Interpersonal Trust and Participation in Party Politics in Korea: A Generational Approach¹

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The young Korean voters born in the 1970s, despite their relatively higher interpersonal trust positively related to participation in party politics, have a higher percentage of non-partisans and the alienated from party politics than their elders. After confirming generation's significant impact on interpersonal trust through a logit analysis based on the socialization and performance perspectives, we picked up three attitudinal variables—political efficacy, political trust, and political interest—to explain the inconsistency between young Korean voters' higher interpersonal trust and their negative attitudes toward political parties. Through a series of logit analyses we could find that generation factor is the only sociological variable which has a significant impact on all three political attitudes. However, generation factor is not working in the same direction. That is, generation factor has the effect of strengthening political efficacy, whereas it weakens political trust and political interest. In other words, the levels of political trust and political interest among young Korean voters are quite low, despite their strong political efficacy.

Such attitudinal features of the youngest generation complicate this generation's relationship with party politics by working contrary. A logit analysis of non-partisans shows us that the only significant attitudinal variable is political interest negatively associated with young Koreans. Similarly, through another logit analysis of partisan alienation we could find that although both political interest and political efficacy have the significant effect of reducing the alienated from party politics, the strong influence of political interest overbears the impact of political efficacy positively related to young Koreans.

To conclude, generation factor itself has the significant effect of increasing non-partisans and the alienated from party politics. More important, generation factor also has an indirect effect of increasing non-partisans and the alienated from party politics through its negative association with political interest which strongly reduces partisan alienation and non-partisanship, overbearing generation factor's other indirect effect of reducing the alienated from party politics and non-partisans through its positive association with political efficacy. Given the significant impact of political attitudes, the transformation of young Koreans' increased interpersonal trust into their more positive participation in party politics is not likely to be realized without a change in their political attitudes. In particular, the analysis suggests that political interest is the major intervening variable. Thus, enhancing the level of political interest among young Koreans seems to be crucial to this transformation.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In any meaningful democracy, the interests and wishes of different members of society should be articulated and represented through organized political groups, and political party is the most important organization mobilizing political participation of citizens. In fact, a large number of citizens in most democracies participate voluntarily in party politics and have a certain degree of psychological attachment to major political parties. Such an active and voluntary public participation in party politics is an important feature which distinguishes a working democracy from an authoritarian political system. Thus, it is ironic that more and more voters in democratizing Korea are increasingly alienated from party politics, and that there is a sharp rise in non-partisans. The recent development in Korea's post-democratization politics is clearly something to be worried about since citizens' active participation in party politics is necessary for a healthy democracy.

More worrisome is that non-partisans and the alienated from party politics are concentrated heavily among young voters, whose political attitudes the future of a nascent Korean democracy depends on. In terms of interpersonal trust, however, young Korean voters are known to have a higher trust level than their elders. According to Inglehart, although the linkage between economic development and democracy is strong, the linkage between culture and democracy is even stronger and economic development can produce democracy only insofar as it gives rise to a specific syndrome of cultural changes (1997,105). In particular, Inglehart emphasizes that a high level of interpersonal trust, along with tolerance and postmaterialist values, is conducive to democracy by activating participation in democratic institutions including political parties. In short, although increased interpersonal trust among young Koreans is a good sign for consolidating Korean democracy, the rise in interpersonal trust among young Koreans does not help encourage their participation in Korean party politics.

The aim of this study is to answer the question of why young Koreans' increased interpersonal trust cannot be transformed into their more positive participation in party politics. For this, first we will try to account for interpersonal trust using sociological variables including generation and evaluation variables such as public evaluation of government's political and economic achievements. Then we will turn to some political attitudes which could work as a barrier to or a catalyst for the transformation of increased interpersonal trust into active participation in party politics, and try to explain how generational factor, along with other sociological and evaluation factors is linked to these political attitudes. Finally, this study will account for the increase in non-partisans and the alienated from party politics using sociological, evaluation, and attitudinal factors, again focusing on generational factor.

