, I included region dummies in all subsequent models to account for baseline differences across regions, although not all coefficients are displayed in the analysis results for brevity.

In the analysis results of interaction models from Table 3.3, the coefficients for national pride, political ideology, and their interaction term are statistically significant, indicating the contingency of the two variables. Compared to the analysis results of the multilevel models, the same demographic controls of employment, education, and income levels show similar effects. On the other

Table 3.3 Results of OLS Interaction Models with Region-fixed-effects

	Dependent variable:			
	Weighterd Participation Index			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Nat. Pride (KRP)	−0.944***	−0.852***	−0.453**	−0.485***
	(0.189)	(0.187)	(0.182)	(0.184)
Pol. Ideology	−1.094***	−1.004***	−0.738***	−0.819***
	(0.206)	(0.203)	(0.197)	(0.200)
KRP*Ideology	0.176***	0.153**	0.120**	0.143**
	(0.063)	(0.062)	(0.060)	(0.060)
Female			0.068	0.089
			(0.091)	(0.092)
Age			−0.015***	−0.015***
			(0.003)	(0.003)
Employed			0.367***	0.358***
			(0.095)	(0.096)
Education			0.277***	0.281***
			(0.038)	(0.038)
Income			0.041***	0.044***
			(0.009)	(0.009)
Favor Gov.				−0.022
				(0.043)
Econ. Grievance				−0.059
				(0.043)
Seoul		1.145***	0.874***	0.857***
		(0.173)	(0.172)	(0.173)
Gyeongsang		0.243	0.266*	0.234
		(0.159)	(0.155)	(0.157)
Jeolla		0.067	0.328*	0.270
		(0.186)	(0.182)	(0.184)
Constant	23.413	14.272	−56.587	−85.352
	(94.160)	(92.982)	(90.429)	(97.921)
Observations	1,987	1,987	1,780	1,759
R^2	0.089	0.122	0.268	0.272
Adjusted R^2	0.088	0.117	0.262	0.265
Residual Std. Error	2.060	2.026	1.857	1.851
	(df = 1982)	(df = 1976)	(df = 1764)	(df = 1741)
F Statistic	48.623***	27.377***	43.082***	38.264***
	(df = 4; 1982)	(df = 10; 1976)	(df = 15; 1764)	(df = 17; 1741)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

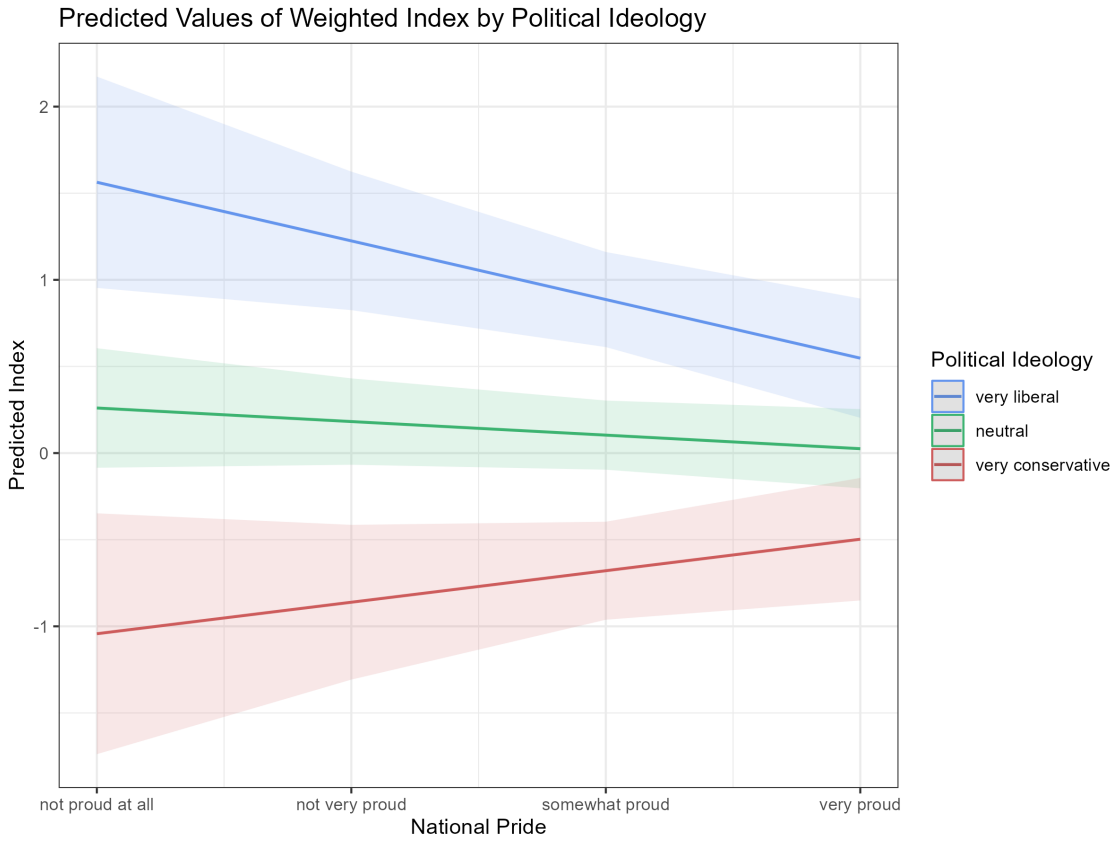

Figure 3.7 Predicted Number of Participated Activities, OLS Interaction Model

hand, the perceptional variables about the current government and economy again do not seem to have a significant effect on the decision to participate in political actions.

In the prediction plot of Figure 3.7, it can be noted that the hypothesized negative and positive mechanisms of national pride on political participation partially appear.[6] The marginal effect of national pride for very liberal respondents, marked with blue shades, is significantly negative, turning almost to no influence for those who are politically neutral. The effect becomes positive for people with conservative ideologies, as seen in the positive red slope. From this result, it can be analyzed that the effect of regionalism on national pride and political participation is partially moderated by political ideology in Korea, and the directions of the interactions are as expected from the theories. Additionally, people with liberal ideologies generally tend to engage in more political activities than conservatives. If the mechanisms driving political participation are correct, it can be

[6]To better visualize the difference, only three categories from the political ideology variable are presented in the plot. The full version without any omission is presented in the Appendix.

inferred that all the nine activities in the index are more inclined towards resistant purposes.

These patterns can be better understood within the political context of the survey years, 2016 and 2018—a period marked by the impeachment of conservative President Park Geun-hye and the subsequent election of liberal President Moon Jae-in. The transition of power not only signaled a dramatic political shift, but also reframed dominant narratives around national pride. For liberal-leaning individuals, the lack of national pride during this period may have been associated with past authoritarian rule, corruption, and the perceived failures of the conservative establishment. As such, lower levels of pride could have reinforced their oppositional political stance and fueled political mobilization. The large-scale protests for the impeachment, held every Saturday in central Seoul until the final judgment, also suggest that liberals—especially those in the capital—had more opportunities to participate during this period. Conversely, conservative respondents—whose trust in national institutions may have been shaken by the impeachment—were generally less politically active during this period. However, among those who did participate, stronger national pride may have served as a motivational resource, framing political engagement as a way to defend the nation's core values and resist perceived threats to traditional legitimacy. For these individuals, political action was not merely about supporting specific institutions, but about reaffirming their emotional attachment to an idealized vision of the nation.

The absence of significant effects among ideologically neutral individuals further highlights how national pride functions not as a universally mobilizing sentiment, but as a politically charged emotion that gains meaning through one's ideological lens. The political salience of national identity during this transitional moment likely heightened such ideological divergences, reinforcing the affective nature of political engagement in South Korea.

Overall, the findings from both the multilevel and interaction models reveal that the relationship between national pride and political participation is more nuanced rather than uniform to the individuals. While regional differences exist, they primarily influence political engagement through varying baseline levels of participation rather than through the expected moderating effects of national pride. Instead, political ideology emerges as a more significant determinant, shaping the

direction and magnitude of national pride's impact on participation. Liberals, who are generally more engaged in political activities, tend to be more so when they are not proud of their nation, whereas conservatives exhibit higher participation levels when national pride is stronger. These results suggest that political engagement in South Korea is not solely dictated by regionalism but is instead contingent upon ideological orientations.

3.6 Chapter Conclusion

National pride is often treated as a simple measure of allegiance or satisfaction with one's nation, yet it is in fact a complex emotional orientation shaped by one's historical position, ideological commitments, and perceptions of national belonging. As this chapter has argued, pride in the nation cannot be assumed to have a uniform meaning—or a uniform effect on political behavior.

The findings of this chapter indicate that national pride, as an explanatory variable for political engagement, did not yield significant effects in the regions of interest, nor did its influence on participation align with the initial hypotheses. However, the results suggest that the effect of national pride on political participation is moderated by political ideology. As expected in the alternative set of hypotheses, conservative Koreans tend to engage more actively in politics when they hold a strong sense of national pride, whereas liberals exhibit higher levels of political participation when they feel less proud of being Korean. This suggests that although national pride is measured uniformly, its impact on political mobilization is contingent upon ideological and contextual factors. These findings imply that underlying perceptions of the nation, national duty, and norms of political participation shape how individuals respond to questions about national pride and, in turn, how this sentiment translates into political action.

While this study focuses on South Korea using data from two recent surveys, the broader implications of regional contingencies in national pride and its role in shaping political engagement extend beyond this specific case. In other contexts where political ideology is divided along regional lines, similar mechanisms may be at play. For instance, the ideological division between northern and southern states in the United States presents a potential avenue for future research. Scholars have argued that symbolic or blind patriotism, referring to a form of national attachment

that emphasizes loyalty and pride without critical evaluation of government actions, tends to be more prominent among conservatives in southern states (Huddy, 2013; Schatz, Staub and Lavine, 1999; Herrmann, Isernia and Segatti, 2009). Examining how regionalism and ideological alignment interact with national pride in this context could offer insights into how different forms of national attachment motivate political behavior. Likewise, the historical division and reunification of East and West Germany may have shaped regionally distinct emotional relationships to the nation, leading to variation in how national belonging is experienced and enacted through political behavior. Prior research has shown that the influence of anomie and self-esteem on national identity differs between Eastern and Western German respondents (Blank, 2003), suggesting that regional variations in emotional attachment to the nation may translate into differing political behaviors. These emotional orientations—ranging from pride and resentment to ambivalence and nostalgia—are not static traits but are formed and reinforced through everyday interactions with the state, society, and historical memory. This suggests that, as in the Korean case, national sentiment is best understood as an evolving product of lived experience rather than as a fixed or universal attachment.

While this chapter only partially confirms the proposed hypotheses, it raises important questions about the relationship between national pride and political participation, as well as the broader interplay between regional identity, political ideology, and national sentiment. This research contributes to ongoing discussions on how affective attachment to the nation can function as both a motivating and demotivating factor in political engagement and how these dynamics vary across different regional and ideological contexts. While the statistical findings offer valuable insights, they also underscore the methodological limitations of survey-based approaches in capturing the nuanced and multifaceted meanings of national identity. National pride, as a standardized survey item, may conceal divergent interpretations and emotional attachments shaped by context, ideology, and lived experience.

One key limitation of this chapter, which also points to a direction for the methodology in later chapters, lies in its reliance on statistical inference. While multilevel models suggest that political ideology moderates the relationship between national pride and political participation, they can-

not fully resolve issues of endogeneity or causal direction—particularly when dealing with deeply embedded emotional constructs. National pride, as argued throughout this chapter, is not just a cognitive position but an affective stance shaped by lived experience. Quantitative surveys, though valuable for detecting patterns, often miss the nuanced meanings behind political behavior, national attachment, and emotional positioning. Moreover, the direction of causality remains ambiguous. While this study posits that individuals' ideological orientations may be shaped by formative regional experiences, the reverse may also be true—ideological predispositions could influence patterns of internal migration or residential choice. These alternative explanations cannot be fully accounted for within the current statistical framework, further highlighting the need for complementary qualitative methods in later chapters.

To capture how individuals interpret, resist, or embrace the idea of the nation in their everyday lives, qualitative methods—such as in-depth interviews or ethnographic observation—would also offer richer insight. As seen in prior research on contentious or insurgent politics (Wilkinson, 2006; Wood and Jean, 2003), such methods reveal how emotions and moral judgments animate political action. On another hand, future research could benefit from longitudinal panel data as well, which can trace how national sentiment and political behavior evolve over time.

To address these limitations and further unpack how nationalism is constructed and expressed in everyday life, the next chapter turns to the analysis of lively online discourse of nationalism. By examining user-generated comments on South Korean platforms during the 2022 World Cup, it explores how the nation is narrated, invoked, and contested in real time. In particular, it investigates how international sporting events activate latent national sentiments and clarify the boundaries of ingroup and outgroup identities. Through computational text analysis, this chapter aims to reveal how everyday expressions of nationalism take shape within digital environments, and how collective identity becomes visible through spontaneous, affective, and contextually grounded reactions to global events.

CHAPTER 4

EVERYDAY NATIONALISM UNLEASHED ONLINE

4.1 Chapter Introduction

On July 8, 2022, former Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo faced an attempted assassination in broad daylight on a street during an election campaign. The incident rapidly became breaking news on Korean online networks, disseminating alongside an unedited video of the shooting scene. Within an hour, two GIF files ignited active discussions on Korean internet forums. One of the GIFs was the newest video of Abe's guards failing to protect him after the initial gunshot. The other, similar but several years old, was a scene of Korean guards blocking a glass bottle thrown at the Korean former President Park Gunhye. The dominant reactions to this purposedly crafted comparison were praise for the Korean guards and blame on Japan. Numerous comments included surprise at the perceived inadequacy of "Japan" in protecting a prominent politician, juxtaposed with laudatory sentiments for "Korea" as an exemplary defense against a threat. This single anecdote demonstrates two main aspects of everyday nationalism in current South Korea. First, everyday nationalism is actively reflected and reproduced in Korean online spaces, emerging as a potent source of public opinion. Second, the Korean public internalizes the superiority of their group compared to their perceived "other," Japan.

Studies of everyday nationalism highlight the pivotal role of the ordinary public, relatively untethered from state propaganda, in shaping the concept of nation and nation-ness. The theory asserts that the source of feeling nationhood and national solidarity exists in everyday life as a set of visible signals and routinized practices (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008; Goode, 2020). Those national signals or symbols often go unnoticed, subtly influencing individuals' perceptions about their own and other nations. Depending on the temporal, spatial, and situational context, these symbols can gain significance, contributing to reinforcement of the nation as a fundamental aspect of one's identity (Fox and Van Ginderachter, 2018).

International sports events are one of the major stimuli of everyday nationalism for the ordinary public in a globalized world (Bairner, 2001; Mylonas and Tudor, 2021; Arnold, 2021). Sporting

Mega Events (SMEs), such as the World Cup or Olympics, provoke a strong perception of nation and nationalism in the publics who watch them and cheer for their national teams. While numerous studies have confirmed that SMEs reinforce everyday nationalism by highlighting athletes representing their nations and emphasizing the distinction between "us" and "them," less attention has been paid to how the public generates and interprets this nationalism. What do people think and discuss when they observe the athletic performance of their own and other nations? Are the meanings and expressions of nationalism created by the public different from those generated by political elites or other sources? How are these messages created and disseminated during such events through the everyday interactions of ordinary people? Traditional measures of everyday nationalism fail to completely capture how the nation is insinuated in the actual "everyday" lives of the public (Fox and Van Ginderachter, 2018). Furthermore, although the concept of everyday nationalism allows a collective identity and perception of their nation, everyday nationalism has been mostly measured at the individual level through survey responses, interviews (Nedelsky, 2023), or research subjects' behaviors in experiments (Edensor and Sumartojo, 2018), rather than through collective or group-level discourse.

This chapter examines everyday nationalism as it unfolds in Korean online spaces during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. Using a large-scale collection of user-generated comments from a major Korean online community, I analyze how national pride and outgroup hostility are expressed and circulated at moments of heightened emotional salience. While Korea and Japan did not face each other directly in the tournament, Japanese matches attracted significant attention and sparked hostile reactions among Korean netizens. Participants actively produced spontaneous comments, memes, and slang expressions to both celebrate Korean achievements and ridicule Japan's outcomes, reflecting and reinforcing the long-standing rivalry between the two nations. These observations demonstrate how digital spaces serve as key sites for the production and performance of everyday nationalism, offering a vivid window into the emotional and discursive dimensions of national identity.

The chapter begins with reviews of existing studies on everyday nationalism, especially re-

garding the relationship between sports and nationalism. I then introduce contextual background on nationalism in Korea, historical tensions with Japan, and the role of political activity in online communities. The description of text data scraped from a Korean community website and the topic model analysis results follow. The analysis shows that there are clear statistical differences in the groups of words used to describe the national ingroup and outgroups by Korean users, with distinct patterns of praise and derogation. This finding is significant as it reflects how everyday nationalism is reproduced by ordinary public through subtle, routine linguistic distinctions. In particular, the consistent depiction of Japan as a distinct outgroup suggests that national identity is deeply internalized and expressed with salience in specific contexts like international sports. I conclude the chapter by discussing the implications of these findings as a tangible observation of ongoing everyday nationalism.

4.2 Everyday Nationalism and Sports

In this dissertation, I employ nationalism as a broad combination of individual consciousness of belonging to a nation as a social and cultural group (often referred to as national identity), and their affection for that group (including national pride). Everyday nationalism, based on this definition, finds the roots and expressions of individual 's nationalism in the daily routines and mundane practices (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2019; Goode and Stroup, 2015; Knott, 2015). As everyday nationalism lies at the individual level of identity, it responds to different situations, stimuli, and personalities (Burke, 2003). Multiple identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, and nationality get mobilized and silenced in different contexts, and affect different behaviors (Smith, 2013). However, there are some cases where it is salient to observe everyday nationalism collectively. This is the reason why we focus on major sporting events like the World Cup and the Olympics—where nations directly compete—which can mobilize the everyday nationalism of the ordinary public who watch the games, cheer for their national teams, and express their sentiments.

International sports games between nation-states have been the playground of not only the sports players but also of everyday nationalism. Especially during Sporting Mega Events (SMEs) where the representatives of nation-states compete with other nation-states, the preponderance of national

flags, official names of other nations, national anthems, and chants all represent the everyday symbols of a nation's existence (Goode, Stroup and Gaufman, 2022; Van Hilvoorde, Elling and Stokvis, 2010). One notable characteristic of sports events is their easy access. The early remarks of Hobsbawm (1992, p. 143) resonate with the role of sports in creating a collective space to create and diffuse nationalism, as they let "even the least political or public individuals [can] identify with the nation." From the entries of the competitors, people reconfirm their worldview that nations exist as the unit of this global event and make a clear distinction between where they belong vis-a-vis the "other."

Sports tournaments put the relationship of us and others as direct competitors. With these rivalries with other countries, international sports games infuse the image of nations to the ordinary public, and the people reconfirm their national identity (Bertoli, 2017; Lee, Lee and Yang, 2018; Bertoli and Yin, 2022; Van Hilvoorde, Elling and Stokvis, 2010). The black-and-white distinction of winners and losers and simple scoring systems also make it easier to evaluate which nation is superior to others (Watson, 2017). That is why and how an international soccer event aimed to promote community spirit in the European Union ended up strengthening nationalism in each participating country (Hargreaves, 2002), and the World Cup qualification games sometimes ignite interstate aggression and conflicts (Bertoli, 2017).

Studies of sports nationalism argue that people consume and absorb nationalism via media broadcasts, to identify the self with the nation (Billings et al., 2013; Billings, Devlin and Brown, 2016). However, the introduction of the internet has resulted in everyday nationalism which enables both public consumption and production of nationalism during sporting events. The development of the internet has been frequently associated with the return of nationalism or the rise of new nationalism (Eriksen, 2007; Mihelj and Jiménez-Martínez, 2021). Some studies focus on how media and internet spaces can be strategic means for right-wing or populist parties and leaders to spread their nationalistic rhetoric more easily (Caiani and Parenti, 2009; Guo, 2018; Udupa, 2019; Waisbord and Amado, 2017), while others analyze the public production and reaction to those messages. The active contribution of people in the production and consumption of online nationalism has been

highlighted in some specific cases such as the electoral victory of Donald Trump (Kreis, 2017) and Brexit (Norris and Inglehart, 2019). Lim (2017) also demonstrates how tribal nationalism in Indonesia, the nationalism based on the exclusion of certain ethnic and religious tribes, has grown quickly through online social media to influence actual election results.

During and after sporting events, people can and do freely and voluntarily share information, react, and display sentiments about their own and other nations on the internet. The online space is a large and easy platform on which to produce nationalistic messages for the ordinary public. There are numerous real-time threads, web pages, highlight video clips, and social network posts where large numbers of people normally gather and express their ideas for everyone to read. From these group discourses, we can observe how everyday nationalism is being consumed and produced at the collective level. It does not remain at the level of individual self-identification but moves forward to the collective social identity, which has not been underlined enough in everyday nationalism studies. This emerging phenomenon with abundant data directly produced by the public is where sports permeate everyday nationalism in the most expressive formats, which is the focus of this chapter, and largely of the current studies of nationalism.

Korean nationalism tends to be exceedingly aggressive and extreme during international sports games, especially when those events are related to Japan (Oh, 2015; Lee, Lee and Yang, 2019). Regardless of the fields of sports, it is widely accepted in Korea that any match against Japan should never be lost, not only for the people watching the games but also for the players and coaches. One Korean coach in the national youth soccer team claimed that "We can never allow the Japanese flag to be held upon our national flag," evoking the symbols of the two different nations (Lee, 2018*a*). The Korean public also devote a large amount of attention to when their national team is in a match with Japanese teams.

In the context of Korean nationalism, soccer (or football) holds a special significance. Korea's first qualification for the World Cup occurred in 1954 in Switzerland, just nine years after gaining independence, by defeating Japan in the preliminary group (Kuk, 2021). Although not everyone may recall this history, Korea and Japan have often been the only two Asian countries to qual-

ify for the World Cup, fueling a rivalry between them despite differences in FIFA rankings. The Guardian even listed the rivalry between South Korea and Japan as one of the world's 10 greatest international football rivalries for this reason based on this historical national animosity among the public (Miller and Ames, 2014). Additionally, while soccer is popular in both countries, it is more strongly perceived as a national sport in Korea, especially since 2002. When Korea and Japan co-hosted the 2002 World Cup, street cheering became a common occurrence during the Korean national team's games. During these events, tens of thousands of people gathered in open streets and squares, dressed in matching red attire, and collectively chanted "Republic of Korea (Daehanminkuk)," fostering a powerful sense of sports nationalism and common identity (Kim and Lee, 2012).

4.3 Theory and Hypotheses

Korean online communities, while not globally known like Twitter or TikTok due to the language barrier, are widely used platforms that play a central role in shaping public opinion in South Korea. These communities, such as DC Inside, FM Korea, and TheQoo, host a massive volume of user-generated content covering all aspects of Korean society—from politics and entertainment to everyday life. According to an unofficial website tracking online community traffic[1], the largest platform, DC Inside, recorded over 230 million visits in July 2024, and all of the top six sites had over 40 million visitors each. The content from these communities often becomes the basis of news articles, television segments, and even political campaigns or fundraising movements. As a result, politicians and journalists closely monitor these spaces to gauge public opinion, and political parties openly admit to tracking them regularly (Hong and Lee, 2021).

Based on the theory of everyday nationalism and sports, I suggest the theory that nationalism at the public level is expressed actively in online spaces, particularly during occasional events that sharpen the boundary between ingroup and outgroup. The "No Japan" movement mentioned in Chapter 2—a nationalistic boycott that manifested strong outgroup animosity in everyday practices

[1]The traffic reports of those communities are found on the website https://todaybeststory.com. It explains the purpose of the page is to track the number of visitors, page views, post views, posts with high attention, and comments for the largest online communities in Korea. The traffic source on the reports is https://www.similarweb.com/

—was also rooted in the online space. A web developer created the "No Japan" website, which provided information on Japanese products, how to recognize their barcodes, and alternative Korean brands (Ko and Choi, 2022). Users accessed the site and shared it across their social networks, effectively producing and consuming everyday nationalism at the same time (Cha, 2019). Others posted photos of people buying clothes from Uniqlo or driving Japanese cars, describing them as national traitors who sold out their country for personal gain (Song, 2019). Similarly, Korean online communities were instrumental in organizing protests against the import of US beef and the impeachment of a former president (Hwang and Willis, 2020).

On the other hand, this chapter anticipates a substantial manifestation of everyday nationalism during a recent Sporting Mega Event (SME). I investigate how ingroup love and outgroup hatred shape and propagate nationalism on a public level. Drawing from prior research, the hypotheses posit that attitudes and messages toward the national team, irrespective of game outcomes, will lean predominantly positive. Even in the event of a loss, those gathered to watch and cheer for the team are expected to foster a stronger sense of belonging without expressing significant blame or animosity towards the ingroup. Conversely, attitudes towards the outgroup, Japan, are predicted to be overwhelmingly negative, again irrespective of game results. Sports competitions crystallize divisions between nation-states, providing a platform to accentuate these distinctions and fuel outgroup animosity, serving to reaffirm ingroup solidarity. On the contrary, I suggest that the emotional reaction toward other countries will be nuanced or rather neutral. As previously theorized, international sports competition serves as a domain for everyday nationalism among the public, but it does not create blind hostility toward other nations. Instead, it provides an opportunity that their latent perception toward the rival or enemy nations to be ignited in comparison with themselves and others.

I focus on the case of the 2022 World Cup held in Qatar. A notable aspect of this recent international Sporting Mega Event was that the two countries, Korea and Japan, were not in the same block for the top 32 and did not directly compete in any match, which means that there is no reason for them to be considered as a direct outgroup of their nation. Regardless, I assume that the underlying

outgroup perception of Koreans would be strengthened by the event and be expressed in the online communities where people voluntarily gather to watch and comment on the games. I predict that negative sentiments will be directed toward Japan even without a single game, rather than the other nations that the Korean national team faced in the tournament. Thus, selecting the 2022 World Cup allows us to study the underlying public-level nationalism of Koreans, highlighting the different reactions toward Japan and other nations. I propose the following hypotheses:

H4.1: Sporting Mega Events (SMEs) will enhance positive bias toward the national ingroup.

H4.2: SMEs will intensify hostile bias toward the outgroups that have historically been perceived as adversaries by the nation.

H4.3: SMEs will not significantly influence bias toward outgroups that have not previously been targeted as hostile.

To test the hypotheses, this chapter combines quantitative and qualitative analysis of Korean online text data. Using natural language processing techniques, I identify statistical differences in language use between references to national ingroups and outgroups. This method offers a new way to measure everyday nationalism by capturing linguistic patterns in a systematic and replicable manner, contributing to a better understanding of national sentiments in digital spaces. I also present selected excerpts of raw user comments to provide contextual depth and illustrate how everyday nationalism is expressed across different national targets.

4.4 Data Collection

The dataset used for the primary analysis comprises comment sections from World Cup-related posts on the "Square" board within the Korean online community, "theqoo." The name of the website, derived from the Korean slang equivalent to the Japanese term "otaku," initially catered to diverse fandoms, evolving into the third-largest online community in Korea according to an unofficial index of content consumption.[2] Unfortunately, there is no official information disclosed about

[2]The various indices about Korean online communities for the latest months can be found at https://todaybeststory.com/ranking_monthly.html/ (last accessed at 08/10/2024) According to the website, the content consumption index is a composite measure that includes community activation level, concentration level, and traffic. In July 2024, "theqoo" recorded over 52 million visitors, generated 3,711 hot posts, and accumulated approximately 130 million views along with 1.1 million comments.

demographics of the online community "theqoo" aside from a brief acknowledgment from the website's owner that the majority of its users are female (Kim and Cho, 2022*b*). However, numerous unofficial data sources and public perception indicate that "theqoo" is currently the largest, most representative female online community in Korea. In a series of feature articles by Weekly Chosun —based on public surveys and analytic reports—covering the top 16 Korean online communities, "theqoo" is prominently featured, along with three other communities, as a key platform for shaping public opinion on pop culture, Korean idol groups, and trends in fashion and beauty frequented by a female audience (Kim and Cho, 2022*b*). Another article links "theqoo" with descriptors such as "liberal," "20s," and "female," with survey results on social issues such as feminism, political ideology, and sexual minorities among "theqoo" users aligning with other well-known female-oriented websites (Kim and Cho, 2022*a*). Another traffic tracking website, Rankify, reported that "theqoo" is the most influential website and has a public preference index that is highly skewed toward women, with 95% of its users being female, and that it is primarily viewed by younger generations, with 41% in their 20s and 32% in their 30s (Seo, 2024). However, while user accounts are mandatory for posting or commenting in most Korean online communities,[3] they allow the users to hide their identity. Unexceptionally, "theqoo" requires all users to remain anonymous so that every user of the posts and comments is marked as "anonymous theqoo" and no demographic information is disclosed in the user history.

The website has hundreds of separate boards called "Talk" or "Room" (e.g., boards discussing Korean idols only are called "K-dol Talk"), with "Square" being the board where the most general issues are contained. The posts on "Square" garnering over 3,000 views and 80 comments (as measured in 2023 January) are categorized as "Hot" posts, and they usually receive more than 10,000 views and 100 comments after surpassing the threshold. Because they can be easily filtered to see only such posts, the "Hot" posts easily attract more views and comments. Approximately 100 posts attain "Hot" status daily, serving as significant sources of online public opinion, and helping

[3] An exception is the largest Korean community, "DC inside." It is known to have more than 20,000 "galleries" for users to discuss different topics, and they are controlled by separate "managers" for each gallery. Most of the "galleries" are open to anyone without an account to read and write posts and comments, while some minor "galleries" are hidden from public access.

to set the social agenda.

For the current study, I scraped the "Hot" posts in "Square" from the "theqoo" website during the period including one week before the 2022 World Cup opening ceremony (November 20, 2022) to one week after the closing ceremony (December 18, 2022). The data was scraped from the website from February 12 to 17, 2022.[4] These posts were manually filtered to include only topics relevant to the World Cup, encompassing scores, game results, information about star players, and related issues such as gender dynamics with Iranian players, updates about sportscasters or coaches, and social issues in Qatar. The broad meaning of the "World Cup-related" is based on the idea that those issues surfaced due to the World Cup games.

The biggest strength of this dataset lies in its exclusive reliance on voluntary public engagement. Participants within the online community autonomously raised the discourse concerning the ongoing international sports competition, actively interacting with posts related to the World Cup and independently expressing their viewpoints through comments during the specified timeframe. Notably, the substance and focus of the data originate from the general populace without governmental influence. Furthermore, the dataset remains unmarred by researcher intervention, distinguishing itself from prior studies that employ techniques such as priming, experiments, or surveys. As a measure of everyday nationalism, this publicly generated dataset inherently mirrors the concept.

While it is impossible to entirely rule out the possibility of governmental influence in shaping public opinion within this online community, the risk seems minimal in this context. In Korea, there has been a documented case where the government used the National Intelligence Service (KNIS) to post political comments under community posts and news articles to influence public opinion during the 2012 presidential election (Han, 2016; Kim, 2014). Additionally, many consumer-oriented companies use these websites for viral marketing, with comments disguised as ordinary users swaying public perception (Yum, Kim and Jeong, 2020). However, public opinion about the Korean team

[4]The website owner reported experiencing DDOS attacks and hacking attempts between April and June 2023, and launched a renewed version of the site in June. Although some content was restored, many posts and comments from the "Hot" section of the "Square" board were deleted (Lee, 2023)

during 2022 World Cup is generally unrelated to political issues, not directly linked to any government performance—unlike cases where a nation hosts sporting events (Kavetsos, 2012). Therefore, I argue that the posts and comments in this dataset are largely independent of external influences such as government or researcher intervention, and genuinely reflect the public's reactions, driven by everyday nationalism.

The primary unit of analysis for this study is the comments, not the post contents. This decision rests on two key considerations. First, I found a relative scarcity of textual data in the contents of the World-Cup-related posts. For example, many posts featured titles like "Country X 0:2 Country Y" or "Player Z just scored!" without additional written content. In other cases, the posts contained screenshots, GIFs, and videos from the games, sometimes including text only inside those images or videos that current programs and codes cannot fully scrape. In either case, the availability of text as data in the content of the posts on online communities is very limited compared to text data such as law articles or speech scripts. Second, even when text is present, it frequently lacks the depth of sentiment required for analysis. As seen in the examples cited above, many posts simply deliver the latest game update. Although the writer of the post might have brought up that issue from either excitement or disappointment, it does not appear as text in the contents. Comments, on the other hand, are rich in textual expressions, providing a valuable resource for exploring ideas, perceptions, and feelings concerning ingroups and outgroups. For these two reasons, I selected comments, not the body contents of the posts as the main database.

The data were further categorized based on the primary topical nation, namely Korea (KOR), Japan (JPN), and all other countries (OHTER). This categorization was achieved through direct mentions or reactions within the comments. For instance, there are always two nations involved in one soccer game, but the community users tend to respond to only one side in one post. For this reason, the games between Korea and other countries are mostly categorized as KOR when people cheered for Korea, and the same rule was applied to Japan. Another example is a post about how a Japanese TV program evaluated Korean players in the previous games. Even though the post itself mostly discussed how Korean players were doing, I categorized it as JPN because almost

all the comments below the post blamed the Japanese program, people, and players. This manual categorization aligns with the dominant focus of the online community on Korean games, players, and coaches, and the majority of the World Cup data falls under the KOR category.

I also subject the data to extensive pre-processing before the analysis. I excluded deleted comments and consolidated a random selection of 50 comments per post into a single text string. I used various Python packages to conduct the pre-processing, starting with spacing correction, lemmatization, and stemming by the "Okt" source from the "KoNLpy" package. After stemming, I removed stopwords based on the "iso" stopwords list, and common adverbs such as "really," or "too." I supplemented this with additional packages including Josa[5] in the Korean language. Importantly, symbols, English alphabets, and numbers were deliberately retained, as they encapsulated a substantial portion of emotional reactions, including those expressed through facial expressions like emojis. For the robustness checks, I conducted the pre-processing using a different package of the Korean natural language process, "soynlp" with some parts of the comments edited manually for more precise processing of the new words. While the use of a different package did change some expressions, the main findings were unaffected. The ensuing data analysis results are presented in the coming section.

4.5 Analysis Results

4.5.1 Descriptive Results

Figure 4.1 describes the distribution of all the "Hot" posts written in the given period of the 2022 World Cup. After eliminating deleted posts, a total of 711 World Cup-related "Hot" posts remained, with 52 focusing on Japan. While this number may seem modest, considering that Korea and Japan were not in the same block, it is noteworthy, given the substantial views and comments garnered.

