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Political Sophistication and Partisan Cues:
Insight from South Korea's 2002 Presidential Election

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Do-Kyung Kim
May 2006

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Dedication

To my parents

Acknowledgements

There are a number of people that I would like to thank for providing invaluable support with this project. First, I wish to thank my mentors, Anthony J. Nownes, Michael R. Fitzgerald, William Lyons, and George White, Jr. who gave good advice, encouragement, and inspiration. Especially, Dr. Nownes has been an excellent adviser throughout my four years here; I am confident I would not be graduating without the timely help and support I received from him during all the stages of writing my dissertation and other work at UTK. I would also like to thank Dr. Hong-suk Park who is a professor at my old graduate school in South Korea, for introducing and encouraging me in the road I have traveled. Lastly, I would like to thank my parents and my sisters for their love and support throughout my life. My three lovely sisters took good care of my parents while I was studying in the U.S. My parents deserve my final gratitude.

Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation is to study the effects of political sophistication on the use of partisan cues in the 2002 South Korean presidential election. Many scholars in recent years have argued that it does not matter so much that many voters are poorly informed about politics because they can use information shortcuts or heuristic cues to overcome the lack of information and still make a reasoned choice. Based on these studies, much of the political sophistication literature in political science assumes that the use of party cues in the voting booth is the hallmark of an unsophisticated voter. Although this idea is nice in theory, it is not supported by empirical evidence. Thus, I examine the relationship between political sophistication and the use of partisan cues in Korea. Simultaneously, this study tests whether the levels of political sophistication differ in regard to voter turnout and candidate choice.

The results show that sophistication is positively related to identification with a political party. In other words, South Korean voters with high levels of sophistication are more likely to identify with a party than unsophisticated voters. Specifically, an individual's political sophistication and ideology strongly affect the probability of identifying with a political party. My results also show that sophistication does, in fact, affect how people participate and vote in elections. The most important finding here is that there is a positive relationship between the level of political sophistication and use of partisan cues. That is, sophisticated Korean voters are more likely to rely on partisan cues. In the 2002 Korean presidential election, party identification as a heuristic did work for sophisticated voters, but not for unsophisticated ones.

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Chapter I. Introduction

1.1 Research Question

Scholars have long recognized the “paradox of modern democracy,” which is a conflict between a normative system that rests on the assumption of informed citizens and the empirical evidence suggesting the contrary (Berelson 1952; Dahl 1994; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Mouffe 2000; Schumpeter 1976). Many scholars have addressed this tension between theory and practice by redefining democracy and redefining what citizens should know. Since the behavioral revolution and the introduction of survey research, however, scholars have confirmed over and over that the public comes up lacking in political knowledge and information.

Traditionally, the scholarly view of the public has not been flattering (Althaus 1998; Bargh 1999; Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964; 1970; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Downs 1957; Kinder 1998; Lippmann 1922; Luskin 1987; Price 1999; Schattschneider 1960). Many citizens know little about even the most basic rules governing politics and even less about the beliefs and policy positions of leaders and current events. Early on, Lippmann (1922)

saw a public that was largely uninformed. He argued that ordinary citizens are ill-prepared to participate in political affairs:

Without an ingrained habit of analyzing opinion when we read, talk, and decide, most of us would hardly suspect the need of better ideas, nor be interested in them when they appear, nor be able to prevent the new technical of political intelligence from being manipulated (Lippmann 1922, 162).

He also argued that due to the sheer flow and increasing complexity of information, the public could neither absorb nor truly understand what was happening around them. Thus for Lippmann, rule by the people had become effectively obsolete.