In order to explain interpersonal trust and attitudes toward political parties, this study is focused on mutually distinguishable generations produced by the rapid change in Korean society. Generational theorists emphasizing the impact of early socialization during one's formative years commonly believe that generational effects will be more salient

when a society changes rapidly so that various cohorts come of age under divergent conditions (Mannheim 1952; Hyman 1959; Ryder 1965; Lambert 1972; Abramson 1975; Flanagan 1987; Abramson and Inglehart 1992). Korean society since the end of the Korean War has undergone a severe, sometimes traumatic, social dislocation, affecting almost every segment of the society, and the speed of social change has been further accelerated since full-fledged economic development was set in motion beginning in the early 1960s. Thus, the historical circumstances which various age cohorts were exposed to in their critical formative years are quite different indeed. As a result, it is our belief that Korean society satisfies the conditions for making the generational approach a meaningful one in analyzing Korean values and political behaviors.¹

There are three dependent variables to be explained: interpersonal trust, partisan support, and partisan orientation. Each dependent variable has two categories: whether or not one believes that people are trustworthy; whether or not one has a political party to support; and whether or not one has a partisan orientation. Regarding partisan orientation, if one can place oneself on the spectrum between government and opposition party, we consider that he or she has a partisan orientation. On the other hand, if one is not interested in placing oneself on the government-opposition party spectrum, we consider that he or she has no partisan orientation or is alienated from party politics. Three other variables are used as both dependent and independent variables: political efficacy, political trust, and political interest. Each variable has two categories: whether or not one agrees that people like me don't have any say about what the government does; whether or not one agrees that the government is pretty much run for the benefit of a few people regardless of public opinion; and whether or not one has political discussion.

In order to explain the variation in dependent variables, we have seven independent variables: four sociological variables including gender, income, generation, and region, along with three variables evaluating political performance, national economy, and family economy. Males and females are coded 1 and 2, while a person's income level is measured on an 8 point scale. In terms of generation, Koreans born in the 1970s are coded 1 and Koreans born before 1970 are coded 0. We give 1, 2, and 3 to residents in Yongnam, Jungbu (the remainder of the nation), and Honam regions respectively. We used a 3-point scale for three variables evaluating national and family economic conditions and the incumbent president's performance.

The data used here were supplied by the Sejong Institute which conducted a survey on public consciousness in Korea. The survey following the stratified random sampling method was conducted in late March and early April of 1995 and the survey's sample size was 1,800. Given that all dependent variables in this study are dichotomous, a series of logistic regression analyses is employed as a major method of analysis.

¹ For a more extensive discussion on the generational thesis and a generational analysis of Korean voting behavior, see Chung (1996).

II. INTERPERSONAL TRUST IN KOREA

Many theorists believe that interpersonal trust is required for the democratic rules of the game to function by enabling the large-scale cooperation between strangers that is essential to a successful democracy. Almond and Verba (1963) argued that a sense of interpersonal trust is a prerequisite for effective democracy because trust is necessary for the formation of secondary associations which is crucial to active political participation in any large democracy. Inglehart (1990) also found that interpersonal trust and related cultural orientations are strongly linked with stable democracy. In a similar vein, Putnam (1993) maintained that building social capital based on interpersonal trust is not easy, but it is the key to making democracy. In particular, using the 1990 World Values data, Inglehart showed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.72$) between interpersonal trust and the functioning of democratic institutions throughout the world (1997, 173).² In short, a culture of interpersonal trust makes possible extensive networks of voluntary associations which are essential to the continuous functioning of successful democracy.

When individuals participate in political institutions such as political parties interpersonal trust plays an important role. This is because a stable party structure can come about only if people with common interests are able to work with one another toward a common end and this ability rests, in the end, on social capital based on interpersonal trust. As Fukuyama (1995, 356-57) argued, it is likely that the same propensity for spontaneous sociability, necessary for building durable businesses, is also indispensable for putting together effective political organizations such as political parties. In default of real political parties, political groupings often come to be based on changeable personalities or patron-client relationships. In a patron-client relationship, the need for interpersonal trust could not be strong because, as Putnam (1993, 75) mentioned, clients of the same patron have nothing to stake against mutual defection and nothing to fear from mutual alienation. Also, clients of the same patron have no occasion to develop a norm of generalized reciprocity and no history of mutual collaboration to draw on. As a consequence, interpersonal trust is not likely to be encouraged and grow in a patron-client relationship. Here, we can see a sort of vicious circle between the lack of interpersonal trust and political groupings based on patron-client relationships, which in turn hinders the development of an effective political party.

One interesting fact regarding interpersonal trust in Korea is that among three postwar generations, the youngest generation born in the 1970s shows the highest level of interpersonal trust as shown in Table 1.