The high attention to Japan in the Korean online community becomes starker when looking at the number of comments and views (Figure 4.2). The posts that contained reactions toward

[5]In the Korean language, josa are grammatical particles that follow nouns to indicate case, topic, or other syntactic roles (e.g., subject, object, or direction). They are often attached at the end of a word and do not exist in English.

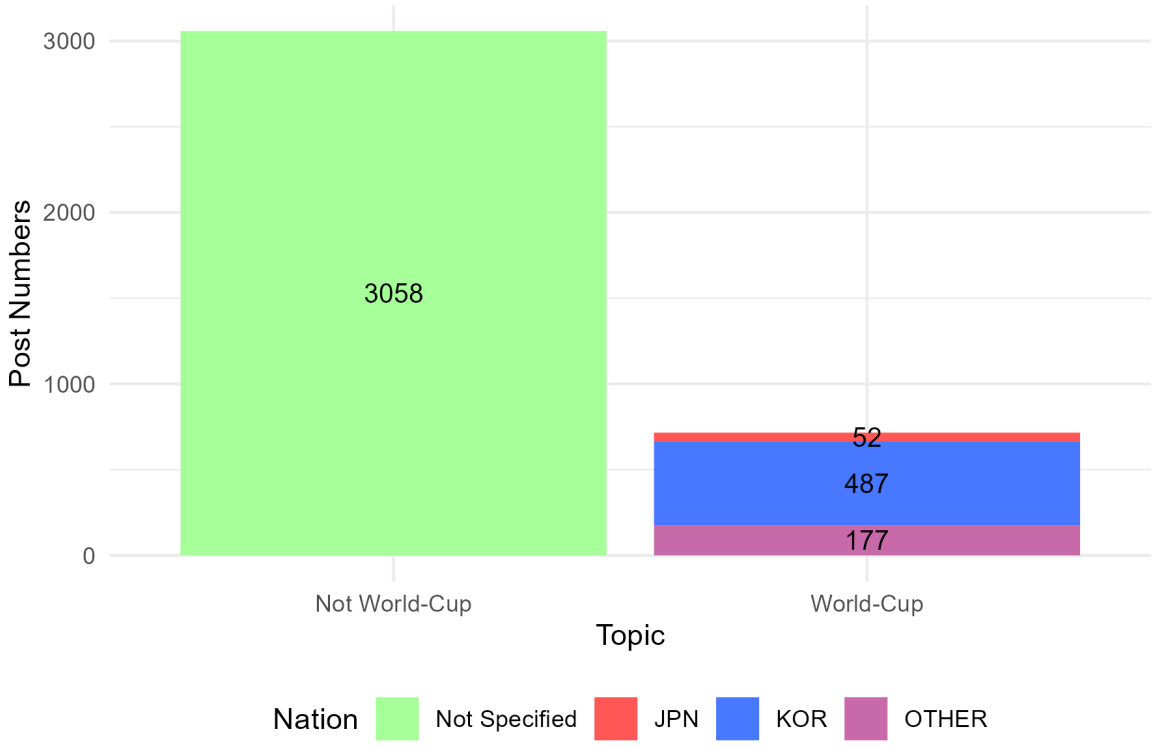

Figure 4.1 Number of "Hot" Posts During the World Cup Period

Japan had 431 comments on average, significantly higher than Korea (353) and Other (349) at the statistical level of $p < 0.05$. The average number of views of the posts was highest for the Other category (80,965) followed by Korea (75,202) and Japan (69,658). The results show an interesting trend that the Korean users of the online community click on posts about Japan less than the others, while not statistically significant, but leave their opinions more often. Even before the analysis of the actual comments, we can find that the Korea public was reactive to Japan during the 2022 World Cup.

The interest in Japan continued throughout the World Cup period, fluctuating by the game schedules (Figure 4.3). The dashed vertical line in red marks the date when Japan competed with other countries, while the dotted line in blue indicates Korean games. As confirmed from the separate lines, Korea and Japan, the two Asian rivals, were placed in different groups and did not face each other until the conclusion of the 2022 World Cup.[6] South Korea belonged to Group H alongside

[6]Except the 4th lines which mark the top 16 competitions of Korea against Brazil and Japan against Croatia, after the 3 games of group rounds.

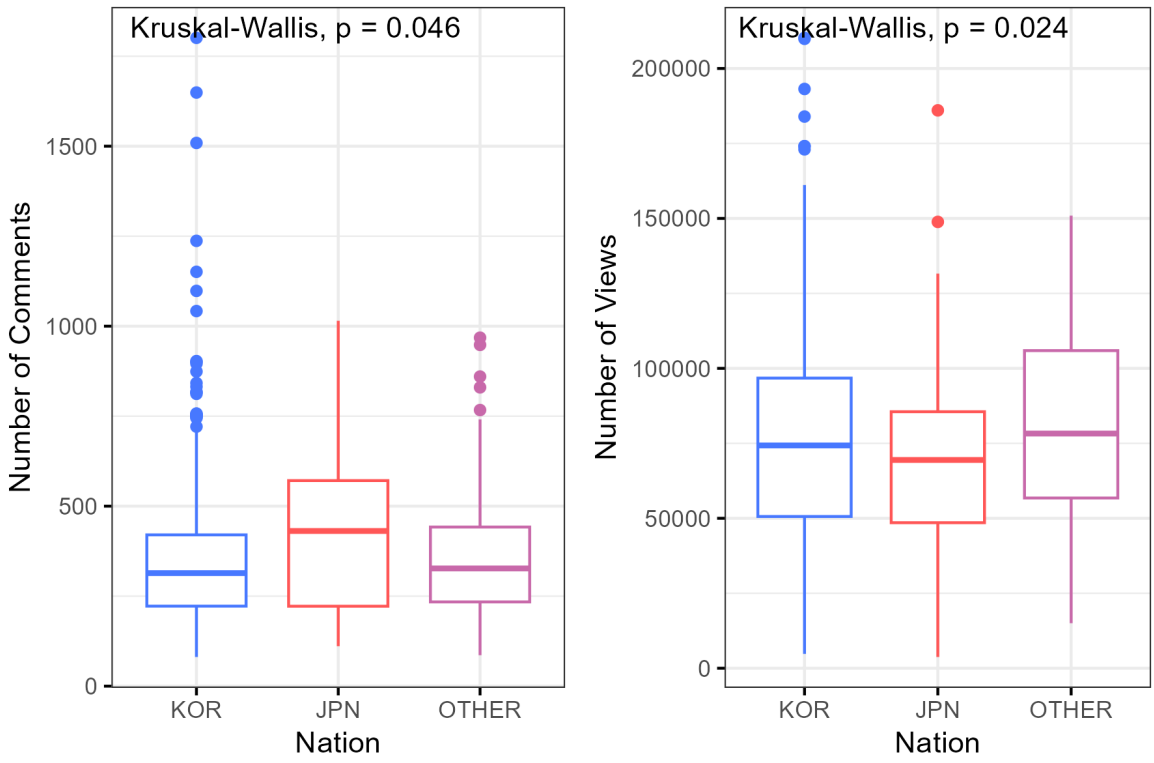

Figure 4.2 Number of Comments and Views by Nation Category

Uruguay, Ghana, and Portugal, while Japan competed in Group E against Germany, Spain, and Costa Rica. The separation of these groups meant that the two nations could only meet in the competition if both advanced to the top 8, a scenario that did not materialize. In the 2022 World Cup, Korea progressed to the Round of 16 by defeating Portugal in its last Group H game, while Japan secured advancement by beating Spain. This highlights the presence of strong rivalry perception among Korean audiences about Japan, even when the results had no bearing on the competitions involving the Korean team.

Another finding from the descriptive statistics is that this female-biased community, while generally showing limited interest in soccer, exhibited a noticeable rise in engagement during the World Cup period. In a contrasting example, a male-biased online community, "fmKorea," displayed a more pronounced World Cup engagement, with over half of their "Hot" posts during the same period being related to the tournament. Even long before the start of the World Cup, the posts from their "Foreign/Domestic Soccer Boards" often progressed to the "Hot" status, igniting discussions

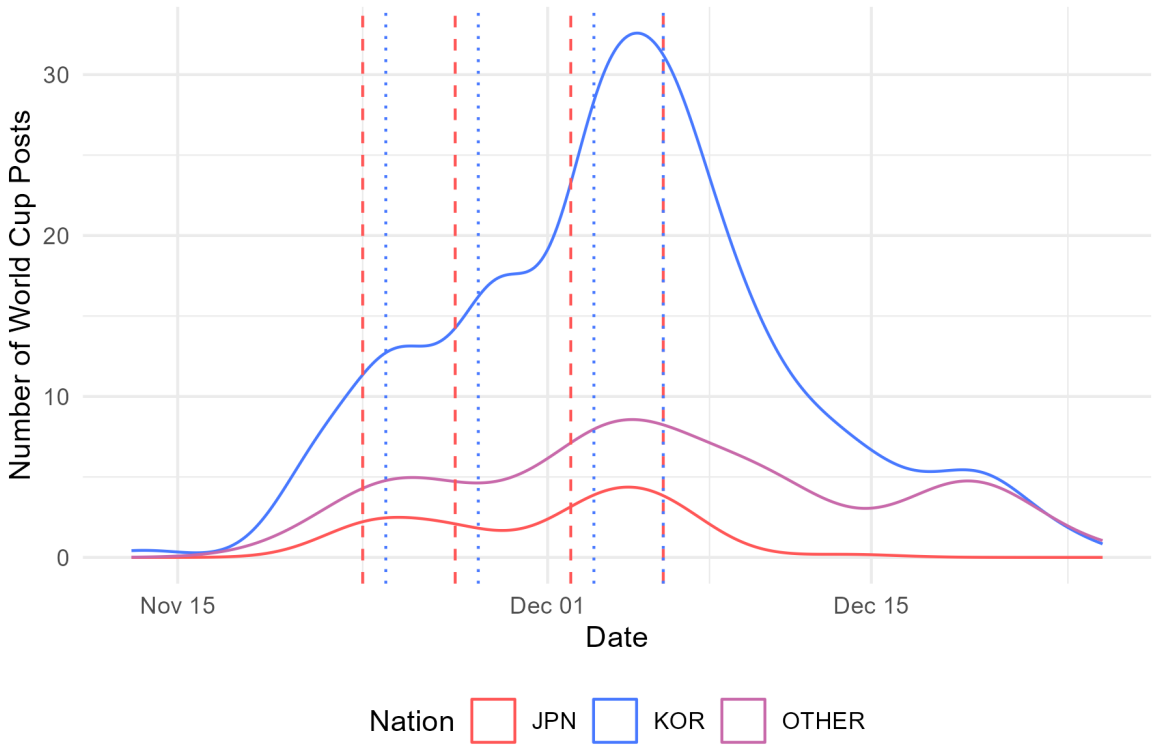

Figure 4.3 Timeline of Posts during World Cup Period

around players and teams from various countries. This evidence of different patterns of interest between the communities also explains how everyday nationalism earns salience during sporting events. The users who had not been interested in the national ingroup and outgroups in terms of soccer accessed the posts due to the World Cup event, reading national symbols, and activating their national identities. The data scraped from a female-biased online community in Korea showcases how everyday nationalism has varying significance depending on context.

4.5.2 Text Analysis

Figure 4.4 illustrates a word cloud delineating three distinct "Nation"categories: Korea, Japan, and Others. The differentiated colors assigned to these words signify their respective nation categories. Even those who are not proficient in the Korean language can notice that a significant number of people expressed emotions, such as crying (ㅠㅠ, Korean letters depicting tears), love (emoji of red-heart), and praise (emoji of thumbs-up) in their posts related to Korea in the World Cup. Conversely, celebrations ensued in posts about Japan when they experienced defeat (emoji

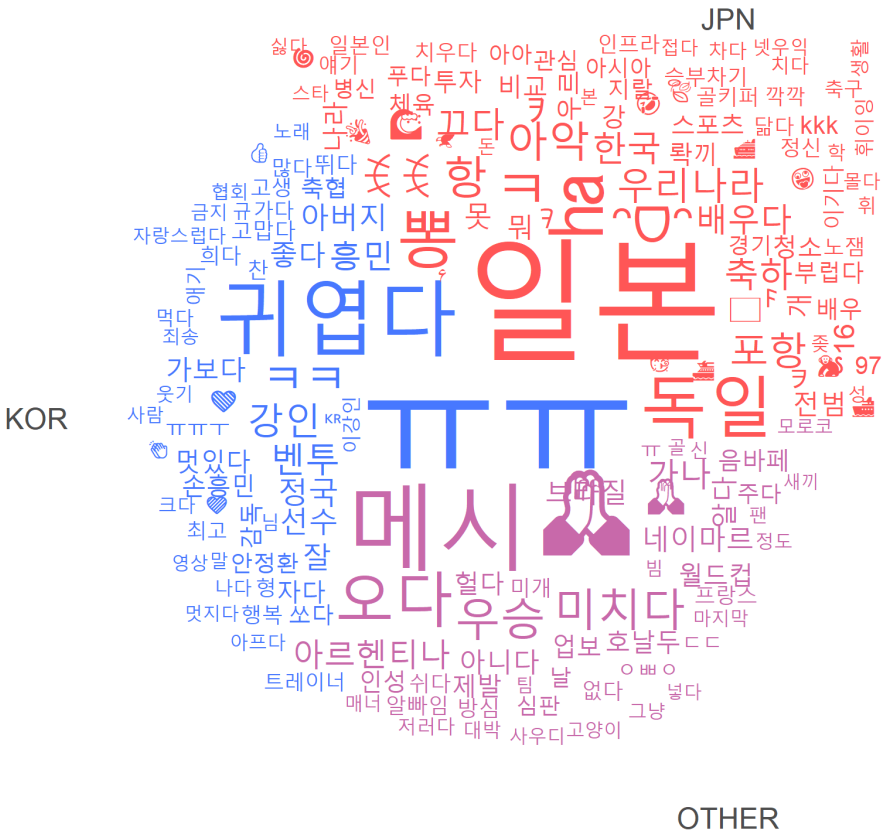

Figure 4.4 Word Cloud by Topical Nations of Comments

of grinning-face-with-smiling eyes and party-popper), accompanied by the use of certain emojis (monkey) implying negative connotations. It is also worth noting that the direction mention of "Korea"(한국, 우리나라 (meaning "my country")) is only evident in comments about Japan, underscoring Koreans' tendency to compare their ingroup with strongly perceived outgroups.[7] This observation implies that posts about Japan involve intergroup comparisons, explaining why Japan continues to be a prevalent topic in online discussions, despite its lack of impact on any Korean games. In the Other category, frequently used words are relatively neutral, encompassing names of foreign players (Messi, Neymar) or countries (Brazil, Argentina).

To further demonstrate the difference between the categories, I utilized a term category asso-

[7]For this reason, the unsupervised topic model without any categories or the automatic categorization of using some key words such as Korea or Japan did not catch the main topical nations of the comments.

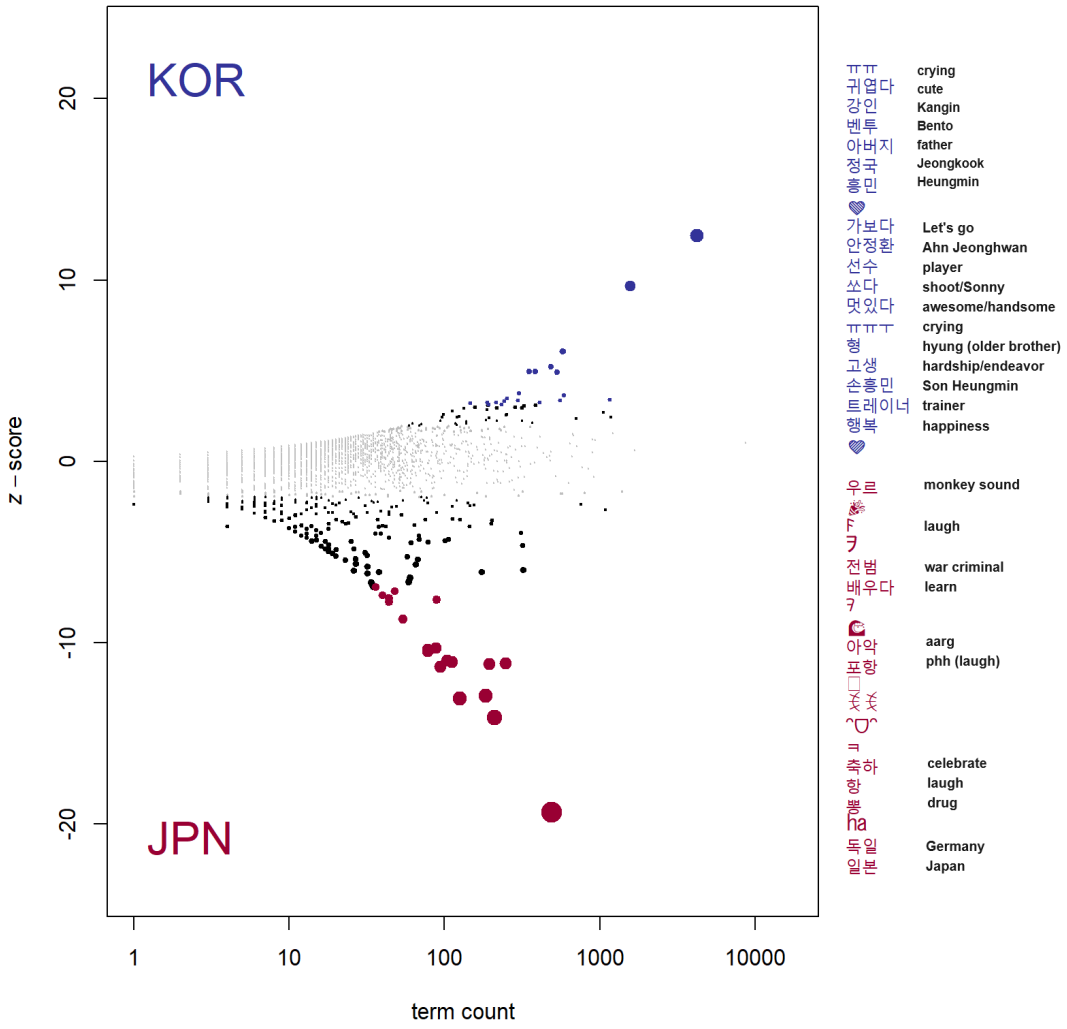

Figure 4.5 Fighting Words Plot between Korea and Japan

ciation plot, or "Fightin' Words" plot (Monroe, Colaresi and Quinn, 2008) in Figure 4.5. This visualization shows the prevalence of words for the two selected metadata categories. The dispersion of dots in the separate areas is indicative of words being used more exclusively in one category, and the more dispersed the dots are, the bigger the difference is between the words used in the two categories. The colored dots connote the most distinctive words for each category and correspond to the list situated on the right side of the plot. The plot is used to specify the terms that "best characterize the difference between the groups"(Kelling and Monroe, 2023, p. 506) with statistical inference, so they are not the same as the most frequently used words visualized in the word cloud.

If the same word appears often in both categories, that word will not be listed as a distinctive one to characterize the category. Figure 4.5 specifically delineates the contrast between distinctive words found in comments under posts related to Korea (upper) and Japan (lower).

The findings align with those derived from the word cloud analysis, as the distinctive words in comments of Korean posts are "cute," "ㅠㅠ (crying)," "Bento (the coach of the Korean soccer team)" and "(Son) Heungmin (the captain of the Korean team)" in both plots. The words in comments reacting to Japan are diverse expressions of laughs with the Korean letter "ㅋ" and symbols in similar shapes[8])", direct references to "Japan," and derogatory depictions of Japanese people through the emoji and sounds of a monkey, which is a common form of disrespect toward Japan in Korea. A noteworthy observation from Figures 4.4 and 4.5 is the recurrent appearance of the term "war criminal" when Korean online users mention Japan. Japan belonged to the same group as and had a match with Germany in the 2022 World Cup, and Koreans directly associate the two countries as war criminals from World War II, reflecting a fundamental perception held by the Korean populace about Japan as the root of public nationalism.

In the comparison of distinctive words between Japan and Other in Figure 4.6, a discernible pattern emerges wherein words used in comments about other nations contain more neutral and less emotional expressions than the comments about Japan. Names of countries (France, Brazil, Argentina) or players, such as "Messi," "Neymar," and "Mbappe" frequently appear in the comments about other nations written by Korean users. Reactions to other nations also demonstrate a greater mixture of emotions, encompassing mentions of championship achievements or analysis of the game plays (as seen in "off guard" and praying emoji), as well as sharp criticisms labeling certain nations or people as "uncivilized" regarding specific interviews or past games, and occasionally involving political or social issues. Compared to the more nuanced mention of Japan along with Germany as "war criminals," the discourse about the other nations shows more diversity.

For a more robust statistical analysis, a structural topic model, implemented using the R pack-

[8]This Korean letter denotes the "k" sound in English and is used as an expression of laughing sounds. It can be used for several types of laughs such as joy, fun, or mockery, and it could be noticed in the comments about Japan that it appeared most often with the mockery of Japan.

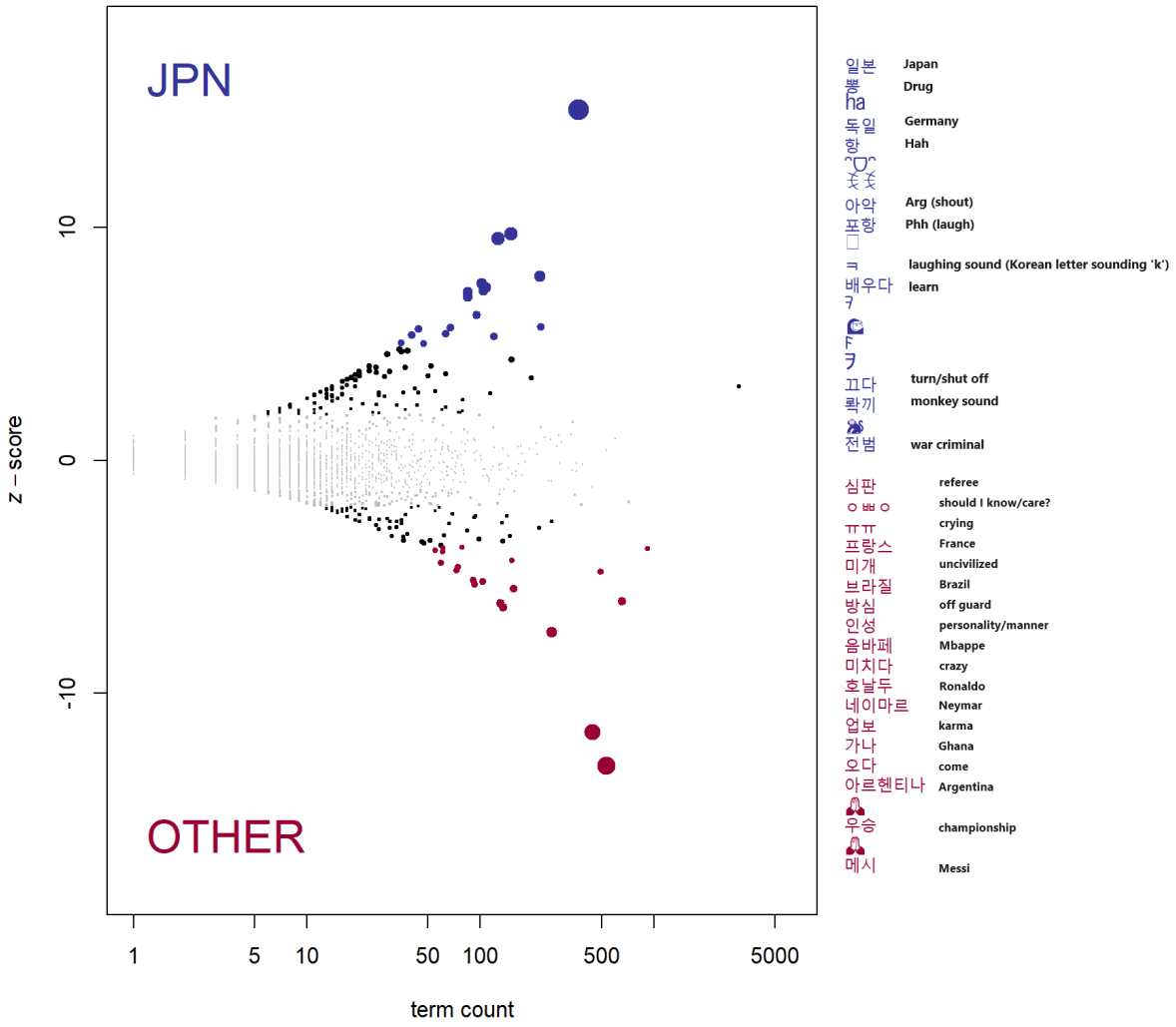

Figure 4.6 Fighting Words Plot between Japan and Others

age "stm," was employed to categorize the text data into distinct topics based on recurring words. The structural topic model's advantage lies in its ability to integrate metadata or variables into the topic model, enabling the examination of the relationship between these metadata and the identified topics (Roberts, Stewart and Tingley, 2019). This model identifies the most probable words for each topic while concurrently establishing connections between topics and document variables to test hypotheses. The model utilized a total of 12 topics based on the number of metadata categories and diagnostic results from models with varying topic numbers, as outlined in the Appendix. The metadata category Nation (KOR, JPN, and OHTER) was designated, and the study explored

whether the topic distribution correlated with the primary nations discussed in the comments, with the hypothesis that the comments to diverse nations would show distinctively positive, negative, and neutral patterns.

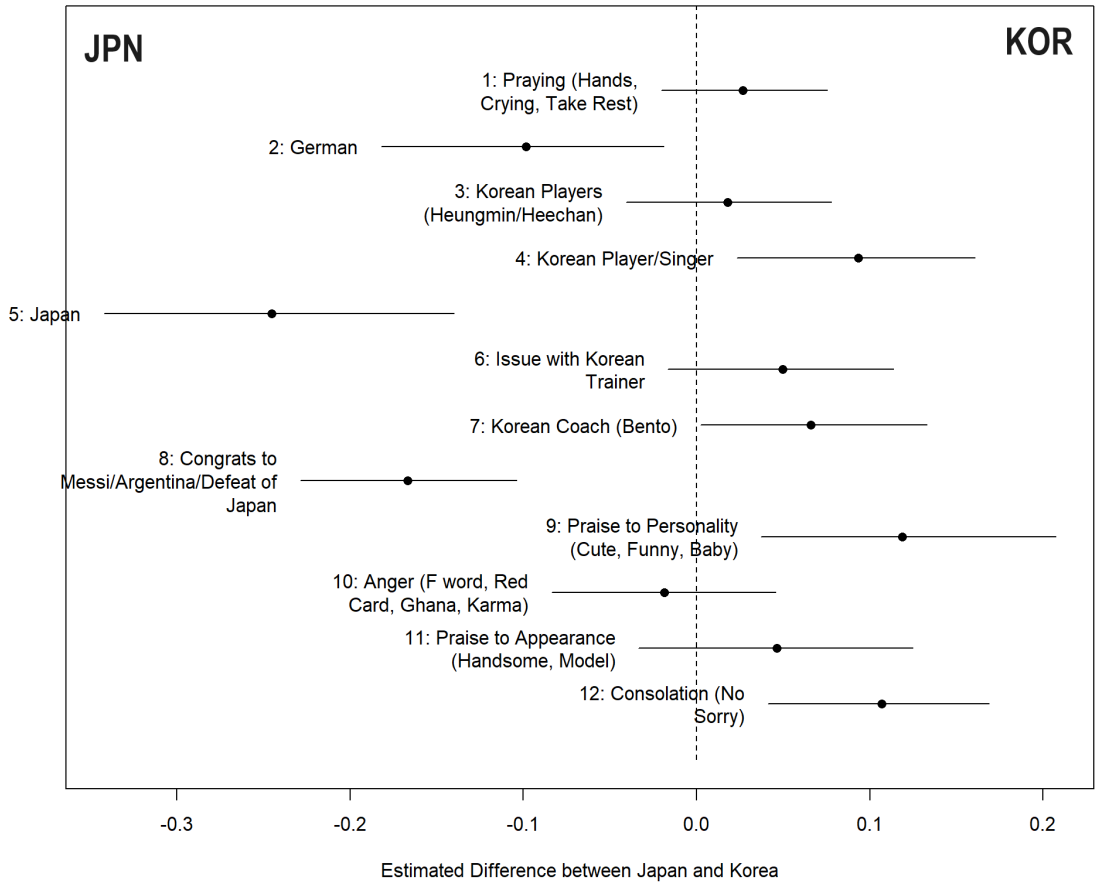

Figure 4.7 Topic Distribution between Japan and Korea

Figure 4.7 illustrates that there are statistically significant differences in the distribution of the words and topics across the Nation categories. The figure showcases the contrast in topic prevalence between Japan (on the left side) and Korea (on the right side), each with 95% confidence intervals. Topics 5 and 8 are notably associated with posts about Japan, while Topics 9, 12, and 4 exhibit a slightly higher prevalence in Korean posts, both with statistical significance.

The topics are labeled from the words that appear with the highest probability and exclusivity compared to other topics, where all the words for each topic are listed in the Appendix. The top

frequent words in Topic 5 labeled just as "Japan" are "ㅋㅋ (laugh)," "아니다 (not)," "뭐 (what)," "일본 (Japan)," "없다 (there is no)," "선수 (player)," "축구 (soccer)" which do not seem to contain that much negativity. However, the top words that appear exclusively in this topic include "열폭 (feeling of inferiority)" or "미개 (uncivilized)" in the comparison of Korea and Japan in diverse aspects. Topic 8 consists of various expressions of congratulations and laughs, not confined to Japan. The top words in Topic 8 are "ㅋㅋ (laugh)," "축하 (congrats)," "우승 (championship)," and "메시 (Messi)." Again, it contains more direct mockery toward Japan in the exclusive terms. The actual tones and narratives toward target nations are better illustrated in excerpts of comments shown next.

A high portion of the comments under Topic 5 reflects a recurring pattern of national comparison between Korea and Japan, which strongly reveals the ingroup–outgroup perception. Posts or comments that point out Japan's better infrastructure or performance—though relatively rare—often trigger an intense reaction from other users. In these threads, even mildly positive evaluations of Japan are met with waves of pushback. For example, when a user writes that Korean soccer should learn from Japan's infrastructure, others immediately respond:

> "After all this bullshit, they went to only the top 16 and were defeated right away. What should we learn about Japanese soccer?"
>
> "That all mentions of sports infra blah blah; our indices are all higher than them, stop that shit."

The criticism does not remain at the level of the Japanese soccer system or players. It is sometimes directed to Japan itself as shown:

> "Japan the country is ugly as f*** and awkward."

In the harsh debates, some Korean users seem to consider those who praise Japan as a national enemy or as a betrayal, underscoring the nuanced dynamics of ingroup and outgroup perceptions reflected in expressions of everyday nationalism during an international sporting event, even without

an actual match between two rival countries. It is noteworthy that the long-held historical conflict is also referred to in the comparison of the sports infrastructure between the two nations:

> "Is there any Korean who does not know that Japan is a war criminal? Who does not know that they have a lot of money (to invest in sports) because they exploited us?"

To explain why Japan could invest more in the infrastructure of national sports, some Korean users brought up the exploitation of Korea by Japan during World War II. It is again a stark example of how a seemingly nonpolitical international sports competition reflects and ignites existing national animosity.

On the other hand, Topic 8 captures more direct reactions to Japan and Japanese people, particularly in response to how Japanese users also talked about Korea's matches and players. Posts or comments from Japanese online communities or news articles—written in Japanese—were captured, translated, and shared within Korean online spaces. These posts, once circulated, often drew sharp and emotional reactions from Korean users. Many mocked the Japanese comments, often copying and pasting them with monkey emojis or typing out monkey sounds, implying that what the Japanese people say is unintelligible or meaningless. Beyond these reactions, users also commented on Japan's own performance in the tournament, belittling their losses and asserting that Japan is still inferior to Korea. Some congratulated Japanese players for missing penalty kicks or losing the match. This behavior shows how everyday nationalism is triggered not only by pride in the national ingroup, but also by a deep concern with how the outgroup perceives them—and a strong desire to reassert national superiority in return. It is embodied in comments such as "That is the story between you and us," which reflects the ongoing perception of rivalry and intergroup distinction.

Conversely, the top words for the Korea-biased topics of Topics 9, 12, and 4 are composed of direct mentions of certain players ("흥민 (Heungmin)," "규성 (Kyusung)," "희찬 (Heechan)," and "강인 (Kangin)") or the Korean singer who performed in the opening ceremony (Jungkook), and public reactions to them. Topic 9 is filled with praise and smiles about individual Korean players

outside the matches, and Topic 12 expresses concern about the condition of the Korean players and offers encouragement after a game loss. The common expressions contain "cute," "sweet," "handsome," and "love," with their wishes for the players to stay healthy and happy even though they lost a game. The examples are:

"He seems such a cool man and it drives me crazy."

"Our god-baby [*calling the player as a baby but also supreme as a god*]."

"You are the best, I love you. I am so proud."

"Thank you, I was happy thanks to you."

It is noteworthy that the most common reactions to Korean posts are directed toward individual players, rather than a clear mention of national superiority which is clearer in the comments under the posts about Japan. These findings imply that while national ingroup love may foster identity, belonging, and pride based on the performance of the national team in international competitions, it does not necessarily entail outgroup hatred or a sense of ingroup superiority as in the comment sections toward Japan. Instances where a player faced challenges, such as injury, elicited more sympathy and cheers than criticism, highlighting the positive perception of the ingroup nation, not solely contingent on winning or losing but also shaped by group-level reactions shared among individuals with a sense of belonging.

