Pride and Politics: The Varied Influence of National Pride on Political Behavior in South Korea, Japan, and China*

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between national pride and political participation in three East Asian countries: South Korea, Japan, and China. Utilizing data from the most recent wave of the Asia Barometer survey, the analysis reveals that national pride significantly increases conventional political participation—voting—particularly in South Korea, while its impact is less pronounced in China and Japan. Conversely, national pride exhibits a minimal or even negative association with unconventional political participation, such as protests or signing petitions, especially in Japan. The study highlights the variability of national pride's influence across different national contexts, suggesting that the unique political environments and histories of these countries shape how national pride affects civic engagement. Methodological limitations, including the reliance on survey data and the temporal disconnect between reported political actions and current national pride, are acknowledged, pointing to the need for future research using longitudinal data and qualitative methods to further explore these dynamics.

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Introduction

What role can a sense of national pride play in today's globalized world? Contrary to the early expectations of cosmopolitanism following globalization, concepts such as nation, nationality, national pride, nationalism, and patriotism have gained increasing prominence across various societies worldwide (Beck, 2002; Bieber, 2018; Nussbaum, 1994). In East Asia, particularly in China, Japan, and South Korea, national pride has become a significant issue closely intertwined with these nations' histories, cultures, and diplomatic relations, affecting public opinion in all three societies. In South Korea, national pride is colloquially referred to as 'Guk-ppong,' a term combining 'guk' (meaning nation) and 'ppong,' a slang for the drug in Korean, which has gained popularity online, in newspapers, and recently in academic literature (Song, 2020). In China, the younger generation, brimming with national pride and nationalism, embraces both traditional Sinocentrism and the propaganda of Xi Jinping, earning the moniker "Little Pink," a phenomenon particularly prevalent in online communities (Fang and Repnikova, 2018). Meanwhile, Japan's government has been promoting the national branding project 'Cool Japan,' which aims to revitalize aspects of Japanese culture such as J-pop, comics, and Anime in the global market, thereby strengthening national identity and pride through the positive international image and reputation of Japan (Tamaki, 2019). These cases illustrate that the international standing of a nation, which fosters national pride, is a significant and ongoing discussion in East Asia.

Despite the growing influence and prominence of national pride in shaping public opinions and behaviors, academic research on this trend remains limited. This study aims to examine how national pride has evolved in recent years in these countries and how it influences political engagement. The research presumes that the level and prominence of national pride have increased in all three countries due to the greater accessibility of international news and information from foreign online communities. As national identity, which underpins national pride, is reinforced by clearer distinctions between in-groups and out-groups, the emotional attachment to one's nation is likely to be strengthened.

However, the impact of national pride on the political landscape may vary depending on the distinct meanings of nation and national pride in each country. The data analysis in this paper reveals that a high level of national pride tends to drive political participation only in conventional and institutional formats, voting in national elections. In contrast, a low level of national pride, which is interpreted as dissatisfaction or shame in their nation, provokes unconventional political engagement such as attending protests, despite the influence being small. These findings suggest that the meaning and influence of national pride are contingent upon the specific contexts of the political background in which it is developed.

Concept of National Pride

The literature on national pride offers a range of definitions, often linked to similar concepts. Some scholars use terms such as national pride, patriotism, and nationalism interchangeably (McDaniel, Nooruddin and Shortle, 2016). Others, however, propose different levels of categorization for these concepts. For instance, national pride is sometimes viewed as an aspect of patriotism (Huddy and Khatib, 2007; Yoon, 2017), while other scholars argue that national pride encompasses both patriotism and nationalism (de Figueiredo and Elkins, 2003).

Evans and Kelley (2002) specifically define national pride as a "feeling … in the achievement or an admirable quality" of one's nation (303), distinguishing it from both nationalism and patriotism. The relationship between national pride and identity is also subject to varying interpretations. For example, while Domm (2004) suggest that positive national pride stems from national identity, Ha and Jang (2015) draw a sharp distinction between national pride and identity. They argue that pride is related to patriotism or nationalism as a cognitive feeling of accomplishment, whereas identity pertains solely to membership. These debates illustrate that the definition of national pride and its relationship with similar concepts remains unsettled, despite a general, albeit vague, consensus on its intended meaning.

In this research, I follow the definitions and distinctions of national pride, national identity, patriotism, and nationalism as outlined by Smith and Kim (2006). They define national pride as "the positive affect ... toward their country, resulting from their national identity" (127). I consider national pride to be rooted in national identity, as individuals can only feel pride in the nation to which they belong. However, national identity alone is not sufficient to elicit national pride, meaning that even those with a strong sense of national identity may not necessarily feel proud of their nation.

For other related concepts, both patriotism and nationalism involve a sense of affection for the nation, but as Smith and Jarkko (1998) previously conceptualized, patriotism entails a "dedicated allegiance" to one's nation. This suggests that while pride may exist at the level of mere affection, patriotism requires a sense of responsibility toward the nation. In this sense, I regard national pride as a broader and more common concept than patriotism. Nationalism, on the other hand, assumes a "feeling of superiority" of one's nation over others (Smith and Kim, 2006). Although the global prominence of a nation may imply its relative success compared to others, I contend that national pride can exist independently of perceptions of superiority or inferiority. Particularly in East Asia, cultural pride, which is on the rise, may be based on cultural originality that can coexist with respect for other cultures. Additionally, various sources of pride, such as political and social institutions, civil society, and history, cannot easily be ranked to determine which is superior. This reinforces the idea that national pride is not always synonymous with nationalism.

These distinctions between concepts are not always clear-cut, allowing them to coexist and intertwine in the public's mind. People may feel proud of their nation because they believe it is superior to others, as observed from the rise of national pride following a victory in an international sports event. In this case, it is hard to discern whether that pride entails a sense of superiority or not. When national identity is followed by not only the sense of belonging but also emotional affection and responsibility to the group, as other types of social identities based on ethnicity or race, national identity mingles with national pride and patriotism. My goal in this paper is not to

dismiss these possibilities but rather to explore the underlying differences. I aim to examine how people perceive their nation, national pride, and their political roles within their nation across three different countries.

Previous Literature on National Pride Research

National pride, in relation to national identity, nationalism, and patriotism, has been a significant topic of interest in sociology and political science, particularly in public opinion research. Some scholars have analyzed country-level differences in national pride using multinational survey data from Europe (Evans and Kelley, 2002; Solt, 2011). Others have focused on the correlation between ethnicity, minority status, and national pride, exploring issues of identity and political empowerment (Nakai, 2018; Wimmer, 2017). Additionally, a group of political scientists has considered national pride as a factor influencing political attitudes and behaviors, such as xenophobia, political trust, and participation (De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright, 2012; Gustavsson and Stendahl, 2020; Hjerm, 1998).

National pride has been examined both as a dependent and independent variable across various academic fields. When treated as a phenomenon to be explained, scholars have concentrated on country-level differences in national pride using data from multinational surveys, such as the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). These studies typically seek to identify the sources of national pride through demographic information (Evans and Kelley, 2002; Nakai, 2018; Solt, 2011). In research focusing on South Korea, factors identified as influencing national pride levels among individuals include demographics such as age and gender, perceived income inequality, its interaction with political ideology, and personal characteristics (Chi, Kwon and Rhee, 2014; Chung and Choe, 2008; Wang and Weng, 2018). It is noteworthy that despite the use of different data sources, national pride is often measured by the same survey question: "How proud are you to be of your nationality?" Although some studies utilize more specific measures of pride, such as pride in a nation's history, most

international surveys only have a single question of national pride.

