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When Authoritarian Legacies Matter: Constructive and Blind National Pride and Voter Turnout in New Democracies

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Abstract

In new democracies, what is the role of nationalism in terms of democratic behavior such as voter turnout? Previous studies have found that, in Western democracies, constructive national pride increases voter turnout, while blind national pride decreases it. However, little scholarly attention has been paid to new democracies. Given different political contexts, we argue that blind national pride can boost turnout in some new democracies that have lingering authoritarian legacies. Using the case of South Korea, we offer a theory about the relationship between blind national pride and voter turnout. We show that, in contrast to the West, blind national pride is positively associated with turnout in South Korea, and that the relationship appears more robust among both older cohorts, who experienced authoritarianism directly in the recent past, and those with conservative ideologies.

Keywords: nationalism; blind national pride; voter turnout; authoritarian legacies; new democracies; South Korea

Introduction

What roles does nationalism play in democracies? States and political leaders have employed diverse tools to instill nationalism in their citizens, for example, by creating national flags, symbols, and holidays (Tilly 1994), and providing public schools and national museums (Lewis 1975). Despite these efforts to embed nationalist sentiments, existing studies offer contrasting theories and empirical findings regarding the relationship between nationalism and political behavior. Some scholars have demonstrated that nationalism not only increases political participation (Huddy and Khatib 2007), but also reduces affective polarization (Levendusky 2018), thereby contributing to a healthy democracy. Others find that a different understanding of nationalism by partisans leads to rising demands for radical candidates (Bonikowski, Feinstein, and Bock 2021) and that nationalism then serves as a foundation for populist

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radical parties (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2017). However, because such debates are primarily based on advanced democracies, we know less about the role of nationalism in new democracies (but see Hur 2022). Given that many new democracies faced the twin challenges of nation-building and industrialization under authoritarianism, we expect that political contexts where nationalism shapes political behavior may be different from those in advanced democracies.

In this study, we examine the relationship between nationalism and voter turnout, one of the most important aspects of democratic behavior, in new democracies. Previous studies have found that national pride increases political participation in democracies. Because national pride—based on national identity in a cognitive sense—is commonly considered an emotion expressed as an affective attachment to one's nation, some scholars regard it as patriotism (Kosterman and Feshback 1989). And because it activates political psychological engagement, it can also boost political participation (Huddy and Khatib 2007; Hur 2022). Yet, some scholars argue that national sentiments, including national pride, are multidimensional (Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016; Powers 2022; Wright, Citrin, and Wand 2012). In particular, Schatz, Staub, and Lavine (1999) divide national pride into constructive and blind types. While the former refers to “an attachment to country characterized by ‘critical loyalty,’” the latter refers to “a rigid and inflexible attachment to country, characterized by unquestioning positive evaluation, staunch allegiance, and intolerance of criticism” (153).

More specifically, although the concept of constructive national pride contains the core aspect of conventional national pride (i.e., a love for one's country), it further entails “questioning and evaluating the nation, and involves a willingness to take corrective actions” (Sekerdej and Roccas 2016, 500), thereby helping to shape good democratic citizens. For example, constructive national pride includes noticing the nation's problems, such as popular but bad policies, and working to correct them so that the nation can move in a positive direction. Political activities, including protests and demonstrations, that oppose any violation of core democratic values (e.g., human rights, liberty, equality), can be an expression of constructive national pride. In contrast, blind national pride tends to manifest in negative attitudes toward out-groups (e.g., foreign countries, immigrants) and uncritical submission to the nation. Thus, it makes citizens view their nation from a black-and-white perspective. In the real world, for instance, it can involve supporting violent and/or chauvinistic policies and culture, without carefully thinking about their consequences, just because they belong to one's nation, against national out-groups.

Based on the division between these two types of national pride, subsequent studies demonstrate that each has different political behavioral outcomes. Constructive national pride, which is related to democratic values, increases voter turnout, whereas blind national pride, associated with chauvinism and anti-democratic values, decreases it (Finell and Zogmaister 2015; Livi et al. 2014; Peña and Sidanius 2002; Schatz et al. 1999; Sekerdej and Roccas 2016). Yet, while the conceptual division and empirical findings come primarily from Western democracies such as the US and several European countries (Finell and Zogmaister 2015; Livi et al. 2014; Sekerdej and Roccas 2016), little scholarly attention has been paid to the issue in new democracies. We claim that because past authoritarian regimes have a lingering

influence on nationalism in some of new democracies, the political contexts in which different types of national pride are connected to political participation can differ between old and young democracies.

Beyond the external validity of the conceptual divide, we believe that the lack of analysis in new democracies is unfortunate for two reasons. First, because they have been democracies for less time and have taken different paths to nation-building than advanced democracies, we expect new democracies to manifest the two types of national pride differently. In new democracies, for example, constructive national pride may not lead to good democratic citizenship. Also, blind national pride may lead to different behavioral outcomes, owing either to its different historical and psychological foundations or to the treatment of domestic political competitors during the process of nation-building, rather than foreign countries, as an out-group.

Second, and more directly related to turnout, although national pride can facilitate political participation in many democracies (Huddy and Khatib 2007; Hur 2022), the political consequences of that participation in new democracies may be both different and also of greater significance. If blind national pride has positive effects on voter turnout in new democracies, as constructive blind national pride does in old democracies (Schatz et al. 1999), political participation based on nationalism may produce undemocratic policy outcomes. Also, if blind national pride makes citizens in new democracies view their domestic political competitors as their key out-group, nationalism can deepen affective polarization, instead of weakening it (Levendusky 2018).

In this study, we delve into new democracies with lingering authoritarian legacies, and examine how constructive and blind national pride are related to voter turnout. As Weil (1985) suggests, regime transition does not immediately result in a shift in the dominant cultural and psychological foundations of the nation. In other words, if citizens in new democracies continue to have positive and nostalgic memories of the past regime and its leaders, they may bring to the polls not only constructive national pride but also unconditional political loyalty (i.e., blind national pride). To shed light on the different mechanisms and effects of nationalism in such political circumstances, we focus on the case of South Korea (hereafter Korea). Korea is a compelling case, which can illuminate our theoretical perspective. It has a history as one of the most dynamic developmental states, in which miraculous economic growth has, in the past, led to both political support and unconditional loyalty. Despite violations of human rights and democratic values, Koreans have shown some characteristics of blind national pride under the earlier regime. This blind national pride has continued even after democratization and, accordingly, it promotes political participation through sustaining loyalty to political leaders.

