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**The Influence of Trust in Mainstream Media and Political Anxiety on Intention to Listen to
a Political Satire: A Case of South Korea**

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ABSTRACT

The introduction of the Internet has opened a new window for the future of politics by lowering the barrier that hurdles the production and distribution of political information. Last year, in South Korean citizens, one of the world's most wired countries, witnessed the influence of an Internet-based podcast on Korean politics. The show created even a syndrome that brought the four members of the show's hosts in the center of the political issues. The purpose of the study concerns this alternative political talk show. What makes the public in South Korea follow the alternative political talk show? Rather than examine the show's innate characteristic, this study focuses on two external factors: trust in mainstream media and political anxiety.

To understand their influence on the intention to listen to the alternative political talk show, this study conducted an online survey. A total of 436 participants were recruited from an online community. The findings of this study reveal that trust in mainstream media significantly affect the intention. More importantly, the significant interaction between trust in mainstream media and political anxiety suggests that there are two distinct paths that motivate the intention to listen to the show. We discussed the implication of the findings and suggestions for a future study.

The Influence of Trust in Mainstream Media and Political Anxiety on Intention to Listen to a Political Satire: The Case of South Korea

The advent of Internet has opened a new window for the future of politics by lowering the barrier that hurdles the production and distribution of political information. Last year in South Korea where the world's most wired country, an Internet-based political talk show became almost a syndrome. The podcast named "Naneun Ggomsuda (henceforth *Na-ggom-su*, 나는 꼬슴수다)," or "I'm a Weasel (Glionna, 2011.11.18)" was hosted by four distinct characters. The show uses iTunes store as its mean of distribution to avoid the government censorship. Unconventionally direct and unbridled satire to Korean politics and political figures is the hallmarks of the show. It has attracted an astronomical number of followers through its provoking contents that directly aim the incumbent president of South Korea, "Mr. Myung Bak Lee." The show claims that its contents are solely "dedicated" to MR. Lee. It started in April 2011 and has produced about 50 episodes that mainly deal with political events and alluded scandals of the incumbent president and members of his cabinet. The show's most effective weapon is its satire and sarcasm aiming to disclose the alleged scandals related to the incumbent regime in an unconventional way (Choe, 2011.11.1).

However, what makes the show noteworthy is that its influences are extended to not only in virtual sphere but also in the real world. The show's popularity drew a worldwide attention to its influences on Korean society and conventional politics (Glionna, 2011.11.18). Its four hosts have held a series of what they call "Talk Concert" in which they discuss current political issues in South Korea before the public. The show also has exerted its influence on mobilizing hundreds of thousands of people to participate in various political events including the Seoul mayoral election. The show was even pointed out as to one of the critical factor that influenced

the result of Seoul mayoral election in the late 2011 (Rebles in Internet, 2011.11.30). *Na-ggom-su* has successfully awakened the politically indifferent public let alone change the political circumstance in Korea.

The question this study tires to understand concerns this political alternative talk show. What are factors that drive its audience to continuously follow *Na-ggom-su*? Admittedly, considering that the show makes fun of political figures (Glionna, 2011.11.18), seeking political humor is an important factor that might affect the consumption of such political satire (Hmielowski, Holbert, & Lee, 2011). However what we try to examine is that whether the public's perception of the politic and mainstream media rather than the show's innate characteristics contribute to the consumption of this political alternative talk show. To understand this relationship, this study examines the effect of two external factors on the intention of exposure: trust in mainstream media and political anxiety.

Studies show that trust and media use are significantly related to each other (Johnson & Kaye, 2000; Kim & Johnson, 2009; Tsfati & Peri, 2006). Given the show has unveiled the alleged scandal of the incumbent while the mainstream media in South Korea failed to do so (Na, 2011.11.11), it is possible to suspect the trust in mainstream media may influence the consumption of such an alternative media. The other factor that we suspect to influence the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su* is political anxiety. Based on studies that show political anxiety may motivate the public to seek information (Marcus, 2002; Marcus & Mackuen, 1993), we expect that citizens who feel anxiety toward the Korean political situation are more likely to intend to listen to *Na-ggom-su*. When the public feel anxiety from political situation, they are more likely to pay attention to politics (Marcus, Neuman, & Maukuen, 2000).