Other political scientists have focused on the impact of national pride on political attitudes and behaviors in various contexts. Gustavsson and Stendahl (2020) found a positive correlation between national pride and political trust in the United States and the Netherlands. De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright (2012) discovered that national pride increases institutional forms of political participation, such as voting, but decreases extra-institutional activities like boycotts or rallies, based on data from 29 European states. Hjerm (1998) highlighted the different effects of various types of national pride on xenophobic attitudes, arguing that pride derived from politics and civility reduces xenophobia, while pride rooted in culture and nationalism has the opposite effect. In the context of South Korea, Ha and Jang (2015) identified a positive correlation between national pride and happiness. In a more recent study, Kim and Lee (2020) analyzed that Koreans with higher national pride were more likely to engage in economic voting in the 2012 parliamentary election.

These studies share a common approach in that they often treat the direct response to the national pride question as a single variable of interest, without delving into the complexity lying below the word 'national pride' to the respondents. As seen in the earlier section, when the distinction between national identity, pride, nationalism, and patriotism is not clear to the researchers, it is common that the public taking surveys would not distinguish those concepts. Therefore, when someone answers that they are proud of their nation, it is not sure whether it includes a sense of superiority of their nation or an act of duty. Since different ideas in the mind can lead to different actions, I consider that this unseen possibility can appear as different influences on different behaviors.

1 Theory

Factors of Political Participation

Research on political participation has traditionally focused on the normative argument surrounding voting, which is considered the most fundamental form of participation in a democracy. From the perspective of rational choice theory, which calculates the likelihood that a single vote will influence an election, alongside the payoffs from election outcomes and the costs of voting, it concludes that it is rational not to vote (Riker and Ordeshook, 1968). However, despite this theoretical skepticism, most democracies consistently achieve voter turnout rates exceeding 50 percent, indicating that a majority of the population in democracies act irrationally in terms of cost-benefit analysis. To address this apparent paradox, the concept of a civic duty to vote has been incorporated into the equation of voting benefits and costs (Campbell et al., 1980). This sense of civic duty is further reinforced by social capital (Leonardi, Nanetti and Putnam, 2001) and community sanctions (Knack, 1992). Although these factors can be understood as social norms, they do not fully explain why some individuals choose to participate while others do not.

As a result, individual-level variables have been introduced as factors that positively influence various forms of political participation. Among these, the level of education or the amount of political information an individual possesses is perhaps the most frequently cited factor. Converse (2006) argued that education and political sophistication are key variables that increase an individual's interest in, knowledge of, and engagement with political matters. Similarly, Campbell (2009) found that education enhances voter participation in election-related activities. Although the mechanism by which education increases political participation is not always clearly articulated in the literature, it could be attributed to a greater intellectual capacity to understand and act upon political issues, or it might result from a stronger sense of civic duty developed through prolonged education. Scholars of political socialization also consider the education level of parents as a significant factor in shaping the social en-

vironment, which in turn influences the future political engagement of their children (Bruch and Soss, 2018; Fox and Lawless, 2014).

In addition to these factors, some political psychologists have proposed that emotions, such as anger and anxiety, may provide a possible explanation for why individuals overcome collective action problems and engage in political behaviors other than voting (Groenendyk, 2011). Previous studies have analyzed how anger and other negative emotions, which arise when individuals perceive injustice, feel deprived, or believe that shared moral values are being violated, can trigger active political engagement (Conover and Feldman, 1986; Haidt, 2003; Mackie, Devos and Smith, 2000). Positive emotions, such as self-confidence (Fox and Lawless, 2014) or self-esteem, have also been examined as factors that increase individual political activism and help overcome collective action problems (Spinner-Halev and Theiss-Morse, 2003).

Political Participation and National Pride

I would like to emphasize the emotional dimension of national pride as a factor that can mobilize individuals to engage in active political activities. While I acknowledge the influence of factors such as education level and social norms on political participation, as established in previous research, I contend that national pride can also exert diverse influences on political participation in various ways.

Firstly, from the affective perspective, I argue that the level of national pride can be a source of civic duty, driving individuals toward political participation. A strong sense of pride and attachment to the nation can foster a sense of ownership among citizens, thereby enhancing their voluntary willingness to engage in national affairs. This phenomenon is most evident in voting within stable democracies, where casting a vote in national elections is firmly established as a social norm. In such cases, national pride is closely related to patriotism, as it involves a sense of duty toward the nation that individuals feel proud of.

In contrast, a lack of national pride combined with a strong national identity can

lead to resistant forms of political participation. This scenario is particularly potent among individuals with a history of resistance or uprisings, where the tradition of voicing dissent and taking action for their nation is well-established. Political activities such as demonstrations, boycotts, or strikes often aim to combat perceived injustices or dissatisfaction with the status quo, which often provokes dissatisfaction or even shame regarding their nation as a whole. However, if individuals strongly identify with their nation, they are more likely to attempt to resolve these issues through direct action. This mechanism differs from the first, as it is the absence of national pride, rather than pride itself, that drives active political movements beyond voting.

Finally, when the sources of national pride are disconnected from national politics, or when national pride fosters political indifference, its impact on political participation may be negligible. For instance, national pride may be rooted in cultural, scientific, or athletic achievements that bear little relation to political activities. In such cases, national pride may neither increase nor decrease political engagement among those who take pride in their nation for non-political reasons. Alternatively, when national pride is associated with blind or absolute patriotism (Nincic and Ramos, 2012; Schatz, Staub and Lavine, 1999), it may also be unrelated to active political participation. This form of national attachment, characterized by unconditional love for the nation and adherence to government directives—often reinforced by propaganda—is commonly observed during stable periods under authoritarian regimes. In such contexts, individuals with high levels of national pride as blind patriotism may conform to the government's promotion of political ignorance and indifference. This may result in high voter turnout but limited engagement in other forms of political action.

Given the various interpretations of national pride, its influence on political engagement is likely to vary depending on the specific contexts in which individuals develop their pride and choose to take action.

Hypotheses

This research design is based on the analysis by De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright (2012), which examines the relationship between national pride and two types of political participation—conventional and unconventional. Conventional political participation refers to activities that comply with institutional norms, primarily measured by attitudes toward voting. The other category, unconventional participation, includes various political activities beyond voting, such as protests, boycotts, or petitions. Using multinational data from European democracies, they found that national pride encourages conventional political participation but discourages unconventional participation. They also tested the effect of several mediating variables, suggesting that national pride influences political participation independently of these mediators.

Although De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright (2012) highlight an important relationship between national pride and political behavior, their findings do not account for the possibility that the impact of national pride may differ across nations, despite their use of multinational data and multilevel models. Therefore, this research focuses more on the variability of these influences. In other words, I hypothesize that national pride can either encourage or discourage political participation, depending not only on the types of participation but also on the specific national contexts. I selected the three East Asian countries—South Korea, Japan, and China—due to the increasing national pride and global attention these nations have garnered.

I propose that national pride is a complex concept encompassing an individual's view of the nation, what a nation should do for its citizens, and what citizens should do for their nation. In this sense, the concept of nation and pride in the nation has a constructive meaning that is contingent on the society in which it is formed. When the meanings of national pride differ, its effects on political participation in different backgrounds should also differ. This forms the basis for my theory and hypotheses, in which I expect varied effects of national pride on political engagement in China, South Korea, and Japan.

For conventional political participation, measured by voting in national elections,

I hypothesize that national pride increases participation in all three countries. When individuals feel a stronger attachment to their nation, they are more likely to believe that they should follow the rules of their nation as members, with voting being a normative act of civic duty. However, I anticipate that this effect will be more pronounced in democracies, Korea and Japan, among the three nations in the data. When citizens are proud of their nation, their pride may extend to the national political system, motivating them to vote as legitimate members of a democracy. However, as the Chinese government also advertises itself as a partial democracy and encourages high voter turnout rates, and as the concept of a model citizen under the authoritarian Chinese government involves conformity to national authority (Feldman, 2003; Meissner and Wübbeke, 2016), a similar but smaller effect can also be observed in China. Thus, the first set of hypotheses is formulated as follows:

H1a: A higher level of national pride will increase voting in all three countries: Korea, Japan, and China.