Our key argument is that, unlike in advanced democracies, both blind and constructive national pride can be positively related to political participation through different mechanisms. We also expect that its effect will be especially robust among older citizens, who have been successful under the rule of the earlier regime. Moreover, given the conservative ideology of authoritarian legacy parties in Korea, we predict that the relationship between blind national pride and voter turnout will be stronger among conservative citizens compared to their liberal and moderate counterparts. We test our theoretical predictions using original survey data in Korea. Our findings suggest that, while, as expected, constructive national pride is positively

associated with voter turnout, blind national pride is not in a negative relationship. Instead, due to the legacies of the authoritarian developmental state, it appears to have a positive impact on turnout, particularly among older or conservative citizens. Therefore, we offer additional evidence of the perspective to understand a different relationship between different types of national pride and voter turnout in some of new democracies (e.g., Golder 2016; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2019; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2017).

Nationalism and voter turnout

Based on social identity theory (Tajfel 1981), prior studies demonstrate that national pride increases turnout. First, some scholars suggest that, because national pride is psychological attachment to one's nation, it can facilitate the acquisition of values and norms of the nation-state. Thus, in democracies where voter turnout is considered a desirable virtue and a sign of good citizenship (Conover, Searing, and Crewe 2004), citizens with higher levels of national pride are more likely to have values related to political participation, because stronger attachment to a group leads to greater acceptance of norms and modes of in-group members' behavior (Terry, Hogg, and White 1999). Second, other scholars provide a different rationale for the positive relationship between national pride and political participation. For example, Hur (2022) argues that the effect of national pride on voter turnout depends on the degree to which the political community (state) and national community (nation) coincide. Because psychological attachment to a nation-state can raise intrinsic and ethical commitment, higher levels of national pride in democracies with strong nation-state linkage can be expressed as democratic political attitudes and behavior including civic duty to vote, actual participation in voting, tax payment, and military service.

However, the two strands of literature above have assumed that national pride is a one-dimensional concept, ignoring its diverse characteristics. This implies that their studies might offer limited explanations as to what aspect of national pride affects voter turnout and what mechanisms are at work. In criticizing the single-dimensional approach, some scholars differentiate subtypes of national pride (Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016; Powers 2022; Schatz, Staub, and Lavine 1999; Wright, Citrin, and Wand 2012). Among them, Schatz and his colleagues (1999) divide national pride into constructive and blind types. Because their fundamental differences can lead to different attitudinal and behavioral outcomes, the division can help answer the question of how and why each part or type of national pride is differently related to political participation.

First, because constructive national pride is associated with the attitudes and values of democracy and universalism (Davidov 2009; Kosterman and Feshbach 1989; Livi et al. 2014; Schatz, Staub, and Lavine 1999), those with higher levels of constructive national pride are likely to be interested in the way that healthy democracy works in their country. They can increase political psychological resources, such as political interests, efficacy, and political knowledge, which in turn may produce active voters. Second, in contrast, because blind national pride is related to chauvinism, it tends to idealize one's country both unconditionally and uncritically. Moreover, prior studies

find that it is positively associated with anti-democratic values, such as right-wing authoritarianism, a tendency toward social dominance, traditional and pre-modern values, discriminatory attitudes toward immigrants, and even xenophobia (Finell and Zogmaister 2015; Livi et al. 2014; Peña and Sidanius 2002; Sekerdej and Roccas 2016). Due to the lack of incentives to keep an eye on the operation of healthy democracy, those with higher levels of blind national pride are likely to exhibit lower levels of political engagement, including voter turnout (Huddy and Khatib 2007; Schatz, Staub, and Lavine 1999).¹

However, although the approach of differentiating between constructive and blind national pride helps us better understand the relationship between national pride and turnout, existing discussions on underlying theoretical mechanisms and empirical analysis have come primarily from advanced democracies. Little attention has been paid to new democracies, which may have very different political contexts where national sentiments operate to shape political behavior in a different way. In other words, studying constructive and blind national pride only in the context of advanced democracies may overlook alternative underlying mechanisms through which the two types of national pride are related to political participation. In this study, we, therefore, discuss and examine the relationship between constructive and blind national pride and turnout in some of young democracies, especially those with lingering legacies from past authoritarianism.

Blind national pride and voter turnout in new democracies

Understanding different political contexts is essential to analyzing political behavior, because the expected underlying mechanisms may not work in a new political context. For example, Jamal (2007) finds that although participation in civic associations results in higher levels of trust, it does not lead to civic engagement and support for democracy in the Arab world, because the associations derive resources and benefits from the nondemocratic state in the region. Similarly, Zhong and Chen (2002) show that citizens with higher levels of political efficacy, political interest, and democratic values tend to stay away from Chinese village elections. In short, in contrast to the conventional wisdom built on advanced democracies (Putnam 1993; Schlozman, Brady, and Verba 2018), new political contexts can involve different mechanisms, thereby producing different political behavioral outcomes.

Likewise, we expect that the relationship between national pride and voter turnout is different in new democracies. Our core argument is that although constructive national pride is still positively associated with turnout, this may also be true of blind national pride in new democracies with lingering authoritarian legacies. This is because authoritarian regimes tend to utilize nationalism, a key characteristic of blind national pride, to promote unconditional political support in facing the twin challenges of nation-building and industrialization (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017). Hence, when individuals shape their national sentiments via the socialization process under those circumstances (Neundorf and Pop-Eleches 2020) and, more importantly, when successor parties sustain the nationalist legacies even after democratization (Jhee 2008; Miller 2021), citizens in new democracies are likely to be active in political participation based on blind national pride. If such is the case, we expect

the positive relationship to be more robust among older citizens, because they have experienced the authoritarian regime both recently and directly, which would lead them to have a stronger and better memory of it. Also, if the authoritarian successor party is conservative (e.g., in Korea), the same pattern can appear more strongly as citizens' political ideology becomes more conservative.