Based on the previous findings on media trust and political emotion, this study expects that trust in mainstream media and political anxiety make the public engages the alternative political media. In the case of this study, we examine trust in Korean mainstream media and political anxiety from the Korean political situation influence the public's intention to consume a political alternative talk show. More specifically, this study focuses on *Na-ggom-su* that has brought about substantial influences on Korean politics. Given the consequences of media trust and political anxiety are different from each other, examining the factors that affect the intention to consume the alternative political outlet may help us understand the ramification of such consumption.

To examine whether the trust in mainstream media and the emotional reaction to political situation influence the intention to continuously consume *Na-ggom-su*, this study conducted an online survey. Our findings show that the trust in Korean mainstream media is a strong predictor of the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*. Political anxiety does not influence the intention alone. However the significant interaction between the trust in mainstream media and political anxiety suggests that there are two distinct paths that influence respondents' intention to continuous consumption of the alternative political talk show. The effect of political anxiety on the intention seems to be contingent of the level of trust in the Korean mainstream media. The implications of the findings were discussed.

Trust in Mainstream Media and Media consumption

How members of the public see news media has been much studied among communication scholars. It is well known that perception of news media substantially influence

the healthiness of democratic society (Ladd, 2012). Trust in mainstream media critically influences the public's reception of political information from mainstream media (Tsfati, 2003). The public's evaluation of media's news reporting substantially influences mainstream media's ability to set important issues to discuss (Wanta & Hu, 1994). Therefore the decreased trust in mainstream media potentially accelerates political polarization (Ladd, 2012) because it may make the public discriminate information from a certain news organization based on the trust of medium. Consequently, distrust in media may make a society harder to come up with unified consensus.

The concept of trust in a broad term is considered as indispensable in social relationships (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). From a dyad relationship in the interpersonal level to relationships between an individual and governmental body in the macro level, trust is considered to be prerequisite for maintaining social relationships. For example, exchanging goods between people in modern society is highly dependent on the monetary system. The modern economic system would heavily rely on a barter transaction if it were not for the mutual consensus on the symbolic value of the money. Public's mutual trust in the money makes it possible for a society to sustain its economic system. A modern economy highly relies on the public's beliefs and expectations in their monetary system as to the money can be used to exchange goods in the future. The trust in this sense, concerns the public's expectation on a certain action will bring about an expected result in the future (Lewis & Weigert, 1985).

Vanacker and Belmas (2009) conceptualize the media trust in this regard. They define the concept as the public's expectation as to a news organization will bring about expected outcome based on previous experiences. In a similar vein, Kohring and Matthe (2007) focus on journalists' practice in their conceptualization of media trust. They define the concept as the

degree to which people trust in journalists' and news organizations' specific selection in topics and facts. This also includes an assessment of how they portray their selections of social reality because the public expects journalists to present social reality in an objective and fair manner.

The logic behind their conceptualization is that reporting social reality relies heavily on journalists' selective judgments on what they cover and how they report. Therefore, when people don't trust a news organization, they don't expect a news organization to accurately portray the reality. This is because they don't expect a news media to select information in an objective and fair manner. In this regard, operationalization of media trust should concern respondents' evaluation on to what extent they expect the mainstream media would report news in an objective and fair manner and to what extent they expect the mainstream media would serve the public interest

Tsfati's conceptualization of media skepticism reflects another role that the public expects from the news media. According to his definition, media skepticism is "a feeling that mainstream media are neither credible nor reliable, that the news media get in the way of society rather than helping society (Tsfati, 2010, p.23)." This definition emphasizes respondents' subjective judgment on performances and roles of media in society. When people trust media, they expect the media to serve the public good rather than private interests. Because we expect a news organization to serve a society rather than its own interest, the concept of trust in media needs to incorporate its expected roles. This implies that the concept of media trust should touches on not only perceived evaluation on media's news reporting but also on the performance of its expected roles to serve a society's interests.

Studies have shown that trust in media and consumption those media are highly related each other. However, whether the consumption of media affects evaluation of trustworthiness or

assessment of trustworthiness of media drives people to use alternative media is still under debate. On the one hand, consumption of a certain medium influences the credibility judgment of that medium. Kiouisis (2001) finds that media uses are significantly correlated with the news credibility. Reliance to a certain medium is highly associated with its credibility (Johnson & Kaye, 2000; Johnson, Kaye, Bichard, & Wong, 2007). Another study finds that consumption of partisan radio talk show is a significant predictor of media trust (Jones, 2004). On the other hand, a study suggests that perception of media credibility may lead public to seek alternative information sources (Tsfati & Peri, 2006). Distrust in mainstream media is highly related to the frequent exposure to nonmainstream news sites (Tsfati, 2010).