H1b: The effect of national pride on voting will be larger in Korea and Japan than in China.

The relationship between national pride and unconventional political participation is more complex. I prefer the term "resistant political participation" over "unconventional," based on the assumption that many unconventional political activities challenge the government or other authorities. I suggest that the sentiment caused by low levels of national pride would be a key motivator for resistant political participation. Therefore, I argue that those who feel ashamed of their nation and wish to change an unjust situation will be more likely to engage in this type of political activity. Given South Korea's recent experience with nationwide demonstrations leading to the impeachment of a former president, I expect this effect to be most pronounced in Korea. Participants in these sequential protests sought a direct change in the current presidency rather than waiting for the next election (Kim and Lee, 2020; Kim, 2020; Lee, Kim and Wainwright, 2010). Meanwhile, due to Japan's longstanding political inac-

tivism and indifference (Tsukada, 2015), I hypothesize that the effect size will be lower than in Korea. In China, where resistant political activities are highly restricted under an authoritarian regime, engagement will likely be low regardless of national pride. Based on this perspective, my hypotheses are as follows:

H2a: A lower level of national pride in South Korea will increase engagement in resistant political participation.

H2b: A lower level of national pride in Japan will increase engagement in resistant political participation, but the effect size will be smaller than in Korea.

H2c: A lower level of national pride in China will not significantly impact engagement in resistant political participation.

Another category of political participation, which was not included in the analysis by De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright (2012), is online political participation. As seen in various social contexts and academic research, public engagement in nationalistic discourses is increasingly active worldwide, including in East Asia. Particularly in China, the government has shown a strong willingness to censor and control the online space to foster nationalism, with many Chinese netizens becoming "fans" of the Chinese nation (Guo, 2018; Jiang, 2012). Therefore, I hypothesize that national pride in China will increase online political participation. However, in Korea and Japan, where freedom of speech and online activities are protected, it is difficult to predict whether those who engage in online political discourse do so to praise or criticize their nation. While many discussions in Korea and Japan involve national pride (McLelland, 2008; Song, 2020), it is also true that many others harshly criticize their country online (오유선, 주남 and 김정현, 2023). Many resistant political activities in these countries have also relied on the anonymity of the internet to gather people and publish group statements. Therefore, it is unclear whether high national pride or a lack of it motivates individuals to engage in online political participation. Consequently, the third set of hypotheses is formulated as follows:

H3a: A higher level of national pride in China will increase engagement in online political participation.

H3b: A higher level of national pride in Korea and Japan will not significantly impact on engagement in online political participation.

To test the hypotheses, I utilize data that includes survey responses from the three East Asian countries of interest: China, Japan, and South Korea.

Data and Variables

Independent Variable

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 current trends in national pride within the target countries.

The primary independent variable, national pride, is derived from the question, "How proud are you to be a citizen of [your country]?", with responses coded on a four-point scale: 'very proud,' 'somewhat proud,' 'not very proud,' and 'not proud at all.' These responses were recoded so that higher numbers correspond to higher levels of pride, ranging from 1 to 4. The histogram in Figure 1 presents the percentage of each option selected by the respondents from the three countries: China, Japan, and Korea.

The results reveal significant differences in levels of national pride among the countries, with China exhibiting the highest levels of pride and Korea the lowest. It highlights the striking percentage of respondents in China who are 'very proud' of being

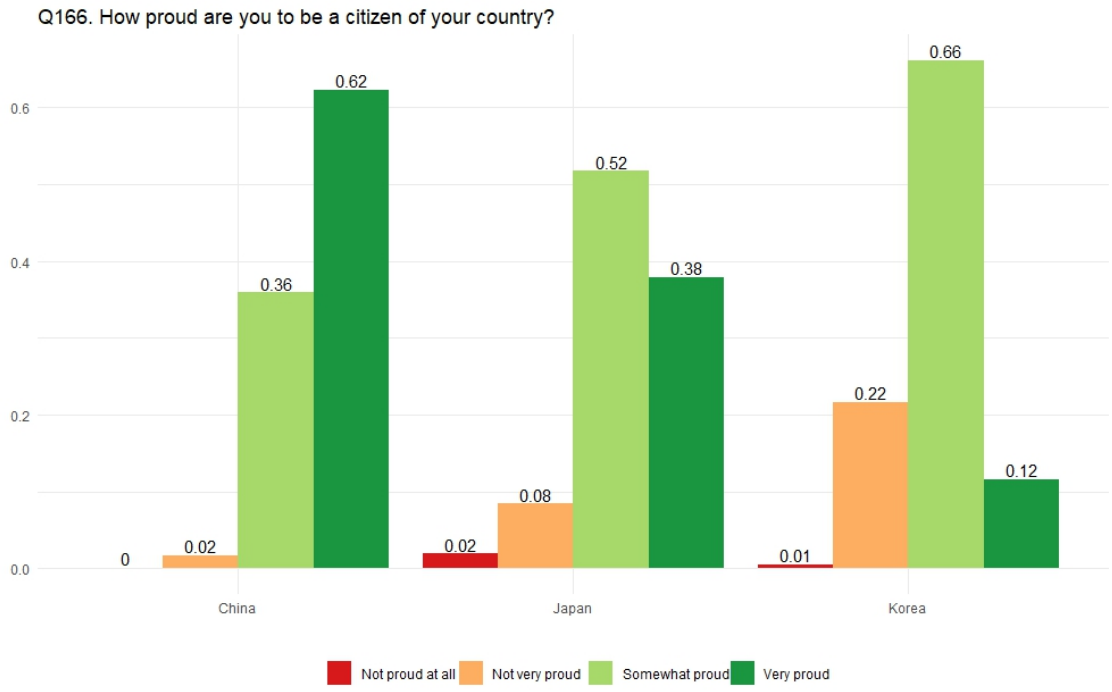

Figure 1: Percentage of Each Response to the Question of National Pride

citizens—over 60 percent. In contrast, only about 12 percent of Korean respondents expressed the same level of pride. Additionally, while less than 10 percent of people in China and Japan answered that they were not very proud or not at all proud to be a citizen of their countries, the percentage of Korea with those answers was over 20. Although all three countries generally appear to be proud of their nation, there are some differences in their actual perceptions.

Dependent Variable

1.0.1 Conventional Political Participation

The first dependent variable, conventional political participation, is measured by whether respondents voted in the most recent national elections. This binary variable is coded as 1 if the respondent indicated that they voted, and 0 otherwise. Respondents who were not eligible to vote are marked as missing data.

The rate of voting among those eligible in the most recent national elections was high across all three countries. China had the lowest reported voting rate at 70.3%, followed by Japan at 72.8%, and South Korea at 84.1%. The figures for Korea and Japan

are higher than the official voter turnout rates in their recent national elections, while the percentage for China is lower than the over-90% turnout rate reported by the Chinese government. This discrepancy suggests the presence of desirability bias in the responses from the two democratic countries, meaning that respondents may have chosen the option they perceived as more socially desirable rather than their actual behavior. Conversely, in China's case, the lower self-reported voting rate might indicate election manipulation by the government, which is common in authoritarian regimes. This is particularly plausible given that admitting not voting may be considered undesirable in such contexts.

1.0.2 Unconventional Political Participation

For the second dependent variable, unconventional political participation, I constructed an index variable based on several survey questions from Section J, Political Participation. This section asks respondents whether they have engaged in various political activities over the past three years, with responses indicating whether they have done these activities 1) more than three times, 2) two or three times, 3) once, 4) not yet but might in the future, or 5) not at all and will not in the future. The eleven activities in the section include: 1) contacting elected officials, 2) contacting civil officials, 3) contacting influential people outside the government (e.g., traditional leaders), 4) contacting news media, 5) signing paper petitions, 6) signing online petitions, 7) using the internet or social media to express political opinions, 8) joining a group to support a cause, 9) meeting face-to-face to solve local problems, 10) attending demonstrations or protests, and 11) participating in political actions that put them at risk of injury.