The everyday nationalism expressed by the reactions toward the other nations is more diverse in its tone and terms used. The Topics 10, 2, and 1 are biased toward the Others category compared to Korea or Japan, although I did not include a separate figure for topics distribution here. Since the large category of Others contains various issues from various countries, the comments by Korean online users are hard to summarize simply. Some countries that garnered significant public attention during the specified period on Korean online communities include Uruguay, Ghana, and Portugal —nations in the same group as Korea in the Top 16 competition—and a few others that the Korean team faced during the tournament. One notable trend is that participants openly cheered for other countries when those teams' performances were perceived as benefiting Korea's victory or Japan's

defeat, either directly or indirectly. This trend further confirms the high level of interest in the outcomes of their own and neighboring countries' games:

> "Thumbs up. Thank you, Ghana." [*In the reaction toward the game between Ghana and Uruguay in Group H.*]
>
> "What are you doing, Croatia? You are not going to the Top 8?" [*In the reaction toward the game between Croatia and Japan. The winner would advance to the Top 8.*]

Another notable group of countries frequently mentioned in the discourse about "Others" are those with more games, meaning the countries that advanced further in the tournament. As shown in the word cloud in Figure 4.4, country names such as Argentina and Brazil are prominently featured in the comments for "Others," along with the star players of those teams. Users of the online community displayed sustained interest as the World Cup progressed, showing empathy and encouragement toward certain foreign star players like Messi or Neymar, similar to how they supported Korean players. Conversely, negative or aggressive expressions appeared when certain players or referees seemed to disadvantage the Korean national team, or when they observed bad manners during the games or interviews regardless of what those nations were. For instance, users expressed the following sentiments:

> "Hey, please take a rest!" [*In response to an article about Neymar's injury*]
>
> "It tears me up to see Messi holding the championship cup."
>
> "How I see the bench-clearing in soccer. You should lose the next game from your karma." [*In reaction to an Argentina player intentionally kicking the ball toward the Netherlands' bench during a game*]
>
> "WTF is the referee doing? Why give a red card to us?" [*Reflecting anger toward the referee during Korea's match. While this specific comment does not mention it, many users in the same post searched for and shared the referee's nationality.*]

Despite these occasional outbursts, the users showed no consistent animosity or criticism toward any single country, except Japan, even among the nations Korea competed against. For example, although Korean online users harshly criticized Argentina's unsportsmanlike conduct (even describing it as "uncivilized" in other comments), they still cheered for Messi and Argentina in the subsequent game. While their reactions could become aggressive during a match, this sentiment rarely persisted afterward. Similarly, the reactions of the people of the competing country, comparison of national infrastructure of elite sports, or direct derogation of certain players never earned enough attention to be one of the Hot posts as in the case of Japan.

The analysis, employing various packages and models, consistently illuminated distinct differences in terms and expressions used in reactions to the ingroup and outgroup within a Korean online community during the 2022 World Cup period, aligning with the proposed theoretical framework. Expressions related to Korea predominantly conveyed positive sentiments, characterized by sympathy, praise, and excitement. Notably, these positive sentiments were chiefly directed at individual Korean players rather than the nation itself, avoiding the pitfalls of fostering feelings of national superiority or exclusiveness often associated with nationalism. This observation aligns with social identity theory, suggesting that positive evaluations and accomplishments within the ingroup contribute to a sense of belonging and identity, even in the context of the nation, thus challenging the presumption that nationalism rooted in ingroup affection is inherently undesirable.

Conversely, reactions toward the perceived outgroup, Japan, predominantly manifested as negative. The analysis unveiled an array of hostile and mocking expressions aimed at criticizing and ridiculing Japan, despite the absence of a single match between the two countries in World Cup games. In contrast, Korean online community users exhibited more diverse reactions to issues concerning other nations, with comments ranging from neutral to positive. The explicit mention of "my country" was notably confined to posts related to Japan, underscoring that ingroup comparisons primarily occurred concerning their closest rival nation, a clear outgroup. These findings supported by the statistical analysis suggest a novel way of observing and measuring everyday nationalism produced by the ordinary public, and how those subtle messages turn out to be distinctively different

by the countries to which they react.

However, it is essential to acknowledge potential biases arising from the imbalanced distribution of posts in the Japan and Others categories. Furthermore, the natural language processing packages for the Korean language are subject to ongoing revisions, particularly in the areas of stemming and lemmatization. The inherent challenges in effectively filtering noise from online discussions, marked by broken language and new coinages, further contribute to the complexities of the text corpus analysis. These limitations highlight the need for cautious interpretation and refinement in future research endeavors.

4.6 Chapter Conclusion

Sports nationalism has traditionally been understood as a straightforward mechanism for amplifying national pride through athletic events. However, this view is increasingly nuanced, as factors such as regime type, historical context, athlete performance, and event hosting all mediate the impact of sports on national pride (Meier and Mutz, 2016, 2018). For instance, the out-performance of athletes relative to expectations has a minor effect on national pride, while hosting a sporting event —seen as a demonstration of governmental capability—can significantly enhance national pride (Kavetsos and Szymanski, 2010; Kavetsos, 2012). Longitudinal studies show only short-lived fluctuations in national pride (Elling, Van Hilvoorde and Van Den Dool, 2014), and increases in pride are often confined to individuals with lower income and education levels (Hallmann, Breuer and Kühnreich, 2013). These findings suggest that the influence of sporting events on nationalism is diverse and multifaceted.

Despite these insights, there has been less discussion on the specific content of everyday nationalism stimulated by such sporting events. By analyzing raw text from public online platforms, this study unveils authentic sentiments related to national identity and pride by Koreans during the 2022 World Cup. The findings illustrate increased interest in countries participating in the international sport events, with tone, words, and sentiments towards these nations varying widely. While national identity appears consolidated through support for the Korean national team, expressions of love and favoritism are directed more towards individual players than the nation itself, raising

questions about the nature of national pride and the feeling of superiority often associated with nationalism.

Interestingly, despite Korea's lack of direct competition with Japan in the 2022 World Cup, Korean online users exhibited a persistent focus on Japan's performance, rooted in the historical, social, and cultural tensions between the two nations since World War II. Derogatory terms related to history, such as "war criminal," were used to criticize Japan during soccer games, indicating that historical animosities still permeate contemporary sports discourse. In contrast, harsh reactions to other competing countries were usually short-lived, with sympathies and support quickly following, regardless of these teams' performances. These findings highlight the complexity of nationalism as it is expressed and reinforced through sports, suggesting the need for more diverse data sources to better understand how nationalism is created and circulated among the public worldwide. Given the inherent challenges in quantifying subjective constructs such as nationalism and national identity, online textual data as in this research can be suggested as a novel and valuable source for measuring everyday nationalism.

Furthermore, utilizing a female-dominant online community to analyze sports nationalism in everyday life offers a fresh perspective on the intersection of gender and nationalism. Previous studies on gendered nationalism have predominantly focused on how women are positioned as objects within masculine national narratives of nationhood (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 2005; Nagel, 2019; Yu, 2020). This marginalization is evident in the context of sports nationalism, where female athletes are often excluded or subjected to sexist journalism in favor of male national heroes (McCree, 2011; Tervo, 2001). While the case of the World Cup used in this research spotlights only male athletes due to the nature of the tournament, the public discourse surrounding the event as gathered in the data was mainly driven by ordinary women, demonstrating their role in creating and perpetuating narratives of nationalism. In this context, Korean women become the subjects in constructing and reproducing nationalism through their natural reactions to a major international sporting event. This case sheds light on a previously underexplored area, suggesting new avenues for future research into the interplay of gender and nationalism, both of which are constructed through

everyday activities (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008; Krasniqi, Sokolić and Kostovicova, 2020).

This chapter also suggests that the nature of sports consumption is evolving. The favoritism shown towards individual sports stars, rather than the nations they represent, may indicate a shift in how sports are perceived in the public sphere. Historically, during the Cold War, sporting events were seen as platforms for showcasing national prowess (Riordan, 1991; Wagg and Andrews, 2012). However, this connection between athletic performance and national pride appears to be weakening, especially as viewership for events like the Olympic Games continues to decline (Jones, 2024). Additionally, the growing perception that hosting sporting mega-events is a waste of resources in developed countries (Sorkin and Kessler, 2021) further complicates this relationship. This shift may reflect a broader trend of "buying" sports and nationalism, as fandom nationalism (Wu, Li and Wang, 2019) becomes a dominant trend in online platforms especially in China, where fandom culture toward the sports stars also gets vigorous. This evolving landscape calls for deeper exploration of the contexts and lively conversations that shape public engagement with international sports events.

Facing a time when the transnational effect of environment, economy, culture, and pandemics is the largest in history, the presence of the nation-state and ideological nationalism remains strong (Bieber, 2018, 2022; Conversi, 2020). With the rise of populism and the radical rights, the salience of nationalism is growing. However, nationalism in the East Asian region has been far understudied compared to the West due to perceptions of cultural authenticity and the homogeneity of East Asian societies, often leading to a disconnect in Western-centered academia. While an increasing number of papers study the effect of nationalism in East Asia, studies have focused more on China and less on Korea or Japan (Jiang, 2012; Ko and Choi, 2022; Burcu, 2022; Schneider, 2018). Using the most contemporary and lively dataset with statistical models, this study contributes to filling a gap in capturing everyday nationalism in the current East Asian context.

While this chapter focuses on Korea and Japan, the implications of the findings are not confined to this particular dyad. The construction of national ingroups and outgroups is shaped by each country 's own historical memory, geopolitical environment, and domestic political narra-

tives. Everyday nationalism—however subtle or performative—can be observed in various contexts, wherever people talk about "us" and "them." As national sentiment increasingly unfolds in online spaces, understanding how people define, affirm, or attack national boundaries through discourse is essential to capturing the evolving shape of nationalism in the contemporary world.

At the same time, this study is not without its limitations, the most significant of which is the restricted scope of the data source. Given the massive volume of comments and posts, this study could not incorporate data from other active online communities, both within Korea and internationally. Additionally, the data collection period was confined to the World Cup, making it challenging to compare the nature of discussions during the tournament with those occurring in non-event periods. Due to the specific case of football games in the World Cup, other possible outgroups of Korean nationalism are also excluded from the analysis. For instance, there is a growing anti-China sentiment among Korean youths which is also based on historical, cultural, and economic conflicts. This limitation in data raises questions about the generalizability of the findings, although it also underscores the necessity of utilizing diverse data sources in future research.

Another limitation is that the data was pre-existing and not produced specifically for this study, meaning that the potential influence of other variables cannot be entirely ruled out. For instance, the lingering anti-Japan sentiment following the "No Japan" boycott in 2019 may have influenced public discourse during the 2022 World Cup. However, it is difficult to measure the extent of these sentiments and their impact on the findings. These limitations highlight the need for ongoing data collection and research that draws from a broader range of online sources and spans different international sporting events.

These limitations raise a broader question: to what extent does nationalism expressed online translate into offline political attitudes and behavior? The following chapter addresses this question through an original survey experiment that tests how national symbols and outgroup framing shape political perceptions in the Korean context.

CHAPTER 5

EVERYDAY NATIONALISM AFFECTING POLITICAL MINDS

5.1 Chapter Introduction

In Chapter 4, we have seen the actual narratives of nationalism by the ordinary public on digital spaces containing various perceptions of their ingroup and outgroup nations. This chapter examines how those different forms of nationalistic messages affect public opinion and political behavior in South Korea, particularly within the framework of everyday nationalism. The broader dissertation explores nationalism in both South Korea and Japan, and the findings from the previous chapters laid the foundation for the current analysis. After reviewing the previous literature about the concept and influence of nationalism, Chapter 3 identified Korean nationalism as a deeply rooted construct, shaped by political ideology and regional divisions. The analysis results of a Korean survey data unveiled that the meaning of the nation varies across individuals and is often interpreted through partisan lenses, which subsequently shape distinct forms of political participation and behavior.

On the other hand, Chapter 4 shows that nationalism, as a form of social identity, is also shaped by the perception of outgroups in shaping the ingroup identity. Within the framework of everyday nationalism (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008), empirical findings from the text analysis of everyday conversation showed that Japan functions as a salient outgroup for many Koreans. During non-political events such as sports competitions, Koreans frequently invoked historical memories—such as colonial occupation and World War II—when reacting to Japan, expressing sustained hostility toward the country on online platforms. This pattern of response, rooted in collective grievance, contrasts with reactions toward other nations, suggesting that Japan holds a distinct and durable position in the Korean nationalist imagination (Ko and Choi, 2022). Conversely, public reactions to their national team filled with sympathy, praise, and excitement, mainly directed toward individual Korean players rather than expressing a national superiority over others. The positive evaluation and achievement of ingroup members seemed to increase feelings of ingroup belonging and identity, without rejection of others.

Given this context, this chapter asks: What are the behavioral and attitudinal consequences

when people are exposed to such different types of everyday nationalist messages? As the messages invoking nationalism are qualitatively different when they are targeted toward ingroup and outgroups, the influence of those messages on the minds of the readers should be measured separately. While everyday nationalism is encountered through daily, often non-political, sources such as sports commentary, online memes, or national memes, its effect on foreign policy preferences or intergroup attitudes is critical by touching the fundamental perception of 'us' and 'others' in domestic and international politics. In democratic societies, where public opinion matters for policymaking, the prevalence of such cues in digital spaces makes this a question of urgent political significance.

To investigate this relationship, I conducted a survey experiment in South Korea that randomly assigned participants to either ingroup-love or outgroup-hostility frames, modeled after the stylistic and rhetorical features of real online posts. After the treatment, respondents answered a battery of questions measuring their attitudes on key issues related to the broad nationalism and perception of ingroup and outgroups, including discomfort with outgroup members joining one's family (exclusive attitude), support for restricting immigration, views on the import of Fukushima seafood, and militaristic preferences regarding national security. This experimental design allows for a clearer assessment of how emotional cues embedded in everyday discourse can activate nationalist sentiments in a politically consequential way.

In this chapter, I present an analysis result from a survey experiment conducted in Korea, testing the distinct influence of ingroup love and outgroup hatred online posts and comments. The results show that the various aspects of national sentiments, such as identity, pride, or their practice of national interests are influenced by different variables, and some of them are stable enough not to be provoked by a temporary exposure to nationalistic messages. However, there is a hint that accessing nationalistic messages on the digital spaces for a longer period or more routinely can drive a more nation-oriented decision making in a game-like design or preference of militaristic policies. While the analysis results show limited causal relationship between the experimental treatments and national sentiments or behavior, they also present that certain sentiments and attachment to

the nation are more fundamental than volatile others, and that a more routinized access to online nationalism can influence the attitudes toward outgroup nations.

5.2 Ingroup and Outgroup Sources of Nationalism Influencing Public Mind and Behavior

Nationalism has long been a subject of inquiry across multiple disciplines, but recent research has increasingly focused on how nationalism is experienced and enacted in everyday contexts. The concept of everyday nationalism (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008; Knott, 2015; Goode and Stroup, 2015) suggests that nationalism does not always manifest as overt ideology or political rhetoric, but rather is reproduced through mundane, routine actions—such as cheering for national sports teams, reacting to news events, or sharing symbolic messages online. These ordinary interactions subtly reinforce boundaries between national ingroups and outgroups, shaping public opinion and intergroup behavior in less obvious but powerful ways.

Though not always labeled as "everyday nationalism," the mechanisms central to this concept are widely adopted in contemporary experimental political science. One common methodological approach involves the use of national identity priming. Visual or linguistic cues—such as exposure to the national flag, national anthems, or captions of national achievements—are used to stimulate latent nationalistic sentiment. Hassin et al. (2007), for example, found that exposure to the Israeli flag significantly shifted public attitudes toward the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and influenced both voting intentions and behavior. Similarly, Kemmelmeier and Winter (2008) found that hanging the American flag in front of the laboratory room during the experiments increased identification with nationalism, in terms of superiority over other nations, but not patriotism.

Ko (2022) utilized a similar design in her research on China, using visual priming to distinguish between two distinct emotional drivers of nationalism: ingroup love, generated by messages of national greatness, and outgroup hate, triggered by historical grievance toward a salient other. National achievements—such as military power, cultural uniqueness, and economic development—can become sources of pride and loyalty (Smith and Kim, 2006). These sentiments, when accompanied by a sense of national superiority, are positively associated with militaristic preferences and support for aggressive foreign policy actions (Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989; Bliss, Oh and

Williams, 2007; Maoz and Eidelson, 2007). For instance, individuals who endorse feelings of national superiority are more likely to support nuclear armament (Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989) and approve the use of force (Bliss, Oh and Williams, 2007).

Importantly, Ko (2022) and others have highlighted the dual pathways through which nationalism may influence political attitudes. In particular, outgroup-based nationalism—or what Spinner-Halev and Theiss-Morse (2003) referred to as "outgroup hate"—can activate psychological mechanisms like vengeance and retribution. When nationalistic emotions are tied to historical suffering inflicted by a "Significant Other" (Triandafyllidou, 1998; Liu and Hilton, 2005), these emotions often fuel hostility, contempt, and the endorsement of punitive policies (Wang, 2008; Woods and Dickson, 2017; Lickel, 2012; Jackson, Choi and Gelfand, 2019). Exposure to such collective memories not only solidifies in-group cohesion but also increases the salience of national distinctiveness and perceived threat from outsiders (Herrmann and Fischerkeller, 1995; Schatz, Staub and Lavine, 1999).

This aligns with psychological models that distinguish between ingroup affirmation and outgroup comparison. According to Steele (1988), individuals who affirm their group identity are more confident and less defensive, which allows them to engage in prosocial behavior. Chung (2023) applied this logic in the context of Japan, showing that national identity affirmation (NIA) increased preferences for cooperative foreign policy, mediated by enhanced prosocial tendencies. Her findings are supported by experimental research demonstrating that reflecting on positive national traits promotes openness and tolerance (Cohen et al., 2007; Sherman et al., 2007; Charnysh, Lucas and Singh, 2015; SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., 2018).

Conversely, when national identity is activated through comparison and resentment, individuals are more likely to favor hardline stances. Ko (2022) found that exposure to historical grievances—such as references to Japan's wartime atrocities against Chinese people—amplified support for uncompromising policies. The psychological literature similarly shows that perceived victimization leads to more aggressive intergroup attitudes and support for violent retribution (Lickel, 2012). As Schatz, Staub and Lavine (1999, p. 155) note, the belief that "foreign influences erode the homo-

geneity and distinctiveness" of the nation can justify punitive responses (p. 155), particularly in foreign affairs (Shiqāqī, 2006).

These divergent effects—between affirming one's nation in a self-referential way versus defining it against a hostile outgroup—form the theoretical foundation for the current study. Drawing from Ko (2022) and Chung (2023), as well as from the broader literature on national identity, affect, and political behavior, this research distinguishes between two experimentally manipulated nationalist messages. The first highlights national love and sense of belonging without invoking superiority or hostility. The second explicitly targets a historical outgroup, invoking grievance and national comparison. This framework allows us to test whether ingroup love and outgroup hate yield different outcomes in attitudes toward the nation, others, and security policy.

5.3 Theory and Hypotheses

Drawing from the literature discussed above, this study develops a framework that distinguishes between two types of nationalistic messages—ingroup-oriented love and outgroup-oriented hatred—and examines how these stimuli influence national identity, intergroup tolerance, and policy attitudes. This framework aligns with Ko's (2022) finding that nationalistic sentiment is not monolithic: while messages of national greatness reinforce pride and belonging, those that invoke historical grievance—particularly toward a salient outgroup like Japan—can intensify hostility and rigid political preferences.

The theoretical distinction between ingroup love and outgroup hate (Spinner-Halev and Theiss-Morse, 2003) underpins this analysis. Ingroup love refers to a sense of pride, admiration, and emotional attachment to one's nation. It is often associated with stable feelings of belonging, not contingent on intergroup comparison or superiority. In contrast, outgroup hate involves antagonism or perceived threat from another group and tends to promote comparison, grievance, and punitive preferences (Herrmann, Isernia and Segatti, 2009; Huddy and Del Ponte, 2019). Importantly, these emotional sources of nationalism are often primed in everyday contexts, even unintentionally, as Ko (2022) and others show.

This study assumes that nationalist identity functions as a form of social identity (Tajfel et al.,

1979) that responds to external cues. When that identity is affirmed through messages of collective greatness or unity, people are likely to experience positive affect toward the national ingroup (Smith and Kim, 2006) and exhibit more inclusive, prosocial tendencies (Chung, 2023; Cohen et al., 2007). However, when national identity is activated in the context of outgroup comparison or perceived threat, it may trigger exclusion, hostility, and support for aggressive state action (Wang, 2008; Liu and Hilton, 2005; Jackson, Choi and Gelfand, 2019). Based on this theoretical foundation, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H5.1: Exposure to nationalist messages—whether based on ingroup affirmation or outgroup hostility—will increase national pride and sense of belonging.

This hypothesis reflects findings from Ko (2022), who demonstrated that both celebratory and grievance-based cues increase identification with the nation. The emotional valence differs, but both reinforce ingroup attachment (Smith, 2013).

Although both stimuli will quantitatively increase nationalism in terms of ingroup identity and affection, the meanings and influences would be different. While nationalism based on ingroup love does not necessarily come with derogation of others, nationalism strengthened by setting the outgroup as bad or inferior involves exclusive or intolerant attitudes toward others, such as xenophobia in radical cases (Ignatieff, 1999; Hearn, 2007). Contrarily, it is argued that nationalism invoked by positive aspect of the ingroup could increase trust, contributing to more generosity and tolerance toward outgroups, not rejection (Mylonas and Tudor, 2021; Mummendey, Klink and Brown, 2001).

The research on identity affirmation (Steele, 1988; Cohen et al., 2007; Sherman et al., 2007) supports the idea that affirming the national ingroup promotes calm, prosocial reasoning. Chung (2023) shows that national identity affirmation increases openness to cooperation in a game-like design of redistribution, which implies lower prejudice. Messages that invoke a sense or collective memory of threatening outgroup, on the other hand, trigger strong affective responses and may enhance group-based suspicion or resentment (Triandafyllidou, 1998; Herrmann and Fischerkeller, 1995). Ko (2022) found that these cues elevate hawkish preferences, while other studies link perceived injustice to retributive attitudes (Lickel, 2012; Jackson, Choi and Gelfand, 2019).

Therefore, the second set of hypotheses could be written as below:

H5.2: Exposure to ingroup-oriented messages will be associated with lower levels of intolerance toward outgroups.

H5.3: Exposure to outgroup-oriented messages will be associated with higher levels of intolerance toward outgroups.

The last set of hypotheses would test the influence of nationalism by two sources on the attitudes toward military expansion of one's nation. Nationalism has been associated with military expansion or modernization in past research, in line with the state building or state autonomy (Posen, 1993; Hutchinson, 2017). However, from the empirical findings and previous research, I again hypothesize that the effect of nationalism on policy preferences and political attitudes should be discerned when the source of nationalism is ingroup- or outgroup-oriented. When the feeling of national belonging and national pride is based on the positive aspects of nation, the individual would not necessarily agree with the policy to spend more of their national budget to antagonize others. Especially when the emotional attachment to the ingroup nation is unrelated to the sense of national superiority, it would not be linked to the preference of expanding national military force. In contrast, if the source of nationalism is based on hatred toward an outgroup, it predicts a strong perception of threat and motivation for intergroup aggression (Spanovic et al., 2010). Gunn and Wilson (2011) suggest that affirming the ingroup without reference to a hostile other can reduce collective guilt and promote reparatory attitudes. In contrast, Ko's (2022) experimental study shows grievance-based messages promote aggressive foreign policy preferences, while Schatz, Staub and Lavine (1999) found public opinion shifts to punitive or defensive measures when foreign influence is perceived to threaten their national identity. Therefore, the third hypotheses would be written as below:

H5.4: Exposure to ingroup-oriented messages will not affect support for national military expansion.

H5.5: Exposure to outgroup-oriented messages will increase support for national military expansion.

5.4 Survey Experiment Design

To test the hypotheses, I arranged a survey experiment in collaboration with Embrain, a leading online research company based in South Korea.[1] The survey was taken online from March 28 to 31, 2024, from a representative pool of respondents of the company. The survey experiment was conducted upon the approval of IRB[2] with a full consent provided at the head of the survey questionnaire. The responses were collected from a total of 750 respondents, excluding those who failed at the two attention check questions during the survey. I utilized a stratified random assignment of respondents, with 250 randomly assigned to either Treatment 1 [Ingroup Love], Treatment 2 [Outgroup Hatred], and Control groups while keeping the balance of age cohorts from 18 to 69 for each group.

Table 5.1 Balance Table of Treatment and Control Groups

		Control (N=250)		Ingroup (N=250)		Outgroup (N=250)	
		Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age		44.3	13.9	44.3	14.1	44.4	13.7
Income		4.4	1.7	4.5	1.7	4.3	1.8
Education		5.0	0.6	4.9	0.6	5.0	0.5
Ideology		2.9	0.8	2.9	0.8	2.9	0.8
Num. Web		1.7	1.1	1.8	1.1	1.7	1.1
		N	Pct.	N	Pct.	N	Pct.
Gender	Female	161	64.4	170	68.0	157	62.8
	Male	89	35.6	80	32.0	93	37.2
Have Children	0	123	49.2	115	46.0	123	49.2
	1	127	50.8	135	54.0	127	50.8

Stratified by age cohort

The balance table shows that the distribution of age and gender is kept in balance for each group. While age-based stratification was fully implemented due to the availability of respondents' age information at the initial stage, gender-based stratification was limited to maintaining proportional balance across groups. This was done to ethically accommodate respondents who identify outside

[1]Embrain is one of South Korea's largest online research firms, offering data collection and panel management services for academic and commercial research. See: https://www.embrain.com/eng/

[2]This study received IRB approval from Michigan State University and was determined to be exempt under 45 CFR 46.104(d) 3(i)(A) (MSU Study ID: STUDY00009504).

of the male/female binary, by including a non-binary/other option in the gender question. As a result, while the gender ratio is balanced within each group, the overall sample leans female (approximately 65%). This gender distribution reflects the actual respondent pool of the online survey company, rather than a controlled demographic target.[3] The means and standard deviations of some other demographic variables that can influence variables of nationalism and attitudes toward others, such as socioeconomic levels or number of online communities they visit on daily basis, are also presented for each group. As seen in the results, the stratified random assignment of respondents to treatment and control groups kept a good balance among those groups.

5.4.1 Treatments and Variables

The treatment groups were provided with two types of primes. The Treatment 1 [Ingroup Love] group read a post that fosters the feeling of belonging to their own nation, with the comments cheering for the national soccer team. For Treatment 2 [Outgroup Hatred], respondents read a short website post about how badly their neighboring country was doing and the comments mocked the outgroup. To increase the reality of the primes, I used some edited excerpts from actual online comments in the Korean online community talking about the performance of their national and rival teams in the latest 2022 FIFA World Cup Game, as shown in the Chapter 4. Both pictures and textual comments were what respondents can easily find in their daily routines as the source of everyday nationalism. By including visual stimuli like pictures and emojis, I intended to make the primes more realistic and more likely to capture respondents' attention.

As a manipulation check, respondents in the two treatment groups were required to remain on the treatment screen for at least 10 seconds and then answer a recall question about the content of the post—specifically, which national team played and whether they won or lost. Participants who failed to provide the correct answer were screened out of the survey to ensure that only those who fully received the treatment were included in the analysis. The English translation of the treatments used in the survey experiment are in Figure 5.1 below.[4]

The left one in Figure 5.1. is the prime of Ingroup Love, while the right one for Outgroup

[3] Although balance across treatment groups was maintained, the overall sample—especially in terms of gender distribution—does not reflect the demographic profile of the general population. This may limit the generalizability of

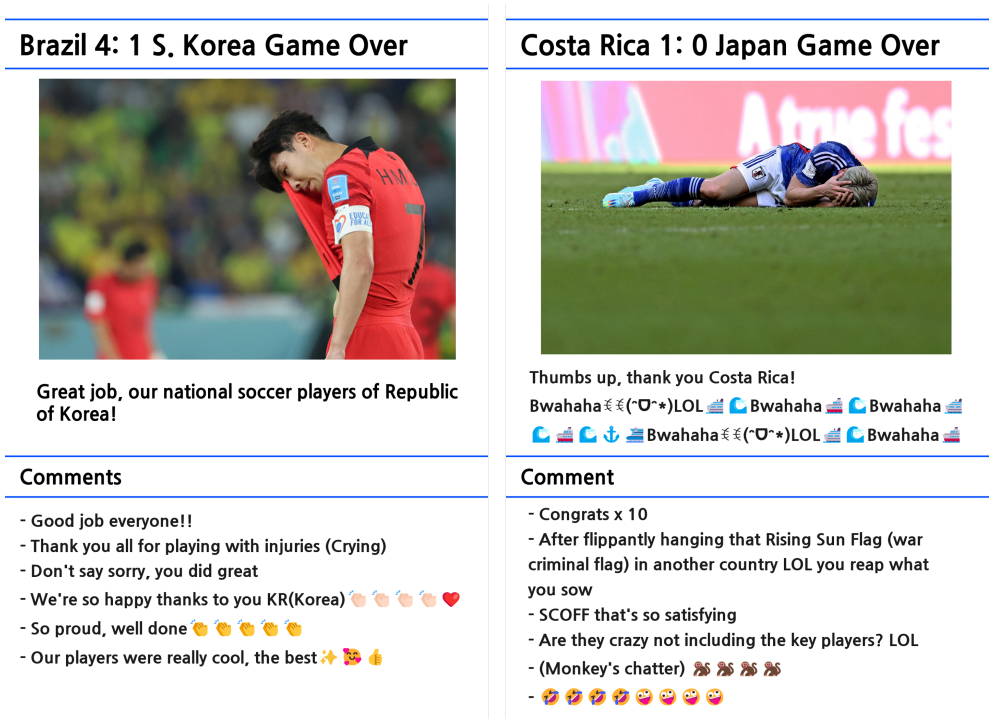

Figure 5.1 Ingroup Love Treatment (Left) and Outgroup Hatred Treatment (Right)

Hatred. As seen in the game result and comment for Ingroup Love treatment, I excluded the aspect of national superiority or rejection of others in the first prime. While the Korean national soccer team lost the game to Brazil, all the comments, originally written in Korean language by the general Korean public, show consistent pride and love to their ingroup representatives. By those emotional reactions of the same ingroup members, this source of nationalism was designed to invoke sense of belonging and pride to their nation. Contrarily, the Outgroup Hatred prime on the right side of the figure includes direct derogation of the outgroup, Japan, with a subliminal perception of outgroup inferiority by using the animal emoji. Also, the mention of Rising Sun Flag, which is a symbol of Japanese imperialism during the World War II,[5] reminds the historical grievance among Korean people. With those signals, the comments written under the lost of Japanese national team in a World Cup game, invokes nationalism as hatred toward the selected outgroup.

To fully measure the changed feelings toward their nations after reading the treatments, I pro-

the findings.

[4]The original version of the treatment, written in Korean and shown to the Korean survey respondents, are presented in the Appendix.

[5]The Rising Sun Flag, originally used by the Imperial Japanese Army, is considered by many in Korea and China as the equivalent of the Nazi Hakenkreuz, due to its usage during the World War II as the symbol of Japan.

vided multiple questions that capture different sides of nationalism. It was aimed to measure different sides of national sentiments and to overcome the limitation of a single survey question to measure a complex concept of nationalism.

Questions for Hypothesis 1 - National Sentiment	
National Identity	How important it is for you of being your nationality [Korea] in your self-identity? (0 −10)
National Pride	How proud are you of being [Korean]? (0 −10)
National Superiority	How much do you agree with the following statement? "Generally speaking, [Korea] is the best country in Asia."(1 −5)
Nationalism in Practice	Imagine that you have [10,000 KW] (about 8 USD) to give to a charity for children's rights and welfare. You can divide the money between Green Umbrella Child Fund for Korean children and UNICEF for global children. (0 −100)

Table 5.2 Measures of Various Aspects of Nationalism

The four separate questions in Table 5.2 ask different aspects of nationalism of the respondents right after they read the primes and answer the attention check question. The first one, National Identity asks how the Korean identity is important to them, in the sense of belonging. Secondly, the Pride question directly asks how proud they are, without comparison or rejection of the others. On the contrary, the third question of National Superiority contains a minor perception of others by asking whether Korea is the best among the other Asian countries, which might cause subliminal recollection of Japan as a neighboring country in Asia. However, it still does not hint a significant outgroup to the respondents. The last question, in the game-like design, asks how they would distribute a limited amount of money to domestic or international charity groups that work for a same purpose: children's rights and welfare. By setting the question as a similar situation that they would face in the real world, it asks whether they will follow the interest of their nation or cosmopolitan values.

To test the second set of hypotheses about the intolerance toward others, I also presented multiple questions in the survey as in Table 5.3.

The first question deals with the willingness of people to include diverse groups of people in

Questions for Hypotheses 2 - Intolerance	
General Openness	In your family, do you feel uncomfortable having someone with ( )? (Select all that apply) [Foreigners, Different religion, Different gender, Different political ideology, LGBTQ+, Disabilities, Elderly, Kids, Racially Korean but born in other countries, None, Others]
Immigration	How much do you agree with the following statement? "Our country (Korea) should not allow more immigrants from other countries."(1 −5)
Trade with Outgroup	How much do you agree with the following statement? "Korean government should prohibit imports of marine products near Fukushima."(1 −5)

Table 5.3 Measures of Intolerance Toward Others

their personal range of family. The respondents checked all types of people who they feel uncomfortable to have as a family member, and the total count of the responses was coded as a measure of general openness to others. The order of the options was randomized for each respondent to prevent any selection biases. The second question, asking whether they agree with more immigrants in their nation, is included as one of the traditional measure of exclusive attitude toward national outgroups. The last question asked whether their government should act to prohibit a probable threat from the selected outgroup, Japan. Fukushima is the area of disastrous power plant destruction due to 2011 Tohoku earthquake in Japan, and a lot of Koreans believe that the wastewater to cool the reactor has been released to the sea without proper treatment despite the official denouncement of Japan (Rashid, 2023). In that sense, prohibiting the marine products from the area is not only based on the individual health and economic concerns, but also on the levels of trust they have to the historical and current outgroup, Japan.

Lastly, the dependent variable for the third set of hypotheses, the opinion on expanding national military, was measured from this question in Table 5.4:

Question for Hypotheses 3 - Military Expansion	
Military	Do you believe that Korea should increase military spending? (1 −5)

Table 5.4 Measures of Militaristic Attitudes

All these questions were shown to the respondents after the treatments to maximize the effect of reading online posts and comments. To ensure that the respondents were giving sincere answers to the survey questions, I also included one attendance check in the middle of the survey and those who missed the check were also forced to quit the survey.

For the control variables, I have the demographic items listed in the balance test: age (*Age*), monthly household income (*Income*), level of education (*Education*), political ideology (*Ideology*), number of online communities that they use on daily basis (*Num. Web*), gender with being a female as a factor variable (*Female*), and whether they have one or more child (*Have Children*). The last variable was especially included instead of the variable of marriage because the measure of Nationalism in Practices asks their willingness to donate money for children's welfare. From this topic, I assumed that having their own children would have more influence on their decision.