We argue that the positive relationship between blind national pride and voter turnout arises from the following three mechanisms: good economic performance under authoritarianism, formation of nationalism during the period, and presence of authoritarian successor parties after democratization. First, the good economic performance of an authoritarian regime can serve as the foundation for political support and national sentiments under the new regimes as well as the old. Although cultural traditions, media manipulation, and external threats such as wars and terrorist attacks can be sources of political support for the regime and its leaders, a good economic performance plays a greater role than any other factors in shaping public loyalty to and support for the authoritarian regimes (Hong and Park 2014; Treisman 2011). In particular, because national economic development is one source of national pride (Smith and Kim 2006), good economic performance can create a political environment in which citizens shape their national sentiments based on that and, at the same time, leaders solidify their political foundations (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017). Furthermore, because a good economic record is one of the legacies that can be easily transmitted and translated to democratic competition, it allows citizens to maintain favorable political attitudes toward the past regime and its leaders even after experiencing a regime transition (Jhee 2008; Miller 2021).

Second, under economically successful authoritarian regimes, citizens can develop a nationalist outlook, which tends to contain characteristics of blind national pride. When confronted with the twin challenges of nation-building and industrialization, authoritarian leaders can utilize nationalism and mobilize citizens by internalizing and indoctrinating key ideologies, norms, and values to push the entire society toward the state-defined goal of economic development (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017; Neundorf and Pop-Eleches 2020; Treisman 2011). Because authoritarian regimes control both public education and mass media, political and national socialization in accordance with the official line of the regime can be achieved using well-designed curricula, textbooks, and diverse governmental programs (Darden and Grzymala-Busse 2006). Given that the provision of mass education facilitates shared values and homogenizes the population based on nationalism (Gellner 1983; Wimmer 2018), children and young people—the primary targets of the educational system—can shape national sentiments by easily internalizing the ideologies and values that help solidify authoritarian rule during their formative years. Therefore, their national sentiments can be closely linked to unconditional political support for the regime, which in turn facilitates political mobilization through diverse governmental programs.

Lastly, the nationalism formed during the authoritarian period can persist even more strongly when the past regime's elites lead the process of democratic transition and, thus, their successor parties survive as viable political actors in the new democracies (Slater and Wong 2022). Because the successor parties are likely to mobilize their supporters by sustaining authoritarian legacies based on shared memories

(Elçi 2022), blind nationalism formed during the past regime can promote voter turnout even in a new regime. Although political orientations from the days of authoritarianism may become biased against the old regime (Dinas and Northmore-Ball 2020; Frantzeskakis and Sato 2020), pro-dictator bias can also appear in new democracies (Jhee 2008; Kim-Leffingwell 2022). In particular, one source that produces favorable attitudes toward the past regime is economic success, which is easily transmittable to democratic competition (Miller 2021). Therefore, national sentiments based on unconditional political loyalty, which had been indoctrinated during the period of authoritarian economic success, can be sustained and revitalized as a part of the successor parties' mobilizing strategies.² As a result, this can lead blind national pride to be positively associated with voter turnout in new democracies.

Moreover, the existence of authoritarian successor parties can further maintain citizens' habit of political participation formed under authoritarian elections. According to the literature on the characteristics, causes, and effects of authoritarian elections compared to democratic ones (Chen and Zhong 2002; Levitsky and Way 2010; Reuter et al. 2016), though elections under authoritarianism might be perceived as "a ritual that everyone knows is fake" (Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009, 406), participation in them can still raise political psychological resources, such as voter efficacy, and the likelihood of becoming habitual voters (Shi 1999). Therefore, given that the survival of successor parties can sustain the effects of a combination of good economic performance and formation of nationalism under the past regime, we expect that the habit formed in authoritarian elections can further strengthen the positive relationship between blind national pride and turnout.

It is also possible that a successful democratic transition weakens the positive link between blind national pride and turnout—that, instead, democratic values on which constructive national pride stand shape political behavior in new democracies just as they do in advanced democracies. However, political orientations and attitudes obtained via political socialization under authoritarianism cannot change immediately after a regime transition because of the accumulated stock of political regimes (Weil 1985). In other words, the period of democratic experience as a historical process shapes political contexts in which blind national pride is associated with political participation. In this regard, Sumino (2021) finds that the level of educational attainment reduces blind national pride only in advanced democracies with larger stocks of democracy, whereas its remedial effect is not observed in new democracies. Moreover, as discussed earlier, the presence of authoritarian successor parties can strengthen the positive impact of blind national pride on voter turnout by maintaining nationalist authoritarian legacies. Hence, we expect that blind national pride, like constructive national pride, is likely to be positively associated with voter turnout in some of new democracies.

Hypothesis 1: Those with higher levels of constructive national pride are more likely to participate in elections.

Hypothesis 2: Those with higher levels of blind national pride are more likely to participate in elections.

In addition, we expect that there will be conditional effects of political cohorts and political ideology. First, given that the positive relationship between blind national pride and voter turnout comes from nationalist legacies of authoritarianism, it is likely that the pattern is stronger among older cohorts. This expectation can be supported by political socialization theory, which explains that fundamental political values are obtained during the so-called impressionable years in early adulthood (Krosnick and Alwin 1989). Because different experiences of political socialization can yield variation in the strength of psychological attachment to social groups (Wong 2010), the same mechanism can be applied to the authoritarian legacies, which come from the shared social identity—national identity in our case—formed during the past regime. For instance, Ekman and Linde (2005) provide the life-biography perspective to explain that the strength of past communist regimes' legacies in East and Central European democracies depends on individuals' direct experiences and memories. Similarly, Neundorf, Gerschewski, and Olar (2020) find that those in younger cohorts, who did not directly experience the past regime and its indoctrination efforts, tend to put less weight on the values and achievements of authoritarianism. We thus expect the positive relationship between blind national pride and voter turnout to be stronger among citizens in older cohorts with direct experiences of the past regime than among those in younger cohorts.