Following the method used by De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright (2012), I selected four activities for inclusion in the resistant participation: signing paper petitions, joining a group to support a cause, attending demonstrations or protests, and participating in actions that carry a risk of injury. While De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright (2012) included boycotts in their analysis, this activity was not listed in the Asia Barometer; therefore, I used 'joining a group to support a cause' as a substitute. I also assumed

that activities involving a risk of injury typically involve conflict with higher authorities, such as the police or government, and thus considered these as resistant political activities.

The dependent variable, the Resistant Participation Index is based on the numeric values of all possible responses from the survey. Responses were coded on a five-point scale, with 'have done more than three times' as 4, 'have done two or three times' as 3, 'have done this once' as 2, 'have not done this but might in the future' as 1, and 'have not done this and will not do it' as 0. I then summed these values into an index. This index measures not only the frequency of past participation but also the willingness to participate in the future. From the concern of the resulting index values not intuitive, I also tested the model with a substitute index that only counts the number of activities the respondent has engaged in over the past three years, regardless of how many times or their future willingness, as a robustness check in the appendix. Due to the smaller range of the second index only from 0 to 4, the effect sizes of the variables were smaller in the model results, but the findings remained consistent.

Below is the histogram of the Resistant Participation Index for each country: China, Japan, and Korea.

As the right-skewed histograms indicate, overall participation levels in all three countries are relatively low. In particular, many respondents in Korea and China reported that they have not participated in any unconventional political activities, such as signing petitions or attending protests, and do not intend to do so in the future, regardless of the circumstances. This may reflect political indifference or silence in Asian countries compared to older democracies. In Korea and Japan, democracy was introduced or imported rather than gained through grassroots movements, while China remains an authoritarian state. Thus, these countries may lack the grassroots democratic engagement seen elsewhere. However, the histogram suggests that Japan has a slightly higher level of political participation than the other two countries.

Lastly, the third dependent variable of online political participation is measured by the Online Participation Index, which is constructed in the same way as the Resistant

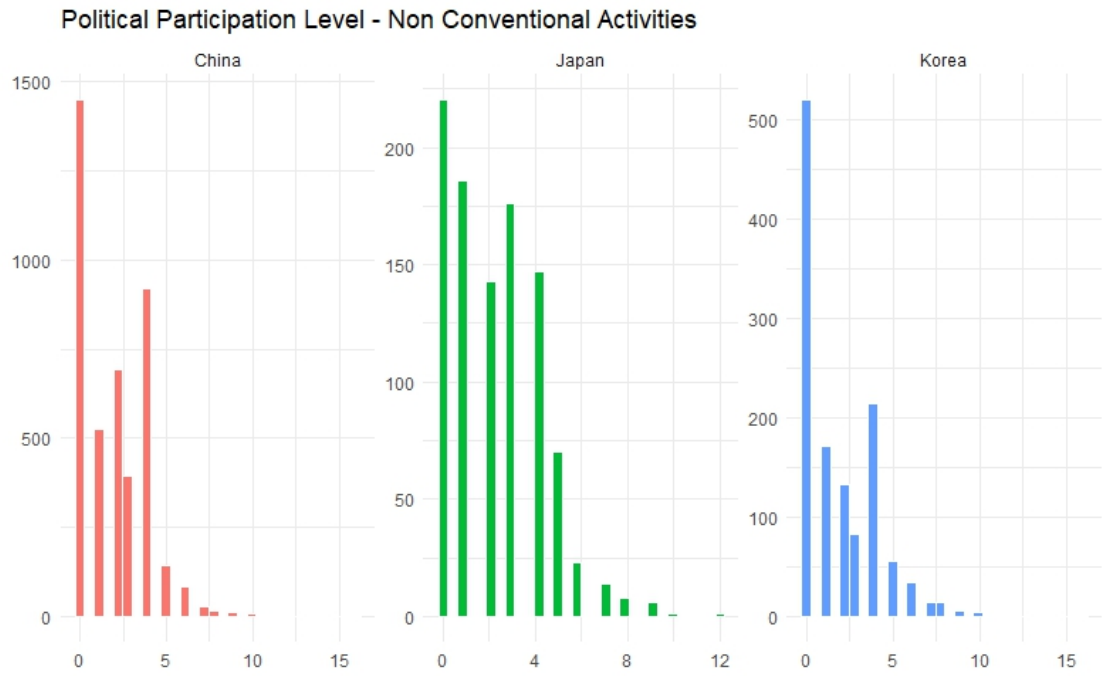

Figure 2: Distribution of Political Participation Level

Participation Index but only from the two political activities: signing online petitions, and using the internet or social media to express political opinions. I do not present the distribution of the third dependent variable here as the low level of overall participation is similar to the histogram in Figure 2. Instead, I present the confidence intervals of all the independent and dependent variables for each country, considering all of them as numerical variables.

In the left upper section of the Figure 3, it is evident that China exhibits a significantly higher level of national pride than Japan and Korea, with a score of 4 indicating that respondents are 'very proud' of being citizens. Conversely, Korea shows the lowest level of national pride, with an average score slightly below 3, indicating that respondents are somewhere between 'not very proud' and 'somewhat proud' of their nationality.

In the other three sections, the levels of political participation in three different aspects are presented. Korea showed a significantly higher level of voting and online participation, while Japan showed the most active engagement with all of the four resistant political activities.

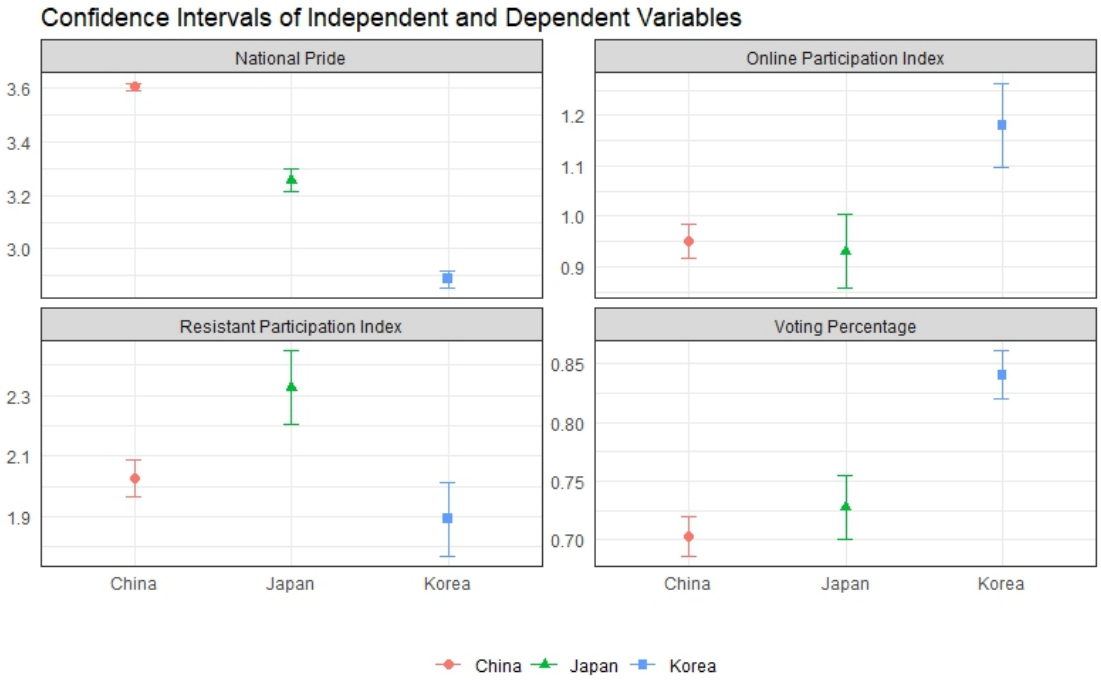

Figure 3: Confidence Intervals of Variables for Each Country

Mediating Variables and Controls

I included several demographic variables in the model as controls, which are commonly expected to predict political participation. These controls include Gender, Age, Education (ranging from 0 to 8 levels), and Income (ranging from 1 to 10 levels). Some variables that were expected to influence political participation but were excluded due to missing data in China include satisfaction with the national government, trust in the president, and the political party respondents feel closest to.