5.5 Analysis of Experiment Results

5.5.1 Descriptive Analysis

For the first set of dependent variables, various aspects of national sentiments, it turned out that the Ingroup Love and Outgroup Hatred treatments from online communities did not have significant effect on any of the dependent variables. Figure 5.2 shows the distribution of the responses for each question of national sentiment, divided by the control and treatment groups. The three measures of national identity, national pride, and nationalism in practice are in the scale from 1 to 10,[6] while the National Superiority is in 1–5 scale. For all the variables, the higher values mean stronger sentiments toward their nations.

As seen in the almost identical shapes of distributions among the three groups for all the four variables, the pattern of the responses were very similar between the control and treatment groups, implying that reading the online posts and comments to provoke ingroup love or outgroup hatred did not influence the national sentiments of the respondents in every aspect measured. The black dots in the Figure 5.2. signify the mean of the dependent variables for each group, with the range of

[6]The Nationalism in Practice variable was originally in 1 - 100 scale, as the percentage of the funds to be donated to the domestic charity, but the values are multiplied by 0.1 for a better comparison with other variables.

95% confidence intervals in the square brackets. Although I do not provide the whole results here, all the two-way t-test results between the groups in the four variables turned out to be statistically insignificant.

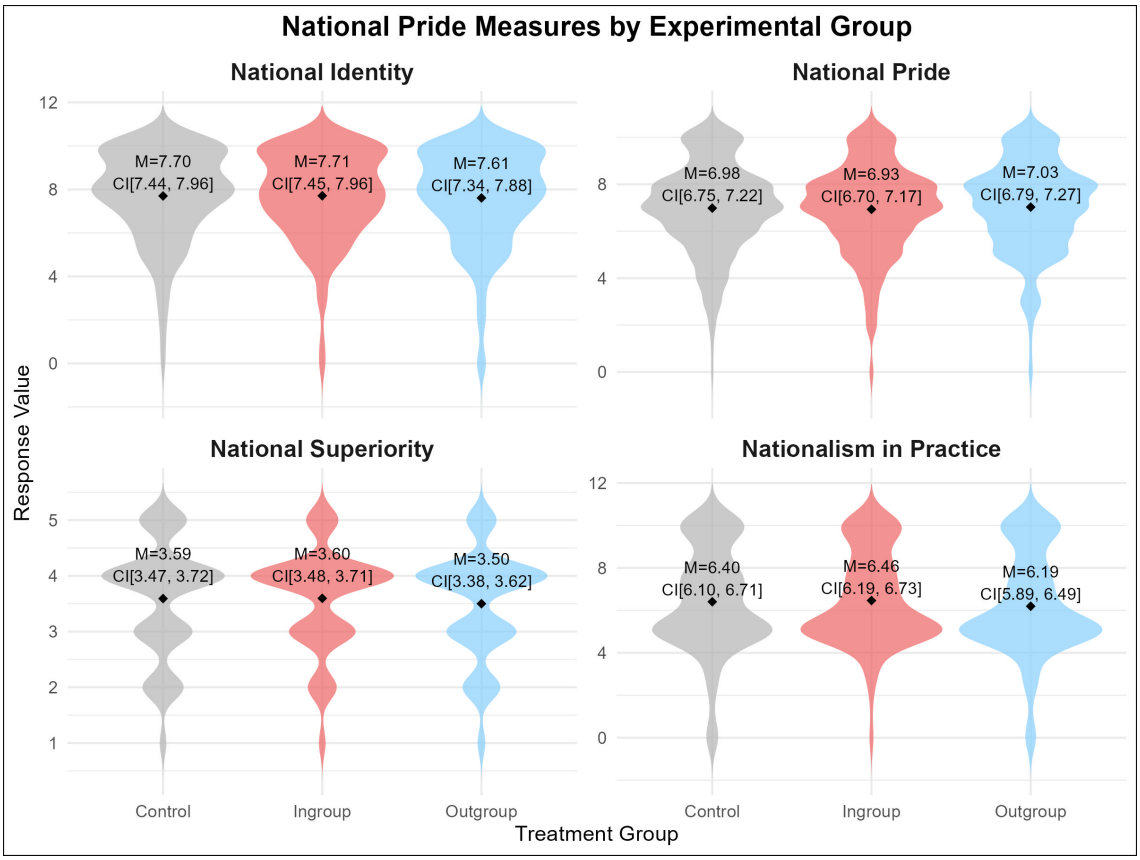

Figure 5.2 National Sentiments Distribution by Experimental Groups

To figure out how the perception about their nations would be influenced in various aspects by the treatments, I additionally asked the questions about which aspect of Korea the respondents feel most proud or ashamed of. The two questions had the same list of options to select, and the respondents were able to pick only one for each question. The orders of the responses were randomly mixed for each question and for each respondent to prevent any biases. The options provided as the aspect of Korea to be proud or ashamed of are: politics, culture (e.g. pop music, film, drama, games), history, sports, economy, military, people, and others, with the order of the options randomized for each respondent and each question. The results are shown in Figure 5.3.

Again, the primes given to the treatment groups did not influence the answers of which aspect of

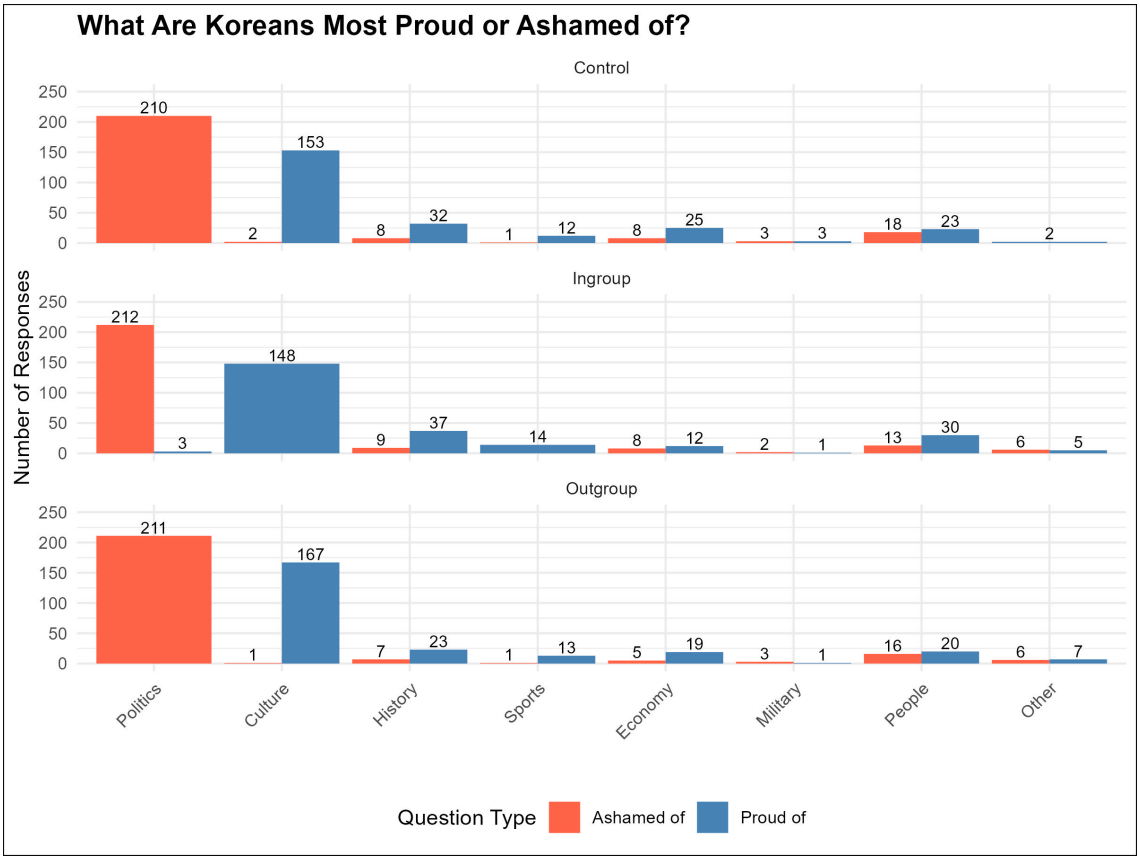

Figure 5.3 Items Koreans being Proud or Ashamed of Their Nation by Experimental Groups

the nation that Korean people would feel proud or ashamed of. However, there are some interesting findings from the results. First, the absolute majority of the respondents, 633 out of 750 in total, answered that they are most ashamed of the Korean politics. Among the people who selected "Other" in the question, three of them specifically answered "President Yoon" and one answered "politicians" instead of politics.[7] Including them, the current political situation as of Korea in 2024 was the undeniably top ranked as the aspect to be ashamed of. It is followed by "People," with 43 responses, although it was also ranked at top three for the aspect to be proud of by 73 respondents.

For the aspect of the nation to be proud of, "Culture" was selected by the majority (468 out of 750), followed by "History" (92), and "People" (73). It can be driven from the recent popularity of Korean cultures, such as K-pop, K-dramas and movies, that are being consumed and respected from the people outside Korea. Interestingly, four among the fourteen people who selected "Other"

[7]Other answers to select "Other" in the question are: nothing (2), personality of Koreans (2), cultural heritage management (1), crime - especially fraud (1), gender discrimination (1), and [lack of] cherishing others than self (1).

answered that they are proud of "Nothing" about their nation. On the other hand, one person commented to be proud of "almost everything except politicians," whereas a few others mentioned food, language, and medical infrastructure/benefit. One thing to be noticed is that although the primes for the Ingroup and Outgroup treatment are about sports, either a defeat of Korean or Japanese national teams in the World Cup games, the ratio of people to be proud or ashamed of sports did not change after the treatment. Even with a more detailed and concrete aspect of the nations for the people to feel proud, the treatments did not have statistically significant influences.

For the measure of general intolerance toward others, the results were similar to the first set of variables. The disributions of the responses for the control and treatments groups were almost identical, and the means and confidnece intervals between those groups did not show statistically significant differences. The descriptive statistics are drawn in Figure 5.4.

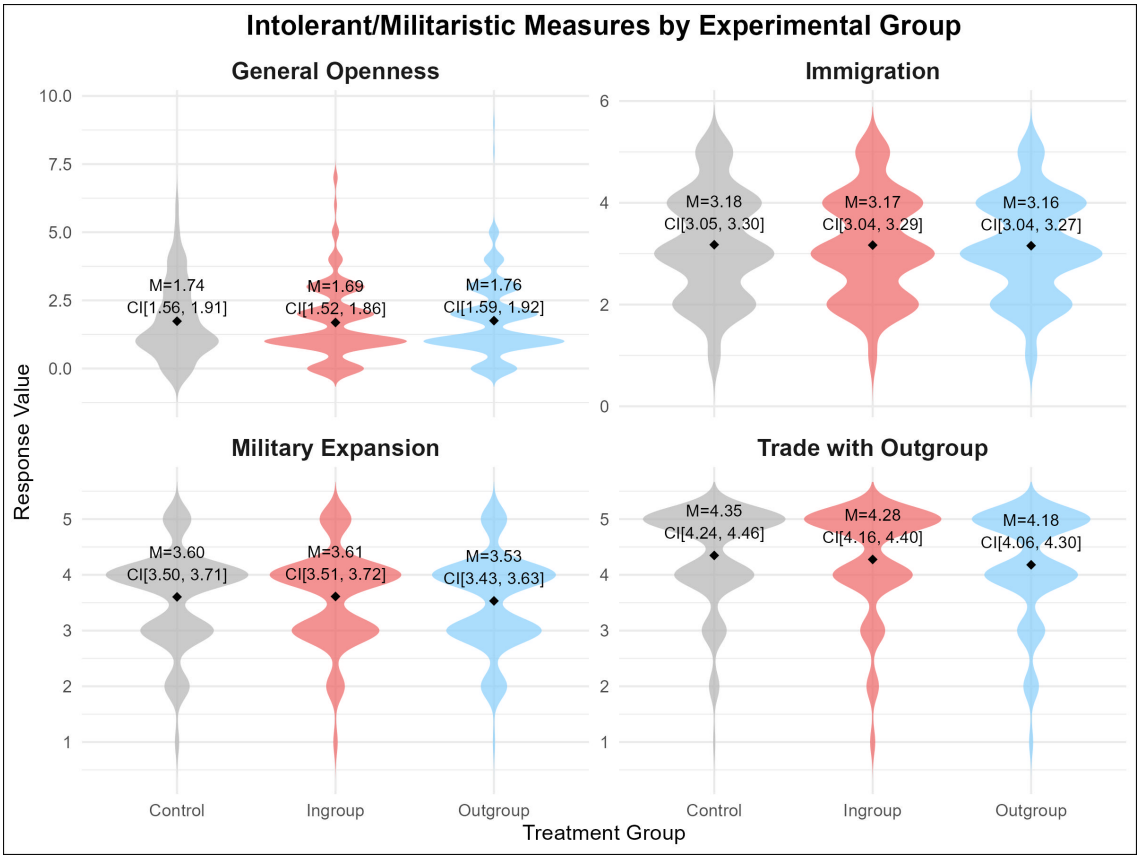

Figure 5.4 Intolerance/Military Attitudes Distribution by Experimental Groups

The first measure of "General Openness" is the sum of the the types of people that one respon-

dent selected for someone uncomfortable to have as their family members. Because there were ten possible options including "Other" and excluding "None," the maximum possible value is 10 and minimum 0. The other three variables, their attitudes toward having more or less immigrants, expanding military expenditures, and prohibiting import from Fukushima area, are coded from 1 to 5, with higher values as stronger national orientation. As shown in the means of the other three variables with the same scale, the question item that Korean people showed the most nation-oriented attitude was about importing the marine products from Fukushima, with the averages over 4 out of 5. It was the only question including the ongoing issue with the primary outgroup, Japan, as confirmed in the Chapter 4. While it is hard to tell whether it was due to their perception of outgroup threat or rather their health concerns just from this survey answers, it is clear that the Koreans tend to agree to the statement that the Korean government should prohibit the import of Fukushima area products.

For the variable of "General Openness," as shown in Figure 5.5, the most common type of people that the respondents answered to feel uncomfortable as their family members was someone with "different political ideology," with 333 responses in total out of 750. With multiple choices possible for this question item, the second most common answer was gender minority groups (327), followed by someone with different religions (220). Only 109 respondents, which takes up 14.5% of the total survey sample, answered that they do not feel uncomfortable with any of the different types of people as their family members. 10% of the respondents (75) answered that they feel uncomfortable to have a foreigner in their family, which is slightly more than the answers of someone with disability (73). On average, about 1.7 types of diverse groups were selected as someone that Koreans were not very willing to have in their families. This rank and number of the respondents for each category shows that Koreans are substantially conservative and exclusive in their boundary of family, and but the national identity is not the top priority to be considered as an undesirable aspect of a new family member.

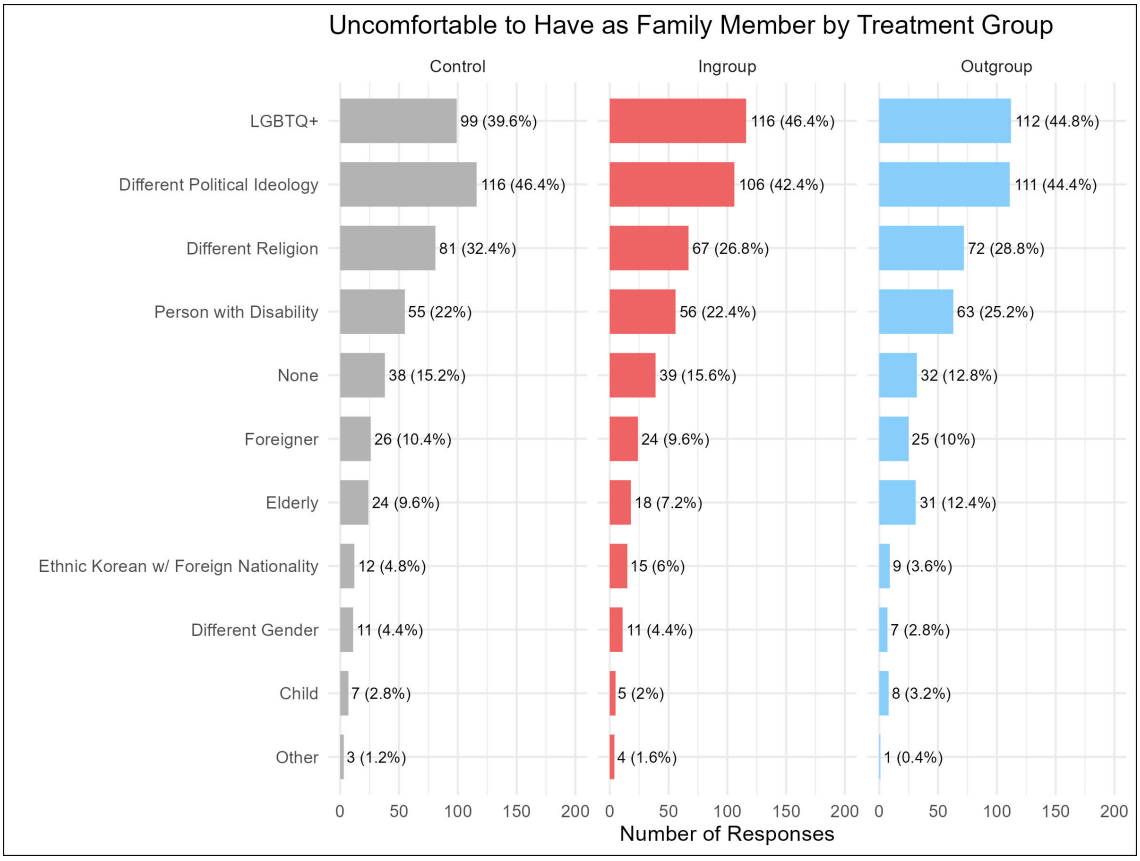

Figure 5.5 Selected as Uncomfortable as Family Members by Experimental Groups

5.5.2 Experimental Models

In this section, I will provide a more statistical analysis results for the experimental design, as well as some alternative explanations. I have run multiple OLS linear models with the treatment as the key independent variable and various dependent variables, with the demographic controls. The Table 5.5 shows the OLS results with the four different variables of national sentiments.

Although the effect of Ingroup Love or Outgroup Hatred treatments were not statistically significant, the model results in Table 5.5 show an interesting pattern between the measures of national sentiments. Comparing the columns, it can be spotted that the variables with significant influences are different between identity, pride, and superiority as one group, and nationalism in everyday practices as the other. For the first and second variable in the Table 5.5, the respondents with higher age and with one or more children tended to have higher national identity and national pride. For the sense of national superiority, the age variable had the same effect while having children did

Table 5.5 Model Results With National Sentiments as DVs

	Dependent variable:			
	Identity	Pride	Superior	Practice
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Ingroup Treat	−0.002	−0.026	−0.022	0.051
	(0.184)	(0.169)	(0.086)	(0.215)
Outgroup Treat	−0.180	0.042	−0.107	−0.276
	(0.184)	(0.169)	(0.086)	(0.215)
Ideology	0.072	0.138	0.013	−0.277**
	(0.093)	(0.086)	(0.044)	(0.109)
Age	0.033***	0.020***	0.008**	−0.002
	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.009)
Num. Web	0.061	0.083	0.014	0.140*
	(0.069)	(0.063)	(0.032)	(0.080)
Income	−0.034	0.012	0.016	−0.031
	(0.047)	(0.043)	(0.022)	(0.055)
Have Children	0.441**	0.492**	0.141	0.425
	(0.224)	(0.206)	(0.105)	(0.262)
edu	0.031	0.092	−0.090	0.079
	(0.137)	(0.126)	(0.064)	(0.160)
Female	−0.014	0.036	0.060	−0.132
	(0.165)	(0.152)	(0.077)	(0.193)
Constant	5.733***	4.764***	3.451***	6.731***
	(0.834)	(0.768)	(0.390)	(0.974)
Observations	724	724	724	724
R^2	0.090	0.070	0.041	0.021
Adjusted R^2	0.079	0.058	0.029	0.009
Residual Std. Error (df = 714)	2.013	1.853	0.941	2.351
F Statistic (df = 9; 714)	7.854***	5.941***	3.423***	1.739*
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

not affect the results. On the contrary, all these variables did not significantly affect their decisions of how much money they would distribute between domestic and international donation in the fourth model. Instead, political ideology and number of online communities that the respondent use in their daily basis showed opposite direction of influence, both of which are somewhat against traditional findings.

First, the *Ideology* measure ranges from 1 to 5, where 1 means "very liberal" and 5 means "very conservative." Because the estimated coefficient of *Ideology* is negative, it means that the respondents with more conservative ideas tend to distribute less percentage of money to domestic charity donation, showing less nationalistic attitudes in the practices. This does not align with the political liberalism often connected with progressive ideas open to more diversity and international orders. Also, the people who use more online communities tend to make decisions toward their nations, as shown in the positive coefficient estimate for *Num. Web*, against the faith that the technological development would foster more cosmopolitan values. This finding can be related to the findings of text analysis in Chapter 4—a lot of online contents in Korean online communities include direct derogation and hatred toward the outgroup nation. With more often and more routinely exposure to those contents, it can bias the decisions related to the interest of their and other nations.

These results signify some implications about the meanings of various nationalism in Korea. First, national identity, pride, or superiority would be related to their fundamental identity constructed throughout their life, and older people tend to have higher sense in those values. These are less influenced by a temporary exposure of ingroup or outgroup messages. Second, the decision related to everyday nationalism practices has different trend with national identity or pride, showing that the multiple aspects of nationalism should be measured and studied differently. Third, the constant exposure of nationalistic messages on digital spaces might drive Korean people to prioritize their nations in a subliminal way, especially when it is related to their behavior in their daily lives.

Next, the Table 5.6 presents the OLS model results for the second and third set of hypotheses. Among the experimental treatments, the Outgroup treatment, where respondents were shown

Table 5.6 Model Results With Intolerance/Military Attitudes as DVs

	Dependent variable:			
	General Openness	Anti-Immigrant	Fukushima	Military Expansion
	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Ingroup Treat	−0.056	−0.028	−0.079	0.002
	(0.124)	(0.088)	(0.082)	(0.074)
Outgroup Treat	0.019	−0.028	−0.159*	−0.082
	(0.125)	(0.088)	(0.082)	(0.074)
Ideology	0.086	0.073	−0.278***	0.124***
	(0.063)	(0.045)	(0.042)	(0.038)
Age	0.005	−0.014***	0.004	0.008**
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)
Num. Web	0.029	0.001	0.032	0.052*
	(0.046)	(0.033)	(0.030)	(0.028)
Income	−0.050	−0.056**	0.012	0.025
	(0.032)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.019)
Have Children	0.099	0.127	−0.137	−0.147
	(0.152)	(0.107)	(0.099)	(0.091)
Education	−0.014	−0.172***	−0.061	−0.134**
	(0.093)	(0.065)	(0.061)	(0.055)
Female	−0.221**	0.259***	0.165**	−0.293***
	(0.112)	(0.079)	(0.073)	(0.067)
Constant	1.581***	4.469***	5.144***	3.636***
	(0.565)	(0.397)	(0.370)	(0.338)
Observations	724	724	724	724
R^2	0.017	0.088	0.079	0.072
Adjusted R^2	0.005	0.076	0.067	0.060
Residual Std. Error (df = 714)	1.364	0.959	0.894	0.816
F Statistic (df = 9; 714)	1.407	7.615***	6.765***	6.159***
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

a post mocking Japan's World Cup loss, significantly reduced opposition to importing Fukushima marine products (-0.159* in the Model 7, $p < .1$) compared to the Control group, while the Ingroup treatment did not have a significant effect. This is in the direct opposite to the hypotheses and the findings from other survey experiments from previous reserach, as the source to invoke historical grievance and hatred toward the selected outgroup actually made people to stand for the outgroup in international trade matters. Also, political ideology of conservatism in the Model 7 was related to the less protective stance, meaning less opposition to the import of Fukushima marine products with the negative coefficient estimates. This counterintuitive finding suggests that witnessing nationalistic ridicule toward Japan may not heighten generalized anti-Japanese sentiment; rather, it might desensitize respondents or normalize the discourse.

One possible explanation is that this effect opposing the hypotheses would be due to the time gap between the survey and the treatment–the game result shown in the prime was about one and a half year behind when the survey was taken. In that sense, bringing the loss of the past and mocking the results would bring the opposite reactions, provoking sympathy to Japan rather than identifying themselves with the comments. Otherwise, it can also be the case that the respondents were anticipating the purpose of the survey experiment and acted against it. Since the Outgroup Hatred treatment contained very direct derogation toward Japan from a past sports game result, they might have thought that they were driven to answer against Japan, and wanted not to follow the expectation of the research.

Another noticeable thing is that, while *Gender* had no significant effect on measures of national pride, including national identity, pride, superiority, and everyday nationalism in earlier models, in this set of intolerant and militaristic attitude variables, it shows diverse and significant associations. Women were significantly less likely to support military expansion (Model 8), and less socially exclusionary overall (Model 5), but more likely to oppose the import of Fukushima seafood (Model 7) or influx of immigrants in their country (Model 6). This result could be reflecting possibly higher risk sensitivity or differing national threat perceptions. In the boundary of their family, for instance, Korean women are more willing to have diversity. However, if it is related a bigger issue

of international trade or increasing immigrants, they would feel more instable and perceive more threats.

Political ideology, measured on a 1−5 scale where higher values indicate more conservative self-identification, was significantly associated with attitudes on two key issues. Conservatives were less likely to oppose Fukushima marine product imports (Model 7), and more likely to support military expansion (Model 8), with only the latter aligns with traditional conservative orientations favoring national strength and trust in state decisions. For the matter of importing Japanese marine products, the conservative political ideology in Korea could have been linked specifically to the diplomatic strategy of Korea's largest conservative party, which is traditionally more pro-Japan than the liberal parties. However, ideology was not significantly related to generalized social exclusion or anti-immigrant sentiment, suggesting that exclusionary tendencies in these domains may not neatly map onto ideological self-placement.

Finally, several socio-demographic variables show consistent patterns. Older respondents were less hostile toward immigrants (Model 6) and more supportive of military expansion (Model 8), while higher income was associated with lower anti-immigrant sentiment (Model 6). Education was significantly associated with greater immigrant tolerance (Model 6) and less support for expanding military expenditure (Model 8), consistent with broader findings on education and cosmopolitan attitudes. Also, the respondents who are visiting more online communities tended to agree more on increasing the national military expenditure (Model 8), although the size of the effect was small.

As the model test results of the three sets of hypotheses show, the theory and hypotheses are not fully supported by the survey experiment I conducted in Korea. However, I could figure out that the national identity or pride is a more fundamental sense of the individual not influenced by a short-time exposure of nationalistic sources. Also, there is a hint that longer and routinely usage of online communities would affect the decision and policy preferences related to their nations and international relations, such as distributing interests and expanding national military. These findings support the broader idea that nationalism at the public level is a multifaceted concept with various aspects of identity, emotions, and perception of self and others, highlighting the importance

to study and measure them in separate ways.

5.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter tested how exposure to different everyday nationalist frames—one affirming the national ingroup and the other expressing hostility toward an outgroup—shapes political and policy attitudes among South Korean respondents. Contrary to expectations, the outgroup hostility frame did not heighten exclusionary preferences. Instead, it was associated with a small but statistically significant decrease in opposition to the import of Fukushima marine products, suggesting a possible desensitization effect or resistance to overt nationalist cues. The ingroup pride frame showed little impact on any outcome variables, indicating that such sentiments may already be internalized and less susceptible to short-term activation.

Not all forms of nationalist sentiment were shaped by the same set of factors. While identity-related orientations—such as national pride, identity salience, and feelings of superiority—were primarily associated with demographic traits like age and parental status, behavioral expressions of nationalism, such as the willingness to donate to domestic versus international charities, were better explained by political ideology and patterns of online engagement, particularly the number of communities visited regularly. This distinction suggests that affective or symbolic attachments to the nation may stem from personal life-cycle experiences, whereas enacted or practiced nationalism is more closely tied to individuals' political and digital environments, signifying that emotional closeness to the ingroup and active distancing from the outgroup may not always move in tandem. These distinctions challenge simplified understandings of nationalism as a coherent attitude set, and instead point to a broader but fragmented structure shaped by personal context and political exposure.

Beyond the priming effects, observational data revealed a subtler but meaningful pattern. The number of online communities visited on a daily basis was positively associated with support for militarization and a preference for donating to national rather than international charities. This suggests that routinely exposure to online nationalist discourse, even outside explicit frames, may shape long-term nationalist orientations and policy preferences. While the effects are modest, they

underscore the importance of considering media environments as structural factors that gradually reinforce exclusionary norms. These findings point to the need for future research that examines how repeated exposure over time consolidates nationalist attitudes. Longitudinal or qualitative approaches, such as panel surveys or focus group interviews, would provide deeper insight into how media environments shape and sustain everyday nationalism.

Taken together, the findings in this chapter show that everyday nationalism does not always operate through overt, affectively charged messages. Its influence is often conditional, differentiated, and mediated through both emotional framing and sustained informational environments. This chapter contributes to the broader literature on nationalism by offering experimental evidence of how nationalist cues embedded in everyday discourse affect political judgment—often subtly, and not always in the direction expected by conventional theories. In doing so, it bridges studies of public opinion, political communication, and the emotional undercurrents of national identity in contemporary democracies.

CHAPTER 6

EVERYDAY NATIONALISM IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

6.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter reviews key theories and applies empirical tests to another democracy in East Asia —Japan. The central concern of the project is how nationalism operates not only as a top-down ideological construct, but also as an everyday identity—shaped, expressed, and reinforced through digital spaces and political behavior. As nationalism functions as a public identity and emotional attachment to the nation, it forms a fundamental framework for individuals' views on domestic issues and international relations, and it can provoke political activism. In a democratic context where public opinion and civic engagement form the grassroots of politics, the shared sense of national identity among citizens remains a core concern in contemporary political science.

In the context of contemporary Japan, everyday nationalism is deeply entangled with anti-Korean sentiment, which has emerged as a dominant feature of both online discourse and political identity. A growing body of scholarship shows that Japan's new far right, especially internet-based actors like the netto uyo (internet right-wingers), express nationalism less through imperial nostalgia and more through hostility toward Zainichi Koreans and liberal institutions. This literature demonstrates that exclusionary nationalism in Japan is not marginal, but embedded in digital subcultures, media ecosystems, and even mainstream politics.

To build on this foundation, the chapter is structured around two analytical directions. First, it examines the discursive patterns of anti-Korean sentiment on Japanese online message boards. This section focuses on how nationalism is linguistically and symbolically expressed in everyday settings, using text analysis to identify themes of exclusion, national pride, and victimhood that construct a particular form of nationalism based on history and perceived ingroup–outgroup differences. Second, it reviews studies connecting nationalist identity with political engagement, considering how different expressions of nationalism influence various forms of political behavior—such as voting, protesting, or participating in online political activity.

By integrating insights from these two strands—everyday discourse and behavioral outcomes

—this chapter lays the groundwork for the dissertation's empirical investigation of nationalism in Japan in relation to Korea. Doing so, it contributes to a broader understanding of how national identity is both shaped by, and shaping, citizen action in an era of rising digital populism and geopolitical tension.

6.2 Anti-Koreanism and Japanese Nationalism

6.2.1 Development of Japanese Nationalism with Anti-Koreanism

Japanese nationalism has undergone a significant transformation since the postwar period. In its earlier form after the end of the World War II, right-wing activism in Japan was largely driven by "old" *uyoku* (右翼, right-wing in Japanese) organizations—groups that were ideologically rooted in prewar militarism and ultranationalism. These actors often staged public performances using black sound trucks adorned with Japanese flags and slogans, advocating loyalty to the Emperor and national purity (Masayuki, 1988; Hall, 2021). Their behavior was performative and symbolic, grounded in nostalgia and reverence for Japan's imperial past, with occasional acts of violence perceived as sacrificial loyalty (Smith, 2011). During the surge of left-wing students movement in Japan during the 1960s and 70s, new right-wing (*shin-uyoku*) groups such as Issuikai (First Wednesday Association, a representative new right-wing group named after their regular meeting on Wednesdays), advanced "neo-nationalism," favoring inward-looking pride over imperial expansionism and framing postwar pacifism and liberalism as historical distortions (Hall, 2021, pp. 14–15).

However, the 1990s marked a shift, or a return toward the outward-based nationalism in Japan, characterized by more intellectual and ideological efforts to redefine nationalism. A key development during this era was the reemergence of unresolved historical disputes—such as the Nanjing Massacre and the "comfort women" issue during the World War II—as central points of friction between Japan and its East Asian neighbors. Hall (2021) and Higuchi (2016) note that the Cold War had suppressed these debates in favor of anti-communist cooperation, but once that era ended, Korea and China began demanding historical accountability, which the Japanese right interpreted as a form of "anti-Japan" hostility. Togo (2010) terms this backlash the rise of the assertive conser-

vative right—a movement that opposed foreign criticism and rejected the postwar ethos of apology. For these actors, the main ideological enemy that threatens their ingroup national identity was no longer communism but neighboring Asian nations, particularly South Korea, that allegedly distorted history to discredit Japan.

Recent literature emphasizes that anti-Korean sentiment is not just a peripheral feature but a core structure of contemporary Japanese nationalism, especially within the new Far Right. The emergence of groups like the Zaitokukai (在特会), who campaigned against the "special privileges" of Korean residents in Japan, and the popularity of comics like Kenkanryu ("Hating the Korean Wave," a title of a comic book telling how and why Korea is threatening to Japan) highlight how anti-Koreanism was embedded in both everyday discourse and online culture (Yoon and Asahina, 2021). Zaitokukai, whose full name of is "Citizens against the Special Privileges of the Zainichi (在日特権を許さない市民の会)" espeically targets the Zainichi (在日) people, which means resident Koreans most of whom were moved to Japan either forcedly or voluntarily during the colonization era could not return to their home countries after the war. The definition of the word also includes the second or third generations of these people, although some of them have full Japanese citizenship (Shibuichi, 2015). These sentiments were not confined to fringe radicals, but circulated widely through media, entertainment, and informal political networks. Kenkanryu, for instance, was largely ignored by mainstream media but became a bestseller online, selling over 300,000 copies in a few months. Its success was fueled by nationalist networks who believed the liberal media—especially outlets like Asahi Shimbun—were suppressing conservative voices (Sakamoto and Allen, 2007). The manga portrayed Koreans as exploitative and ungrateful, relying on narratives of historical grievance that accused Zainichi Koreans of misusing Japan's liberal system.