Hypothesis 3: The positive association between blind national pride and voter turnout will be stronger among older cohorts.

Second, one of the key mechanisms that positively connects blind national pride to voter turnout is survival of authoritarian successor parties as viable political actors in new democracies. In Korea, the successor party is the conservative party, which occupied the presidency for ten years after democratization in 1987. Political leaders during the transitional period calculated that they retained power and legitimacy through a remarkable record of economic development. Thus, authoritarianism in Korea “did not collapse, nor was the regime overthrown, but rather the incumbent ruling party introduced and led the democratization process” (Slater and Wong 2022, 122). If our theory holds, we expect blind national pride to be more positively associated with turnout among conservatives.

Hypothesis 4: The positive association between blind national pride and voter turnout will be stronger as citizens' political ideology becomes conservative.

The case of South Korea

The Korean case provides theoretically appropriate settings to discuss and test our argument. Our theory about the relationship between blind national pride and turnout relies on the expectation that the past authoritarian regime showed a good economic performance, citizens formed nationalist inclinations during the period, and the successor parties exist as a viable actor in a new regime to provoke the public's positive memories and national sentiments on the past regime. As will be discussed below, all these mechanisms were at play in Korea.³

Historically, Korea was one of the most dynamic developmental states under authoritarianism (Haggard 2018; Kohli 2004; Woo-Cumings 1999). Especially under President Park Chung-hee's rule, manufacturing industries, one of its primary developmental strategies, grew at an impressive 16 percent per year during the 1970s, contributing to an annual GDP growth rate by about 9 percent. Given the miraculous economic success, many Korean citizens supported and approved the regime and its policies in elections, despite the violations of human rights and democratic values.⁴ Moreover, as of 2021, many Koreans still consider President Park not only as the most favored (32.2 percent), but also as the most successful (47.9 percent) among all the past and current presidents.⁵ In short, the Korean authoritarian regime enjoyed favorable political environments for their legitimation, owing to political support resulting from good economic performance.

More importantly, by implementing diverse governmental policies, the regime took advantage of nationalism to mobilize and push the entire society towards national development. Indeed, in his presidential speeches, President Park proclaimed that nationalism is a core ideological construct (Kim 2013), and he tried to implant strong nationalism, particularly in schools, among farmers in rural areas, and in private businesses, to form a developmentalist coalition. For example, he issued the "Charter of National Education" (CNE) in 1968 and used nationalism to industrialize and revitalize the nation by stating that "we were born into this land charged with the historic mission to revitalize the nation." Specifically, the CNE consists of three core values: "the establishment of self-reliant nationalism," "the creation of a new national culture with harmonization of tradition and progress," and "the development of democracy with harmonization of the state and individuals." Since it was printed on the first page of all school textbooks and used as guidance for all education, the Park regime could easily and successfully indoctrinate young citizens, including students, using the nationalist ideologies to promote unconditional allegiance to the single-minded goal of national development (Moon and Jun 2011).

In addition to the CNE, the Park regime also launched the "New Village Movement" (*Saemaul Undong*) in 1970. Although its explicit purpose was rural village development, based on a nationwide self-help program that conditionally offered financial and material resources for production of public goods (e.g., cash transfer, cement, fertilizer, grain subsidies), it implicitly aimed to mobilize farmers in rural areas for top-down national economic growth (Park 1979). Specifically, by emphasizing values such as "diligence," "self-help," and "cooperation" as the key components of economic developmental strategies, the program efficiently spread nationalist ideology and collaborative spirit among the citizens. As a result, the regime successfully utilized nationalism as an effective strategy not only to expedite the industrialization process, but also to mobilize citizens for political support and loyalty during the 1970s.

Furthermore, the positive effects of the New Village Movement on political support persisted even after democratization in 1987. Villages that received more benefits from the program tended to show stronger support for Park Geun-hye, the daughter of President Park, in the 2012 presidential election (Hong, Park, and Yang 2022; Kang 2016). In particular, Hong and her colleagues (2022) demonstrate that the underlying mechanism of its lingering influence is psychological (e.g., attachment to the Park regime), rather than economic (e.g., material benefits). This implies that the national

sentiments Koreans formed under the economically successful authoritarian regime have not only produced political support during the past regime, but also provided a psychological foundation of blind nationalism even after democratization.⁶ Put differently, citizens who experienced Park's regime strongly embedded unconditional political loyalty into their national sentiments.

Given the political environments favorable to the past authoritarian regime, Korea's democratization in 1987 allowed its successors to survive as a viable political party in the new regime (Slater and Wong 2022). The legacy party consolidated its power based on strong organizational resources and established personnel networks under democracy. Moreover, it thrived as the dominant conservative party to win the presidency in the two subsequent elections after democratization. As a result, it has maintained the nationalist legacies that can promote political loyalty and even unconditional political support. Therefore, given the political context of Korea, we expect blind national pride to have a positive impact on voter turnout in addition to constructive national pride. We also expect that the positive relationship will be stronger both among older citizens who both recently and directly experienced the past regime, and among those with conservative ideologies.

Data, variables, and model specification

To empirically test our theory, we analyze original survey data collected in Korea, in August, 2020. Our survey was conducted with quota sampling for adults older than 18, by considering actual proportion of gender, age, and region. The sample size of our data is 1,236 in total. Despite its online survey format, the data include diverse measures of constructive and blind national pride, which are the variables of interest in this study. We first provide appropriate measures of constructive and blind national pride and conduct a factor analysis to show that the conceptual divide is applicable to Korean citizens as it is in the US and European democracies before testing our hypotheses.