I also utilized similar mediating variables as those used by De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright (2012). First, social trust is measured by the question, "Do you think most people can be trusted?" This is a binary variable, coded as 1 if the respondent agreed and 0 if they selected that "one must be very careful in dealing with people." For institutional trust, due to the sensitivity of certain questions under an authoritarian regime, some items were not asked in China. Given the limitations, I concluded that creating a political institutional trust variable without these items would not be meaningful. Instead, I used another variable as a potential mediator: whether the respondent voted for the winning party in the last election. This mediator was used only for unconventional

political participation, as whether someone voted for the winning party implies their alignment with the party in power, indirectly capturing their opinion of the current government or parliament. Finally, I included a political interest variable based on the question, "How interested would you say you are in politics?" which was measured on a four-point scale.

Models

The analysis for the set of hypotheses will be conducted at both the individual and cross-national levels, with the understanding that the concept of nation and the source of national pride vary from country to country. The model used will be OLS regression models with interaction terms between national pride and country, under the assumption that the unexplained variance in each nation will influence how national pride is perceived and how it affects political participation.

Analysis Results

Table 1 presents the analysis results of the interaction models with the national pride and country variables, using the binary dependent variable of whether respondents voted in the last election. Given the binary nature of the dependent variable, all three models employ logistic regression. In Model 1, which includes all demographic controls, national pride slightly increases the probability of voting. This effect remains largely unchanged when the mediating variable of social trust is included in Model 2. However, when political interest is added as a mediating variable in Model 3, the coefficient estimate for national pride substantially decreases, and its statistical significance drops below the p-value threshold of 0.1. Instead, political interest emerges as the most influential variable, indicating that its impact on voting surpasses that of national pride.

The most notable finding in Table 1 is the interaction effect of national pride and Korea. In all three models, this interaction term shows a large and statistically signif-

Table 1: Logit Models - Effects of National Pride on Voting

	Dependent variable:		
	Voted Last Election		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
National Pride	0.152*	0.140*	0.099
	(0.080)	(0.084)	(0.081)
Gender	−0.283***	−0.297***	−0.225***
	(0.067)	(0.069)	(0.068)
Age	0.033***	0.033***	0.032***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Education	0.023	0.023	0.008
	(0.014)	(0.016)	(0.012)
Income	0.005	0.004	0.007
	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.012)
Social Trust		0.077	
		(0.071)	
Political Interest			0.247***
			(0.045)
Japan	0.381	0.433	0.232
	(0.458)	(0.473)	(0.461)
Korea	−0.483	−0.501	−0.542
	(0.487)	(0.498)	(0.489)
Pride*Japan	−0.122	−0.137	−0.095
	(0.132)	(0.136)	(0.133)
Pride*Korea	0.519***	0.529***	0.546***
	(0.160)	(0.162)	(0.161)
Constant	−1.006***	−0.989***	−1.344***
	(0.346)	(0.362)	(0.352)
Observations	5,096	4,876	5,060
Log Likelihood	−2,713.775	−2,590.442	−2,677.413
Akaike Inf. Crit.	5,447.549	5,202.884	5,376.826
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

icant influence compared to the baseline factor of China. To better illustrate these results, I plotted the predicted probability of voting for the three countries using Model 3 in Figure 4 below.

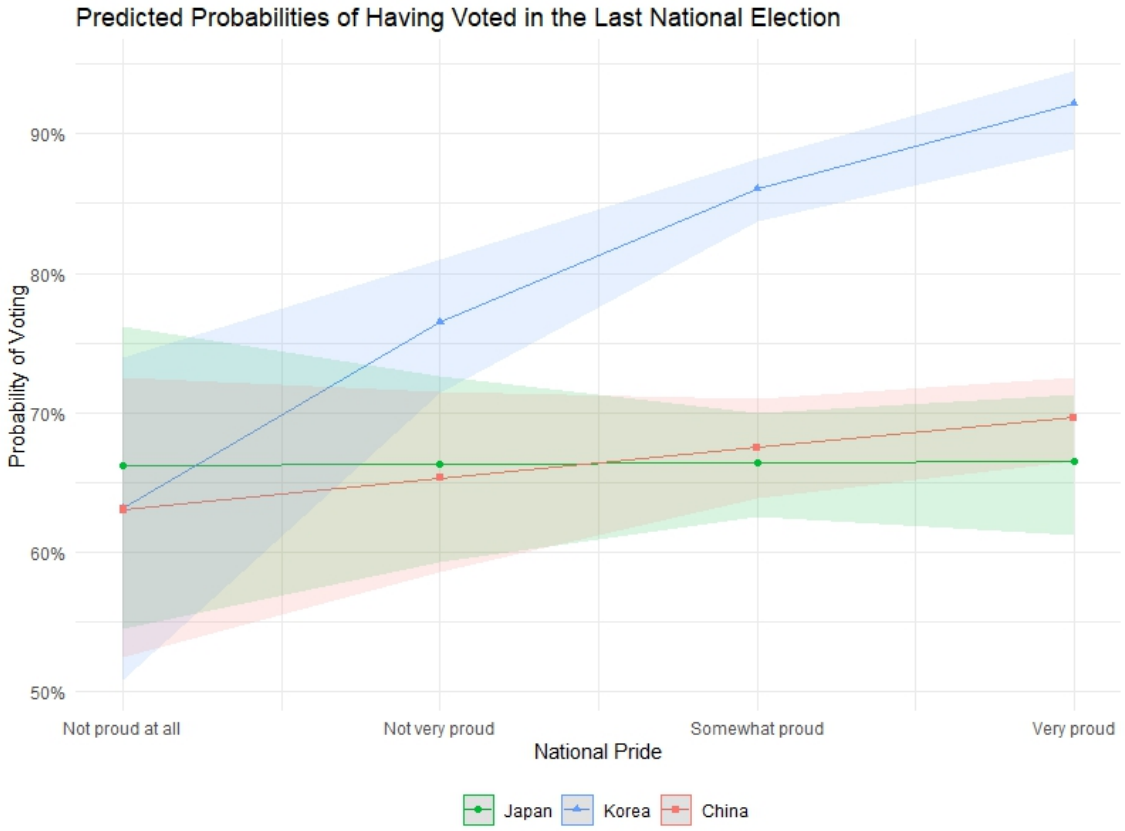

Figure 4: Binary Model with Mediating Variable of Political Interest

The predicted probability of voting by the level of national pride is depicted by lines, with 95% confidence intervals. The three countries are distinguished by different colors and markers. The striking result for Korea is evident in the steep upward slope, which contrasts sharply with the more gradual slopes observed in China and Japan. While the probability of voting when respondents are not proud at all is similar across all three countries at around 60%, this probability increases to more than 90% in Korea as national pride rises. Although national pride also increases the probability of voting in China, the effect is less pronounced than in Korea. These findings provide only partial support for the first set of hypotheses: while national pride generally boosts conventional political participation—voting—the effect is strongest in Korea, contrary to the hypothesis that it would be largest in China.