Yoon and Asahina (2021) argue that such sentiments are not merely xenophobic outbursts but are often linked to historical consciousness and identity politics, especially in their perception of the prominent outgroup to their national ingroup. People who internalize narratives of Japan's victimization and lost pride are more likely to exhibit strong anti-Korean views, even without direct affiliation with right-wing organizations. This process of "Othering" is made particularly explicit

in the language used by hate groups like Zaitokukai, who have been recorded chanting: “Shoot Koreans!” “Turn Seoul (the capital city of Korea) into a sea of fire!” “Send the Koreans to the gas chamber!” “Don’t breathe the same air as us!” (Korean Residents Union in Japan, 2014) The symbolic invocation of gas chambers not only reveals the extremity of exclusionary nationalism, but also underscores how unresolved legacies of wartime aggression continue to shape contemporary nationalist imagination.

These expressions of hatred are not isolated provocations but are embedded in a broader emotional and political dynamic. Asahina (2019), based on interviews with nativist activists, found that moments of emotional shock, disgust, or fear—often triggered by anti-immigrant rhetoric—played a central role in drawing individuals into far-right activism. Through repeated engagement, short-term emotional reactions evolved into long-term commitments, with Korean and Chinese communities becoming symbolic enemies of the nation. One interviewee noted, “when it comes to the anti-Japan states, I think my idea is close to that of the far-right. But I do not have the same idea for all foreigners” (Asahina, 2019, p. 134), further illustrating how anti-Koreanism in particular has become central to Japanese nationalist narratives.

In this sense, anti-Koreanism has become one of the main aspect of nationalism in Japan, with its strong alignment with the political right wing. It fuses memory, identity, and emotion into a form of everyday nationalism that defines belonging through the exclusion—and sometimes demonization—of a historically marked ”Other.”

6.2.2 Political and Online Background of Japanese Nationalism

The 2000s witnessed the expansion of these ideologies into online spaces, giving rise to the phenomenon of the *netto uyoku*. The combination of *netto*, as the Japanese pronunciation of “net” (internet) and *uyoku* (right-wing), directly means the extreme right-wing people active on the digital spaces. It is often abbreviated as *netto uyo* (ネットウヨ) or *netouyo* (ネトウヨ) and used with variations. Unlike the old uyoku, netto uyo are not public performers or political organizers. They are anonymous individuals—often young men—who express nationalist, xenophobic, and revisionist views on online forums such as 2channel (Sakamoto, 2011). According Nagayoshi (2021), these

users frequently endorse anti-Korean and anti-Chinese racism, support for Yasukuni Shrine visits,[1] constitutional militarism, and general media distrust.

Kimura (2018*a*) interprets the rise of online nationalism as a reaction to the dominance of liberal narratives in postwar Japan. In his analysis of Yahoo News comment sections, he finds a significant over-representation of anti-Korean sentiment, suggesting a backlash against perceived censorship and elite liberalism (Kimura, 2018*b*,*a*). Hall (2021) similarly documents how internet forums and nationalist blogs became incubators for exclusionary discourse, reinforcing ideas of ethnic homogeneity and victimhood. These online expressions are not simply marginal venting. They represent what Fox and Miller-Idriss (2008) call "everyday nationalism"—the habitual, emotionally charged enactment of identity boundaries by ordinary people. In digital environments, such discourse becomes particularly potent due to its anonymity, reach, and rapid reproducibility.

Despite the lack of a strong far-right party in Japan, nationalist discourse has increasingly intersected with mainstream politics, especially under the leadership of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which is the largest conservative party in Japan to produce most of the historical prime ministers since its foundation in 1955. Japan's former prime minister Koizumi Junichiro (2001-2006) from LDP officially visited the Yasukuni Shrine and approved a new history textbook that downplayed the atrocities of World War II (Hall, 2021). This triggered controversies and protests in neighboring countries, China and Korea, while empowering the assertive conservative right groups during his tenure (Togo, 2010). Abe Shinzo, the successor of Koizumi from the same party, also visited Yasukuni Shrine in his first term and maintained outward-based nationalism policies such as showing a strong position on the Senkaku Islands disputes (the territorial dispute between Japan and Russia) and the revision of Japan's pacifist constitution (Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan) which prohibits Japan to have national armed forces. Schäfer (2022) also finds that during the Abe administration, LDP rhetoric frequently aligned with netto uyo themes, including historical revisionism, territorial nationalism, and conservative moralism.

[1] It is a Japanese Shrine which pays tribute to Japan's war dead including 14 Class-A war criminals, so an official visit of this Shrine is often considered as denial of wartime crimines during the World War II or support for imperialism by neighboring Asian countires, especially Korea and China.

Schäfer (2022) and Nakano (2016, 2018) argue that the LDP has absorbed and encouraged right-wing populist ideas, creating a symbiotic relationship between digital grassroots nationalism and elite policy discourse. In fact, some scholars suggest that this alignment has become structurally reinforced through digital platforms. Kaigo (2013) found that political aggregator blogs reflecting netto uyo rhetoric often express favorable language toward conservative LDP politicians. Similarly, Sakamoto (2011) and Schäfer, Evert and Heinrich (2017) argue that internet right-wingers have increasingly aligned themselves with the ideological agenda of both the LDP and nationalist organizations like Nippon Kaigi, potentially forming an informal but powerful digital support base for Abe's administration. This convergence between online discourse and institutional conservatism further blurs the boundaries between marginal activism and mainstream political influence and showcases the power of online everyday nationalism. While Schäfer, Evert and Heinrich (2017) point to a growing alignment between elite rhetoric and online nationalism, the causal direction remains debated. Some scholars suggest that conservative politicians strategically incorporate popular digital narratives to solidify their base (Togo, 2010; Kaigo, 2013), whereas others—such as Schäfer (2022)—even raise the possibility that internet right-wingers may be directly hired or incentivized by political elites. Although direct empirical evidence remains limited, this body of work suggests a reciprocal and mutually reinforcing relationship between grassroots digital discourse and institutional conservatism, particularly under the LDP's evolving platform.

This dynamic over Japan's digital infrastructure enabled what Howard (2000) term computational propaganda—the strategic use of bots, networks, and comment brigades to amplify nationalist messaging. Pomerantsev (2019) describes this as "censorship through noise," where sheer volume of nationalist content marginalizes alternative voices. These strategies have helped normalize exclusionary discourse through what some call "metapolitical" tactics: injecting fringe ideas into everyday culture to gradually shift public opinion. With the nationalism provoked and amplified on the digital spaces, resonating with some ideologies of the political party, it would affect more people in their concept of nation, national identity, and political attitudes toward various national and international issues.

The evolution of Japanese nationalism—from its postwar authoritarian fringe to its contemporary digital expressions—shows how everyday narratives of identity, grievance, and superiority are reproduced at the intersection of online culture and political power. While not all Japanese citizens engage with far-right ideology, the widespread circulation of anti-Korean sentiment across comics, blogs, news comments, and party rhetoric suggests that such nationalism is no longer a fringe position. Rather, it is part of the ambient national culture, reproduced through daily acts of speech, memory, and political alignment (Yoon and Asahina, 2021). While this does not mean that all Japanese people harbor animosity toward Korea—and the two countries remain deeply connected through cultural and economic exchange—anti-Korean sentiment constitutes a significant and visible strand of Japanese national identity and everyday nationalism, readily encountered in both online and offline spaces.

This study approaches nationalism not as a monolithic state ideology but as a diffuse cultural practice, observable in everyday discourse within online communities and public attitudes. Therefore, this chapter focuses on how exclusionary nationalist sentiments are embedded in routine expressions of identity and difference, rather than nationalism sate-projected ideology. Understanding how such sentiments emerge, spread, and interact with individual political attitudes is essential to capturing the dynamics of exclusion and belonging in contemporary East Asia.

Beyond shaping discourse and symbolic practices, exclusionary nationalism may also have important consequences for political behavior. Research on affective polarization and intergroup hostility suggests that strong exclusionary sentiments can influence both ideological alignment and patterns of political participation (Iyengar et al., 2019; McCoy, Rahman and Somer, 2018). Individuals who harbor exclusionary views may be less engaged in mainstream political activities or may selectively mobilize around nationalist or conservative causes. In the context of exclusionary nationalism targeting Koreans in Japan, it is therefore critical to examine not only how exclusionary ideas are articulated online but also how they correlate with broader patterns of political participation and ideological identification.

6.3 Text Analysis of Anti-Korean Online Board

To investigate the intersection of anti-Korean sentiment and Japanese nationalism in digital discourse, I collected user-generated content from the "ハングル (Hangul)" board on the popular Japanese anonymous forum 5channel (5ch).[2] This text-based online board is one of the successors of its early version 2channel (2ch), which was described as the most popular online community in Japan (Sakamoto, 2011). However, due to its focus on subcultures and extreme, often xenophobic and hateful, right-wing messages, the user pool of the website was analyzed to be biased and this tendency continues in 5ch. Still, the community has more than 1,000 active boards by the topics discussed by anonymous users. Although 5ch is a vast platform with various thematic boards, the Hangul board is specifically designated for topics related to Korea and Koreans. While its stated rules discourage defamatory posts and emphasize appropriate board usage, the board has long been known as a space where anti-Korean narratives frequently surface, making it a relevant—though not representative—site for observing the expression of xenophobic and nationalist discourse online.

Despite its limited representativeness, the Hangul board offers a concentrated discursive space where radical nationalist and anti-Korean rhetoric is both expressed and reproduced. The very naming of the board—"Hangul," the name of Korean alphabet which is often derogated by the right wingers—and the reference to Korea not as "韓国 (*Kankoku*, country name of Korea in Japanese language)" but as "朝鮮 (*Chōsen*, the name of Korean dynasty from the 14th century to the establishment of Republic of Korea in 1945, which is the name of the country when Japan colonized Korea)"[3] in the board's official rules reflect entrenched ideological framings of Korea by Japanese netizens, particularly those aligned with far-right views. These linguistic choices signal a persistent refusal to acknowledge contemporary Korean identity on its own terms and instead reproduce his-

[2]While South Korean platforms such as "theqoo" in Chapter 4 feature Japan-related sections—such as the "Japan board" under the broader "Overseas Entertainment" category—these primarily focus on fandom discourse around Japanese celebrities and cultural content. By contrast, the "ハングル (Hangul)" board on 5channel is uniquely devoted to discussions of Korea itself, often with a strong political or nationalistic undertone. Although it is difficult to definitively claim this board is the only one of its kind, its structure and thematic focus appear to be relatively uncommon in East Asian online communities.

[3]The Japanese term of 朝鮮人 (*Chōsenjin*), which means the people of 朝鮮 (*Chōsen*), is widely used by the Japanese far-right as a derogatino of Korean people, either in the full version (*Chōsenjin*) or abbreviation of チョン (*Chōn*).

torical derogatory framings. Thus, this forum provides valuable insight into how certain segments of the Japanese online right-wing sphere construct and circulate exclusionary nationalist identities and hostile perceptions of Korea.

The dataset comprises all accessible threads and responses (レス) newly posted as of August 6, 2024, that goes back to June 2021. Each thread includes metadata such as posting time, title, and popularity indicators (e.g., number of responses and view level), along with the full text of user comments. Although the dataset is not intended to generalize public opinion in Japan, its targeted and ideologically charged nature allows for a focused analysis of how anti-Koreanism is linguistically and emotionally articulated in online nationalist discourse.

For analysis purposes, all comment lists and the texts in the body contents are flattened into a single block of text under the title. For the preprocessing of the online texts including broken language and slangs, I performed morphological analysis using the *fugashi* tokenizer with the *unidic-lite* dictionary, a commonly used setup for Japanese NLP (Natural Language Processing). To improve the reliability of network and frequency analysis, only nouns were extracted during tokenization. This was done separately for thread titles and the body of comments, and the processed outputs were stored in new columns for downstream analysis. Emojis and certain symbolic elements were retained, as they may carry meaningful emotional or cultural signals.

The word cloud visualization of the most frequent nouns in the 5ch dataset in Figure 6.1 reveals a striking pattern in how anti-Korean discourse is constructed. The most frequently appearing word is “日本”(Japan, n = 9,910) at the center of the plot, despite the forum’s explicit focus on Korea. This suggests that the discourse centers on a comparative framework, where Korean identity is often constructed in opposition to Japan—particularly through the lens of “文化”(culture, n = 4,807). The high frequency of ethnic slurs such as “チョン”(*Chōn*, the derogatory term for Koreans, n = 4,691), “チョンコ”(*Chōnko*, used in the same way with *Chōn*, n = 1,856), and “朝鮮”(*Chōsen*, as derogatory term of Korea, or when combined with “North,” it is the official name of North Korea, n = 3,446) reflects the overtly derogatory tone, and terms like “在”(meaning “there is” or “reside,” n = 2,939) and “日”(first letter of Japan’s official name 日本, used as abbreviation like JPN, n = 4,213)

Figure 6.1 Word Cloud by Word Frequency

—which likely combine into “在日”(Zainichi Koreans)—underscore a fixation on ethnic Koreans residing in Japan as a symbolic outgroup. Dehumanizing terms such as “死”(death, n = 3,396) and “うんこ”(feces, n = 798) also frequently appear, revealing the violent, symbolic language embedded in everyday hate expression.

Notably, the term “謝罪”(apology, n = 1,352) emerges prominently, indicating that historical grievances—particularly related to Japan’s colonial rule and wartime conduct—are central in the framing of Korea-Japan relations, as in the context that apology is often unreasonably required by Koreans to Japan. Other frequently occurring words like “差別”(discrimination, n = 1,052), “反論”(counterargument, n = 776), and “同意”(agreement, n = 1,051) suggest that users are engaged in emotionally charged debates over legitimacy, blame, and national pride. The term “生粋”(pure-blooded, n = 1,380) likely refers to assertions of ethnic purity, reinforcing exclusionary na-

tionalist ideals. Additionally, the appearance of “ネトウヨ”(Netouyo, n = 930)—a slang term for online right-wingers—alongside “ネット”(internet, n = 918), indicates a reflexive awareness of the medium and the identity of those engaging in this discourse. Together, these patterns illustrate how the the comparison of Korea and Japan is activitated in the online board to construct the national identity, with the recollection of historical matters.

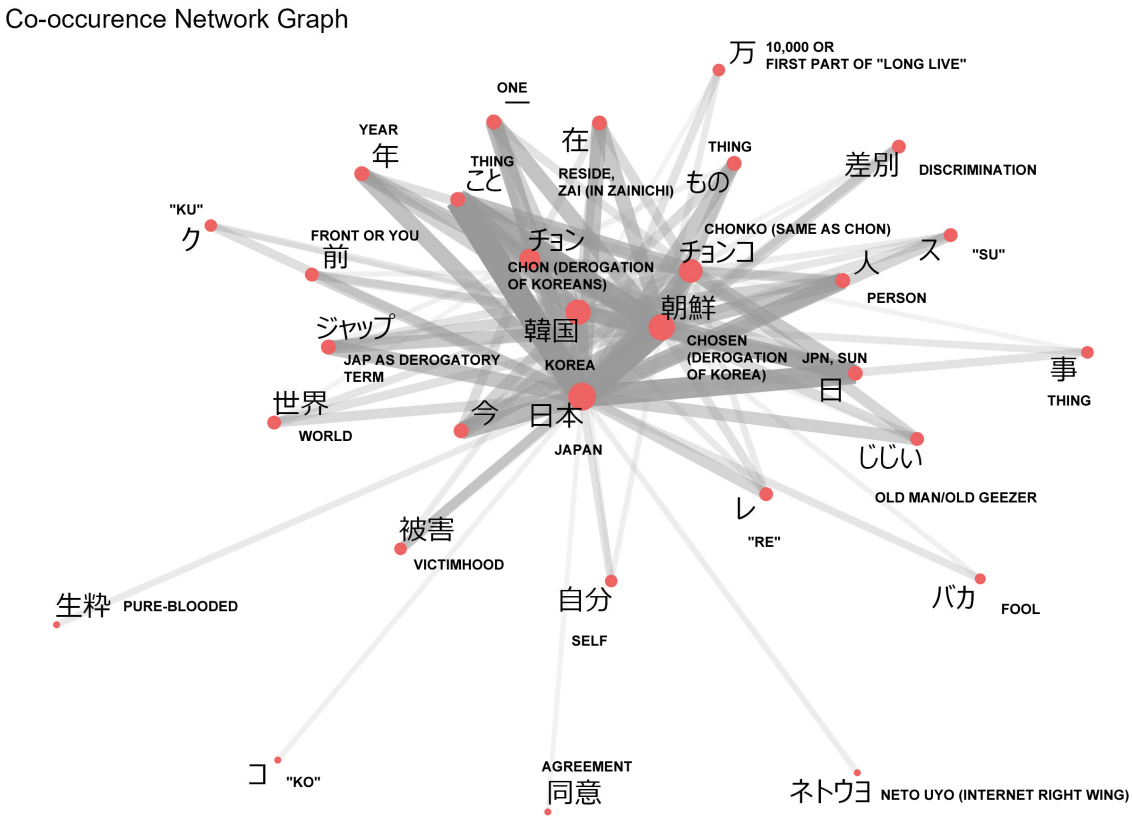

Figure 6.2 Co-occurrence Network of Words

To better present how the mention of their (Japan) and outgroup nation (Korea), I present a co-occurence network plot in Figure 6.2, focusing on frequently co-occurring nouns with anti-Korean framing. In this visualization, node size reflects the degree centrality of each word—i.e., how many other words it co-occurs with—while edge thickness and transparency represent the strength of association between word pairs. The graph reveals three highly central nodes: “韓国”(Korea), “日本”(Japan), and “朝鮮”(Chōsen), which together form the core axis of the discourse. These nodes are tightly connected to a cluster of ethnic slurs, such as “チョン”(*Chōn*) and “チョン

コ”(*Chōnko*), as well as terms like “在”(suggesting “在日”or Zainichi Koreans), underscoring the centrality of racialized and exclusionary language.

Beyond overt hate speech, the graph also highlights the frequent co-occurrence of historical and political terms including “謝罪”(apology), “差別”(discrimination), and “被害”(victimhood), indicating that the discourse surrounding Korea is often framed through contested memory and grievances. Japan-related terms, in contrast, are surrounded by words like “世界”(world) and “今” (now), reflecting a self-referential narrative that positions Japan in a global context while distancing itself from perceived Korean accusations. Emotional and generational expressions such as “ジジイ”(old man), “バカ”(fool), and “ネトウヨ”(online right-winger) further illustrate the affective dimensions of the discourse, linking national identity to frustration, mockery, and group antagonism. Taken together, the network structure visualizes how nationalism, historical denialism, and digital populism intersect in online anti-Korean sentiment.

One example of how anti-Korean sentiment is turned into an internet meme can be seen in a post that begins with a satirical heading: “偉大なる東アジア最強国家・大韓民国の主な文化一覧” (The main cultural features of the great East Asian superpower, the Republic of Korea). This is followed by a barrage of over sixty invented “cultures,” such as “強姦文化” (rape culture), “火病文化” (rage syndrome culture), “食糞文化” (coprophagy culture), and “慰安婦捏造文化” (comfort women fabrication culture). Through the repeated use of the suffix 文化 (-culture), the post cynically attributes a wide range of negative stereotypes—criminality, deceit, sexual deviance, and historical revisionism—to Korean society as if they were inherent cultural traits. This reflects a broader pattern of outgroup generalization, whereby specific negative behaviors are projected onto an entire nation. A similar logic appears in the Korean case discussed in Chapter 4, where misconduct by Japanese soccer players or audience members is generalized as indicative of Japan as a whole. The absurdity and exaggeration of such expressions serve not only to denigrate the outgroup but also to entertain, allowing users to collectively revel in mockery—again, as seen in some Korean online comments ridiculing Japan’s defeat in soccer matches. This list-based meme format has become a common rhetorical device in far-right online spaces, functioning as a copy-

paste template of hate that combines humor, disgust, and dehumanization. Such practices illustrate how everyday nationalism blends identity, emotional investment, and a sense of superiority through routine acts of online expression.

Another example shows how Japanese nationalist users mobilize historical revisionism as a sarcastic meme to undermine Korea's postcolonial grievances, based on the historical issues between the two countries. It opens with "日本人は永遠に反省しろ！" (Japanese people must repent forever!)—a phrase often associated with Korean demands for wartime apology—and follows with a list of ironic "crimes" committed by imperial Japan, such as "朝鮮半島の人口が 2 倍に増えてしまった" (The Korean Peninsula's population was doubled), "朝鮮語教育のための教材が大量に持ち込まれてしまった" (A large number of Korean-language teaching materials were unfortunately introduced), and "入浴を強制され…下水垂れ流しの生活ができなくなった" (They were forced to bathe…and could no longer live in sewage-filled filth). These statements present Japan's colonial modernization as a kind of unwanted blessing, mocking the idea that Korea was ever oppressed. The post ends with the exaggerated punchline: "チョッパリ共は今スグに輝かしいあの生活を返しなさい！" (You damn Japs, give us back that glorious life now!). This ironic reversal ridicules Korean historical narratives and reframes Japan's colonial role as one of reluctant benefactor. By mimicking activist language only to subvert it, this post turns imperial nostalgia into a weaponized meme, circulating nationalist pride through layers of sarcasm and plausible deniability.

It often leads to the expression of national pride of Japanese right-wing as advanced and superior to Korea, glorifying the imperialist past of Japan. For instance, one comment describes Japan as the "Asia's only modern nation to enter the ranks of the five greatest powers" (五大国入りしアジア唯一の近代国家) that "liberated the continent" and "gave hope to the colored races" (アジア解放に貢献し有色人種に希望を与え). The statement culminates in the expression of strong national pride, that "we should be grateful for our nearly 2000 years of imperial lineage," (最低 2000 年近く続く皇運に感謝だね) fully denying the damages or crimes of the war time imperialism. Such expressions frame Japan not only as superior, but as the rightful bearer of civilization in East Asia,

following the ideological pathways of the right wingers of Japan after the World War II.

Beyond these individual examples, prior studies and public cases suggest that the meme-ification of anti-Korean sentiments and the use of historical revisionism are not isolated incidents, but are widespread patterns among Japanese right-wing communities. According to Kim (2021), online spaces in Japan from the early 2000s accumulated and circulated content portraying Koreans as inherently inferior through the use of traditional proverbs and cultural stereotypes. This body of online hate material later materialized into popular publications such as Shinpan Chōsen Karuta in 2015, a best-selling hate book that framed Korean people's alleged traits—such as criminality, deceit, and filth—as immutable cultural features and combined it in the format of a traditional Japanese game Karuta.[4] These depictions relied heavily on pseudo-anthropological rhetoric, using "culture" as a basis to legitimize discrimination and exclusion, thereby reinforcing nationalist identity through exaggerated differentiation (Kim, 2021). The fact that such books sold widely and became a topic of nationalist mobilization online further evidences how normalized these narratives have become.

Moreover, explicit historical revisionism denying Japan's colonial and wartime crimes has extended beyond fringe internet spaces to public institutions and corporations. For instance, the APA hotel chain placed books in guest rooms that denied the Nanjing Massacre and the existence of comfort women, while a television broadcast produced by DHC, a major cosmetics company of Japan, used racial slurs like *Chōsenjin* and falsely claimed that modern Korean script (Hangul) was created by the Japanese (The Hankyoreh, 2020). These examples show that nationalist memes and revisionist histories are not confined to anonymous internet forums but have become part of a broader, public-facing nationalist discourse in contemporary Japan.

6.4 Influence of Nationalism on Political Actions

The previous section demonstrated that expressions of nationalism on Japanese online platforms—particularly on 5ch—are often intertwined with anti-Korean sentiment and political conservatism. Building upon these findings, I turn to a more systematic investigation of how nationalism relates

[4]Karuta is a game to match the cards with Japanese alphabet and phrases from Japanese poems that start with the given letter. It has variations in the phrases to put on the other side of the cards, and in the case of Chōsen Karuta, they are traits of Korea and Korean people described as cultural inferiority.

to political activism. Historically, manifestations of right-wing nationalism in Japan, often termed *netto uyoku*, were not confined to the online space but extended into offline political activities such as street demonstrations and visible public protests. However, recent studies and observations suggest that contemporary right-wing activism in Japan has become increasingly confined to online expressions, with less frequent translation into real-world political engagement.

In light of these trends, this section seeks to formally test the relationships among political conservatism, national pride, and political participation. Using survey data, I aim to examine whether nationalist attitudes among politically conservative individuals are associated with higher levels of political activism, and whether similar or distinct patterns are observed among non-conservative individuals.

6.4.1 Theory and Hypotheses

Since the nationalism observed in Japan has historically been closely aligned with far-right movements, expressions of national identity and pride are shaped in divergent ways depending on individuals' political ideology. As seen in the historical development of Japanese nationalism—particularly its association with right-wing politics and anti-Korean sentiment—conservative expressions of nationalism often emphasize outgroup threat and national superiority. In contrast, postwar liberal movements in Japan, such as student protests, emphasized critical reflection and a desire to normalize Japan's global position by confronting its historical wrongdoings, although the influence of liberal politics has significantly weakened in contemporary Japan. As a result, many non-conservative individuals today—including those who are unaffiliated or politically disengaged—do not necessarily align with a coherent liberal ideology but may still resist conservative nationalism or authoritarian tendencies. This ideological divide suggests that national pride is not a politically neutral sentiment. For conservatives, it may entail a duty to restore national greatness and defend the ingroup, while non-conservative individuals may associate national identity with accountability, pacifism, or democratic values. Drawing on theories of social identity and political behavior, I therefore expect that national pride among conservatives will more strongly predict a sense of obligation to engage in political support for their ingroup. This expectation parallels the

pattern observed in South Korea (Chapter 3), where national pride among conservatives was similarly associated with increased political engagement, while liberals tended to be more active when they felt less national pride.

As Japan's largest conservative party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has increasingly incorporated far-right ideological elements, making it a symbolic target for nationalist mobilization. Traditional street-level activism by right-wing groups—such as propaganda trucks and public rallies—has gradually merged with digital forms of participation, including online forums and social media campaigns. Therefore, I hypothesize that individuals with higher national pride will be more likely to align themselves with right-wing parties and express greater willingness to engage in political action supporting conservative causes.

In contrast, individuals who do not identify with conservative political ideology—including politically unaffiliated or critical citizens—have historically supported pacifist, anti-militarist, or reformist political movements. Drawing on Japan's postwar legacy of pacifism and grassroots activism, these individuals are more likely to view political participation not as a display of loyalty or national superiority, but as a tool for accountability and democratic critique. Rather than mobilizing to affirm the national ingroup, they may engage politically to resist perceived injustices or state-led nationalism, particularly when national pride is low. In this sense, political engagement among liberals may be driven less by national pride itself, and more by a sense of civic duty or resistance when pride is absent or eroded.

Based on these theoretical expectations, I propose two hypotheses concerning how national pride may differentially influence political participation among conservative and non-conservative individuals in Japan:

H6.1: Among politically conservative Japanese individuals, higher national pride will be associated with greater political participation.

H6.2: Among non-conservative Japanese individuals, national pride will be not be associated with greater political participation.

To test these hypotheses, I employ interaction models that examine the moderating role of polit-

ical affiliation, based on respondents' reported feelings toward political parties. Utilizing the latest round of the Asia Barometer Survey, the analysis results are presented in the following sections.

6.4.2 Data and Variables

The data for this study comes from the Asia Barometer database, chosen for both the availability of relevant variables and the timing of the survey. The Asia Barometer, led by the Hu Fu Center for East Asia Democratic Studies in collaboration with other research centers across East and South Asia, covers more than 15 countries in its latest wave. The survey questionnaire includes items on various aspects of the dependent and independent variables, enabling hypothesis testing and robustness checks through multiple approaches. The most recent survey wave, Wave 5, was conducted between 2018 and 2019, making it well-suited to capture the recent trends in national pride.

Before getting into the main analysis, I am presenting the cross-national differences in various national sentiments between Korea and Japan. In the earlier analysis of Korea in Chapter 3, I have used a survey data from KGSS. However, since the Asia Barometer tackles the two countries together, I have analyzed whether the average trend of national sentiments between the two countries are distinct.

Figure 6.3 presents the mean responses to six national sentiment items, comparing South Korea and Japan. Each item was measured on a four-point scale, where higher values indicate stronger national attachment or more protectionist attitudes. For example, in the item "Learn from Other Countries," a higher score reflects greater disagreement with the idea that one's country should learn from others—thus signaling a stronger belief in national self-sufficiency. Similarly, in the item "Inflow of Foreigners," respondents were asked whether the government should increase or reduce the number of foreigners entering the country for work. The scale ranges from 1 ("increase") to 4 ("not any more"), with higher values reflecting more restrictive attitudes toward immigration.

The results reveal a consistent pattern in which Korean respondents report higher average scores across most items, particularly those related to symbolic protection and exclusion. For example, on "Inflow of Foreigners," the mean score in Korea approaches 3.0, suggesting a preference for reducing or halting the inflow of foreign workers. In contrast, Japanese respondents average closer

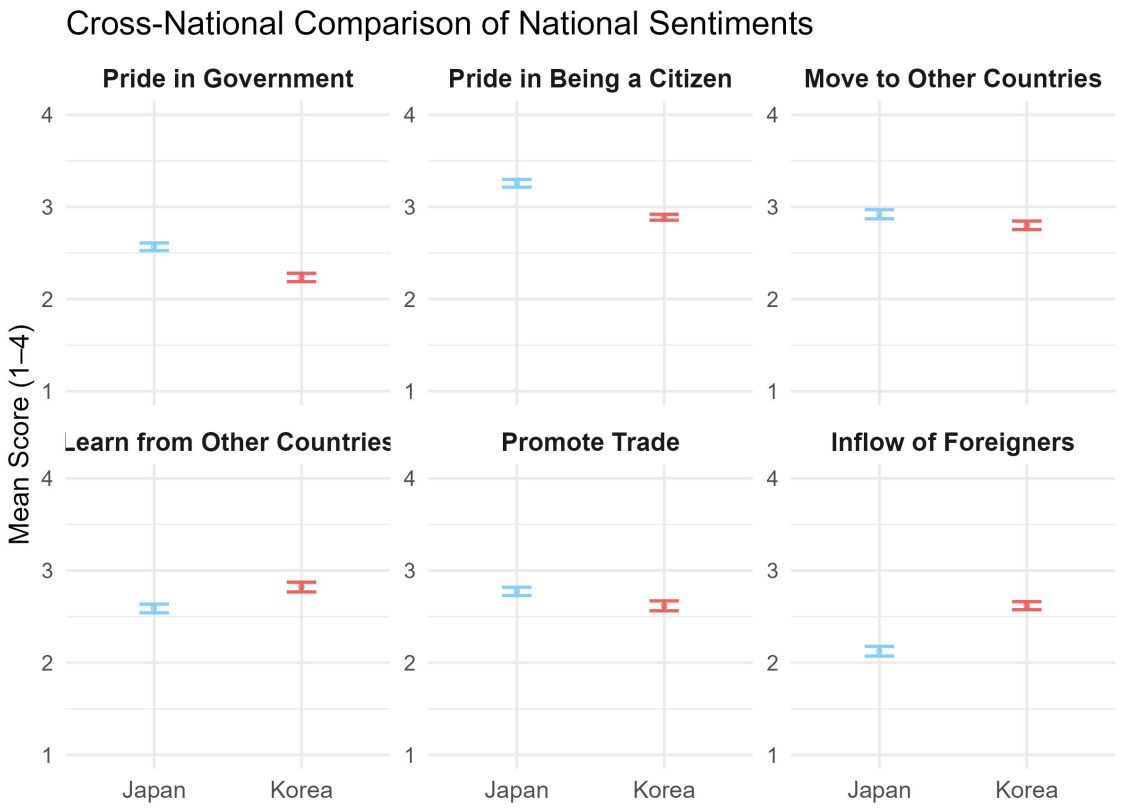

Figure 6.3 Difference in Means of National Sentiments in Japan and Korea

to 2.0 on the same item, indicating a more open stance toward immigration. A similar pattern is observed in "Learn from Other Countries," where Koreans tend to reject the idea more strongly, whereas Japanese respondents show greater acceptance of learning from other nations.

Interestingly, this pattern is not accompanied by a weaker sense of national pride in Japan. On the contrary, Japanese respondents report higher levels of pride in being a citizen and in their government than their Korean counterparts. This suggests that national pride in Japan may coexist with a more outward-facing, cooperative orientation, whereas Korean nationalism appears more strongly tied to exclusivity and protectionism. One possible explanation is that extreme nationalism in Japan is confined to a relatively small segment of the population and thus not reflected in the general public's attitudes toward other countries. Another explanation—relevant to both Korea and Japan—is that the survey questions did not specify particular outgroups. When asked about attitudes toward "other countries," respondents may have had different countries in mind. As demonstrated in

Chapter 5, general measures of exclusiveness yielded different results compared to specific questions about trade with Japan in the survey experiment taken in Korea, indicating that target-specific attitudes can vary substantially. These findings highlight the distinct configurations of nationalism in the two countries, emphasizing that national pride and openness can vary independently depending on context.

For the dependent variable, I created the *Weighted Participation Index* as in the same way of Chapter 3. The political activities included to create the comprehensive index are slightly different due to the different questionnaires between KGSS and Asia Barometer. The twelve political activities which were asked under the section of "Political Participation" in the questionnaire and included to create the index are: contacting elected officials or legislative representative at any level; contacting civil servants or officials; contacting other influential people outside the government, such as traditional leaders/community leaders; contacting news media; signing a paper petition; signing an online petition; using internet including social media networks to express opinions about politics and government; joining a group to actively support a cause (including online); getting together with others face-to-face to try to resolve local problems; attending a demonstration or protest march; taking an action or having done something for a political cause that put you in a risk of getting injured; and voting in elections. For every activity but voting, the answered were collected at five levels, which include both past experience and willingness of participation as: 1 (have done more than three times), 2 (have done two or three times), 3 (have done once), 4 (have not done this, but might do it if something important happens in the future), and 5 (have not done this and would not do it regardless of the situation). For voting, the 4-level answers are: 1 (voted in every election), 2 (voted in most elections), 3 (voted in some elections), and 4 (hardly ever voted).

For all the responses of political participation, I recoded the answers in the opposite direction so that the higher number would present higher level of participation. Then, I multiplied the weight from the results of principal component analysis (PCA) to the standardized values of the those numbers, then summed up all of them to create a comprehensive index as I previously did in Chapter 3. The first component accounted for 35.5% of the total variance, and most variables showed

strong and consistent loadings on this dimension, indicating that they are structured by a common underlying factor. Based on this, I constructed a weighted participation index using the PC1 scores, which effectively summarize overall political engagement across both online and offline domains.