This unclear causality between media trust and media consumption that studies on media trust relies heavily on cross-sectional surveys that prevent the studies from clarifying the causal relationship. However the unresolved causality between trust in media and the consumption, such studies provide consistent evidence on the relationship between perceived trustworthiness of media and consumption. Therefore, it is possible to expect that those people, who are discontent with mainstream media as to the source for political information, are more likely to tune into alternative sources.

Effect of Political Anxiety

It is not totally unfair to say that the history of western philosophy has been the history of reason. From ancient Greek philosophers to more modern political philosophers, human being has been considered to be a logical entity (Solomon, 2008). Emotion, in this perspective, has been disregarded as to the bodily sensation that clouds ones' ability to think clearly. Therefore,

emotional behaviors have been considered to harm a democratic society by stimulating behaviors without making the behaviors think about their actions. Especially in the realm of the political sphere where deliberation is required to make sound judgments on political activities such as voting in elections, the effects of emotions are considered to be detrimental to a society that are needed to be controlled (Marcus, 2002).

More recent studies on effects of emotions on politics, however, have shown that such an assumption that emotions preventing the public from rational judgments is not always true (Marcus et al., 2000). According to a series of studies based on affective intelligence theory, emotions sometimes rather help the public engages to politics and seeks political information (Marcus & Mackuen, 1993; Valentino, Hutchings, Banks, & Davis, 2008). These studies suggest that different emotions may activate different mechanisms based on their natures. According to their explanations, enthusiasm and political anxiety, in particular, have exerted substantial influence on politics. For example, reason without passion doesn't stimulate the public to participate in political activities. The feeling of anxiety makes the public more deliberate toward the politics and political figures by activating the surveillance system (Marcus, 2002; Marcus & Mackuen, 1993).

Between the two distinct emotions, the affective intelligence theory seems to focus more on the effect of political anxiety (Marcus, MacKuen, & Neuman, 2011). This is because the political anxiety motivates the public to inhibit reliance on heuristic judgment such as party affiliations and to engage a deliberated evaluation on politics and political candidates. Under the normal situation when everything seems to be right, the public's political judgments rely highly on dispositional factors such as ideology and party affiliation. The public, under this circumstance, has no motivation to mull over politics and candidates. On the contrary, under the

circumstance where the public senses something is going wrong, the public stops doing whatever they are up to and pay the attention to the source that generates the anxiety (Marcus et al., 2000). A looming threat generates political anxiety activates “the surveillance system” that directs the public’s attention toward politics. Therefore, in this sense, the emotion is a critical factor that creates more engaged citizens by changing their strategies to acquire political information (MacKuen, Wolak, Keele, & Marcus, 2010).

The anxiety in a broader term is the feeling that derives from an uncertain external threat (Lazarus, 1991). Unlike the fear that derives from immediate danger to ones’ physical well-being, the sources of the anxiety is an uncertain threat against ones’ personal meaning structures. It means people feel anxiety if there is something that potentially threaten ones’ psychological wellness. Although both of the fear and anxiety share similar trait, the fear is the reaction to a more imminent and concrete threat whereas the anxiety is the reaction to an uncertain and obscure threat (Öhman, 2008).

When it comes to politics, such threats to ones’ value and ideology are the sources that generate political anxiety. However, it is hard to specify the sources of threat that make the public anxiety in that the sources of threats are not universal (Marcus, 2002). This is because the nature of politics. Of course there is a certain type of threats that generate universal anxiety from the public, 9/11 terrorist attack for example. However, in general, a threat to a certain type of people who hold a certain political ideology is not necessarily a threat to another type of people who hold a different ideological viewpoint. A proposition of tax reform for providing more funds for healthcare might be a threat that makes a certain type of people be wary of the circumstance. The same proposition, on the contrary, may be welcomed from another type of people who deems such a proposition would make a society better place.

The consequences of the political anxiety does not, by itself, motive the public to engage a defensive behavior to cope with a uncertain source that generates the threat to them (Marcus et al., 2000). Rather, the public who feels anxiety activates their surveillance system to monitor the situation and gather the information to reduce the uncertainty. Often time, the feeling of anxiety motivates the public to seek information to reduce uncertainty (Kahlor, 2007). Studies show that anxious people are more likely to learn from candidates' websites when the circumstance requires them to do so (MacKuen et al., 2010; Valentino, Banks, Hutchings, & Davis, 2009).