Our main explanatory variables are *constructive* and *blind national pride*. To measure them, we utilize 20 items, as shown in Table 1. For each item, subjects in the survey selected one of the five-point scale responses from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). Most of the items listed in Table 1 were developed in Schatz and his colleagues' study (1999), where they verified the validity and reliability of the measures among American voters. Considering the Korea-specific contexts, we also included four additional items (item 4, 18, 19, and 20).⁷

Table 1 presents question wordings of the measures and the results of factor analysis, which examines whether the two types of national pride are distinguished among Koreans in ways similar to Western democracies. The results clearly show that the 20 items are divided into two factors, constructive and blind national pride. Because the factor analysis distinguishes factor 1 (eigenvalue = 5.5) and factor 2 (eigenvalue = 4.8),⁸ we retain items included in each factor based on factor loadings.⁹ We then calculate mean values of each type of national pride, which ranges from 1 to 5, respectively. Since the inter-item reliability is 0.895 and 0.859 (Cronbach's α) for constructive and blind national pride, respectively, we generate composite indices using their mean values. In sum, the two types of national pride are conceptually

Table 1. Measures of constructive and blind national pride and factor analysis

Measures	Factor loadings	
	Factor 1 (Constructive)	Factor 2 (Blind)
1. People who do not wholeheartedly support South Korea should live somewhere else.	-0.1295	0.5847
2. South Korea is virtually always right.	-0.3150	0.7175
3. I would support South Korea, no matter what (i.e., whether it's right or wrong).	-0.1324	0.6293
4. People who oppose a boycott of Japanese products are not South Koreans.	-0.1924	0.5715
5. I believe that South Korea's policies are almost always the morally correct ones.	-0.4119	0.6385
6. People should not constantly try to change the way things are in South Korea.	0.1284	0.4369
7. I support South Korea's policies for the very reason that they are the policies of my country.	-0.3435	0.6762
8. There is too much criticism of South Korea in surrounding countries and we, as citizens, should not criticize it.	-0.3373	0.6664
9. Criticizing South Korea is being anti-South Korea.	-0.4467	0.6481
10. We should have complete freedom of speech even for those who criticize the country.	0.5841	-0.0372
11. Because I identify with South Korea, some of its actions make me feel sad.	0.6602	-0.0645
12. People should work hard to move this country in a positive direction.	0.7149	0.3112
13. If you love South Korea, you should notice its problems and work to correct them.	0.7997	0.1951
14. If I criticize South Korea, I do so because of my love for the country.	0.6651	0.2733
15. I oppose some South Korea's policies because I care about my country and want to improve it.	0.8147	0.1226
16. I express my love for South Korea by supporting efforts at positive change.	0.6723	0.4034
17. My love for country demands that I speak out against popular but potentially destructive policies.	0.8044	0.1264
18. I am very proud that South Korea is the number one country in Asia.	0.4204	0.5908
19. I believe that South Korea is the best country in the world.	0.0769	0.6840
20. I highly appreciate South Korea's democracy, but I will not hesitate to criticize it for the achievement of a better democracy.	0.6589	0.2712

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued.)

Measures	Factor loadings	
	Factor 1 (Constructive)	Factor 2 (Blind)
Eigenvalue	5.53775	4.79857
Proportion of total variance	0.2724	0.2444

Note: Bolded values indicate retention of item on the factor.

distinct among Korean voters (see online Appendix A for further information on the composite indices).

In addition to constructive and blind national pride, another key variable is *political cohorts*, which is our first moderator to test *Hypothesis 3*. To measure political cohorts in accordance with the historical trajectories of Korea, we follow prior studies in Korean politics (Noh, Song, and Kang 2013), and divide into five cohorts based on birth year as follows: “before 1960” (6.55%); “1960~1969” (15.29%); “1970~1978” (29.85%); “1979~1987” (26.78%); “after 1987” (21.52%). We create an interaction term by combining *blind national pride* and *political cohorts*. For *Hypothesis 4*, we measure *political ideology*, our second moderator, by using the following question: “People generally divide political ideology into ‘liberal’ and ‘conservative’. On a scale from 0 (being the most liberal) to 10 (being the most conservative), where do you think you belong?” Respondents selected one of the 11-point scale responses. To create an interaction term, we then combine *blind national pride* and *political ideology*.

Our dependent variable is *voter turnout*. To measure respondents’ participation in elections, we directly asked whether or not they participated in the 2020 Korean legislative election, which was the latest election before the survey. If a respondent participated in the election, we score him or her 1 on the measure and 0 otherwise.

We include political and socio-demographic covariates in our analysis. Given that political psychological resources are well-known predictors of political participation (Schlozman, Brady, and Verba 2018), we first consider the following political variables: political knowledge (the number of correct answers out of four questions; 0–4);¹⁰ political interest (1 = “not interested”; 4 = “very interested”); internal and external political efficacy (1 = “not efficacious”; 4 = “very efficacious,” respectively); partisanship (1 = “independent”; 0 = “partisan”); strength of political ideology (0 = “very weak”; 5 = “very strong”). Second, we also include socio-demographic variables:¹¹ gender (1 = “female”; 0 = “male”), education (1 = “≤ high school graduation”; 2 = “college/university”; 3 = “graduate”), monthly household income (1 = “≤ one million won”; 11 = “≥ ten million won”), and employment status (1 = “employed”; 0 = “unemployed”). Lastly, because our dependent variable is a binary variable, we utilize binary logistic regression models and then provide substantive interpretation based on predicted probabilities using *Clarify* (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000). For our interaction models, we use marginal effects graphs to interpret. Online Appendix B presents the summary statistics of all variables in our first analysis.

Findings

Table 2 displays findings from our analysis. Before discussing the key findings, we briefly introduce each model in the table. While Model 1 includes the variables of interest and socio-demographic covariates, it does not contain political psychological variables except for *political ideology* and *strength of political ideology*. But Model 2 includes all covariates. Models 3 and 4 include the interaction terms to examine *Hypothesis 3* and *4*, respectively.¹²

In Model 1, constructive national pride is positively associated with voter turnout as *Hypothesis 1* predicts.¹³ This suggests that because constructive national pride is closely related to democratic values, Koreans who exhibit its higher values are more likely to participate in elections just like those in the advanced democracies. Interestingly, however, blind national pride is also in a positive relationship with voter turnout, which provides empirical support for *Hypothesis 2*. Unlike citizens in Western democracies, those with high levels of blind national pride are more likely to go to the polls in Korea. Substantively, when other variables are held at their means or medians, the min–max change of constructive national pride increases the likelihood of voting from 0.42 (0.23, 0.63) to 0.97 (0.96, 0.98). Though relatively weaker, the same change of blind national pride also increases it from 0.84 (0.73, 0.91) to 0.96 (0.92, 0.98) (parentheses indicate the 95% confidence intervals).