While the second principal component (Dim2) accounted for a smaller proportion of the total variance (13.7%), it appeared to capture stylistic differences in participation—particularly distinguishing between digital and institutional modes. However, since the primary interest of this study lies in the overall intensity of political engagement, only the first component was used to construct the participation index. To further examine whether distinct subdimensions of political participation exist, I additionally divided the PCA loading space by quadrant. In the Appendix, I constructed one index from variables loading positively on both PC1 and PC2 (representing more expressive or digital forms of participation), and another from those loading positively on PC1 but negatively on PC2 (representing more institutional or traditional forms). These two sub-indices allow for an exploratory robustness check on whether my findings hold across different styles of political engagement. The results, which do not change the main argument of the chapter, are provided in the Appendix along with the PCA dimensions and scree plots.

The main independent variable, the national pride and sentiment of the respondents, is again the self-reported answer to a similar question, "How proud are you to be a citizen of your country?" The 4-scale answers are recoded from 1 ("not proud at all") to 4 ("very proud") in the same way.

Based on limited findings using region of residence as a mediating variable in Chapter 3, I decided to include political ideology as a second independent variable. However, the Asia Barometer does not include a direct measure of political ideology. Instead, I use responses to the question, "Among the political parties listed here, which party, if any, do you feel close to?" as a proxy. This question arguably captures the concept even more effectively, as nationalism in Japan has long been associated with the country's dominant conservative political party, the Liberal Democratic Party. Below is the distribution of the parties selected by the respondents.

As seen in the Figure 6.4, the most frequently selected party was the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Japan's dominant conservative party since the postwar era. Notably, the second most com-

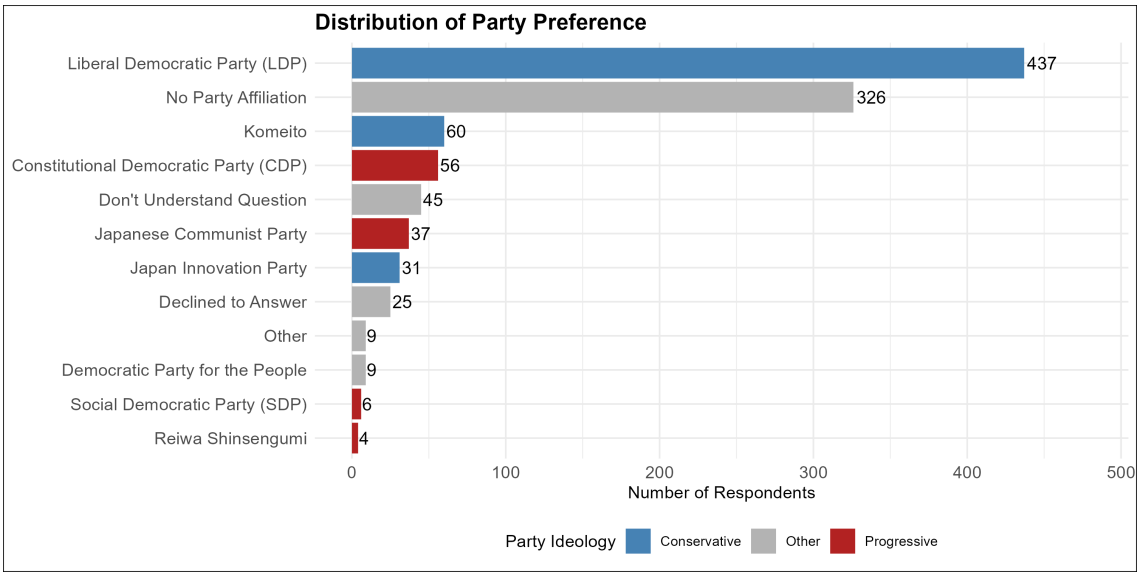

Figure 6.4 Distribution of Responses to Party Affiliation Question

mon response was "No Party Affiliation" (326 respondents), highlighting a substantial portion of politically unaffiliated individuals. Other conservative parties include Komeito (公明党, Kōmeitō), a centrist coalition partner of the LDP, and the Japan Innovation Party (日本維新の会會, Nippon Ishin no Kai, Japan Restoration Association), a right-leaning reformist group (Pekkanen and Pekkanen, 2021; Asano, 2022). Progressive parties include the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP), the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), Reiwa Shinsengumi (れいわ新選組), and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) (Stockwin, 2019). The Democratic Party for the People (DPP) is categorized as Other due to its centrist orientation and inconsistent alignment with either major bloc (Jain, 2020); although it exhibits some liberal positions, it has also cooperated with the ruling coalition on key legislative issues. I also retain non-aligned responses such as "Don't Understand Question" and "Declined to Answer" as separate categories rather than treating them as missing, given their non-negligible share in the sample (45 and 25 respondents, respectively).

Next, I provide the descriptive statistics of the dependent and the key independent variable, national pride, by the party affiliation of the respondents. First, the Figure 6.5 presents the means and confidence intervals of the 4-scale national pride variable. As seen in the figure, there are no statistically significant differences in the levels of national pride by the respondent's support to the political parties. The highest average of national pride was observed from the people who support

a social democratic party in Japan, but is followed by the first and second largest conservative party supporters. Overall, the respondents of the survey answered a substantial level of national pride in average regardless of which party they feel closest to.

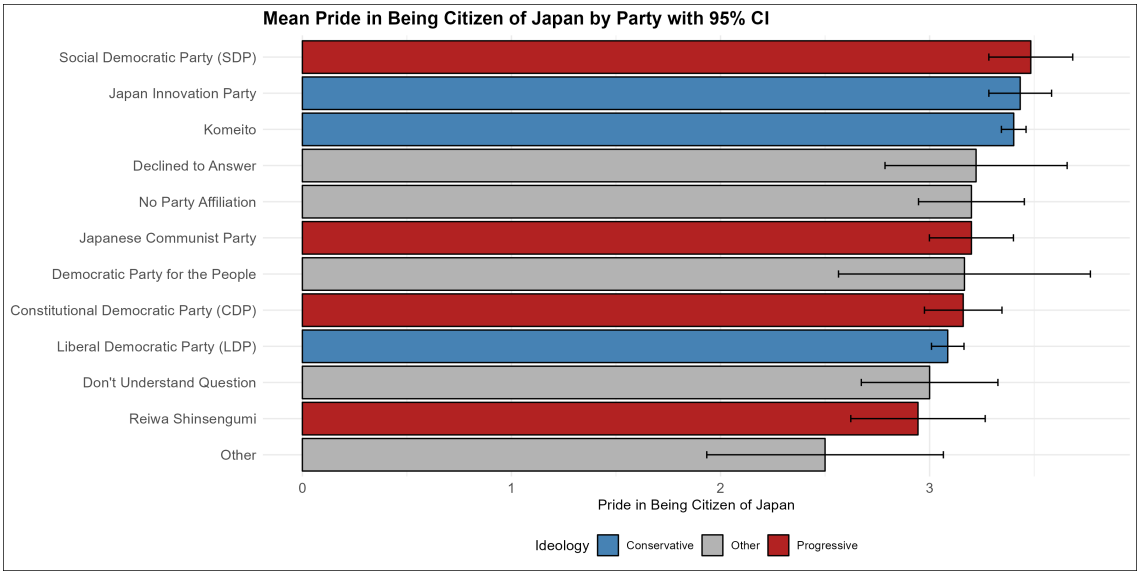

Figure 6.5 National Pride Distribution by Affiliated Party

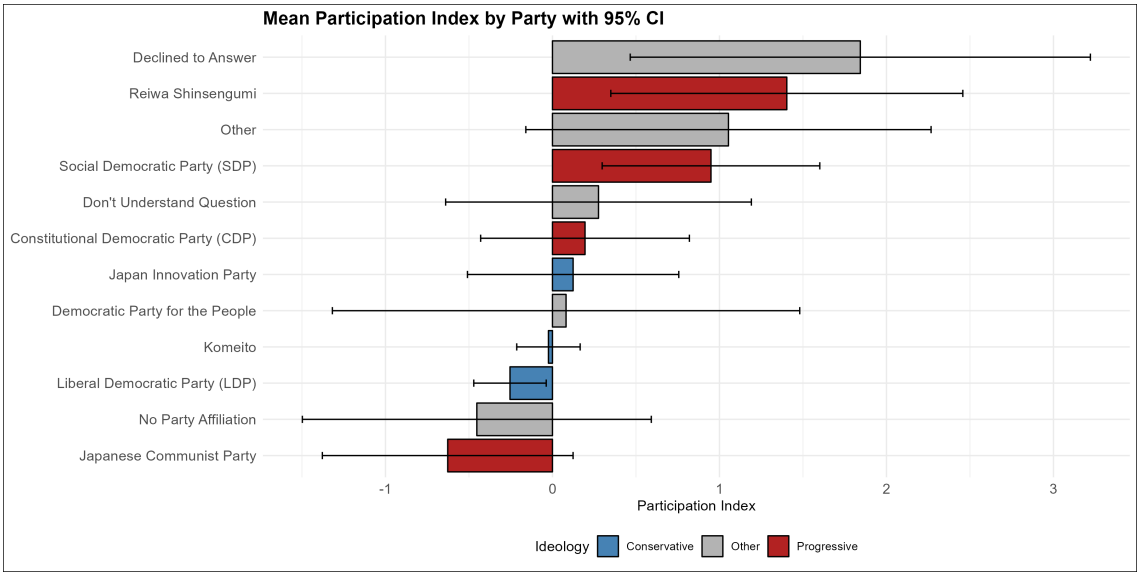

Figure 6.6 Weighted Political Participation Index Distribution by Affiliated Party

On the contrary, the level of political participation shows differences between the party affiliation of the respondents in Figure 6.6, in a different way with the national pride. Interestingly, the two largest group of people to feel close to LDP or no party at all, had the third and second low-

est political participation rate on average. In contrast, people who support relatively small parties, especially progressive parties except the Japanese Communist Party, or did not want to answer the question showed higher participation levels.

For the control variables, some of the self-reported demographic information is used as in the Chapter 3. It includes gender (as a factor of being *Female*), age (*Age*), employment (*Employed*), level of personal education (*Education*, from 1 to 10), and a 10-scale substantive level of household economy (*Income*).[5] For the perception of their national politics and economy, I also included their level of satisfaction toward current government (*Sat. Gov.*) and grievance to their national economy (*Econ. Grieve*). As 4- and 5-scale measures each, the higher numbers represent higher level of satisfaction and grievance. Lastly, due to the active political participation and communication of Japanese nationalist right wings, I included how much they use internet (*Internet Use*), where 1 means that they never use it and 9 that they are connected all the time. Another variable of how much they are interested in politics (*Pol. Interest*) is also included as a variable to influence both the independent and dependent variables.

6.4.3 Analysis Results

To test the hypotheses, I first estimated three Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) models with the party affiliation included as categorical dummies, incrementally adding individual-level covariates. In Table 6.1, Model 1 includes only attitudinal and party affiliation variables, Model 2 adds basic demographics and socio-economic status, and Model 3 further incorporates political interest, media use, and perceptions of government and the economy.

Across all models, national pride is negatively associated with the participation index, suggesting that pride in citizenship decreases political participation on average. It can be hinting that usually political activities in Japan are more related to the resistant ones, so that people who are not proud of being a Japanese citizens are actively engaging in politics. Meanwhile, some party affiliation, but not limited to the conservative parties, strongly predicts nationalist attitudes: supporters

[5] Although the original questionnaire had a separate question asking the range of household income, the missing data for this item was substantially large to impact the models (265 respondents declined to answer to this question in total). For this reason, I used the self-evaluation of the household's economic status as a proxy of income.

Table 6.1 OLS Models with Participation Index as DV

	Dependent variable:		
	Weighted Participation Index		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	−0.225** (0.099)	−0.184* (0.099)	−0.217** (0.099)
LDP	0.284* (0.158)	0.361** (0.158)	0.290* (0.163)
Komeito	0.431 (0.306)	0.562* (0.301)	0.322 (0.297)
CDP	0.444 (0.312)	0.424 (0.313)	0.099 (0.313)
Don't Know	−0.352 (0.389)	−0.178 (0.399)	−0.110 (0.398)
Communist	1.502*** (0.367)	1.541*** (0.376)	1.117*** (0.366)
Innovation	1.275*** (0.390)	1.256*** (0.382)	0.786** (0.370)
Decline Answer	−0.232 (0.555)	0.127 (0.575)	0.051 (0.575)
DPP	0.497 (0.727)	0.224 (0.745)	−0.319 (0.716)
Other Parties	2.121*** (0.727)	1.942*** (0.698)	1.597** (0.717)
SDP	0.340 (0.836)	0.440 (0.806)	0.374 (0.845)
Reiwa	1.162 (1.023)	0.601 (1.133)	0.047 (1.091)
Female		−0.675*** (0.137)	−0.475*** (0.135)
Age		−0.004 (0.005)	0.001 (0.005)
Employed		0.045 (0.162)	0.034 (0.158)
Education		0.211*** (0.047)	0.068 (0.049)
Income		0.042 (0.049)	0.023 (0.048)
Sat. Gov.			−0.099 (0.099)
Econ. Grieve.			0.073 (0.088)
Pol. Interest			0.691*** (0.094)
Internet Use			0.121*** (0.029)
Constant	0.453 (0.326)	−0.922 (0.634)	−2.536*** (0.773)
Observations	934	874	852
R^2	0.044	0.107	0.189
Adjusted R^2	0.031	0.089	0.168
Residual Std. Error	2.029 (df = 921)	1.943 (df = 856)	1.860 (df = 830)
F Statistic	3.495*** (df = 12; 921)	6.025*** (df = 17; 856)	9.187*** (df = 21; 830)
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

of Japan Innovation Party (as *Innovation* in the Table 6.1, far-right party) and the Communist Party (*Communist*, far-left party), as well as those who selected "Other"parties (other small parties not listed in the survey question), exhibit significantly higher participation scores, especially in Model 1 and Model 2. These effects remain robust, albeit reduced, in the full model (Model 3). In contrast, supporters of the Liberal Democratic Party (*LDP*) and *Komeito*, which were the two most selected and conservative-leaning parties by the respondents, show modest and less consistent positive effects. It can be understood that the large group of people who selected these two large parties include modest supporters who are not strongly affiliated with political parties and less active in political actions. Notably, female respondents report significantly lower participation scores, and

higher political interest and internet use are associated with increased political engagement. Other socio-demographic and perceptual variables (such as education, age, economic status, and satisfaction with government) show no strong or consistent effects.

Building on prior research that suggests Japanese conservative right-wing individuals are more active in online political spaces, I tested additional models using the single question item, asking the level of online political commenting as the dependent variable in Table 6.2. However, the results closely mirrored those of the participation index models, showing no statistically significant effect for LDP supporters. When conservative individuals are more narrowly defined as those who report feeling closest to the far-right Japan Innovation Party, the model results lend support to the hypothesis. Nevertheless, given the small number of respondents affiliated with the Innovation Party and the consistently strong negative effect of national pride on political participation, I conclude that the theory receives only partial support.

To see the mechanisms linking party identification to political participation more closely, I employed a mediation model. Mediation analysis seeks to identify intermediary variables—mediators—that transmit the effect of an independent variable to a dependent variable, thereby uncovering underlying causal pathways. In this context, national pride is posited as a mediator that potentially channels the influence of party identification on political participation. In other words, I wanted to see if party identification of Japanese people would lead to higher or lower national pride, followed by their motivation or de-motivation of political participation

The independent variable, *Party Identification*, is operationalized through a categorical variable distinguishing between supporters of conservative parties and those with no party affiliation. Specifically, respondents indicating support for any conservative party (e.g., LDP, Komeito, Japanese Innovation Party) are coded as 1, while those with no party affiliation (e.g., feel closes to none of the parties, decline to answer) are coded as 0. Since the simple mediation model allows a binary independent variable, and my theory and hypotheses is focused on the conservative party supporters, those who affiliated with the progressive political parties in the survey are excluded in this model. The mediator, *National Pride*, is the answer from the same question, asking how proud

Table 6.2 OLS Models with Political Online Commenting as DV

	Dependent variable:		
	Political Commenting Online		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	−0.051* (0.030)	−0.022 (0.030)	−0.030 (0.031)
Communist	0.219 (0.134)	0.310** (0.138)	0.278** (0.138)
Decline Answer	−0.096 (0.160)	0.008 (0.178)	0.051 (0.181)
DPP	−0.056 (0.225)	−0.196 (0.244)	−0.267 (0.243)
Don't Know	−0.043 (0.134)	−0.081 (0.138)	−0.104 (0.144)
Innovation	0.435*** (0.142)	0.443*** (0.141)	0.386*** (0.141)
Komeito	−0.035 (0.120)	−0.001 (0.120)	0.006 (0.122)
LDP	0.042 (0.090)	0.062 (0.091)	0.083 (0.096)
party_facNoParty	0.007 (0.091)	−0.024 (0.093)	0.009 (0.095)
Other Parties	0.499** (0.237)	0.389* (0.230)	0.316 (0.242)
Reiwa	0.085 (0.324)	−0.112 (0.359)	−0.181 (0.356)
SDP	−0.047 (0.269)	0.051 (0.260)	0.045 (0.280)
Female		−0.159*** (0.041)	−0.118*** (0.042)
Age		−0.008*** (0.001)	−0.006*** (0.002)
Employed		−0.026 (0.049)	−0.038 (0.049)
Education		0.033** (0.014)	0.004 (0.015)
Income		0.012 (0.015)	0.008 (0.015)
Sat. Gov.			−0.0003 (0.031)
Econ. Grieve.			0.024 (0.027)
Pol. Interest			0.120*** (0.029)
Internet Use			0.037*** (0.009)
Constant	1.544*** (0.126)	1.707*** (0.210)	1.182*** (0.259)
Observations	995	922	894
R^2	0.025	0.102	0.141
Adjusted R^2	0.014	0.085	0.120
Residual Std. Error	0.625 (df = 982)	0.602 (df = 904)	0.594 (df = 872)
F Statistic	2.138** (df = 12; 982)	6.039*** (df = 17; 904)	6.792*** (df = 21; 872)
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

to be a citizen of Japan. The dependent variable, political participation, is again the *Weighted Participation Index* derived from principal component analysis of various participation-related items.

Control variables incorporated into the model include gender, age, employment status, education level, personal and national economic evaluations, government satisfaction, political interest, and internet use, all in the same was as the previous models. These variables are included to account for potential confounding factors that may influence both national pride and political participation.

The model demonstrates a satisfactory fit, with 756 observations and 23 estimated parameters. Bootstrap standard errors were calculated with 1,000 replications to ensure robust inference. The visualized path diagram in Figure 6.7 presents standardized coefficients, which allow for easier in-

terpretation of the relative strength of effects across variables with different measurement scales. In contrast, the table that follows displays unstandardized estimates, which retain the original scale of each variable and are more suitable for precise interpretation of effect sizes in real-world terms. Although the two versions differ numerically, they reflect the same underlying patterns and statistical significance, and the table with the standardized estimates is also presented in the Appendix.

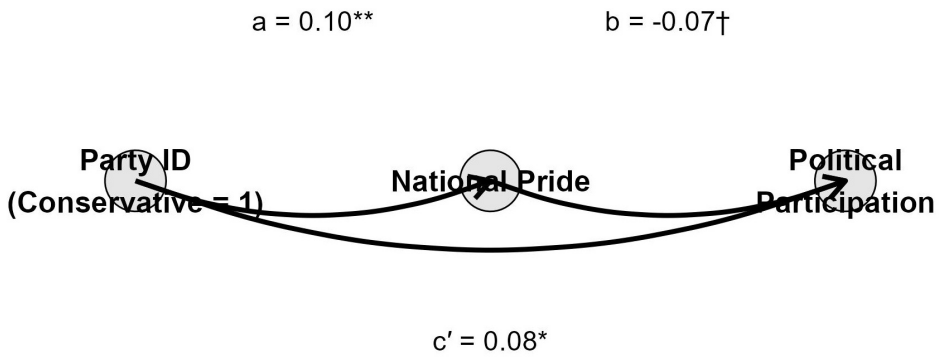

Figure 6.7 Path Coefficients from Mediation Model

The mediation model visualized through a path diagram in Figure 6.7 illustrates the relationships between party identification, national pride, and political participation. In this diagram, three key paths are depicted: the a-path represents the effect of party identification on national pride; the b-path captures the effect of national pride on political participation; and the c'-path denotes the direct effect of party identification on political participation after accounting for national pride as a mediator. Each arrow in the diagram corresponds to one of these paths, with the associated standardized coefficients (β) and significance levels indicated above the arrows for clarity.

The a-path ($\beta = 0.10$, $p < .01$) shows that individuals who support conservative parties exhibit significantly higher levels of national pride compared to those with no party affiliation. The b-path ($\beta = -0.07$, $p < .10$) indicates a marginally significant negative relationship between national pride and political participation, suggesting that higher pride may slightly discourage political engagement. Finally, the c'-path ($\beta = 0.08$, $p < .05$) reflects a positive and statistically significant direct effect of conservative identification on political participation, independent of national pride. In sum,

the diagram captures both the mediating role of national pride and the enduring direct influence of political identity on civic participation.

These findings further suggest that political ideology plays a central role in shaping not only the relationship between national pride and participation but also the structure of civic disengagement. While conservatives tend to report higher levels of national pride, this pride is associated with lower political participation, resulting in a negative indirect effect. This asymmetry implies that expressions of pride function differently across ideological lines—serving more as an identity signal for conservatives than a participatory motivator. The divergence in both direction and intensity raises broader concerns about representational imbalance and selective mobilization within Japan's political landscape.

Table 6.3 Significant Regression Paths from the Mediation Model

Path	Estimate	Std. Error	p-value
National Pride ∼ Conservative Party	0.139**	0.053	0.009
National Pride ∼ Gender (Female = 1)	0.139**	0.050	0.005
National Pride ∼ Age	0.008***	0.002	0.000
National Pride ∼ Government Satisfaction	0.176***	0.036	0.000
National Pride ∼ Economic Grievance	-0.069*	0.033	0.039
National Pride ∼ Income	0.033†	0.019	0.079
Political Participation ∼ Conservative Party	0.310*	0.143	0.030
Political Participation ∼ Gender (Female = 1)	-0.455**	0.148	0.002
Political Participation ∼ National Pride	-0.200†	0.112	0.076
Political Participation ∼ Political Interest	0.691***	0.100	0.000
Political Participation ∼ Internet Use	0.110***	0.030	0.000

Note: $^{\dagger}p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

In terms of key results in Table 6.3, the path from conservative party identification to national pride is positive and statistically significant (unstandardized estimate = 0.139, p = 0.009), suggesting that supporters of conservative parties tend to express higher levels of national pride compared to those with no party affiliation. National pride, in turn, is negatively associated with political participation (estimate = −0.200, p = 0.076), although this effect is only marginally significant. The direct path from conservative party identification to political participation remains positive and statistically significant (estimate = 0.310, p = 0.030), indicating that conservative supporters are

more likely to participate in politics regardless of their level of national pride.

Several control variables also show meaningful associations. Female respondents reported significantly higher national pride (estimate = 0.139, p = 0.005) but lower political participation (estimate = −0.455, p = 0.002). Age and satisfaction with the government were positively associated with national pride, while a negative perception of the national economy predicted lower pride. Political interest and internet use were both strong and significant predictors of political participation.

To assess whether the relationship between national pride and political participation differs by party affiliation, I also conducted a moderated mediation analysis including the interaction term between party affiliation and national pride. The interaction term was not statistically significant, which means that national pride marginally decreased the political participation of Japanese respondents for both those who feel close to the conservative parties or no parties at all. The plot showing the effect of national pride on political participation, indifferent with the political ideology of being conservative or non-conservative, is provided in the Appendix. As a robustness check, I also fit simple OLS interaction models with all the party affiliations and national pride as the two interaction terms, instead of the mediation model using the binary variable of conservative and non-conservative. The full results in the Appendix, however, show similar results with the main OLS and mediation models.

Taken together, the results suggest that while national pride plays a partial mediating role between conservative identification and political participation, the direct link between party identity and participation remains strong. This implies that political identity itself may be a more powerful motivator for civic engagement than generalized national sentiment.

6.5 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter explored the dynamics of everyday nationalism in Japan, with a particular focus on online discourse shaped by anti-Korean sentiment. Drawing from a dataset scraped from the "Hangul" board of 5ch—a fringe yet revealing digital space often associated with far-right netizens—the analysis identified prevalent themes and lexical patterns in expressions of outgroup hostility. The most frequent words, including "韓国" (Korea), "朝鮮" (an outdated, derogatory term for Ko-

rea), "チョン" (a slur for Koreans), and "謝罪" (apology), revealed not only deep-rooted animosity but also how Korean others are discursively constructed as a threat to Japanese identity, pride, and morality. Representative comments further illustrated how nationalist narratives are circulated as memes, blending satire, misinformation, and historical revisionism to reassert Japan's moral, imperial, and civilizational superiority. These findings align with previous studies that show how xenophobic discourses have been routinized and even commercialized in Japan's public sphere, particularly through phenomena like the Kenkan (hate-Korea) literature boom and the reproduction of racialized memes in popular media (Kim, 2021; Grimaldi, 2022).

Quantitative models using survey data provided only partial support for the hypothesis that nationalism motivates political participation among Japanese conservatives. While affiliation with far-right parties such as the Japan Innovation Party was associated with higher participation, traditional conservative identification (e.g., with the LDP) was not. Moreover, mediation analysis showed that although conservative party affiliation increased both national pride and political participation, the feeling of national pride itself negatively mediated participation. This suggests that nationalism in the Japanese case, at least as captured in online discourse and survey responses, is less about civic engagement and more about affective identity performance—particularly through the expression of superiority over external others.

These findings also raise broader concerns about the quality of democratic engagement in Japan. While nationalist sentiment is prevalent in digital spaces and often expressed through exclusionary or affective language, it does not necessarily translate into higher levels of political participation. The gap between intense identity performance and low political engagement among certain ideological groups may signal a form of expressive but disengaged nationalism—one that substitutes symbolic acts for institutional involvement. This trend could weaken participatory norms and further entrench affective polarization, where politics becomes a venue for signaling loyalty rather than enacting collective action.

Importantly, the findings contribute to the broader dissertation project by highlighting a distinct trajectory of everyday nationalism in Japan compared to Korea. Although both countries are

ethnically homogeneous and tend to define their national identity against neighboring outgroups, Japan's case is shaped by the longstanding domestic presence of Zainichi Koreans. The existence of this internalized outgroup sharpens anti-Korean sentiment, making it more pervasive and personalized than in Korea, where nationalism more often targets external historical grievances. As observed in both qualitative and quantitative analyses, Japanese online nationalism appears particularly entangled with the presence of ethnic Koreans within Japanese society, leading to a fusion of racialized resentment and imperial nostalgia that is less politically participatory but more symbolically charged.

Finally, while the focus on 5ch offers valuable insight into the raw, unfiltered expressions of everyday nationalism, it also presents certain limitations. As an anonymous forum often populated by extreme or fringe voices, 5ch cannot be assumed to represent the general Japanese population. Future research would benefit from examining other platforms—such as mainstream social media (e.g., Twitter, YouTube comments) or comment section in the online news pages in Yahoo Japan, the most widely accessed news portal in Japan—to capture a broader and more nuanced spectrum of nationalist discourse. Nonetheless, the findings presented here demonstrate how digital spaces—even marginal ones—function as crucial arenas for the everyday reproduction of nationalist identities through mundane, repeated, and emotionally charged practices of outgroup boundary-making.

Additionally, while the current dataset scraped from the Hangul board spans several years and continues to grow with new threads added daily, I have not conducted a longitudinal analysis. As shown in Chapter 3, where the World Cup triggered nationalist reactions in Korean online communities, it would be meaningful to investigate whether similar events provoke particular types of messages on 5ch or other Japanese platforms.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In late 2024, after Donald Trump's reelection campaign reignited nationalist economic rhetoric and protectionist trade policies, a curious episode unfolded in Canadian cafés: baristas began renaming the "Americano" as a "Canadiano." What began as a small, cheeky act of menu rebranding quickly spread across social media, sparking debates about national pride, economic retaliation, and symbolic politics. Though lighthearted on the surface, the incident captured a core dynamic of contemporary nationalism—its persistence, emotional resonance, and increasingly everyday form. National identity was not fully invoked by state institutions or war memorials, while it started from the actions of political figures, but spread and reinterpreted by coffee menus and meme culture. And yet, the symbolism was unmistakably political.

This moment is neither exceptional nor isolated. Despite early predictions that globalization and interdependence would erode national boundaries, nationalism has proven to be remarkably adaptive. Rather than disappearing, it has resurfaced in new forms—emotional, affective, and digitally mediated. Even existential global threats such as climate change, which require transnational cooperation, are routinely filtered through national interests, frames, and symbols. Whether in vaccine nationalism during the COVID-19 pandemic or competitive climate policy narratives between countries, the nation remains the dominant reference point for interpreting crisis, allocating resources, and performing belonging.

This dissertation emerged from such a landscape. It seeks to understand how nationalism, long studied as a top-down ideology or elite discourse, operates in everyday lives—through feelings, symbols, informal speech, and spontaneous political judgment. By focusing on Korea and Japan, two ethnonationally homogeneous societies with vivid historical rivalries and active digital public, this study offers insight into how national sentiment is experienced, expressed, and acted upon by ordinary people. It asks: How is national pride felt differently across ideological groups? How are outgroups represented and moralized in anonymous online spaces? When does exclusionary rhetoric translate into political behavior—and when does it not?

In answering these questions, the dissertation places everyday nationalism at the center of political life. It argues that national identity is not just a story we are told—it is a story we tell ourselves, perform with others, and negotiate in relation to broader political, historical, and technological currents. The following sections revisit the key empirical findings of the dissertation, reflect on their contributions to existing theory and methods, and explore new possibilities for future inquiry into the affective and digital life of nationalism.

7.1 Revisiting the Core Findings

This dissertation has shown that nationalism in Japan and Korea does not work as a stable belief system or consistent ideology. Instead, it changes depending on how people see themselves in relation to the nation—whether they feel proud, angry, disconnected, or threatened. These emotions do not work the same way for everyone. What encourages action for some might cause withdrawal for others. Online spaces especially show how national identity is performed in everyday life, sometimes reinforcing group pride, and other times drawing sharp lines between ingroups and outgroups.

Chapter 3 looked at how national pride affects political participation in South Korea. The analysis found that the same feeling—being proud of the nation—had very different meanings depending on political ideology. Conservatives were more active when they felt proud, seeing their engagement as loyalty to the country. Liberals, on the other hand, were more likely to participate when their pride was low, expressing dissatisfaction or resistance. This difference shows that national pride is not just a warm feeling, but a signal of how people relate to their state. It can mean support for the system or a desire to change it, depending on who is feeling it and why.

Chapter 4 examined how ordinary people express nationalism online, using comments from the 2022 World Cup. Even though Korea did not compete directly with Japan, many users expressed strong anti-Japanese sentiment, often linking sports with historical grievances. The analysis found that these moments reactivated collective memories and sharpened symbolic boundaries. But these were not the only forms of nationalism observed. When talking about Korea's own team, users showed pride and belonging—even in defeat. This suggests that everyday nationalism is not just reactive or hostile. It's shaped by long-term perceptions of who "we" are, who "they" are, and how

those boundaries have been built over time.

Chapter 5 tested how these everyday expressions of nationalism—like the ones seen online—might influence political attitudes. A survey experiment exposed participants to either ingroup-affirming or outgroup-mocking messages drawn from real online content, then asked about their views on policy issues. Interestingly, those who saw outgroup-based cues—such as mockery of Japan—were less likely to support government restrictions on imports from Fukushima, contrary to the initial expectation. Rather than heightening suspicion or hardline preferences, the treatment may have triggered discomfort or a sense of overreaction. Meanwhile, respondents who visited online communities more often—those likely to be regularly exposed to everyday nationalism—were more supportive of militarization and domestic charities. These findings suggest that while the immediate impact of a single message may be complex or even counterintuitive, sustained exposure to nationalist discourse may gradually shape how people view their national ingroup and policy priorities.

Chapter 6 turned to Japan to examine how anti-Korean discourse appears in anonymous forums. The data showed repeated patterns of exclusion and hostility, often built around ideas of national superiority and historical victimhood. However, the analysis of survey responses proved that these emotions did not always translate into political behavior. The results suggest that in many cases, nationalism online is more about identity performance than political action. In other words, people express who they are and how they feel about the nation, but that does not always mean they act on it politically.

Taken together, these findings support the idea that nationalism is not a fixed ideology or a set of consistent values. Instead, it is a flexible emotional framework shaped by context—by political beliefs, historical narratives, and everyday experiences. Emotions like pride, anger, or grievance do not just reflect how people feel; they help shape how they define national belonging, draw the line between "us" and "them," and decide whether to engage or stay silent. These emotions show up in protests, survey answers, and online comments, but their meanings—and their effects—depend on who is expressing them, in what space, and under what conditions.

Overall, this dissertation shows that everyday nationalism is not just background noise. It is something people feel, speak, and live through in real time—especially online. Even when it looks small or symbolic, it can shape how people understand their place in the nation and what they think that nation should be. That is why nationalism remains powerful—not because everyone agrees on it, but because it keeps finding new ways to matter.

7.2 Theoretical, Empirical, and Methodological Contributions

This dissertation makes four interrelated contributions to the study of nationalism and political behavior. Theoretically, it builds on a constructivist understanding of nationalism, emphasizing how national identity is shaped through context, emotion, and everyday experience rather than through fixed ideology or elite-driven narratives. Drawing on theories from social identity, political psychology, and everyday nationalism studies, the dissertation focuses on how individuals hold an underlying sense of national ingroup and outgroup, how that sense is activated in particular moments, and how different interpretations of the nation lead to different forms of political action. Rather than treating nationalism as a single, consistent variable, this study approaches it as a dynamic practice—something people express, contest, and reproduce in both digital and political spaces. By highlighting variation across ideology, regional experience, and media environments, the theoretical framework helps explain why the same sentiment—such as pride or grievance—can produce opposite political behaviors depending on context.

Importantly, the study contributes to a growing body of work that bridges political psychology and nationalism studies. While scholars have examined the role of emotion in political behavior, few studies have directly explored how emotional attachment to the nation—particularly national pride—varies depending on individuals' ideological orientation or situational context. National pride, for example, can be experienced as conformity or dissent, empowerment or disillusionment. The political consequences of national sentiment thus depend not just on emotional intensity, but on the interpretive frameworks that shape how people understand their relationship to the nation.