Given that the media function as the public's sensory system that enables them to get information beyond their immediate environment, political anxiety is a significant factor that directs one's attention toward media (Marcus et al., 2000). A study shows that when the public is threatened by a traumatic event such as 9/11 terrorist attack, the public's amount of media use increases (Boyle et al., 2004). This means that those people who feel the anxiety from the political situation because of whatever a threat they might conceive, they are more like to use media to monitor the politics. It is possible to expect the public increase their media consumption to reduce the uncertainty by monitoring political situation when a threat triggers the surveillance system that motivate the public to be wary of politics

Context of the Study

Last year in South Korea, one of the most wired countries in the world, an iTunes-based political talk show called *Na-ggom-su* drew a world-wide attention (Choe, 2011.11.1). The show consists of four members. Each of them has a diverse background from a former congressman to a CEO of an online-news paper. The hosts claim that the show is solely "dedicated" to the

incumbent president of South Korea, Mr. Myeong-Bak Lee. Although it mainly aims at disclosing alleged scandals of Mr Lee to the public, they also discuss diverse topics that are related to up-to-date political issues.

Almost a year has been passed since the show's first episode. The show's popularity culminated when one of the hosts, Mr. Bong-Ju Jeong was jailed for political slander and defamation in December 2011.¹ The show, other than the political controversies revolve around Mr. Jeong's imprisonment, has brought about a huge impact on the South Korean politics. *Na-ggom-su* syndrome is what the Korean mainstream media dubbed the impact of the show on the politics in South Korea. Millions of people download whenever a new episode is updated on a weekly basis. The show even has hosted a series of talk concerts where the four members of the show discuss current political issues before the public (Na, 2011.11.11). Uncensored satire is the hallmark of the show. Each member even swears at one another time to time. However its unbridled mockery and uncensored sarcasm aim at the Korean politics scratch Koreans' backs (Choe, 2011.11.1).

The show uses iTunes store as its means of distributing its satirical and partisan contents. This allows the show to avoid governmental censorship because iTune store is not within the jurisdiction of Korean government under the current law. The show's content is blind to the political partisanship. It directly condemns political figures regardless of their party affiliation. The show has discussed a variety of topics that people in Korea rarely encounter in their mainstream media (Choe, 2011.12.26). It raised several political speculations many of which have not been covered on the mainstream media in South Korea. President's controversial real

¹ The South Korean Supreme Court upheld the verdict from a lower court for spreading unconfirmed rumors about Mr. Lee's, the candidate for presidency at the time, involvement in a stock fraud on December 22, 2011. Mr. Jeong was imprisoned on December 26, 2011. Our data collection started on December 14 and stopped on December 21 a shortly before the Supreme Court'

estate purchase, particularly, was brought into the public's attention when the show exclusively disclosed the issue and questioned its legitimacy.

Some of the shows' speculations turned out to be truth. Most of them, however, still remained unconfirmed. Some mainstream media criticized the show for not providing solid evidence to support their allegation and not being objective (Rebles in Internet, 2011.11.30). The show, interestingly, disregards such criticism claiming that it's openly biased against the president. Most of the accusations it had made still remained in a conjecture stage (Choe, 2011.11.1) which is not exactly an ideal journalistic norm to follow, let alone raise a series of questions concerning what they do can be seen as ethical journalism practice.

In November 2011, shortly before Mr. Jeong imprisonment, *Na-ggom-su* won the Democratic Journalism Award from the National Union of Media Workers for its roles and contributions to the democracy. This was a remarkable event in the history of journalism in the South Korea given that a journalist organization recognizes the show had played a watchdog role while the mainstream media had failed to provide meaningful information for the public (Rebles in Internet, 2011.11.30). Regardless of remaining questions, the show has been seen as a surrogate source for political information while the public sees mainstream media in Korea are considered to fail their job to check the power, namely the government.

In this regard, the current study tries to understand factors that motivate the public to listen to such an alternative political talk show. Considering that the trust in mainstream media and political anxiety influence on the public's media consumption, it is possible to suspect that intention to consume an alternative political information source like *Na-ggom-su* is highly associated with the public's perception of trustworthiness in the Korean mainstream media and the level of anxiety from the Korean political situation.