As discussed above, this result may come from the fact that Korea has a history as a developmental authoritarian state. Despite violations of human rights and democratic values, a significant number of Koreans under the regime may have been satisfied with its successful and rapid economic development and thus supported the regime and its leaders. In particular, the fact that the regime utilized nationalism as an effective ruling and mobilizing ideology may have allowed Koreans to shape unconditional political support and loyalty based on the national sentiments. As a result, even after democratization, blind national pride among Koreans can be associated with voter turnout in a positive direction, unlike in western democracies.

In turn, we further examine the patterns of the relationship between the two types of national pride and voter turnout in Model 2 by including variables of political psychological recourses. When controlling for political psychological variables, though blind national pride does not hold statistical significance at the 95 percent confidence level, it is still significant at the 90 percent confidence level (*Hypothesis 2*). Constructive national pride remains significantly associated with voter turnout in a positive direction at the 99 percent confidence level and thus consistent with *Hypothesis 1*. For substantive interpretation, we estimate predicted probabilities. When holding other variables at their means or medians, the min–max change of constructive national pride increases the voting probability from 0.75 (0.56, 0.89) to 0.97 (0.94, 0.98). Again, although weaker than constructive pride, the min–max change of blind national pride also boosts the voter turnout from 0.88 (0.78, 0.94) to 0.97 (0.93, 0.98) (parentheses indicate the 95% confidence intervals).¹⁴ Therefore, the findings again strongly suggest that both constructive and blind national pride are positively associated with voter turnout (*Hypothesis 1* and *2*), which implies that they have different mechanisms in terms of political participation at least in some of new democracies with lingering authoritarian legacies compared to advanced democracies.

Table 2. Constructive and blind national pride and voter turnout in South Korea

Variable	Additive Models		Interactive Models	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constructive national pride	1.03*** (0.16)	0.59*** (0.18)	0.62*** (0.18)	0.58*** (0.18)
Blind national pride	0.40** (0.17)	0.37* (0.19)	-0.48 (0.44)	-0.41 (0.51)
Political cohorts	0.09 (0.08)	0.02 (0.09)	-1.03** (0.48)	0.03 (0.09)
Blind × Cohorts			0.37** (0.17)	
Political ideology	-0.06 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.48* (0.27)
Blind × Political ideology				0.16* (0.09)
Political knowledge		0.28*** (0.09)	0.29*** (0.09)	0.29*** (0.09)
Political interest		0.71*** (0.15)	0.73*** (0.15)	0.75*** (0.15)
Internal political efficacy		0.20 (0.22)	0.23 (0.22)	0.20 (0.22)
External political efficacy		-0.12 (0.17)	-0.14 (0.18)	-0.15 (0.18)
Partisanship (independent)		-1.18*** (0.22)	-1.17*** (0.22)	-1.16*** (0.22)
Strength of political ideology	0.29*** (0.07)	0.10 (0.08)	0.09 (0.08)	0.13 (0.08)
Gender (female)	-0.17 (0.19)	0.19 (0.22)	0.19 (0.22)	0.21 (0.22)
Education	0.33* (0.19)	0.19 (0.20)	0.19 (0.20)	0.21 (0.20)
Income	0.03 (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)
Employment	0.17 (0.23)	0.02 (0.24)	0.03 (0.24)	0.03 (0.24)

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Variable	Additive Models		Interactive Models	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	-3.99*** (0.98)	-4.14*** (1.15)	-1.92 (1.54)	-1.976974 (1.72)
Log-likelihood	-377.6232	-334.1360	-331.6663	-332.6479
AIC	775.2464	698.2720	695.3327	697.2957
BIC	826.1054	774.5605	776.7071	778.6701
N	1,195	1,195	1,195	1,195

Note: Coefficients and standard errors are from binary logistic models. AIC: Akaike information criterion; BIC: Bayesian information criterion. *** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.1$.

In addition to the positive effects of both constructive and blind national pride on turnout, our *Hypothesis 3* predicts that the positive association between blind national pride and voter turnout will appear stronger among older cohorts. And *Hypothesis 4* states that the relationship will be more robust as citizens' political ideology becomes more conservative. The interaction terms in both Models 3 and 4 are statistically significant in a positive direction and thus support our hypotheses.¹⁵ The marginal effects are displayed in Figure 1, which clearly shows the expected patterns: the association between blind national pride and voter turnout appears more robust as political cohorts become older (left) and individuals become more conservative (right). Specifically, a positive relationship is observed among political cohorts born before 1979, whereas the relationship becomes null among relatively younger cohorts. Likewise, while the relationship is null among liberal and moderate citizens, it appears positive as political ideology becomes more conservative. In contrast, online Appendix E shows that neither political cohorts nor political ideology moderate the relationship between constructive national pride and voter turnout.¹⁶

This suggests that, as Ekman and Linde's (2005) life-biography perspective explains, because citizens' memories about the past and its experiences are crucial in shaping political attitudes and behaviors, older cohorts who directly experienced the developmental state are likely to participate in elections based on the blind national pride that they internalized during the past regime. And the nationalist legacies of the authoritarian regime may have lingering influence on the national sentiments and political behavior of Koreans—particularly, older citizens—after democratization. Also, given that the authoritarian successor party in Korea is the conservative party, the mobilizing effects of blind national pride appear more robust among conservative voters.