The high level of interpersonal trust among young Koreans is also reported by another empirical study (Auh 1999, 225-27). In addition, Auh's diachronic study shows that the level of trust among young Koreans has been greatly enhanced over

² According to Inglehart, in most stable democracies, at least 55 percent of the public express the opinion that most people can be trusted whereas in almost all of the nondemocratic societies, or those that have only recently started to democratize, interpersonal trust is below this level (1997, 173).

10-year period. The youngest generation in Table 1 is the generation born in the 1970s and growing up after the 1987 Democratization Uprising. During the youngest generation's formative years the Korean economy continued to grow, joining an the economically advanced group of nations as symbolized by Korea's admission into the OECD in 1996. In other words, these young Koreans have grown up in an economically prosperous environment, which leads to a rise in interpersonal trust along with tolerance and postmaterialist values.² Inglehart showed that high interpersonal trust goes along with relatively high levels of economic development ($r=0.53$) (1990, 36). Although Inglehart was not quite sure of the causal relationship between economic development and interpersonal trust, he suggested that economic development leads to an enhanced sense of security that is conducive to trust, citing a dramatic rise in interpersonal trust in West Germany and Italy. In fact, it is interesting that in the two countries a dramatic rise in interpersonal trust took place after a period of rapid economic recovery.

TABLE 1. GENERATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF INTERPERSONAL TRUST

Generation [*]	Interpersonal Trust	Interpersonal Distrust
1950s	47	53
1960s	57	43
1970s	61	39

Note: Entries are the percentage of respondents.

*Generation is based on birth years.

Source: Public Consciousness Survey Data, 1995, Sejong Institute.

In short, interpersonal trust is a sort of basis for voluntary participation in political parties, and Korea's youngest generation shows the highest level of interpersonal trust. However, the youngest generation's attitude toward political parties is more negative compared to older Koreans, as reflected in this generation's higher percentage of non-partisans and the alienated from party politics in Table 2.

TABLE 2. GENERATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF PARTISAN SUPPORT AND PARTISAN ALIENATION

Generation	Partisan Orientation		Partisan Support	
	Oriented	Alienated	Partisan	Non-Partisan
Pre-1970	86	14	25	75
1970s	79	21	16	84

Note: Entries are the percentage of respondents.

Source: Public Consciousness Survey Data, 1995, Sejong Institute.

² According to Inglehart, interpersonal trust, tolerance, and postmaterialist values constitute postmodern values and are closely correlated since theoretically they share a common set of causes, that is, the transition from conditions of scarcity to the relative security of postmodern society (1997, 103-104). Young Koreans' high levels of tolerance and postmaterialist values are discussed more extensively in Auh (1999, 223-24) and Chung (1999, 282-85) respectively.

The primary research question of this study, as mentioned earlier, is why the incongruity between the youngest generation's higher interpersonal trust and more negative attitude toward political parties takes place. The first step is to explain interpersonal trust in Korea. In order to analyze interpersonal trust in Korea, this study adopts the socialization and performance perspectives discussed in the study by Mishler and Rose (1997, 434), which analyzed popular trust in post-Communist Europe. The socialization perspective emphasizes the primacy of early life or formative experiences, whereas the performance perspective emphasizes more recent and contemporary experiences. The socialization perspective is related to long-term, more enduring cultural values. On the other hand, the performance perspective is associated with short term evaluations of government's political and economic achievements, which could easily fluctuate. And we believe that both early life socialization experiences and contemporary performance evaluations could influence levels of interpersonal trust.

Based on the two perspectives, differences in interpersonal trust are conceived as consequences of social background characteristics reflecting one's position in the socio-economic structure or sociological variables, evaluations of political performance of incumbent office-holders or day-to-day operations of government, and evaluations of national and family economic conditions. To account for the level of interpersonal trust we used three explanatory models. The first two include sociological variables and evaluation variables separately and the last one contains both sociological and evaluation variables.

The first model includes four sociological variables—gender, income, generation, and region—to explain interpersonal trust, but only the generation factor has a significant impact on interpersonal trust, as shown in Table 3. In the second model using only three evaluation variables—evaluations of political performance, national economy, and family economy—only the evaluation of one's family economic conditions turns out to have a significant impact on interpersonal trust. In terms of explanatory power we cannot find any substantial difference between the two models.

When three evaluation variables are used along with four sociological variables in the third model, the model's explanatory power is somewhat increased. Here again, only one evaluation variable, that is, the evaluation of one's family economic conditions, has a significant impact on interpersonal trust, and generation factor continues to be significant. From the logit model we can also draw an odds ratio between two generations. In terms of odds ratio, young Koreans born in the 1970s are 1.3 times more likely to believe that people are trustworthy than Koreans born before 1970.