Rationale and Hypotheses

The current study examines the influence of external factors that affect the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*. This study relies heavily on the findings from studies on media trust and affective intelligence theory both of which confer valuable implications for understanding the media consumption. Studies on media trust have shown that one's perception of trustworthiness of media and one's media diet are highly associated with each other. Considering that a study finds listening to a conservative political radio talk show is significantly related to mistrust in mainstream media, it is possible that trust in mainstream media might be significantly related to the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*. Instead of using a method that helps this study clarify the causal relationship between the two concepts, we suspect that respondents' current level of trust in mainstream media will affect their intention to consume an alternative political talk show. This is based on a series of research tradition that has shown intention to a behavior is a significant predictor for the future behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In this regard we expect that those who have more trust in mainstream media are less likely to have the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*.

H1. Trust in mainstream media will decrease the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*.

Studies on the effect of emotion in politics show that the public's emotional state influences their political behavior. Marcus and his colleague examine the effect of political anxiety on individuals' political behavior (Marcus et al., 2011; Marcus et al., 2000). According to their studies, political anxiety is the emotional responses when the public senses something is going wrong from uncertain threat to their political values and ideologies. Therefore, uncertainty is the principle component of political anxiety.

Studies show that the feeling of anxiety motivates people to seek information in an effort to avoid an uncertain situation. In the course of avoiding such an uncertainty, people eagerly monitor the political situation. Since the majority of the public uses media as their sensory system that surveys the external world, it is plausible to expect that the more anxious people are more likely to increase their exposure to media. In this regard, the current study suspect that those who are anxious about the political situation in South Korea are more likely to activate surveillance system. The more people feel anxiety, the more they intend to tune their eyes and ears toward the media that discuss the political situation. Therefore we expect that political anxiety will increase the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*.

H2. Political anxiety will increase the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*.

This study expects that trust in mainstream media and political anxiety will significantly influence the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*. Considering the studies show that both factors influence the consumption of political information, it is possible that the interaction between trust in mainstream media and political anxiety might bring about different results. On the one hand, studies have shown that trust media is significantly associated with media consumption. Those people who don't trust in media are more likely to reject such media as legitimate political information sources (Ladd, 2012; Tsfati, 2003). Studies on political anxiety, on the other hand, also show that anxiety motivates the public to use media more to seek information that reduces the uncertainty from the political environment. Scholars on political anxiety consider that political anxiety may help establish the deliberative democracy by making the public engage information beyond ones' political ideology. This is where a question arises concerning the

relationship between political anxiety and trust in mainstream media. Is the effect of political anxiety moderated by the public's level of trust in mainstream media?

RQ 1. Is there interaction effect between trust in mainstream media and political anxiety on the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*?

Method

Participants

To investigate effect of media credibility and political anxiety on the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*, this study conducted an online-base survey. Participants were recruited from an online community where its members discuss a variety of topics from digital gadgets to politics. Admittedly, the sample we drew from this community is not necessarily represent the population of South Korea. However, considering *Na-Ggom-su*, the focus of this study, is an internet-based podcast, we expected that recruiting participants from a online community may provide an opportunity to reach avid followers of the show.

We recruited survey participants by posting a solicitation message on a freeboard where the members of the community post various topics from their hobbies to political issues. The survey was started on December 15, 2011 and ended on December 21, 2011. The solicitation message included the purpose of the study and the link to the survey. A total number of 436 participants completed the survey. About one fourth of the sample was female (N = 123, 28.2%). The average age of participants were 31.16 (SD = 6.1) ranged from 19 to 60. Most of them were attending college (N = 84, 19.3%) or college graduate (N = 217, 49.8%) at the time of the survey.

Measures

Intention to Listen to Na-ggom-su

Based on the research tradition that has shown the intention is a strong predictor for the behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), we use the intention to listen to the alternative political talk show as our dependent variable. To measure intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*, we used three items from Lee and Kim's study (2009). Questions include "I have intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*," and "I am not going to listen to *Na-ggom-su*." We asked respondents to indicate their agreement on 8-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 8 = Strongly Agree). The reliability of scale was acceptable ($M = 6.87$ $SD = 1.81$ $\alpha = .93$).

Trust in Mainstream Media

The five item used in Tsfaty's study (2010) were modified and translated into Korean to serve the purpose of the study. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement on 8-point questions (1 = Strongly Disagree, 8 = Strongly Agree) including "I think the mainstream media in general are accurate," "I think the mainstream media in general are fair," and "I think the mainstream media in general can be trusted." Because of the low reliability, this study used only four items ($M = 2.02$, $SD = 1.08$, $\alpha = .90$). The lower the scale indicate the lower trust in mainstream media.

Political Anxiety

To measure political anxiety, the current study translated and modified the truncated version of the anxiety scale from Marcus and colleagues' study (2000). The respondents were asked to indicate their agreements on 8-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 8 = Strongly Agree).