The first mass surveys of voters in the 1940s and 1950s confirmed Lippmann's arguments. It appeared that the public was badly informed about issues, policy, and candidates. For example, Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee (1954) argued that voters fall short of classic standards of democratic citizenship. Campbell et al. (1960) arrived at similar conclusions, and Converse (1975, 79) concluded that "the most familiar fact to arise from sample surveys ... is that popular levels of information about public affairs are, from the point of view of the informed observer, astonishingly low." The following statement is representative of a common point of view:

Overall, close to a third of Americans can be categorized as “know-nothings” who are almost completely ignorant of relevant political information (Bennett 1988) -- which is not, by any means, to suggest that the other two-thirds are well informed. ... Three aspects of voter ignorance deserve particular attention. First, voters are not just ignorant about specific policy issues, but about the basic structure of government and how it operates (Bennett 1988; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1991; 1996; Neuman 1986, ch. 2). Majorities are ignorant of such basic aspects of the U.S. political system as who has the power to declare war, the respective functions of the three branches of government, and who controls monetary policy (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996, 701-71). This suggests that voters not only cannot choose between specific competing policy programs, but also cannot accurately assign credit and blame for visible policy outcomes to the right office-holders (Somin 1999, 417).

Low levels of knowledge have caused widespread concern for many years. For example, some political theorists argue that basic knowledge about the functioning of the government is a value on its own, and that its absence is a failure of democracy (Barber 1984; Dahl 1979; 1998; Pateman 1970; Putnam 2000).

This approach to participatory democracy sets standards for democratic systems that no democracy can meet. A more instrumental view assumes that it will be difficult to translate citizens’ interests into political action or into political preferences for those people who lack knowledge about basic political facts. In this view, the more citizens know, the more they will be able to express themselves and act in their own interest (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). Democracy with many badly-informed citizens is dysfunctional because the interests of many citizens are not

reflected or are underrepresented in the decision making process.

Generally, political sophistication¹ is low in most countries. Political scholars have long debated political sophistication and whether poorly informed citizens are capable of sound political judgment and choice. The crucial issue is how ordinary citizens are able to make a reasonable choice in elections with low levels of political sophistication.

In recent years this discussion has been dominated by the notion of cognitive heuristics. Although voters generally have little political information, they compensate for this deficit by using information shortcuts, namely heuristics or cues to make a reliable voting choice (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Carmines and Kuklinski 1990; Downs 1957; Graber 2001; Lupia 1994; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Mondak 1993a; b; Neuman, Just, and Crigler 1992; Popkin 1991; 1994; Rahn 1993; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a; Zaller 1992). Reflecting this idea is the

¹ Political sophistication has been conceptualized and measured in many different ways, which are often used nearly interchangeably. Political sophistication, education, and awareness are often used as proxies for each other (Gomez and Wilson 2001; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a; Zaller 1992). Thus, I use “sophistication,” “knowledge,” “information,” “awareness,” “competence,” “literacy,” and related terms synonymously, ignoring fine distinctions among them. Conceptually, knowledge and sophistication may be quite different things, with the latter also capturing factors like attitude stability, attitude constraint, or ideological reasoning. Nevertheless, basic political knowledge is at least a component or prerequisite of broader political sophistication. Moreover, measures of political knowledge and sophistication are highly intercorrelated in practice. In fact, some analysts have argued that factual knowledge scales are perhaps the most reliable and valid indicators of underlying political sophistication (Luskin 1987); this argument parallels more recent trends toward using factual knowledge scales as proxies for more difficult-to-measure items like media exposure (Price and Zaller 1993). Briefly, they all denote the sheer mass and interconnectedness of a person’s political cognitions (Luskin 1987; 2002). For my purposes, I focus the analysis on what people know about politics, but I use the more elegant term of “political sophistication.” The definition of political sophistication will be explained in detail in Chapter II.

implicit assumption that a relationship exists between sophistication and the use of heuristics (Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991b). If heuristics address an information shortcut, it is logical to assume that less sophisticated citizens are more likely to use heuristics than are more sophisticated citizens.

In particular, average citizens can use partisan cues to compensate for their limited knowledge base. It is commonly held that partisan cues serve useful heuristic functions. Since parties lower the costs of voting by providing citizens with fairly reliable cues, party identification may be thought of as “a relatively cheap cognitive cue” (Martinez 1990, 824). For this reason, one assumption held in common by most of the researchers in the field is that reliance on party cues in the voting booth is the mark of a distinctly unsophisticated voter (Campbell et al. 1960; Carmines and Stimson 1980; Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Kahn and Kenney 1997; Lau and Redlawsk 1997; 2001a; Luskin 1987; McKelvey and Ordeshook 1986; Popkin 1991; Rahn 1993; Schaffner and Streb 2002; Shively 1979; Squire and Smith 1988).