In sum, both early life socialization experiences and contemporary performance evaluations almost equally influence interpersonal trust. Among sociological variables, only generation factor has a significant impact on interpersonal trust, and among evaluation variables, only the evaluation of one's family economic conditions significantly influences interpersonal trust.

TABLE 3. LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF INTERPERSONAL TRUST

	Model I	Model II	Model III
Gender	-0.01		-0.01
Income	0.03		0.03
Generation	0.06*		0.06*
Region	0.05		0.05
Political Performance		0.05	0.05
National Economy		0.02	0.01
Family Economy		0.07**	0.07*
-2Log L	11.09*	15.67**	26.09**
Concordant	51.9%	50.6%	56.0%
N	1,800	1,800	1,800

Note: Entries are standardized logit coefficients.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Source: Public Consciousness Survey Data, 1995, Sejong Institute.

III. POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND PARTICIPATION IN PARTY POLITICS

Although interpersonal trust is necessary for individuals to participate voluntarily in political parties, obviously interpersonal trust itself is not enough to activate public participation in party politics, as shown in the case of young voters of democratizing Korea. Here we focus on three politically more relevant attitudes, that is, political efficacy, political trust, and political interest.

Political efficacy is a belief that one can influence the political process or have an effect on decisions made in the political system, whereas political trust refers to the feeling that public officials are honest and capable. It is widely accepted that the higher the level of political efficacy and political trust, the greater the likelihood that one will participate in political activities and be integrated into the political system. Conversely, a low level of political efficacy and political trust is likely to be associated with political apathy or alienation. Another general proposition regarding political participation is that the more stimuli about politics a person receives, the greater the likelihood that he or she will participate in politics. Persons who are interested in politics expose themselves more to political stimuli than those who are not so interested. In other words, disinterested persons do not pick up political stimuli. Consequently, any effort to increase public participation in political activities must find some way to maintain the interest of citizens.

Since political efficacy, political trust, and political interest have long been considered the primary attitudes which link citizens to democratic institutions, one logical corollary is that these political attitudes are closely related to public participation in party politics. In other words, if people have high levels of political efficacy, political trust,

and political interest, we could expect a vigorous participation in party politics.

As in the analysis of interpersonal trust, we used sociological and evaluation variables to account for three political attitudes more directly linked to public participation in party politics. First, a model including four sociological variables was used to account for political efficacy. As demonstrated in Table 4, here again one's generation has the most significant impact, although the influences of gender and region are also significant. When we added three evaluation variables in the second model, we could not find any significant impact of evaluation variables and the model's explanatory power was improved only slightly. More important, however, the generation factor continues to have the most significant positive impact on political efficacy in the second model. In terms of odds ratio young Koreans born in the 1970s are almost twice more likely to believe that they can influence the political process than Koreans born before 1970.

TABLE 4. LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL EFFICACY, POLITICAL TRUST, AND POLITICAL INTEREST

	Political Efficacy		Political Trust		Political Interest	
	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II
Gender	0.08**	0.08**	0.05	0.05	0.28**	0.28**
Income	0.03	0.03	-0.05	-0.04	0.12**	0.12**
Generation	0.14**	0.14**	-0.05*	-0.06*	-0.01**	-0.08**
Region	0.09**	0.08**	-0.01	0.01	-0.05*	-0.05*
Political Performance		-0.05		0.08*		-0.06*
National Economy		0.02		0.02		0.01
Family Economy		0.03		-0.05		0.04
-2Log L	49.90**	53.88**	11.65*	21.87**	135.83**	142.07**
Concordant	57.6%	52.3%	52.7%	55.4%	64.0%	65.6%
N	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800

Note: Entries are standardized logit coefficients.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Source: Public Consciousness Survey Data, 1995, Sejong Institute

When we applied a similar model including four sociological variables to explain political trust, generation factor is the only variable with a significant impact on political trust. In the second model adding three evaluation variables to sociological variables, only the evaluation of political performance turned out to be significant. However, the increase in the explanatory power of the second model is not that impressive. Again, the impact of generation continues to be significant in the second model, but the generation factor's impact on political trust, unlike its impact on political efficacy, is negative. And the level of political distrust among young Koreans born in the 1970s is likely to be 1.3 times higher than among Koreans born before 1970.