The questions were “When I think about politics in Korea, I felt anxious,” “afraid,” and “worried.” We averaged the questions to create political anxiety scale ($M = 6.54$, $SD = 1.42$, $\alpha = .78$).

Control Variables

To control the effect of other variables, we used following variables as covariates. Demographic information such as sex, age, income and education were entered to the regression model. Income was measured by asking respondents how much they earn a month. They were instructed to chose the answer that best describes their monthly income among five choices (1 = Less than 1,000\$, 5 = More than 7,000\$). The average score was 2.12 ($SD = .94$) indicating almost 70% of respondent make less than 3,000\$ a month. The item measuring education level was asked respondents to select the choice that best describes their levels of education (1 = Junior High, 6 = Graduate School). A total of 403 participants (92.3%) had advanced education. This means the majority of participant has college degree or at least goes to a college at the time of the survey.

The variables that touch on respondent’s political orientations including political ideology, distrust in politicians, and political interest were also used as covariates. Trust in *Naggom-su* was also measured to control the effect of trust of the political alternative talk show on intention to exposure to the political satire. Considering trust is a significant factor that affects the media consumption, its effect should be controlled to understand the influence of the public’s perception of political situation and mainstream media on the intention to listen to the alternative political talk show. Political ideology was measured by asking respondents to choose the answer

that best describes their political ideology on a 5-point scale (1 = Strongly Conservative, 5 = Strongly Liberal). The average was 3.44 (SD = .74).

The questions from Pinkleton and Austin (2001) were slightly modified and translated into Korean to measure political interest. Questions include “I’m interested in political information,” “I pay attention to political information,” and “I actively seek out information concerning the politics.” The questions were averaged to create political involvement scale (M = 6.41, SD = 1.45, $\alpha = .90$). Considering the show mainly deals with political scandal, this study also expect distrust in politicians may affect the intention to exposure. Distrust in politicians (M = 6.37, SD = 1.02, $\alpha = .76$) was measured by asking four questions including “Politicians don’t realize how badly they come across,” “Our elected leaders don’t have very good personalities.”

To control political information through mainstream media we measured exposure to mainstream media. We asked respondents to indicate their agreement on a series of 8-point statements. Questions used to measure mainstream media exposure include “I frequently watch news on terrestrial television channels,” “I frequently read a newspaper,” and “I frequently news on cable news channels.” For items that ask exposure to television and cable channels, we also provide respondents with examples that represent. All questions were on 8-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 8 = Strongly Agree). We created exposure to mainstream media scale by averaging six items. The scale was proved to be reliable (M = 4.10, SD = 1.28, $\alpha = .71$). Trust in *Na-ggom-su* was measured by the same items we used to capture the trust in the mainstream media. The reliability was acceptable (M = 5.74, SD = 1.69, $\alpha = .90$). We also use the previous exposure to *Na-ggom-su* as a control variable. The exposure was measured by asking respondents to indicate their agreement on 8-point scale (M = 5.99, SD = 2.12).

Analytic Strategy

To investigate the influence of trust in mainstream media and political anxiety on the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*, the current study employed the hierarchical regression analysis. However, a handful of variables in this study were highly skewed. Therefore, we decided that OLS regression might not be an appropriate statistical method for the analysis. To seek a more rigorous procedure, we implemented the bootstrapping method. To investigate possible interaction between trust in mainstream media and political anxiety on intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*, this study implemented SPSS script developed by Hayes and Matthes (2009). To control the effects of other exogenous variables, we included other variables into the model as covariates.

Result

H1 predicted negative association of trust in mainstream media with the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su* while H2 expected that positive relationship between political anxiety and the intention to listen. The regression model explained about 71% of total variance. Among control variables, political interest, previous exposure to *Na-ggom-su*, distrust in politician, and trust in *Na-ggom-su* were significant predictors of the intention (See table 1).

As expected, trust in mainstream media was negatively associated with the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su* ($\beta = -.83$, $p < .01$, LLCI = -1.3, ULCI = -.62). The effect of political anxiety, on the contrary, was not significantly different from zero although it was marginally significant ($\beta = -.14$, $p = .09$, LLCI = -.31, ULCI = -.03). This indicates that the more respondents hold distrust in mainstream media, the more they intend to listen to *Na-ggom-su* while political anxiety did not significantly influence the intention by the anxiety itself (See table 1).