A possible explanation for these findings could be the role of political efficacy, a key variable that both affects and is affected by political participation in several studies (Karp and Banducci, 2008; Reichert, 2016). While active participation is often cited as increasing internal political efficacy, it is also argued that the perceived ability to influence election outcomes, often based on the competitiveness of elections, plays a significant role in the decision to participate (Blais, 2006; Powell, 1986). In Korea, recent presidential and parliamentary elections have been closely contested, with high turnout rates on both sides of the major conservative and liberal parties. In this context, individuals who are proud of their nation may feel a stronger sense of belonging to the national group and ownership over the electoral process, motivating them to vote in order to sway the results in their preferred direction. The competitiveness of these elections may also reinforce their belief that their vote can make a difference.

In contrast, the competitiveness of Japanese elections in recent years has been relatively low, particularly in regional districts where the same party or even the same families have been re-elected for decades. This situation may lead to lower internal efficacy and a reduced willingness to vote, meaning that national pride has little impact on voting behavior. In China, the situation is even more challenging, as turnout rates and possibly even election results may be manipulated by the national government. Under these circumstances, while individuals may recognize that voting aligns with national norms and government expectations, they may not feel a strong need to actually participate, thereby weakening the link between national pride and actual voting behavior.

Next, I tested the influence of national pride on participation in resistant political activities for the second set of hypotheses. Since the created Resistant Participation Level is a continuous variable with numeric values, I used the OLS models with the interaction term of national pride and countries. The model results are presented in Table 2.

The coefficient estimate for national pride was minimal or statistically insignificant, while the two mediating variables—political interest and whether the respondent

Table 2: OLS Models - Effects of National Pride on Resistant Political Participation

	Dependent variable:			
	Resistant Participation Index			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
National Pride	0.121**	0.115*	0.047	0.004
	(0.058)	(0.060)	(0.058)	(0.097)
Gender	−0.201***	−0.204***	−0.097*	−0.233***
	(0.049)	(0.051)	(0.050)	(0.073)
Age	−0.020***	−0.019***	−0.022***	−0.017***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.003)
Education	0.022***	0.024***	0.010	0.055***
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.014)
Income	0.004	0.007	0.007	0.025*
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.014)
Social Trust		0.058		
		(0.052)		
Political Interest			0.414***	
			(0.033)	
Voted Winning				−0.178**
				(0.082)
Japan	1.498***	1.535***	1.249***	1.443***
	(0.373)	(0.382)	(0.370)	(0.542)
Korea	0.538	0.526	0.475	−0.152
	(0.355)	(0.361)	(0.352)	(0.524)
Pride*Japan	−0.309***	−0.320***	−0.268**	−0.301*
	(0.109)	(0.111)	(0.108)	(0.154)
Pride*Korea	−0.218*	−0.217*	−0.198*	−0.036
	(0.112)	(0.114)	(0.111)	(0.160)
Constant	2.699***	2.658***	1.993***	3.050***
	(0.247)	(0.256)	(0.251)	(0.417)
Observations	6,479	6,195	6,443	3,220
R^2	0.042	0.040	0.065	0.046
Adjusted R^2	0.040	0.039	0.064	0.043
Residual Std. Error	1.981	1.984	1.959	2.049
F Statistic	31.193***	25.997***	45.016***	15.577***
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

voted for the winning party in the last election—showed significant and substantial influence on their willingness or experience of political engagement. The inclusion of these two variables drastically decreased the coefficient for national pride or reduced its statistical significance. This suggests that these variables may not merely serve as mediators but exert a significant independent effect on individuals' participation in political activities.

To better illustrate the marginal effect of the main independent variable, national pride, in each country, I included a prediction plot of the fourth model, with the Participation Level Index as the dependent variable and the inclusion of whether the respondent voted for the winning party.

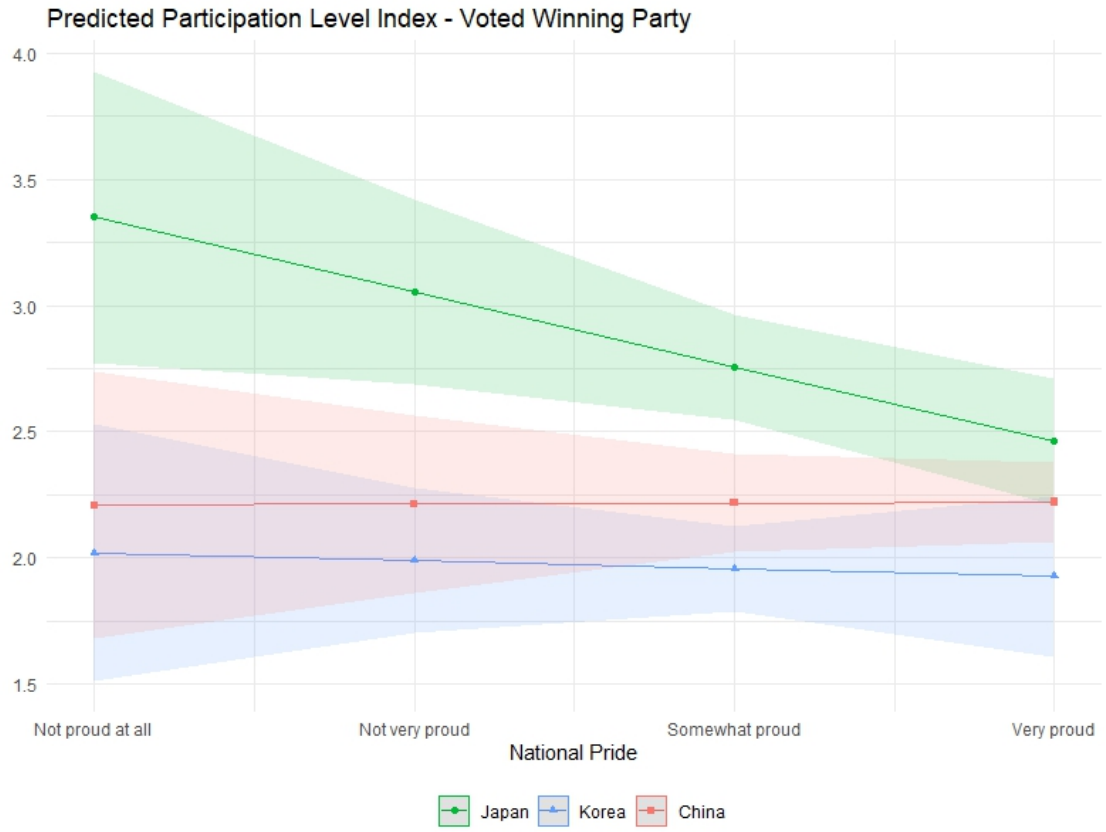

Figure 5: Predicted Probabilities of Resistant Participation Index

As shown in the table and plot, the marginal effect of national pride on political participation is minimal in all three countries. However, a slight decrease in participation is observed as national pride increases in Japan, where the average level of participation is higher. This suggests that those who report not being proud to be citizens of

their country are more active in various political activities. While De Rooij, Reeskens and Wright (2012) interprets this as national pride discouraging unconventional forms of political action, which fall outside institutional frameworks, I would argue that it reflects a more active way of expressing the will of the people as suggested in the theory and hypotheses. The low national pride—expressed by respondents who are "not proud at all" to be citizens of their country—may be a distinct factor driving people to engage in political activities.

However, while I expected that this form of political participation, driven by low national pride, would be most prominent in Korea, given the well-documented cases of public demonstrations, the effect was strongest in Japan. Thus, the findings provide limited support for the second set of hypotheses. This can be based on the differences in the social infrastructure about how accessible those non-conventional and non-institutional activities are. Japan, with its longer history of democracy and stability, might have more groups for cause or open petitions. As an instance to show this, I tested a binary logit model only using the variable of attending demonstrations, protests, or marches, with all the other mediating and control variables remaining the same. The visualization of the model result is in Figure 6.