A similar model including four sociological variables was used to explain political interest, and all four variables turn out to be significant. As shown in Table 4, the

influences of gender, income, and generation are significant at the 0.01 level, whereas region's impact on political interest is significant at the 0.05 level. When three evaluation variables are added in the second model, only the evaluation of political performance has an impact significant at the 0.05 level. Here again, the explanatory power of the second model is only slightly improved, and the generation factor's impact on political interest is negative. In terms of odds ratio young Koreans born in the 1970s are 1.4 times less likely to be interested in politics than Koreans born before 1970.

To summarize, generation factor is the only sociological variable which has a significant impact on all three political attitudes. The logit analyses of political attitudes also show that the level of political trust and political interest among young Koreans born in the 1970s is lower despite their stronger political efficacy, compared to Koreans born before 1970. Among evaluation variables only the evaluation of political performance has some impact on political trust and political interest. Otherwise, the influences of evaluation variables are almost negligible, contributing only modestly to improving the model's explanatory power. Thus, we can conclude that the differences in major political attitudes resulted mostly from one's position in the socioeconomic structure rather than contemporary performance evaluations, and that among sociological variables, the generation factor's impact on political attitudes is most salient.

IV. ALIENATION FROM PARTY POLITICS AND INCREASE IN NON-PARTISANS.

In the post-1987 Democratization period, Korean voters' alienation from party politics has deepened. As a result, non-partisans who do not support any political party have continued to increase. According to So, the percentage of non-partisans among Korean voters was 22.7% in the 1992 presidential election and sharply rose to 40.8% in the 1995 regional and local elections(1999, 404-405). By the time of the 1998 regional and local elections, non-partisans among Korean voters grew to 52.1%. As a matter of fact, we often hear that at least half of the Korean electorate today is non partisan. In particular, the more serious alienation from party politics among young voters is clearly one of the major problems in the consolidation process of a nascent Korean democracy.

To account for the increase of non-partisans and the alienated from party politics and non-partisans among Korean voters, we applied three models using sociological variables only, sociological variables combined with evaluation variables, and sociological variables added to attitudinal variables, as illustrated in Table 5.

When we used the first model including four sociological variables in order to explain partisan orientation, all four variables including generation turned out to be significant. In the second model adding three evaluation variables to the sociological variables, we could find any evaluation variable with significant impact on partisan

orientation. However, when we added three attitudinal variables in the third model, political interest and political efficacy turned out to have a significant impact on partisan orientation. We could also find that the contribution of attitudinal variables to explaining partisan orientation was greater than that of evaluation variables, as demonstrated in Table 5. Generation factor influences partisan orientation negatively, which means the increase of the alienated from party politics among young Koreans. In fact, in terms of odds ratio young Koreans born in the 1970s are 1.6 times more likely to be alienated from party politics than Koreans born before 1970. In other words, many young Koreans are not interested in placing themselves on the government-opposition party spectrum. They might resist adapting to the whole parameter of the present Korean party system, probably searching for a new alternative. This tendency of many young Koreans, we believe, is reflected in their high rate of abstention in recent major elections.

TABLE 5. LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF PARTISAN ORIENTATION AND PARTISAN SUPPORT

	Partisan Orientation			Partisan Support		
	Model I	Model II	Model III	Model I	Model II	Model III
Gender	-0.17**	-0.17**	-0.11**	-0.09**	-0.09**	-0.05
Income	0.18**	0.17**	0.15**	0.01	0.01	0.01
Generation	-0.11**	0.11**	-0.12**	-0.11**	-0.11**	-0.10**
Region	0.11**	0.11**	0.12**	0.16**	0.16**	0.15**
Political Performance		0.05			0.04	
National Economy		0.02			-0.01	
Family Economy		0.05			0.03	
Political Trust			0.03			-0.01
Political Interest			0.21**			0.17**
Political Efficacy			0.10*			0.02
-2Log L	60.49**	66.13**	101.01**	44.86**	47.62**	71.06**
Concordant	63.3%	65.2%	68.4%	57.8%	60.5%	62.5%
N	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800

Note: Entries are standardized logit coefficients.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Source: Public Consciousness Survey Data, 1995, Sejong Institute.