H3 sought the interaction effect between two variables. The interaction term was not centered based on Hayes and colleagues suggestion (Hayes, Glynn, & Huges, 2012). The regression model showed that the effect of the interaction on the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su* was significantly different from zero ($\beta = .10$, $p < .01$, LLCI = .06, ULCI = .21). To probing the interaction effect between the two variables, we ran Modprobe script (See table 2 and figure 1). The control variables used in the regression model also entered as the covariates to control their effect on the intention. The result revealed that the conditional effect of political anxiety on the intention was not significantly different from zero when trust in mainstream media was at two ($\beta = -.06$, $p > .1$, LLCI = $-.03$, ULCI = .16) or less ($\beta = -.04$, $p > .1$, LLCI = $-.15$, ULCI = .08). This indicates that for those respondents who highly distrust in the mainstream media are more likely to intend to continuously consume *Na-Ggom-su* regardless of the level of anxiety.

On the contrary, the conditional effect of political anxiety became significantly different from zero when the level of trust in mainstream media was greater than or equal to three ($\beta = .17$, $p < .05$, LLCI = .07, ULCI = .26). The result shows that conditional effect of political anxiety incrementally increased as the level of trust in mainstream media increase (See table 2). At the eight point on trust in mainstream media, which is the highest point of the scale, one unit of the political anxiety scale increases about .67 point in the intention to listen with 95% confidence interval between .42 and .93. This indicates for those respondents who trust the mainstream media, their intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su* was contingent upon their level of trust in mainstream media.

Discussion

This study examines the effect of trust in mainstream media and political anxiety on the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*, an alternative political talk show. The significant interaction between trust in mainstream media and political anxiety reveals that two distinct paths may differently influence the intention to listen to the political alternative talk show. We suspect that these two different paths to motivate the public to engage the alternative political talk show may bring about different consequences in Korean politics. Of note, our findings need to be read with caution because its reliance on the convenient sample that holds biased viewpoint toward the Korean mainstream media. Moreover, given *Na-ggom-su*'s exceptional position in the Korean politics, our finding may not be applicable to a broader context.

As expected, trust in mainstream media is a significant predictor of the intention to listen to *Na-ggom-su*. The less the respondents hold trust in mainstream media, the more they show the intention to listen to the political alternative talk show. This is consistent with the previous findings that the perception of mainstream media may motivate the public to engage alternative political outlets. On the contrary, the hypothesis that sought to positive relationship between political anxiety and the intention was not supported.

We also examine whether the interaction between trust in mainstream media and political anxiety provide different outcomes. The finding of the study reveals two distinct patterns that make the public intent to listen *Na-ggom-su*. The level of the trust significantly moderated the conditional effects of political anxiety on the intention. For those who perceive the mainstream media untrustworthy, the intention did not vary regardless of the level of political anxiety whereas for among those who hold trust in the mainstream media, the intention to listen to the alternative political talk show increase as the level of political anxiety increases.

The conditional effects of political anxiety that is contingent upon the level of trust in mainstream media suggest that there are two distinct paths that motivate the public to engage such an alternative political talk show. For those who perceive the mainstream media as trustworthy, their intention to engage a political alternative talk show were motivated by the surveillance system. For them, the consumption of such an alternative media may be a supplement that quenches the need for monitoring the political environment. In a circumstance where it demands the public to engage to more diverse political information because of the activated surveillance system, the consumption of such an alternative talk show provides additional information that might reduce the uncertainty from the political situation and confer the basis for the deliberative democracy.

On the contrary, for those who don't perceive the mainstream media as the trustworthy source for the political information, consumption of *Na-ggom-su* might be a substitution for the mainstream media. Distrust in mainstream media motivates the public to reject the mainstream media as the legitimate source for information and replace them with the alternative outlets. For those who hold distrust in mainstream media, political anxiety did not exert significant influence on motivating them to engage to an alternative political talk show. In this perspective, the consumption of the alternative political talk show may cause the political polarization.

However the similar consequences on the influence of two distinct paths on the intention, the political ramification of listening to an alternative political talk show may vary based on what factor motivates the follower to listen the show. This is because the factors that behind motivating the intention to listen such a politically alternative show may significantly influence the results of such consumption. Studies show that prevailing distrust in media may accelerate the political polarization by making the public reject information from untrusted media (Ladd,

2012). If people listen to the alternative political talk show out of such motivation, this may make it harder for a society to come up with a unified consensus. On the contrary, studies show that information seeking that is motivated by the surveillance system helps the public to establish the deliberative democracy. This is because the anxiety triggers the system that makes the public employ a different strategy for acquiring political information (MacKuen et al., 2010). This different strategy may make the public consume opposite information with their political values and ideology.