In sum, in sharp contrast to advanced Western democracies, in some of new democracies with authoritarian legacies, blind national pride, like constructive pride, has a positive association with voter turnout. Furthermore, the pattern becomes more salient especially among older citizens who experienced authoritarianism directly in the recent past and conservative citizens who are psychologically more

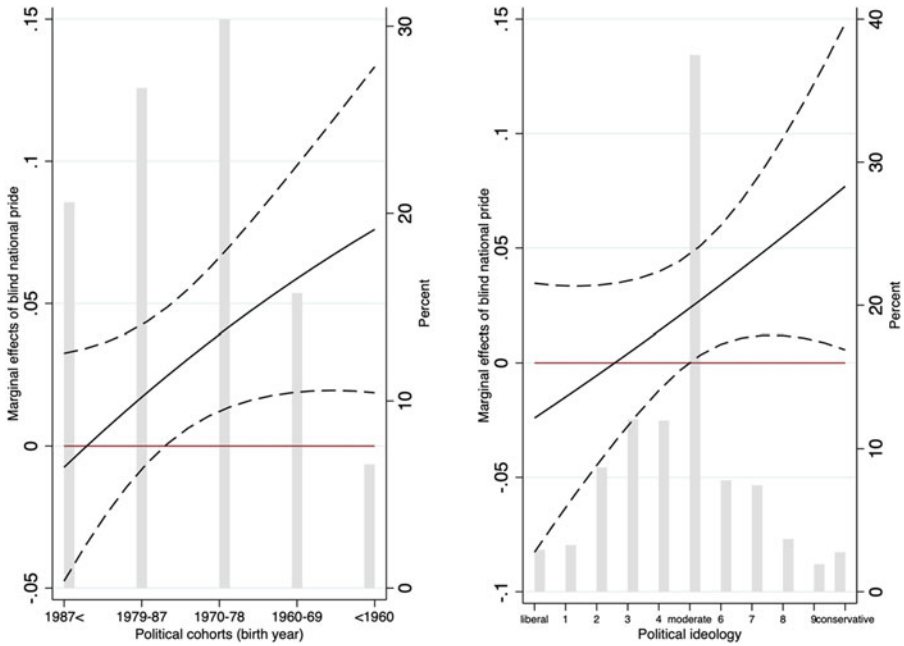


Figure 1. Conditional effects of political cohorts and political ideology.

Note: Marginal effects are from Model 3 (left panel) and Model 4 (right panel). Other variables are fixed at their means or medians. Dashed lines indicate 95 percent confidence intervals.

attached to the successor party. Lastly, among control variables, our models show that, as expected, those with higher levels of political knowledge and political interest and partisan voters are more likely to go to the polls.

Conclusion

A renewed approach to the political effects of nationalism has improved our understanding of the relationship between different types of national pride—in particular constructive and blind national pride—and political participation (Huddy and Khatib 2007; Schatz, Staub, and Lavine 1999). However, our understanding of the relationship in new democracies remains limited because existing key findings come from advanced democracies. As the burgeoning literature on authoritarian legacies in new democracies suggests (Dinas and Northmore-Ball 2020; Frantzeskakis and Sato 2020; Hong, Park, and Yang 2022; Kim-Leffingwell 2022; Miller 2021), examining different underlying mechanisms of political behavior in different political is imperative. In this research, we analyzed the relationship between constructive and blind national pride and voter turnout in new democracies. We examined the case of Korea, the miraculous economic growth of which has made it one of the most dynamic developmental states, to provide a novel explanation on the relationship.

We argue that, in contrast to advanced democracies, where blind national pride does not promote voter turnout, in some new democracies the lingering influence

of authoritarian legacies (Sumino 2021; Weil 1985), can mean that it does. Our findings demonstrate that because of its historical experience as a successful developmental state, in Korea blind national pride is positively related to turnout, and the association becomes even stronger among older cohorts who directly experienced the past regime. Therefore, this study strongly suggests that the underlying mechanisms through which national sentiments influence political participation can be different in new democracies from those in advanced ones, owing to their different historical trajectories.

The study offers important implications for comparative research on political behavior, authoritarian legacies, and nationalism. First, our findings suggest that it is necessary to take the role of authoritarian legacies into account when analyzing political behavior in new democracies. In line with an emerging literature (Hong, Park, and Yang 2022; Kim-Leffingwell 2022), we provide additional evidence that the legacies from the past can shape micro-level foundations of political behavior in new democracies. Second, the evidence presented here that behavioral outcomes appear to differ between advanced and new democracies, despite the same measures of constructive and blind national pride, implies that nationalism contains contextual elements that influence the local meaning of the term (e.g., Powers 2022). Furthermore, given our findings that blind national pride can boost voter turnout in some young democracies, it is necessary to pay more attention to potential negative political consequences of elections, such as undemocratic policy outcomes, a rise of populist and/or radical parties, and an increase of affective polarization (Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2019; Levendusky 2018).

Based on the findings, our study suggests promising avenues for future research. First, it is necessary to carefully examine the causal mechanisms among key variables of interest in this study. For example, we demonstrated that both constructive and blind national pride can lead to active participation in elections, but the underlying mechanisms may be different. Interestingly, even though blind national pride is negatively associated with some political psychological resources, such as political knowledge and internal political efficacy (Online Appendix C), it is in a positive relationship with voter turnout. This may suggest that passive political attitudes, such as unconditionally following and approving political elites and deference to political authority, mediate the positive relationship. In future research, it is worth directly investigating through what specific mechanisms blind national pride affects political participation in new democracies with successful authoritarian histories.

Second, although we demonstrated that, in sharp contrast to Western democracies, blind national pride can help citizens actively participate in elections in some new democracies that grew out of economically successful authoritarian regimes, the findings should be further examined beyond the realm of political participation. For instance, previous studies show that blind national pride is closely related to anti-democratic values such as right-wing authoritarianism, social dominance tendency, traditional and pre-modern values, discriminatory attitudes toward immigrants, and xenophobia (Finell and Zogmaister 2015; Livi et al. 2014; Peña and Sidanius 2002; Sekerdej and Roccas 2016). If the mechanism by which blind national pride shapes political attitudes and behavior is different across old and young democracies, it is worth examining whether blind national pride produces different attitudinal and

behavioral outcomes beyond political participation, such as attitudes toward immigration and foreign policy.

Supplementary material. The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.1017/jea.2023.13>.

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Competing interest. The authors declare none.