A similar model including four sociological variables was used to explain partisan support. As shown in Table 5, all of the sociological variables except for income level had a significant impact on partisan support. When three evaluation variables were added in the second model, like in the analysis of partisan orientation, we could not find any evaluation variable with a significant impact on partisan support. Adding three attitudinal variables, however, makes a difference. Unlike evaluation variables, political interest among attitudinal variables has a strong positive influence on partisan support. Also, the third model including attitudinal variables accounted for partisan support better than the second model using evaluation variables. Again, generation factor has

a negative impact on partisan support, which means the increase of non-partisans among young Koreans. In terms of odds ratio, the level of non-partisans among young Koreans born in the 1970s is likely to be 1.6 times higher than among Koreans born before 1970.

As shown in the logit analysis of political attitudes in Table 4, young Koreans born in the 1970s display very strong political efficacy whereas their political interest and political trust are dismally low. Such conflicting political attitudes of Koreans born in the 1970s complicated our expectations regarding young Koreans' participation in party politics, because strong political efficacy usually encourages an active participation in party politics, while low political interest together with low political trust discourages it.

The logit analysis of partisan orientation and partisan support in Table 5 gives us an answer to this complicated matter. Although both political interest and political efficacy have a strong positive effect on partisan orientation by reducing the alienated from party politics, the effect of political interest is much stronger than that of political efficacy. In other words, in terms of reducing partisan alienation, the influence of political efficacy positively related to young Koreans is dwarfed by the strong effect of political interest negatively associated with young Koreans. Since young Koreans' level of political interest is lower than that of old Koreans born before 1970, the stronger impact of political interest does not help reduce partisan alienation among young Koreans born before 1970s.

In terms of effect on partisan support, neither political trust nor political efficacy turns out to be significant. Only political interest has a significant positive effect on partisan support, by reducing non-partisans. In other words, the effect political efficacy positively linked to young Koreans is almost negligible while only the strong influence of political interest negatively associated with young Koreans prevails. Therefore, the significant effect of political interest on partisan support does not help reduce non-partisans among young Koreans either.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As far as interpersonal trust in Korea is concerned, young Koreans born in the 1970s shows the highest level, reflecting an enhanced sense of security largely due to economic prosperity in their formative years. Given the positive effect of interpersonal trust on participation in party politics, we could expect that young Koreans attitude toward political parties is less negative compared to old Koreans born before 1970. However, the reverse is true and young Koreans have higher percentage of non-partisans and the alienated from party politics than older Koreans.

After confirming significant impact the generation factor has on interpersonal trust through a logit analysis based on socialization and performance perspectives, we picked up three attitudinal variables to explain the incongruity between young Koreans

higher interpersonal trust and more negative attitude toward political parties. Through a series of logit analyses we could find that generation is the only sociological variable which has a significant impact on all three political attitudes. However, generation factor does not work in the same direction. That is, the generation factor strengthens political efficacy but weakens political trust and political interest. In other words, the levels of political trust and political interest among young Koreans born in the 1970s are quite low despite their strong political efficacy.

Such attitudinal features of young Koreans complicate their relationship with party politics by working crosswise. A logit analysis of non-partisans shows us that the only significant attitudinal variable is political interest negatively associated with young Koreans. Similarly, through another logit analysis of partisan alienation, we find that although both political interest and political efficacy have the significant effect of reducing the alienated from party politics, the strong influence of political interest negatively associated with young Koreans overwhelms the impact of political efficacy positively related to young Koreans.

To conclude, generation factor itself has the significant effect of increasing non-partisans and the alienated from party politics. More important, generation factor also has an indirect effect of increasing non-partisans and the alienated from party politics through its negative association with political interest which strongly reduces partisan alienation and non-partisanship. This indirect negative effect of generation factor overwhelms generation factor's other indirect effect of reducing non-partisans and the alienated from party politics through its positive association with political efficacy because political interest has a much stronger impact on partisan orientation and partisan support than political efficacy. Given the significant impact of political attitudes, the transformation of young Koreans' increased interpersonal trust into their more positive participation in party politics is not likely to be realized without a change in their political attitudes. In particular, the analysis suggests that political interest is the major intervening variable. Thus, enhancing the level of political interest among young Koreans seems to be crucial to this transformation. Unfortunately, however, considering that the regionalism based party system with a highly personalized party structure in post-Democratization Korea has failed to provide a new political alternative appealing to young Koreans, it is very unlikely to expect present party system to stimulate the political interest of young Koreans, whose concerns of interest continue to be diversified as the postmaterialist orientation of young Koreans has been reinforced over time.

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