Of course, this explanation might be tentative given that this study failed to provide the convincing evidence to support this assertion. However, some recent studies on political anxiety show that the effect of political anxiety may be moderated by other factors such as the information utility and the nature of threat (MacKuen et al., 2010; Valentino et al., 2009). Moreover, considering the media function as the sensory system that enables the public to survey the political environment, it is plausible to expect that the perception of the media as the sources of information may affect the acquisition of information from the media. A study on trust in media shows that people are more likely to disregard the mainstream media when they hold distrust toward them (Tsfati, 2003). Another study shows that consumption of conservative political radio program is a significant predictor for distrust in mainstream media (Jones, 2004). What this line of studies suggests is that when people hold distrust, it may affect the attitude toward media, which in turn, influence the consequences of consumption of media.

Of course, this study is not without limitation. The study's heavy dependence on the convenient sample may prevent this study from generalizing its results into a boarder context. Moreover, the prevailing distrust among the study participants makes us suspect that our finding may be significant only within a specific context. Although we implemented the bootstrapping

method to resolve the highly skewed sample distribution, a more representative sample drawn from probabilistic sampling procedure warrant a promising result. An experiment regarding the consequences of different information acquisition strategy will fill the caveat of the current study's findings. Considering these limitations would benefit a future study.

The findings of this study provide valuable implications for the factors that motivate the public to consume an alternative political medium and its plausible ramifications of the consumption. We show that the motivational factors rather than the amount of consumption may influence the consequences of such consumptions of alternative political media. Political anxiety that help establish the deliberative democracy might be accompanied with a certain condition to make it possible.

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Table 1. The Result of Hierarchical Regression Analysis of the Effect of Trust in Mainstream Media and Political Anxiety on the Intention to Listen to *Na-ggom-su*

	Upon Entered		Final Model		BCa 95% CI ¹⁾	
	β	t	β	t	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	4.88**	7.15	4.15**	6.12	2.72	6.31
Sex (1 = Male)	-.66**	-3.51	.11	.95	-.11	.35
Age	.06**	3.58	.01	.61	-.14	.03
Education (6 = Post Graduate)	-.15 ⁺	-1.792	.02	.48	-.07	.12
Income	-.08	-.75	-.07	-1.13	-.21	.05
Political Ideology (1 = Conservative)	.50**	4.44	.01	.15	-.12	.13
Δ Block R ² (%)	12%					
Distrust in Politicians	-.07	-1.37	-.20**	-3.69	-.32	-.09
Political Interest	.16**	3.4	.15**	3.22	.04	.25
Exposure to Mainstream Media	.00	.01	.05	1.32	-.03	.13
Previous Exposure to <i>Na-ggom-su</i>	.34**	12.33	.31**	11.44	.24	.37
Trust in <i>Na-ggom-su</i>	.39**	9.48	-.35**	8.73	.26	.43
Δ Block R ² (%)	55%					
Trust in Mainstream Media	-.21**	-3.52	-.83**	-5.72	-1.3	-.62
Political Anxiety	.11*	2.26	-.14 ⁺	-1.9	-.31	0
Δ Block R ² (%)	2%					
Trust in Mainstream Media X Political Anxiety	.		.10**	4.66	.06	.21
Δ Block R ² (%)	2%					
R ² (%)	71%					

Note : ⁺ p < .1, * p < .05, ** p < .01,

¹⁾ Biased corrected and accelerated 95% confidence interval for Final Model; 1000 bootstrap samples.

Table 2. The Conditional Effect of Political Anxiety on Intention to Listen to *Na-ggom-su* for Various Possible Values of Trust in Mainstream Media

Values of Trust in Mainstream Media	Point Estimate	SE	Bootstrapping BCa 95% CI		Cumulative N (%)
			Lower	Upper	
1	-.04	.06	-.15	.08	155 (35.6%)
2	.06	.05	-.03	.16	262 (60.1%)
3	.16	.05	.07	.26	372 (85.3%)
4	.26	.06	.15	.38	419 (96.1%)
5	.37	.07	.22	.51	430 (98.6)
6	.47	.09	.29	.65	434 (99.5%)
7	.57	.11	.36	.78	435 (99.8%)
8	.67	.13	.42	.93	436 (100%)

Note : BCa- bias corrected and accelerated; 1000 bootstrap samples.