Here, the line at the top is marked with Korea, showing that the effect of national pride on joining protests is most pronounced in Korea. More than 10 percent of those who said that they were not proud at all of being a citizen of Korea have attended more than one protest during the last three years. This was about three times higher than those who answered that they were very proud.

As seen in Figures 5 and 6, the influence of national pride is contingent on the types of political activities and the contexts where those activities take place. Lastly, I have tested the third set of hypotheses about the newest format of political participation, commenting about their nations or signing petitions on digital spaces.

The results regarding the influence of national pride on online political participation are presented in Table 3. It was found that national pride, both in general and within specific countries, did not significantly impact whether individuals engaged in

Table 3: OLS Models - Effects of National Pride on Online Political Participation

	Dependent variable:			
	Online Participation Index			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
National Pride	0.021	0.019	−0.019	0.055
	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.057)
	(0.209)	(0.213)	(0.207)	(0.308)
Gender	−0.143***	−0.141***	−0.087***	−0.191***
	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.029)	(0.043)
Age	−0.021***	−0.021***	−0.022***	−0.022***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Education	0.017***	0.019***	0.011***	0.039***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.008)
Income	0.014***	0.016***	0.016***	0.032***
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.008)
Social Trust		0.010		
		(0.031)		
Political Interest			0.221***	
			(0.019)	
Voted Winning				−0.065
				(0.048)
Japan	0.353	0.386*	0.221	0.671**
	(0.219)	(0.225)	(0.217)	(0.318)
Korea	0.467**	0.515**	0.436**	0.471
Pride*Japan	−0.057	−0.068	−0.035	−0.124
	(0.064)	(0.065)	(0.063)	(0.090)
Pride*Korea	−0.085	−0.107	−0.074	−0.047
	(0.066)	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.094)
Constant	1.944***	1.923***	1.566***	1.797***
	(0.144)	(0.149)	(0.147)	(0.242)
Observations	6,554	6,257	6,514	3,241
R^2	0.106	0.105	0.124	0.121
Adjusted R^2	0.105	0.103	0.123	0.118
Residual Std. Error	1.171	1.175	1.160	1.207
F Statistic	86.074***	73.041***	92.064***	44.388***
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

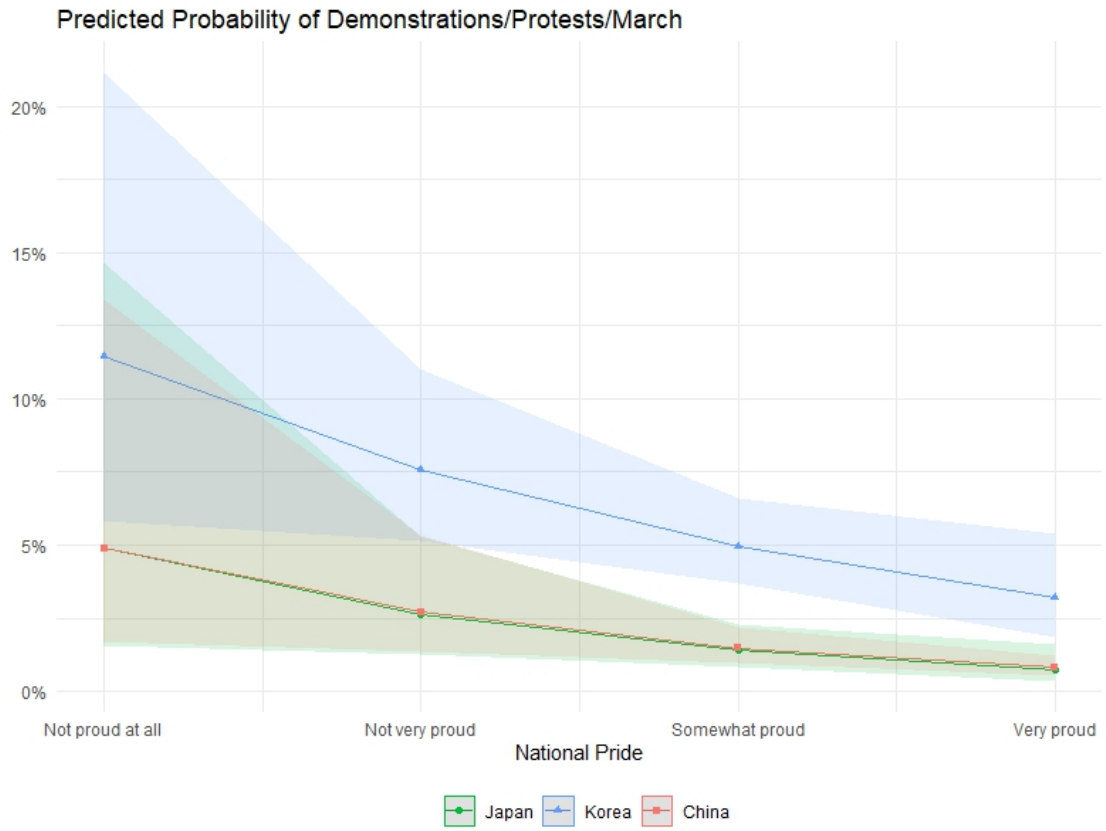

Figure 6: Predicted Probabilities of Attending Demonstrations

political activities online. In contrast, demographic factors such as gender, age, education level, and income all demonstrated significant effects. Notably, whether individuals voted for the winning or losing party in the last election did not affect their online political activities, which contrasts with the results from the resistant political participation model. This finding suggests that online political activities, such as expressing opinions, encompass viewpoints both in support of and in opposition to the current government and regime, unlike resistant activities, which are more oppositional in nature.

Figure 7, generated from Model 3 in Table 3, includes political interest as a mediating variable. Contrary to the hypotheses, national pride did not increase online political participation in any of the three countries, nor was its influence statistically significant. Additionally, despite the academic focus on Chinese nationalism in digital spaces, the level of online participation reported by the public is the lowest among the three countries. This may be due to differences in internet access infrastructure be-