Empirically, this dissertation contributes by using original, cross-national data to capture how everyday nationalism is actually expressed and interpreted by ordinary people. The Korean and

Japanese online comments analyzed in Chapters 4 and 6 were independently collected from active public forums, offering rare access to how people discuss national identity, outgroups, and civic responsibility in their own words and outside institutional settings. Because everyday nationalism is often difficult to measure—due to its spontaneous, informal, and symbolic nature—this project takes a step forward by identifying its narrative patterns across countries and across platforms. The analysis not only shows what everyday nationalism looks like on the ground, but also links it to broader political attitudes through survey and experimental data. In doing so, the dissertation moves beyond simply describing nationalist discourse to explaining how it may shape real-world political preferences. This approach, combining new sources of data with quantitative models, provides a concrete way to measure everyday nationalism and examine its political consequences—an area that remains underdeveloped in the existing literature.

Methodologically, the study combines multiple tools to analyze both structured attitudes and unstructured expression. It draws on large-scale surveys, a survey experiment, and computational text analysis to show how different forms of nationalism appear in different spaces—from online forums to survey responses. Each method captures a different side of how nationalism works: the survey helps identify general patterns of political behavior, the experiment isolates causal effects, and the text analysis uncovers latent themes and emotional signals in digital discourse. Together, these methods offer a more comprehensive view of how people live and express nationalism in everyday contexts.

In addition to its theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions, the dissertation offers a regionally grounded perspective by centering South Korea and Japan—two countries often overlooked in comparative studies of nationalism. Both countries present unique cases in which national identity is shaped by deep historical memory, ethnonational homogeneity, and rising digital discourse. By analyzing nationalism as it is expressed in East Asian contexts, the study challenges Western-centric assumptions in existing literature and demonstrates how emotional and symbolic attachments to the nation play out across different cultural and political environments.

Together, these contributions help move the study of nationalism toward a more grounded

and context-sensitive understanding—one that takes seriously how national identity is shaped, expressed, and acted upon in everyday life.

7.3 Unexplored Dimensions and Future Directions

While this dissertation explores how nationalism is expressed and interpreted in everyday life, it also points to several areas that remain underexamined. These are not gaps that weaken the findings, but rather directions for future work that could build on and expand the study's insights.

One of these areas involves the gendered dynamics of nationalist discourse. Across different chapters, women appeared as active participants in everyday expressions of nationalism—both in survey responses and online activity. On Korean platforms in particular, female users were not just frequent contributors, but often shaped the tone and framing of nationalist messages. Their comments frequently emphasized divisions of national ingroups and outgroups, feelings of embarrassment or pride tied to their or other nations, and strong judgments about whether other countries —especially Japan—were being respectful or fair. These responses show that nationalism was expressed through specific emotional and moral language, shaped by the platform and participant demographics. This challenges the idea that nationalism is mostly driven by male-coded symbols like military strength or elite authority. While past research has often portrayed women as symbolic figures in nationalist projects—such as cultural reproducers or markers of purity—this dissertation highlights their discursive role as producers and moral enforcers of national sentiment. Future work could look more closely at how gender shapes the emotional tone and political meaning of everyday nationalism, especially across different platforms and issue areas.

A second direction for future research concerns how everyday nationalism shifts over time. While this study shows how emotional expressions of nationalism vary by ideology and situation, it does not trace how they change in response to political events. Longitudinal or time-series analysis could help capture those shifts. For instance, while Chapter 1 discussed the 2016–2017 candlelight protests as a moment of civic nationalism, more recent protests in 2023–2024 under President Yoon Suk-yeol show that nationalist framing continues to play a central role in Korean political life. As before, protesters used national symbols and moral language to claim legitimacy. But this time, the

symbols were more fragmented—Taegukgi flags appeared alongside American and even Japanese flags, complicating the line between national pride and transnational alignment. Analyzing how these meanings shift over time could offer a more dynamic picture of how everyday nationalism evolves across political cycles.

Finally, although the main focus of this dissertation is Korea and Japan, the concepts developed here can apply to other cases with different histories and institutions. Countries like Poland, Hungary, Turkey, or China—where nationalism is shaped by ethnic homogeneity, state authority, and external rivalry—may show similar emotional patterns in how people express national belonging online. A cross-national perspective could help explain when and why nationalist emotions lead to civic behavior, and when they remain symbolic. Factors like media infrastructure, protest culture, and elite responsiveness may play an important role.

At the same time, expanding this framework to other contexts may also require new methods. The intensity and speed of online nationalism often escape traditional survey tools. Future studies could combine computational methods like sentiment analysis or time-sensitive scraping with ethnographic or interpretive approaches to better understand how nationalism is lived, expressed, and performed in everyday life.

7.4 Final Reflections

This dissertation began with a simple observation: even in a time of growing global interconnection, nationalism has yet disappeared. If anything, it has become more visible—appearing in pandemic border closures, everyday shopping choices, online memes, and national symbols that show up in unexpected places. However, these expressions are not always consistent. They can signal pride or grievance, unity or exclusion, resistance or obedience. It is in these contradictions that everyday nationalism takes shape.

By focusing on emotion, identity, and informal discourse, this study has tried to understand how nationalism is felt and expressed by ordinary people—not just by political leaders or institutions. The stories told in protest chants, online posts, or anonymous forums may seem small or passing, but they matter. They shape how people imagine their nation, how they draw boundaries, and how

they decide who belongs. In a digital environment where visibility is constant and emotions spread quickly, these narratives are not just reactions—they are part of how people perform identity and make sense of power.

The findings here challenge the idea that nationalism always motivates participation or lines up neatly with ideology. National pride does not always lead people to act; sometimes it reflects loyalty, other times disappointment. Online, nationalist expression can be loud and angry, but also moral, ironic, or even loving. What unites these expressions is that they mark emotional positions —and those positions shape how people think about politics, even if they do not act.

These dynamics have real implications for democracy. As the lines between emotion, civic expression, and digital performance blur, it becomes more important to pay attention to how nationalism works in everyday life. It affects how people feel about immigration, war, trade, and elections. It shapes who gets seen as a legitimate citizen, what stories are told about the nation, and what grievances are treated as real.

At the same time, this research leaves open new questions. As political polarization and geopolitical anxiety grow, how will nationalism respond? Will expressions of national identity lead to action—or just frustration? Will digital spaces become places for democratic participation, or distractions from it? And who decides what the nation means going forward—political leaders, online communities, or algorithms?

These questions cannot all be answered here. But this study shows one thing clearly: nationalism does not just live in state institutions or public speeches. It is carried in people's feelings, habits, and everyday conversations. It is shaped by shared frustrations, passing jokes, and moral claims about what the country should be. That's the version of nationalism this dissertation has tried to understand.

In a world where transnational problems demand shared solutions—but nationalist ideas still define who belongs—paying attention to everyday nationalism is not just useful. It is necessary.

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APPENDIX A: SUPPLEMENTARY FOR CHAPTER 3

This scree plot in Figure A1 presents the proportion of cumulative variance explained by each component in the principal component analysis of nine political participation variables. The plot indicates a steep drop after the first dimension, suggesting that a single dominant factor underlies these items. This supports the use of a unidimensional additive index.

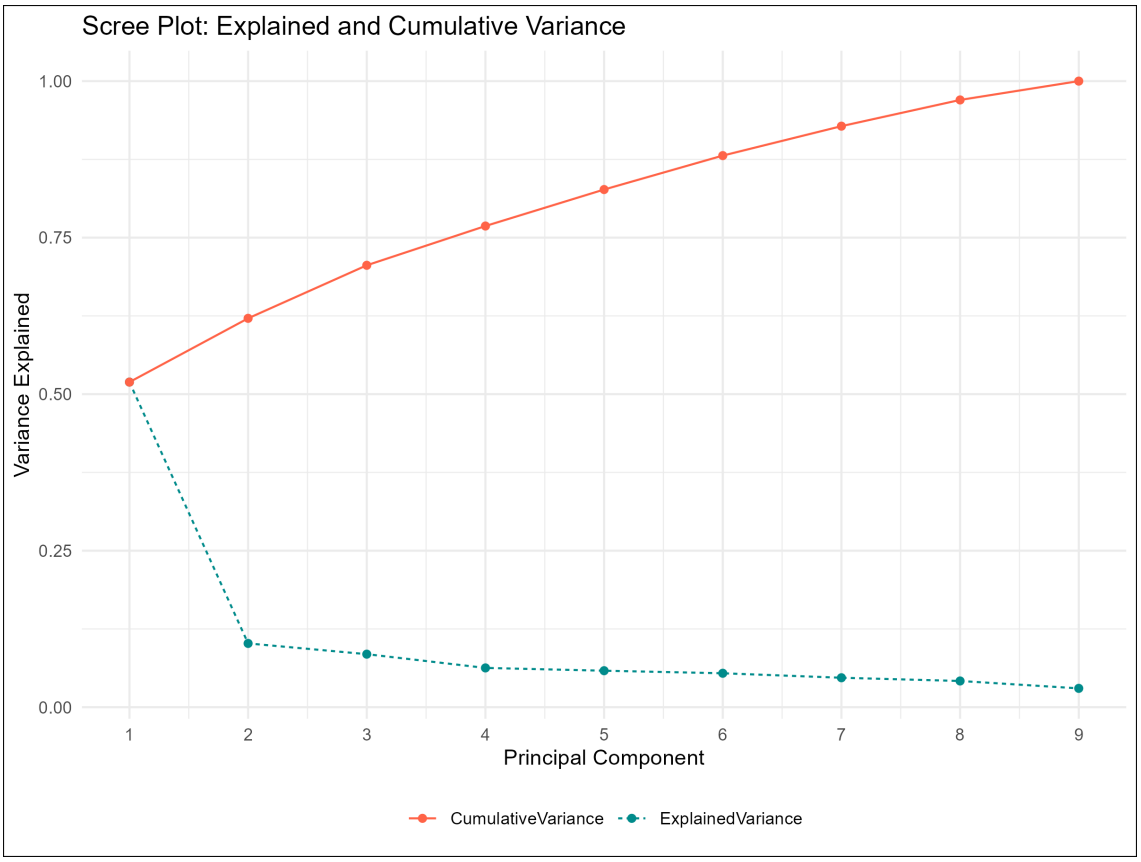

Figure A1 Principal Component Analysis, Scree Plot

Figure A2 visualizes how each of the nine political participation items loads onto the first two principal components. Most variables align closely with the first dimension, with minimal dispersion along the second, further supporting the validity of combining them into a single index. The orientation of variables also illustrates their shared directionality in capturing participatory tendencies.

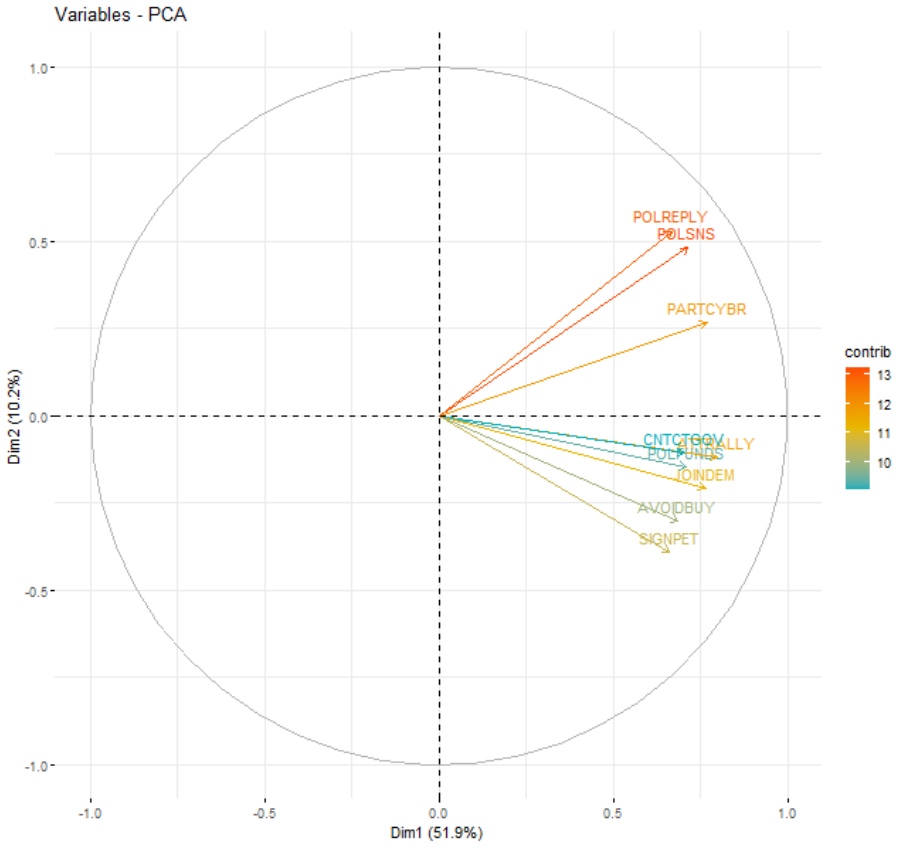

Figure A2 Principal Component Analysis, Variables Plot

To validate the dimensionality of political participation, I conducted a factor analysis using nine activity items. The result in Table A1 shows that all items load strongly onto a single factor, with factor loadings ranging from 0.60 to 0.79 and a proportion of explained variance at 46%. This supports the use of a unified index of political participation across these diverse activities.

Table A1 Factor 1 Analysis of Political Activities

	Factor 1
Signing Petitions	0.602
Boycotting Products	0.625
Attending Protests	0.746
Attending Rallies	0.789
Contacting Politicians	0.663
Donating or Raising Funds	0.660
Posting Political Materials on SNS	0.663
Posting Political Comments	0.723
Participating Online Group Activities	0.609
SS loadings	*4.141*
Proportion Variance	*0.460*
p-value	*2.8e-174*

Table A2 presents the multilevel models results using the counted number of political activities that the respondents have ever participated in. The significance and size of the effects are very similar to the original model using the PCA-loaded index. The variances explained by the region-level intercepts and national pride variables are almost identical with the orignal models.

Tables A3 and A4 present the multilevel model analysis results with the dependent variable including voting. When the respondent voted in the most recent national election at the time of the survey, it was counted as 1 and summed up to the additive index. Again, the coefficients for the independent and control variables turn out to be similar, and the region does not have statistically significant variance.

Table A2 Results of Multilevel Models, Number of Participated Activities

	Dependent variable:		
	Number of Participated Activities		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	−0.208**	−0.044	−0.018
	(0.100)	(0.106)	(0.113)
Female		0.029	0.051
		(0.080)	(0.081)
Age		−0.003	−0.003
		(0.003)	(0.003)
Married		−0.011	0.010
		(0.087)	(0.088)
Employed		0.257***	0.258***
		(0.084)	(0.085)
Education		0.233***	0.234***
		(0.034)	(0.034)
Income		0.030***	0.033***
		(0.008)	(0.008)
Favor Gov.			0.002
			(0.037)
Econ. Grievance			−0.056
			(0.038)
Constant	−85.522	−114.139	−111.359
	(77.532)	(78.590)	(85.982)
Observations	2,051	1,832	1,803
Log Likelihood	−4,050.894	−3,544.664	−3,491.245
Akaike Inf. Crit.	8,115.787	7,115.328	7,012.489
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	8,155.170	7,186.999	7,094.947
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A3 Results of Multilevel Model, Including Voting in DV

	Dependent variable:			
	Participated Activities, Including Voting			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
National Pride	−0.166	−0.023	−0.022	−0.001
	(0.108)	(0.113)	(0.106)	(0.115)
Female		0.044	0.039	0.054
		(0.085)	(0.084)	(0.084)
Age		0.002	0.005	0.004
		(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Married		0.001	0.005	0.027
		(0.091)	(0.090)	(0.091)
Employed		0.278***	0.246***	0.243***
		(0.089)	(0.088)	(0.089)
Education		0.248***	0.239***	0.238***
		(0.034)	(0.033)	(0.034)
Income		0.036***	0.036***	0.036***
		(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.009)
Political Ideology			−0.304***	−0.304***
			(0.043)	(0.044)
Favor Gov.				−0.008
				(0.037)
Economic Grievance				0.028
				(0.039)
Constant	2.478***	0.567	1.369***	1.253**
	(0.450)	(0.495)	(0.487)	(0.546)
Observations	2,051	1,835	1,835	1,806
Log Likelihood	−4,155.435	−3,651.997	−3,630.051	−3,576.150
Akaike Inf. Crit.	8,322.869	7,327.993	7,286.101	7,182.301
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	8,356.626	7,394.171	7,357.793	7,264.784
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A4 Variance Components of Multilevel Model Including Voting

	Var.	SD	SE	Corr	Perc.
Region (Intercept)	1.02127	1.011	0.78313		0.2517
Region (National Pride)	0.05807	0.241	0.04997	-1.00	0.0143
Residual	2.97781	1.726	0.09968		0.734

Figure A3 depicts the full results of the interaction model, where national pride and political ideology interact. It shows a clear pattern that the negative impact of national pride on political engagement is strongest for the "very liberal" people, and it gets weaker for "liberal" and almost none for "neutral." Then, the impact turns to be positive for "conservative" ones, and becomes more strongly positive for "very conservative."

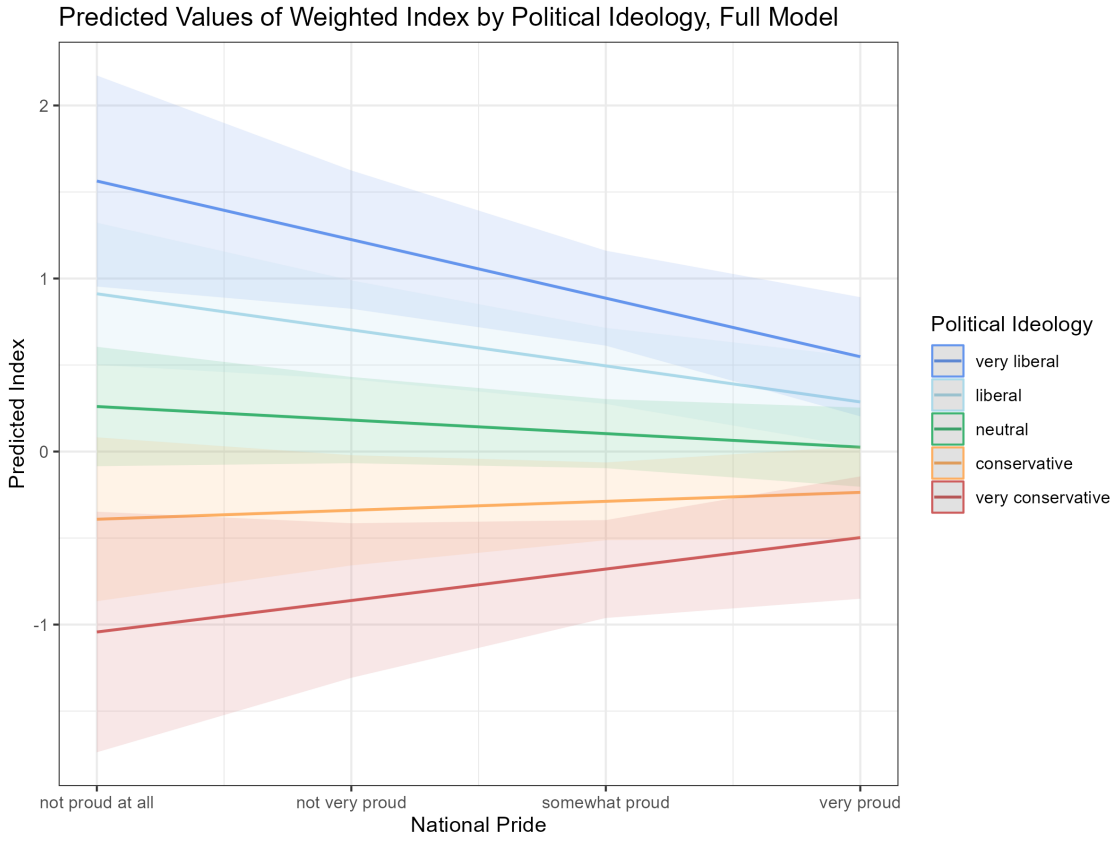

Figure A3 Predicted Number of Participated Activities, OLS Interaction Model, Full

APPENDIX B: SUPPLEMENTARY FOR CHAPTER 4

Figure B1 presents the results of model selection diagnostics for Structural Topic Modeling (STM), including held-out likelihood, semantic coherence, residuals, and lower bound. Based on a balanced consideration of these metrics, the number of topics was set to 12, which offers a good tradeoff between model interpretability and statistical fit.

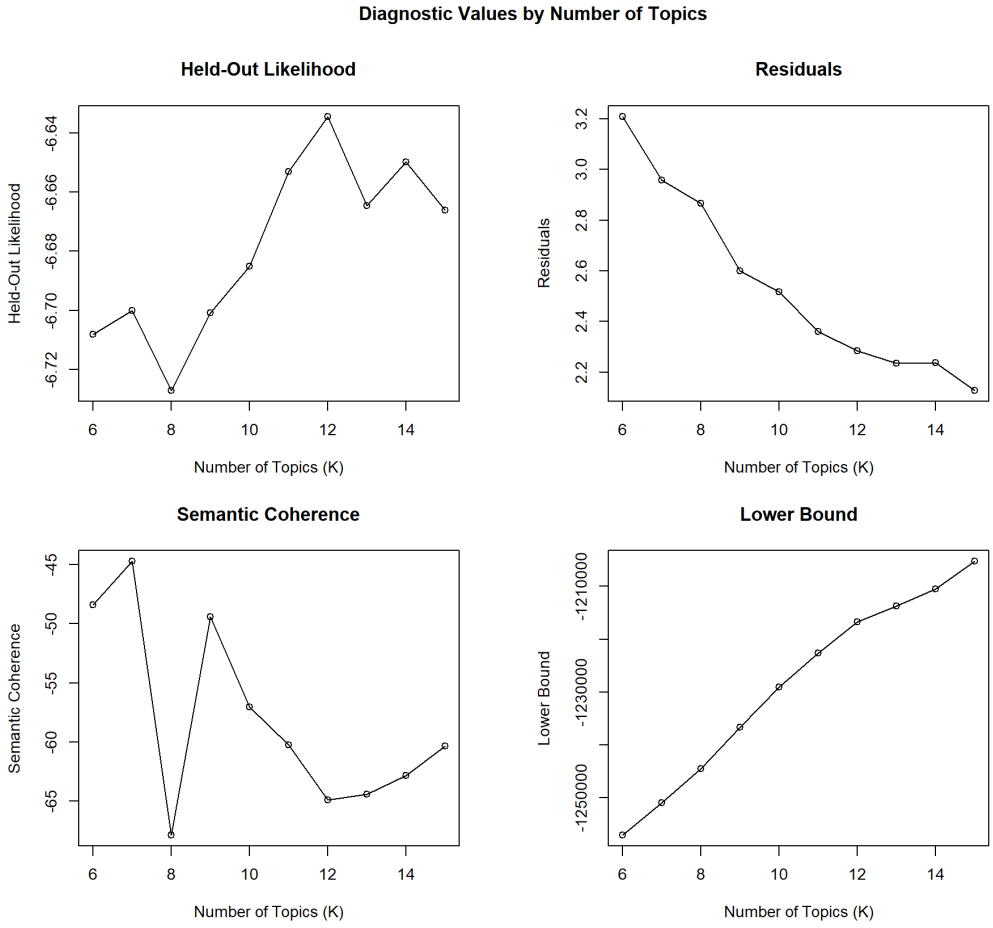

Figure B1 Analysis of Finding the Topic Numbers of the Structural Topic Model

Table B1 presents the full coefficient estimates from the Structural Topic Model (STM), showing how the prevalence of each topic varies depending on the topical nations of the comments. The table includes estimates and standard errors for Korea (KOR) and other countries (OTHERS), with Japan (JPN) as the reference category. Positive or negative coefficients indicate whether a given topic is more or less likely to appear in comments that refer to Korea or other nations, relative to Japan.

Table B1 Full Coefficient Estimates of Topics

	Coefficient Estimates (Standard Errors)		
	Intercept	KOR	OTHERS
Topic 1	0.007182	0.026852	0.061745*
	(0.021889)	(0.023429)	(0.025662)
Topic 2	0.17044***	−0.09808*	−0.05055
	(0.04025)	(0.04181)	(0.04500)
Topic 3	0.05379	0.01892	−0.02015
	(0.02898)	(0.02995)	(0.03215)
Topic 4	0.027959	0.093186*	0.009201
	(0.034372)	(0.036346)	(0.038654)
Topic 5	0.31539***	−0.24492***	−0.18572***
	(0.04818)	(0.05029)	(0.05058)
Topic 6	0.0324168	0.0501123	0.0005539
	(0.0326039)	(0.0339278)	(0.0359794)
Topic 7	0.01493	0.06613*	0.08112*
	(0.03010)	(0.03228)	(0.03655)
Topic 8	0.18605***	−0.16633***	−0.05334
	(0.03010)	(0.03123)	(0.03455)
Topic 9	0.05595	0.11902**	0.03446
	(0.04017)	(0.04200)	(0.04603)
Topic 10	0.06312*	−0.01893	0.06304
	(0.03131)	(0.03199)	(0.03434)
Topic 11	0.05365	0.04557	0.01466
	(0.03657)	(0.03979)	(0.04110)
Topic 12	0.01914	0.10820**	0.04581
	(0.03071)	(0.03284)	(0.03518)

Note: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

Figure B2 presents an overview of the 12 topics extracted through structural topic modeling, arranged by their expected topic proportions across the entire corpus. For each topic, the top 10 most frequent words are displayed in both Korean (original language) and their English translations.

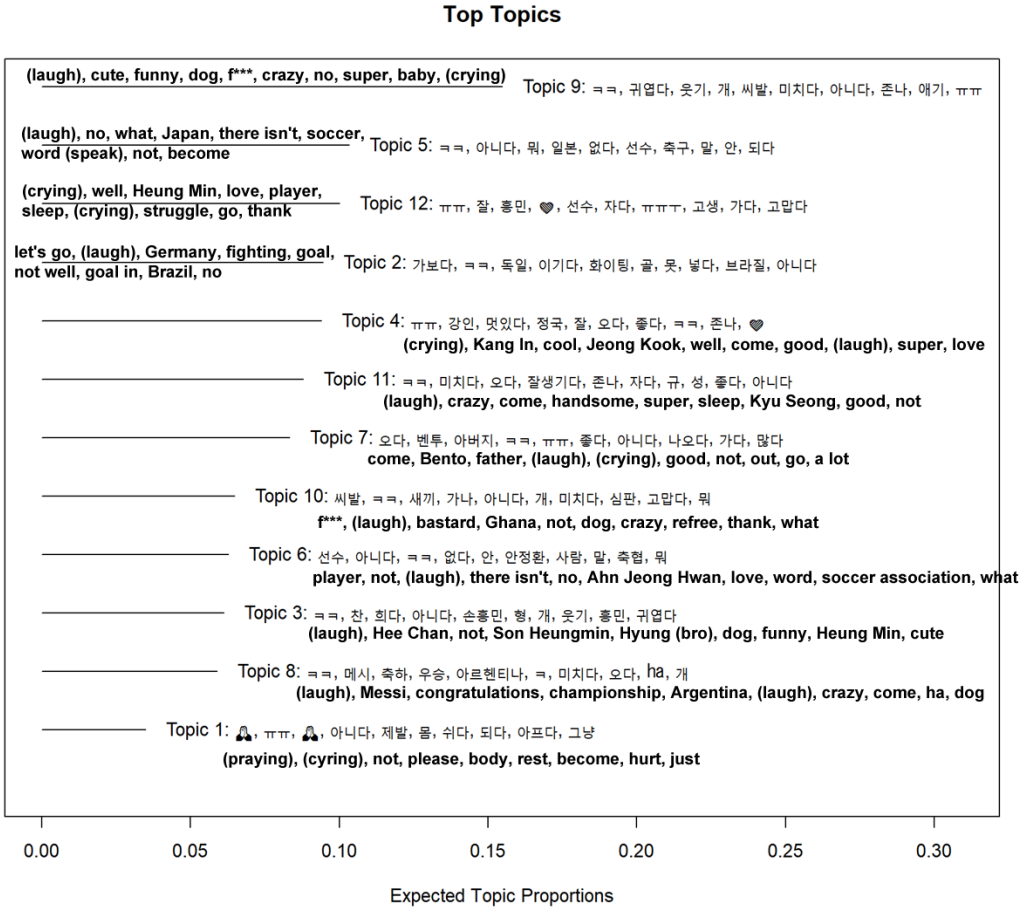

Figure B2 Figure of All 12 Topics and Top 10 Words

Figure B3 displays the estimated differences in topic prevalence between comments about "Other" nations and those about "KOR" (South Korea). Each point represents a topic's estimated difference, with confidence intervals indicating statistical significance. Positive values (to the right) suggest the topic appears more frequently in comments about South Korea, while negative values (to the left) indicate greater prevalence in comments about other nations.

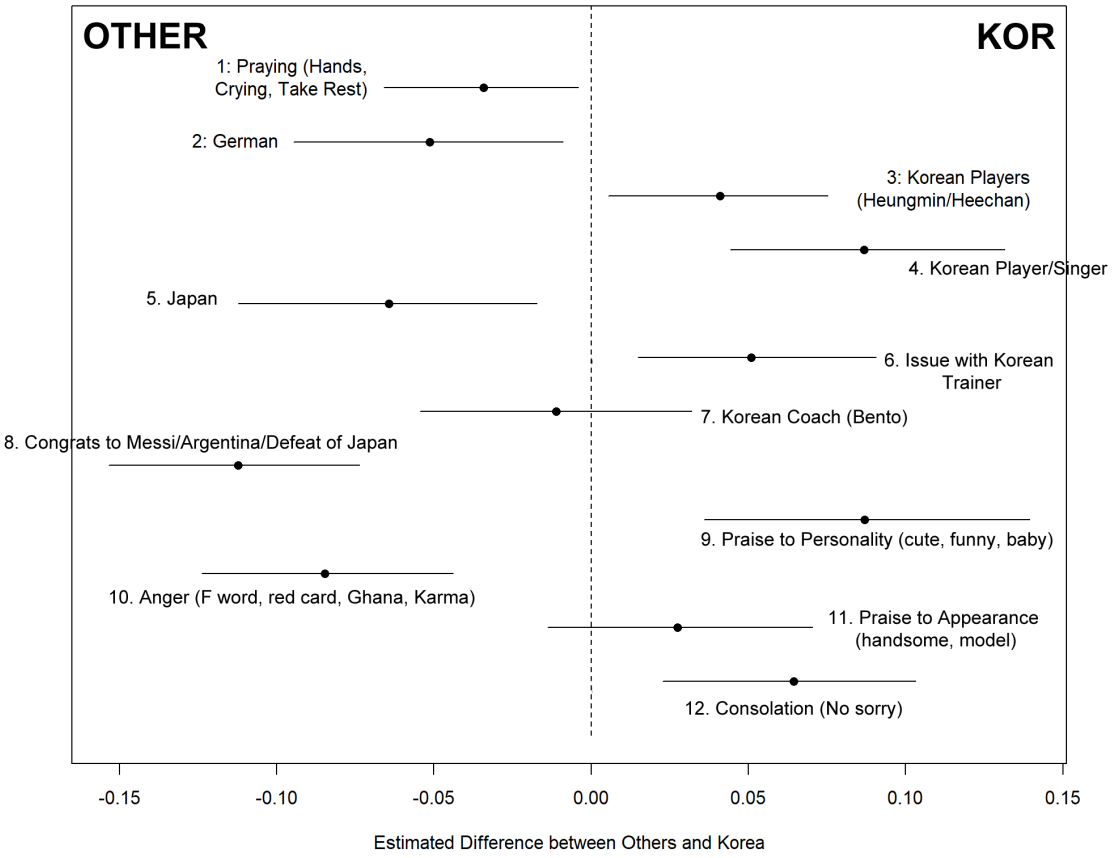

Figure B3 The Topic Distribution between Others and Korea

Figures B4–B6 display representative user comments from topics that show statistically significant prevalence in reactions to specific countries. Figure B4 includes examples from topics 9 and 12, which are more prominent in discussions about South Korea. Figure B5 presents comments from topics 5 and 8, associated with Japan, while Figure B6 highlights topics 10, 2, and 1, which appear more frequently in comments about "Other" countries. Each comment is shown with its English translation to illustrate how everyday nationalist sentiments are expressed in context.