Notes

1. Compared to constructive nationalism, the characteristics of blind nationalism are likely to decrease political participation. However, given the recent rise of far right and/or populist parties in Western democracies, blind nationalism may be not necessarily have a negative relationship with political participation. Some argue that both nativism—a combination of nationalism and xenophobia—and/or “new nationalism”—a combination of nationalism and populism—can be a foundation of support for anti-democratic values, such as monoculturalism and chauvinism, which can lead to populist far right voting (Golder 2016; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2019; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2017).
2. Strictly speaking, the fact that some Koreans have formed their national pride based on the past regime’s good economic performance does not necessarily mean that their national sentiments are “unconditional” because the economic success can be a necessary condition. However, even though their national pride begins under a certain condition, we argue that it has been evolved into “unconditional” and “uncritical” sentiments—that is, blind national pride. We admit the different mechanisms between the (conditional) formation of national pride and its later evolution of (unconditional) blind national pride. Yet we focus on the latter, which is more directly related to voter turnout, our dependent variable.
3. Relying on the literature on how colonialism shapes the context of nation-building and formation of nationalism (Soehl and Karim 2021), many scholars have explained that the period of Japanese colonialism led to strong ethnic nationalism among Koreans (Lee 1986; Shin 2006). However, even though it is true that colonialism has formed Korean nationalism, based particularly on ethnicity, our discussion focuses on authoritarianism, rather than colonialism. This is because the key distinction between constructive and blind nationalism—our theoretical interest—comes primarily from their different foundations in the authoritarian era, rather than the era of Japanese colonial rule, and thus the discussion is more directly related to *democracy* in the country, rather than *ethnicity*.
4. After claiming power via military coup in 1961, Park agreed to hold an election in 1963 and successfully ran for the presidency. In the fifth (1963), sixth (1967), and seventh (1971) presidential elections, Park obtained 46.6%, 51.4%, and 53.2% of vote share, respectively. Those vote shares are relatively high compared to other presidents under competitive elections in Korean politics.
5. Source: *JoongAng Ilbo* article on November 11, 2021 (www.joongang.co.kr/article/25022960#home).
6. One might suggest that the fact that Korean national pride was shaped during the former developmental state implies that it is rational and self-interested and, thus, it cannot be blind. However, the rationality of Korean citizens does not refute our argument that a remarkable economic performance under authoritarianism provides a basis for blind national pride because the division of constructive and blind national pride does *not* rely on rationality. Regardless of rationality, we emphasize that some characteristics of blind national pride (e.g., unconditional national pride) persist even at the present era, especially through stronger psychological affinity for the past leader, Park Chung-hee, and/or, more broadly, the authoritarian legacy party (Hong, Park, and Yang 2022).
7. Though most of the items in Table 1 are not controversial because they are widely used by previous studies, some items may need further discussion on their validity. First, “People who oppose a boycott of Japanese products are not South Koreans” (item 4): Because the core component of blind national

pride is “unquestioning endorsement of or unconditional support for one’s country” (Sumino 2021, 929), it is one behavioral outcome to regard those who oppose a boycott of Japanese products as being “anti-South Korean” without any consideration on political and economic consequences. Similarly, Schatz and his colleagues (1999) use the following item as one measure of blind national pride: “The anti-Vietnam war protesters were un-American” (159). Second, some may question the validity of items 6 to 9 given that they might tap into Confucian values, rather than blind national pride. It is true that some components of blind nationalism and Confucianism are not mutually exclusive because they share some characteristics, such as unconditional followership and staunch allegiance in a hierarchical relationship. However, even if we construct the combined index of blind national pride without those items and estimate same models given the possible conceptual overlap, our findings are consistent (see online Appendix H).

8. Because the eigenvalue of other factors does not exceed 1.0 (not reported), it provides clear evidence that the distinction can be applied to Koreans.

9. We apply the rule used by Schatz, Staub, and Lavine (1999) and Davidov (2009) as the item retention criteria: a difference in factor loadings between two factors is at least 0.2 or a factor loading of an item is at least 0.4. Following this rule makes the decision on item 18 ambiguous. Although we regard it as blind national pride, excluding it does not produce substantively different findings.

10. The following four questions are used to measure *political knowledge*: “How many years is the current president’s term of office in South Korea?” (85.36% answered correctly); “How many members of the current 21st Korean National Assembly including both district and proportional representatives?” (59.49% answered correctly); “Who is the current Prime Minister in South Korea?” (79.61% answered correctly); “How many consecutive terms can the head of metropolitan government in South Korea be elected?” (54.85% answered correctly).

11. Because one of our key variables are *political cohorts*, we do not include *age* in our models. Yet, even if we include *age* in all models reported in the manuscript, the results are not different. We will discuss it in the article where necessary.

12. One may claim that because positive memories of economic success play a pivotal role in our theoretical mechanisms, we need to provide empirical evidence of the relationship between authoritarian nostalgia and blind national pride before examining the relationship between blind national pride and voter turnout. Because our data do not include a direct measure of authoritarian nostalgia, we employ *national pride in economic achievement* as a proxy to test it. Online Appendix I presents a positive association between blind national pride and pride in economic achievement.

13. Though all models include *political cohorts*, instead of *age*, the substantive results are not different either when both are included together in one model or when *age* replaces *political cohorts*. For the purpose of simplicity, we report models with *political cohorts* based on our theoretical discussion.

14. Although the 95 percent confidence intervals of the estimated min–max predicted probabilities overlap each other in the case of blind national pride, the 90 percent confidence intervals do not overlap. Specifically, the estimated values change from 0.88 (0.81, 0.93) to 0.97 (0.94, 0.98) (parentheses indicate the 90 percent confidence intervals).

15. In Model 3, we additionally test the interactive relationship using *age*, instead of *political cohorts*, to see if the similar pattern appears. We find consistent results. See online Appendix D.

16. Because the data we analyze in this study were collected during the era of Covid-19, some may raise a concern about external validity of our findings. To address it, we re-analyzed alternative data, the 2003 and 2013 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), and online Appendix F shows that our key findings are consistent. Also, another concern is the possibility that the generational gap in turnout may come from the rational choice theory and political resources theory. In online Appendix G, we conduct sub-sample analysis only with older cohorts and find consistent findings of the positive effects of blind national pride on turnout.

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