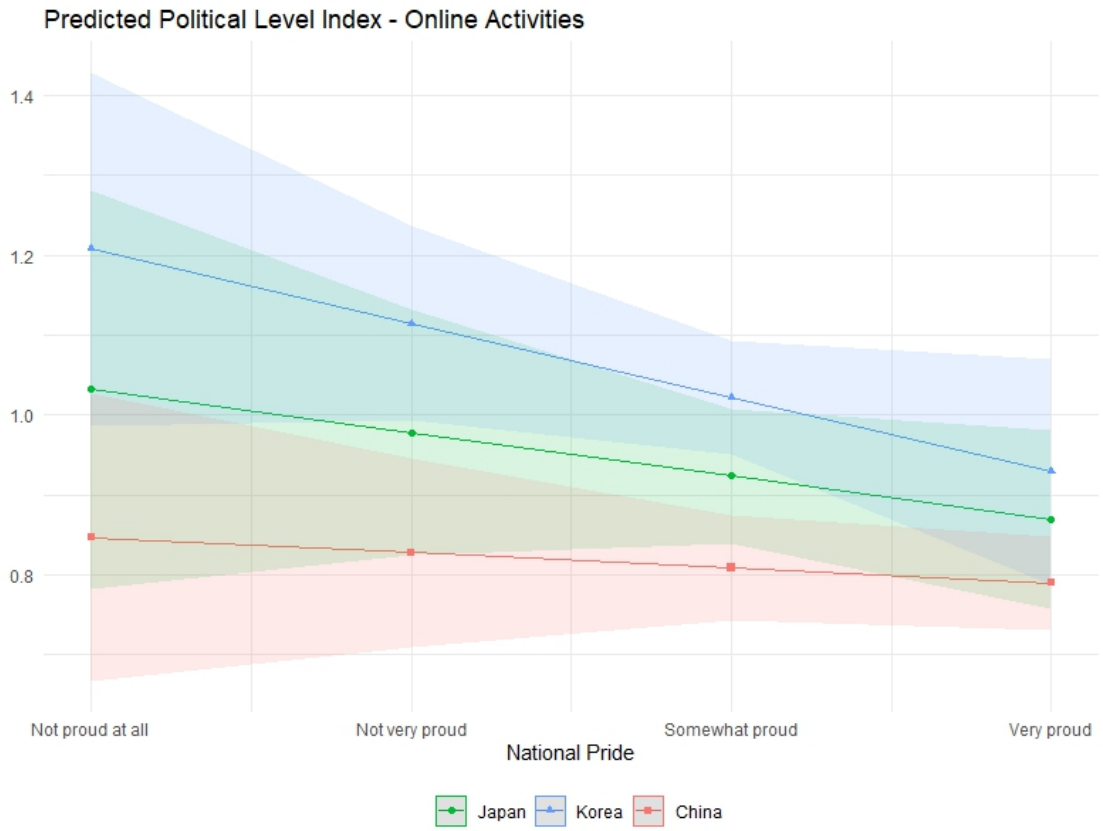

Figure 7: Predicted Probabilities of Online Political Participation

tween the countries, or it could indicate that the voices of nationalism online may not represent the general public but rather influencers with ties to the government. Either way, this finding underscores the need for caution when interpreting and analyzing the rise of online nationalism.

Implications and Future Research

The analysis of the most recent round of Asia Barometer survey data reveals that national pride has diverse influences on public participation in different types of political activities. While national pride is a prominent issue across various media in all three countries, the underlying concepts and their political implications vary significantly depending on the national context in which people experience pride and decide to act. As a result, the hypotheses proposed in this research are only partially supported.

The unique characteristics of China, Japan, and Korea present challenges when

analyzing these countries at the same level, highlighting the need for deeper investigation in future studies. For instance, key questions expected to influence political participation, such as political ideology and satisfaction with current governments, were not asked in China, the only authoritarian regime among the three. Additionally, given the repression of political activities and stringent internet censorship in Chinese society, the reliability of political participation measures in China may be questionable. Considering the distinct histories and political backgrounds of these countries, more in-depth case studies would likely enrich the background explanations of the analysis results or provide alternative theories to account for the non-findings in some models.

Another limitation of this research, and a potential avenue for future studies, lies in the methodological approach. Quantitative analysis based on survey data may not be the optimal method for uncovering the motivations behind political actions, national affection, or perceptions of the nation. Qualitative data, such as interviews with small groups of either participants or nonparticipants in political activities, could better illuminate the underlying motivations for their engagement, sense of duty to national politics, and emotional differences, as seen in renowned research on violent civil actions (Wilkinson, 2006; Wood and Jean, 2003). From this perspective, another aspect of my work involves analyzing rough textual data from online communities in Korea and Japan to explore the real-world expressions used to praise and discriminate against their own and other nations. Utilizing these new data sources may offer insights into capturing and measuring real perceptions and national sentiments, unsupervised by survey interviewers.

Since the purpose of political activities is not clarified in the survey, closer observational research on people actively engaged in various activities would help identify more specific reasons for their involvement in political matters. Given the current rise of national pride not only in South Korea but also globally, a time-series panel dataset on national perception and political engagement would provide valuable insights, revealing trends in national pride and its impacts. Additionally, the small group of respondents who are not proud of their nation at all could be an exceptional case worth

studying in greater depth. Their ideas and motivations could again be better understood through qualitative interviews rather than survey analysis.

Another limitation of using survey data to measure political participation lies in the temporal disconnect between the timing of the survey and the events it seeks to analyze. Survey questions typically ask respondents about their past experiences, such as previous voting behavior, while measuring their current level of national pride. This temporal gap can introduce biases, as respondents' current feelings of national pride may not accurately reflect their sentiments at the time of the political participation in question. Such a discrepancy makes it challenging to draw definitive conclusions about the causal relationship between national pride and past political actions. Future research should consider longitudinal studies or time-specific data collection to better capture the dynamics between national pride and political participation over time.

Although the findings from this research only partially support the suggested hypotheses, there remain many subjects and methods to explore the variety and specificity of how national pride influences political participation within a nation. Differences in the meaning of nationhood, norms of political engagement, and citizens' sense of civic duty toward their country could lead to vastly different outcomes in neighboring countries. Future research should aim to uncover more diverse contingencies of how national pride operates in different political contexts.

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Appendix

Table A1: OLS Models - Using Summed Number of Participated Activities

	Dependent variable:			
	Number of Participated Resistant Activities			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
National Pride	0.016	0.019	−0.001	−0.043
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.030)
Gender	−0.038***	−0.040***	−0.015	−0.048**
	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.022)
Age	−0.002***	−0.002***	−0.002***	−0.002**
	(0.0004)	(0.0005)	(0.0004)	(0.001)
Education	0.004**	0.005**	0.001	0.010**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.004)
Income	−0.002	−0.002	−0.002	0.002
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.004)
Social Trust		0.013		
		(0.015)		
Political Interest			0.094***	
			(0.009)	
Voted Winning				−0.076***
				(0.025)
Japan	0.403***	0.424***	0.346***	0.195
	(0.107)	(0.110)	(0.107)	(0.166)
Korea	0.198*	0.213**	0.184*	−0.061
	(0.102)	(0.104)	(0.102)	(0.160)
Pride*Japan	−0.060*	−0.066**	−0.051	−0.009
	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.047)
Pride*Korea	−0.046	−0.051	−0.042	0.016
	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.049)
Constant	0.264***	0.237***	0.106	0.533***
	(0.071)	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.128)
Observations	6,479	6,195	6,443	3,220
R^2	0.022	0.022	0.037	0.028
Adjusted R^2	0.020	0.020	0.035	0.025
Residual Std. Error	0.569	0.570	0.566	0.627
F Statistic	16.046***	13.862***	24.513***	9.284***
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A2: OLS Models - Participation Level Including All Political Activities

	Dependent variable:			
	Level Index − All Activities			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
National Pride	0.288*	0.240	0.035	−0.065
	(0.160)	(0.165)	(0.159)	(0.268)
Gender	−0.866***	−0.829***	−0.508***	−1.053***
	(0.135)	(0.138)	(0.135)	(0.199)
Age	−0.055***	−0.054***	−0.062***	−0.036***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.007)
Education	0.071***	0.081***	0.030	0.342***
	(0.018)	(0.021)	(0.018)	(0.053)
Income	0.047*	0.053**	0.059**	0.106***
	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.039)
Social Trust		0.291**		
		(0.143)		
Political Interest			1.411***	
			(0.089)	
Voted Winning				−0.275
				(0.222)
Japan	2.968***	3.019***	2.202**	2.127
	(1.017)	(1.037)	(1.000)	(1.488)
Korea	−0.065	−0.035	−0.260	−2.695*
	(0.958)	(0.973)	(0.941)	(1.424)
Pride*Japan	−0.520*	−0.535*	−0.399	−0.417
	(0.295)	(0.301)	(0.290)	(0.419)
Pride*Korea	−0.064	−0.097	0.004	0.672
	(0.302)	(0.306)	(0.296)	(0.432)
Constant	9.070***	8.944***	6.666***	8.610***
	(0.679)	(0.700)	(0.685)	(1.167)
Observations	6,130	5,878	6,099	3,061
R^2	0.049	0.048	0.086	0.062
Adjusted R^2	0.047	0.047	0.085	0.059
Residual Std. Error	5.276	5.271	5.172	5.456
F Statistic	34.705***	29.838***	57.624***	20.232***
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01