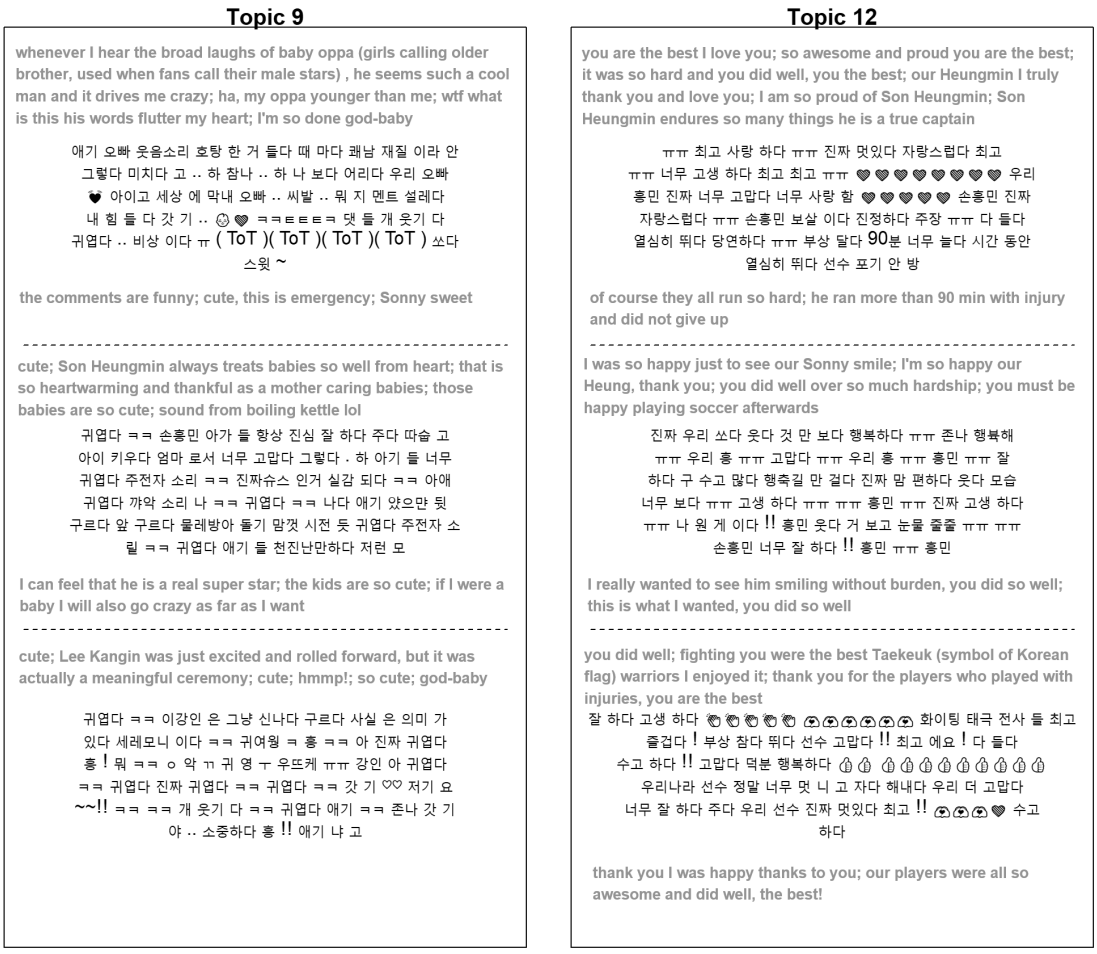

Figure B4 Comments from the Topics relevant to Korea

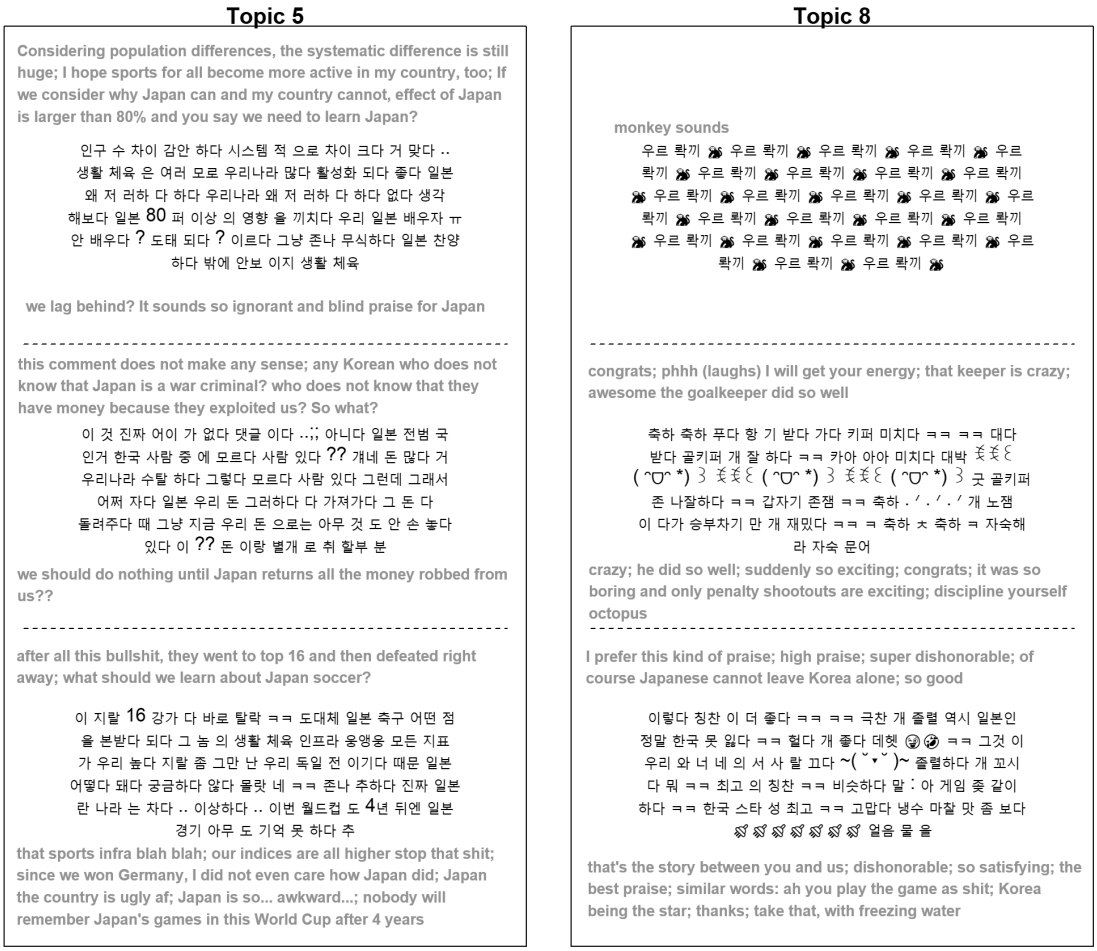

Figure B5 Comments from the Topics relevant to Japan

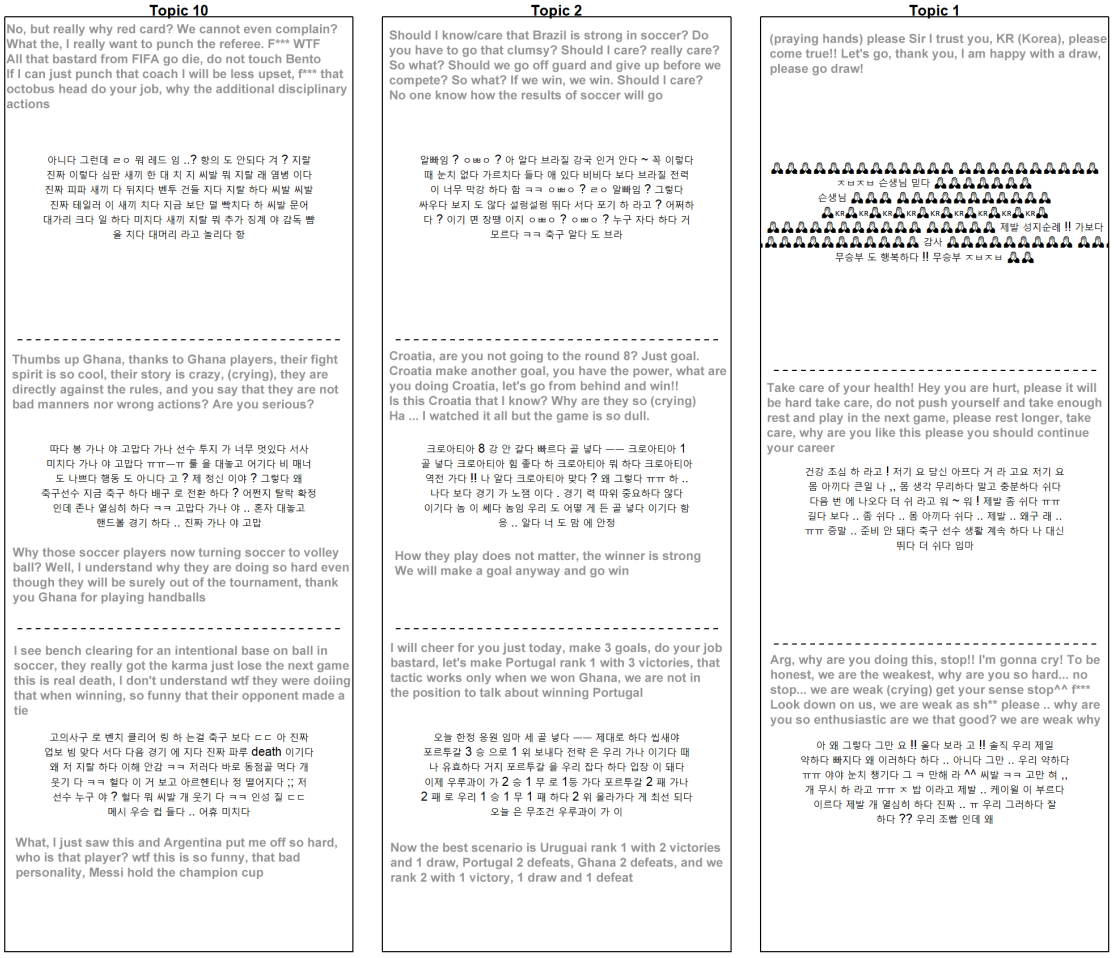

Figure B6 Comments from the Topics relevant to Others

APPENDIX C: SUPPLEMENTARY FOR CHAPTER 5

Figure C1 presents the original Korean-language versions of the experimental treatments used in the survey experiment discussed in Chapter 5. These treatments were translated into English in the main text, but the appendix provides the original wording as it was shown to respondents for transparency.

Figure C1 Survey Treatment in Korean Language

The full questionnaire and codebook used in the survey are available upon request.

APPENDIX D: SUPPLEMENTARY FOR CHAPTER 6

To construct a weighted index of political participation for the Japanese case, I conducted a principal component analysis (PCA) using the AsiaBarometer survey data filtered to include only Japanese respondents. Figure D1 presents the scree plot of the PCA, which shows that the first component captures the majority of the variance across participation items. Figure D2 displays the variable loadings on the first and second dimensions, confirming that the political activity items are largely aligned along a single latent dimension. As in the Korean case (see Appendix A1 and A2), this supports the construction of an additive index that summarizes overall political engagement.

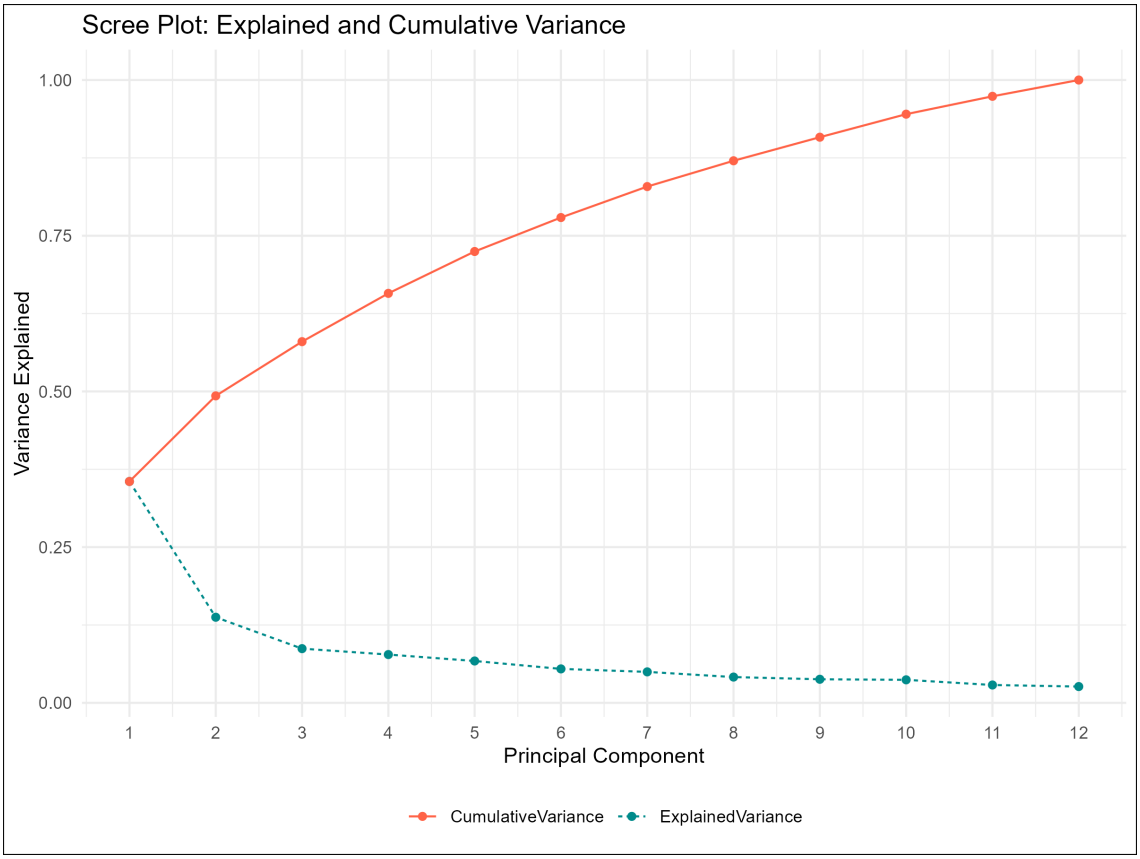

Figure D1 Scree Plot of Principal Component Analysis (Japan Sample, AsiaBarometer)

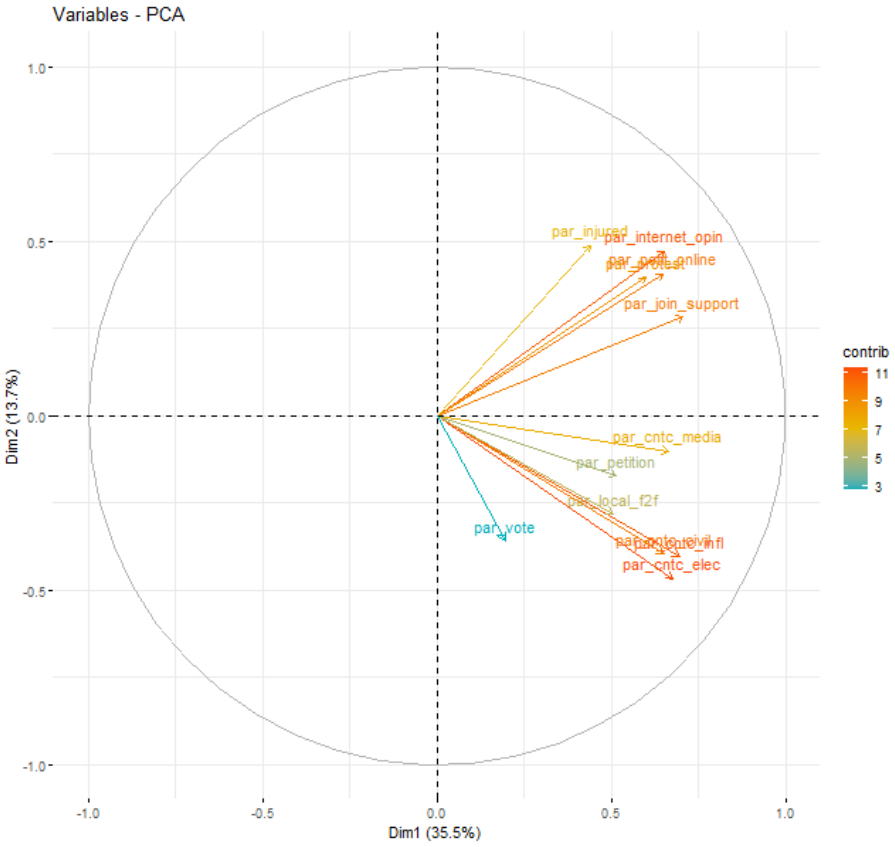

Figure D2 Variable Loadings on Principal Components (Japan Sample, AsiaBarometer)

Table D1 and Table D2 present the results of OLS models using two alternative dependent variables derived from partial indices based on PCA loadings (see Figures D1 and D2). The two indices are constructed as follows: Partial Index 1 includes political activities with high values on both Dimension 1 and Dimension 2, such as signing online petitions, posting political opinions online, joining political support groups, participating in protests, and even being injured during political activities. These represent more resistant and nontraditional forms of political engagement.

In contrast, Partial Index 2 includes activities with high values on Dimension 1 but low values on Dimension 2, such as contacting elected officials, civil servants, influencers, or media about political issues, signing offline petitions, meeting local politicians in person, and voting—representing more conventional and civil modes of participation.

The two indices are moderately correlated ($r = 0.4459$, $p < .001$), suggesting that they capture distinct but related forms of political behavior.

Table D1 OLS results with Resistant/Online Participation as DV

	Dependent variable:		
	Partial Index 1 (High PC1, High PC2)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	−0.125*** (0.035)	−0.100*** (0.035)	−0.102*** (0.036)
LDP	0.049 (0.056)	0.089 (0.057)	0.091 (0.059)
Komeito	−0.021 (0.109)	0.036 (0.108)	−0.0003 (0.108)
CDP	0.029 (0.112)	0.082 (0.112)	0.002 (0.113)
Don't Know	−0.133 (0.139)	−0.123 (0.143)	−0.142 (0.144)
Communist	0.436*** (0.131)	0.571*** (0.134)	0.441*** (0.133)
Innovation	0.537*** (0.139)	0.561*** (0.137)	0.430*** (0.134)
Decline Answer	−0.006 (0.198)	0.192 (0.205)	0.139 (0.208)
DPP	0.159 (0.260)	0.018 (0.266)	−0.135 (0.259)
Other Parties	0.547** (0.260)	0.454* (0.249)	0.365 (0.260)
SDP	−0.110 (0.299)	0.008 (0.288)	−0.095 (0.306)
Reiwa	0.637* (0.366)	0.588 (0.405)	0.376 (0.395)
female		−0.240*** (0.049)	−0.185*** (0.049)
age		−0.007*** (0.002)	−0.005*** (0.002)
Employed		−0.030 (0.058)	−0.039 (0.057)
Education		0.062*** (0.017)	0.021 (0.018)
Income		−0.0002 (0.017)	−0.007 (0.017)
Sat. Gov.			−0.080** (0.036)
Econ. Grieve.			−0.018 (0.032)
Pol. Interest			0.186*** (0.034)
Internet Use			0.042*** (0.011)
Constant	0.348*** (0.117)	0.343 (0.226)	0.066 (0.280)
Observations	934	874	852
R^2	0.049	0.131	0.191
Adjusted R^2	0.037	0.114	0.170
Residual Std. Error	0.725 (df = 921)	0.694 (df = 856)	0.674 (df = 830)
F Statistic	3.951*** (df = 12; 921)	7.610*** (df = 17; 856)	9.323*** (df = 21; 830)
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table D2 OLS results with Traditional/Civil Participation as DV

	Dependent variable:		
	Partial Index 2 (High PC1, Low PC2)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	0.002 (0.031)	−0.005 (0.031)	−0.022 (0.031)
LDP	0.108** (0.049)	0.104** (0.050)	0.063 (0.051)
Komeito	0.260*** (0.096)	0.271*** (0.095)	0.163* (0.093)
CDP	0.248** (0.098)	0.165* (0.098)	0.063 (0.098)
Don't Know	−0.069 (0.121)	0.001 (0.125)	0.066 (0.125)
Communist	0.452*** (0.115)	0.346*** (0.118)	0.222* (0.115)
Innovation	0.263** (0.122)	0.218* (0.120)	0.072 (0.116)
Decline Answer	−0.015 (0.173)	−0.014 (0.181)	−0.030 (0.181)
DPP	0.187 (0.227)	0.183 (0.234)	0.014 (0.225)
Other Parties	0.604*** (0.227)	0.605*** (0.219)	0.464** (0.225)
SDP	0.334 (0.261)	0.247 (0.253)	0.291 (0.266)
Reiwa	0.227 (0.320)	−0.018 (0.356)	−0.143 (0.343)
female		−0.159*** (0.043)	−0.094** (0.042)
age		0.006*** (0.002)	0.007*** (0.002)
Employed		0.026 (0.051)	0.032 (0.050)
Education		0.068*** (0.015)	0.024 (0.015)
Income		0.022 (0.015)	0.018 (0.015)
Sat. Gov.			0.009 (0.031)
Econ. Grieve.			0.051* (0.028)
Pol. Interest			0.226*** (0.030)
Internet Use			0.028*** (0.009)
Constant	−0.112 (0.102)	−0.961*** (0.199)	−1.576*** (0.243)
Observations	934	874	852
R^2	0.036	0.094	0.173
Adjusted R^2	0.024	0.076	0.152
Residual Std. Error	0.634 (df = 921)	0.610 (df = 856)	0.585 (df = 830)
F Statistic	2.901*** (df = 12; 921)	5.238*** (df = 17; 856)	8.262*** (df = 21; 830)
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Figure D3 presents OLS interaction models used as a robustness check. Instead of the mediation framework used in the main analysis, this model includes an interaction term between national pride and party support to assess whether the relationship between pride and political participation differs by partisan alignment. The dependent variable is the full weighted index of participation.

Tables D4 and D5 report OLS interaction models using the two partial indices of political participation as dependent variables. As in Figure D3, the models include an interaction term between national pride and party support, but here the outcomes distinguish between resistant/online participation (Partial Index 1, Table D4) and traditional/civil participation (Partial Index 2, Table D5).

Table D3 Interaction Models, As Robustness Check for Mediated Models

	Dependent variable:		
	Weighted Participation Index		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	−0.351** (0.161)	−0.321** (0.161)	−0.342** (0.164)
LDP	−0.560 (0.758)	−0.252 (0.750)	−0.149 (0.742)
Komeito	−1.441 (1.702)	−1.373 (1.663)	−1.461 (1.617)
CDP	3.092** (1.434)	2.452* (1.450)	1.690 (1.416)
Don't Know	−4.050* (2.195)	−3.468 (2.173)	−3.991* (2.378)
Communist	0.182 (1.214)	−0.083 (1.232)	−0.423 (1.206)
Innovation	−2.161 (2.363)	−4.232 (2.611)	−3.468 (2.517)
Decline Answer	2.812 (2.585)	2.586 (2.663)	2.012 (2.914)
DPP	0.960 (4.378)	1.243 (4.214)	0.286 (4.052)
Other Parties	2.737 (3.620)	1.590 (3.490)	2.093 (3.428)
SDP	5.808 (3.925)	4.271 (3.777)	2.723 (4.070)
Reiwa	3.335 (5.180)	3.224 (5.697)	4.193 (5.488)
female		−0.666*** (0.137)	−0.465*** (0.136)
age		−0.004 (0.005)	0.001 (0.005)
Employed		0.071 (0.162)	0.062 (0.158)
Education		0.199*** (0.048)	0.061 (0.050)
Income		0.050 (0.049)	0.027 (0.048)
Sat. Gov.			−0.087 (0.100)
Econ. Grieve.			0.053 (0.089)
Pol. Interest			0.682*** (0.095)
Internet Use			0.117*** (0.029)
National Pride:LDP	0.259 (0.228)	0.192 (0.226)	0.136 (0.221)
National Pride:Komeito	0.564 (0.499)	0.582 (0.488)	0.535 (0.474)
National Pride:CDP	−0.847* (0.449)	−0.644 (0.452)	−0.504 (0.444)
National Pride:Don't Know	1.139* (0.663)	1.003 (0.648)	1.173* (0.706)
National Pride:Communist	0.439 (0.387)	0.541 (0.390)	0.518 (0.384)
National Pride:Innovation	1.005 (0.676)	1.578** (0.739)	1.227* (0.713)
National Pride:Decline Answer	−1.018 (0.841)	−0.853 (0.890)	−0.657 (0.951)
National Pride:DPP	−0.158 (1.439)	−0.346 (1.382)	−0.206 (1.328)
National Pride:Other Parties	−0.183 (1.093)	0.113 (1.054)	−0.144 (1.022)
National Pride:SDP	−1.724 (1.212)	−1.206 (1.166)	−0.782 (1.327)
National Pride:Reiwa	−0.899 (2.028)	−1.166 (2.387)	−1.804 (2.299)
Constant	0.843* (0.509)	−0.454 (0.739)	−2.033** (0.883)
Observations	934	874	852
R^2	0.061	0.123	0.200
Adjusted R^2	0.038	0.094	0.169
Residual Std. Error	2.022 (df = 910)	1.938 (df = 845)	1.859 (df = 819)
F Statistic	2.587*** (df = 23; 910)	4.227*** (df = 28; 845)	6.407*** (df = 32; 819)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table D4 Interaction Models with Resistant/Online Participation DV

	Dependent variable:		
	Partial Index 1		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	−0.171*** (0.058)	−0.155*** (0.058)	−0.151** (0.059)
LDP	−0.308 (0.272)	−0.257 (0.268)	−0.179 (0.269)
Komeito	−0.710 (0.610)	−0.768 (0.595)	−0.723 (0.586)
CDP	0.380 (0.514)	0.323 (0.519)	0.075 (0.513)
Don't Know	−0.771 (0.787)	−0.681 (0.777)	−0.739 (0.863)
Communist	0.362 (0.435)	0.607 (0.441)	0.481 (0.438)
Innovation	0.277 (0.848)	−0.141 (0.934)	0.044 (0.913)
Decline Answer	1.130 (0.927)	0.707 (0.953)	0.084 (1.057)
DPP	0.576 (1.570)	0.429 (1.508)	0.151 (1.470)
Other Parties	−1.266 (1.299)	−1.865 (1.249)	−1.798 (1.243)
SDP	0.275 (1.408)	−0.204 (1.351)	−0.585 (1.476)
Reiwa	3.557* (1.858)	4.350** (2.038)	4.456** (1.990)
female		−0.230*** (0.049)	−0.176*** (0.049)
age		−0.008*** (0.002)	−0.006*** (0.002)
Employed		−0.026 (0.058)	−0.034 (0.057)
Education		0.061*** (0.017)	0.022 (0.018)
Income		0.001 (0.018)	−0.006 (0.017)
Sat. Gov.			−0.076** (0.036)
Econ. Grieve.			−0.012 (0.032)
Pol. Interest			0.186*** (0.034)
Internet Use			0.041*** (0.011)
National Pride:LDP	0.109 (0.082)	0.107 (0.081)	0.084 (0.080)
National Pride:Komeito	0.208 (0.179)	0.243 (0.175)	0.218 (0.172)
National Pride:CDP	−0.112 (0.161)	−0.074 (0.162)	−0.021 (0.161)
National Pride:Don't Know	0.198 (0.238)	0.172 (0.232)	0.182 (0.256)
National Pride:Communist	0.023 (0.139)	−0.012 (0.140)	−0.013 (0.139)
National Pride:Innovation	0.080 (0.243)	0.207 (0.264)	0.117 (0.259)
National Pride:Decline Answer	−0.380 (0.302)	−0.180 (0.319)	0.016 (0.345)
National Pride:DPP	−0.140 (0.516)	−0.139 (0.494)	−0.097 (0.482)
National Pride:Other Parties	0.560 (0.392)	0.716* (0.377)	0.662* (0.371)
National Pride:SDP	−0.120 (0.435)	0.071 (0.417)	0.165 (0.481)
National Pride:Reiwa	−1.179 (0.728)	−1.628* (0.854)	−1.761** (0.834)
Constant	0.490*** (0.183)	0.516* (0.264)	0.191 (0.320)
Observations	934	874	852
R^2	0.061	0.144	0.201
Adjusted R^2	0.037	0.116	0.170
Residual Std. Error	0.725 (df = 910)	0.693 (df = 845)	0.674 (df = 819)
F Statistic	2.552*** (df = 23; 910)	5.071*** (df = 28; 845)	6.451*** (df = 32; 819)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table D5 Interaction Models with Traditional/Civil Participation DV

	Dependent variable:		
	Partial Index 2		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	−0.024 (0.050)	−0.025 (0.050)	−0.043 (0.051)
LDP	−0.054 (0.236)	0.082 (0.233)	0.062 (0.231)
Komeito	−0.175 (0.528)	−0.063 (0.518)	−0.171 (0.504)
CDP	1.313*** (0.445)	0.976** (0.451)	0.738* (0.441)
Don't Know	−1.291* (0.681)	−1.103 (0.676)	−1.259* (0.741)
Communist	−0.118 (0.377)	−0.442 (0.384)	−0.535 (0.376)
Innovation	−1.410* (0.734)	−2.109*** (0.813)	−1.859** (0.784)
Decline Answer	0.760 (0.803)	1.121 (0.829)	1.229 (0.908)
DPP	0.211 (1.359)	0.589 (1.312)	0.287 (1.263)
Other Parties	2.350** (1.124)	2.346** (1.086)	2.474** (1.068)
SDP	3.037** (1.219)	2.568** (1.176)	2.068 (1.268)
Reiwa	−0.519 (1.608)	−1.485 (1.774)	−1.058 (1.710)
female		−0.162*** (0.043)	−0.096** (0.042)
age		0.006*** (0.002)	0.007*** (0.002)
Employed		0.034 (0.050)	0.042 (0.049)
Education		0.061*** (0.015)	0.021 (0.015)
Income		0.025 (0.015)	0.019 (0.015)
Sat. Gov.			0.012 (0.031)
Econ. Grieve.			0.038 (0.028)
Pol. Interest			0.220*** (0.030)
Internet Use			0.026*** (0.009)
National Pride:LDP	0.050 (0.071)	0.008 (0.070)	0.0002 (0.069)
National Pride:Komeito	0.131 (0.155)	0.099 (0.152)	0.100 (0.148)
National Pride:CDP	−0.341** (0.139)	−0.259* (0.141)	−0.216 (0.138)
National Pride:Don't Know	0.376* (0.206)	0.335* (0.202)	0.399* (0.220)
National Pride:Communist	0.191 (0.120)	0.263** (0.121)	0.255** (0.120)
National Pride:Innovation	0.485** (0.210)	0.664*** (0.230)	0.552** (0.222)
National Pride:Decline Answer	−0.259 (0.261)	−0.391 (0.277)	−0.419 (0.296)
National Pride:DPP	−0.009 (0.447)	−0.136 (0.430)	−0.091 (0.414)
National Pride:Other Parties	−0.536 (0.339)	−0.535 (0.328)	−0.611* (0.318)
National Pride:SDP	−0.853** (0.376)	−0.734** (0.363)	−0.593 (0.413)
National Pride:Reiwa	0.292 (0.630)	0.622 (0.743)	0.389 (0.716)
Constant	−0.030 (0.158)	−0.878*** (0.230)	−1.436*** (0.275)
Observations	934	874	852
R^2	0.066	0.126	0.199
Adjusted R^2	0.043	0.097	0.168
Residual Std. Error	0.628 (df = 910)	0.603 (df = 845)	0.579 (df = 819)
F Statistic	2.810*** (df = 23; 910)	4.363*** (df = 28; 845)	6.355*** (df = 32; 819)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table D6 presents the full standardized coefficients from the mediation model shown in Chapter 6. While the main text highlighted only the theoretically relevant and statistically significant variables, this appendix table includes all covariates used in the model for transparency. The outcome variable is political participation (weighted index), and the key mediating variable is support for the conservative party.

Table D6 Full Standardized Coefficients from the Mediation Model

	lhs	rhs	label	se	pvalue
1	index_pc1	National Pride_c	-0.069†	0.039	0.077
2	index_pc1	party_dummy	0.078*	0.036	0.029
3	index_pc1	female	-0.116**	0.037	0.002
4	index_pc1	age	-0.006	0.047	0.894
5	index_pc1	employed	-0.020	0.038	0.600
6	index_pc1	Education	0.042	0.038	0.267
7	index_pc1	Income	0.004	0.035	0.902
8	index_pc1	Sat. Gov.	-0.030	0.039	0.441
9	index_pc1	Econ. Grieve.	0.033	0.039	0.395
10	index_pc1	Pol. Interest	0.268***	0.037	0.000
11	index_pc1	Internet Use	0.166***	0.044	0.000
12	National Pride_c	party_dummy	0.101**	0.038	0.008
13	National Pride_c	female	0.103**	0.036	0.004
14	National Pride_c	age	0.193***	0.048	0.000
15	National Pride_c	employed	0.021	0.038	0.591
16	National Pride_c	Education	-0.026	0.037	0.483
17	National Pride_c	Income	0.068†	0.039	0.080
18	National Pride_c	Sat. Gov.	0.204***	0.039	0.000
19	National Pride_c	Econ. Grieve.	-0.081*	0.039	0.036
20	National Pride_c	Pol. Interest	0.025	0.042	0.552
21	National Pride_c	Internet Use	0.066	0.050	0.185

Figure D3 visualizes the results of a moderated mediation model, where an interaction term between national pride and party affiliation (conservative vs. no affiliation) is added to the mediation framework. The plot displays the predicted effect of national pride on political participation for each group, with overlapping confidence intervals indicating no statistically significant moderation. These null results support the simpler model used in the main text.

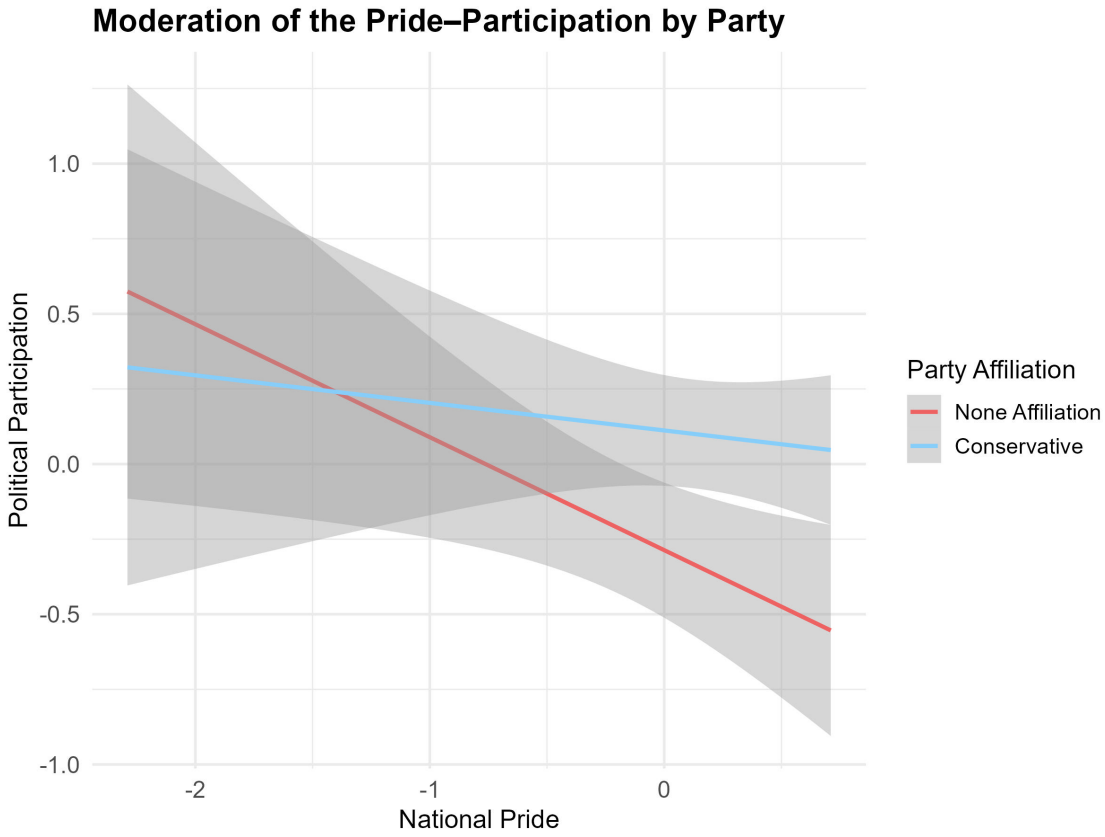

Figure D3 Moderated Mediator Model - Interaction Effect