Despite the richness of these studies, there are several limitations in the extant literature. First, the idea that political sophisticates do not use partisan cues in their decision-making processes is unproven. Since the use of partisan cues might require

even more political sophistication than having knowledge specific to party or candidate, it could be that there is a positive linear relation between the amount of sophistication people have and the shortcuts they use. In fact, it is likely that people with a lot of substantive knowledge make use of partisan cues and shortcuts as well to validate their information and come to a better conclusion (Alvarez and Brehm 2002; Bartels 1993; Campbell et al. 1960; Colton 2000; Converse 1964; Luskin 2002; Luskin, Fishkin, and Jowell 2002). Thus, empirically, we do not know the relationship between political sophistication and the use of partisan cues. In sum, this is still a mystery and deserves further study.

Second, since most studies focus predominantly on the two main parties in the United States, we do not know whether or to what extent other party labels are used as heuristic devices in other countries. In other democratic systems, where the party system is in flux and/or where attachments to parties are weaker, party labels may not be as influential in the formation and expression of policy preferences. For such reasons, we should not simply assume that party labels always influence opinion formation and expression.

Thus, the main research question in this dissertation is *what is the relationship between political sophistication and the use of partisan cues in South Korean*

politics? In other words, I will try to discover which citizens are more or less likely to rely on party cues in elections. This study explores the impact of political sophistication on the use of partisan cues, political participation, and electoral choices during the 2002 South Korean presidential election. To assess the effects of political sophistication on partisan-based presidential candidate choice, I use the Korean Social Science Data Center (KSDC) data sets for the 2002 Korea presidential election.

1.2 Background on Electoral Studies in South Korea

South Koreans have enjoyed free and open elections for more than a decade. Since the 1987 Democratic Movement², South Korea (Korea hereafter) has made great progress in achieving procedural democracy (Steinberg 1998). Democratization began with major procedural reforms at the national level, such as the direct election of the president and other electoral reforms. Elections have been regularly held and there has been hardly any dispute over their procedures and outcomes. For Korea, which had had six constitutions in only five decades and where no president had left

² Korea began its transition from authoritarianism to democracy on June 29, 1987, when Rho Tae-woo, the presidential candidate of the ruling Democratic Justice Party (DJP), announced an eight-point pledge. This declaration served as the first threshold of Korea's democratic transition from a military dictatorship. Shortly thereafter, the June 29th declaration was adopted in the National Assembly as a blueprint for amending the Fifth Republic's authoritarian constitution. Rho was elected on December 16, 1987, in the first popular election held in twenty-six years. The Sixth Republic under Rho was relatively democratic. He loosed the coercive state and the activated of civil society. For detail of the historical profile, see Kil and Moon (2001), and Saxer (2002).

office peacefully before 1987, the last 30 years have marked a period of unprecedented democratic continuity and political stability.

Because of this, Korea has become “the most powerful democracy in East Asia after Japan” (Diamond and Sin 2000, 1). Indeed, “Korea became the first third-wave democracy in East Asia to peacefully transfer to an opposing party” on December 16, 1997 (Diamond and Sin 2000, 2). Specifically the victory of the opposition over the party in power and, above all, the turnover of the presidency in 1997 seem to indicate that Korean democracy is on the road to full consolidation (Chu, Diamond, and Shin 2001; Diamond and Sin 2000, 3).

In order for a democracy to operate effectively, however, its citizens must possess a rudimentary understanding of politics. Understanding how government operates, who composes government, and the details of salient political issues is a prerequisite to meaningful political participation (Berinsky 2002; Gilens 2005; Hacker 2004; Martin 2003). The consolidation of a new democracy like Korea requires the mass citizenry to become sophisticated in democratic politics on an increasing basis. As Korea entered the consolidation democracy period, the concept of political sophistication gained a dynamic momentum. It refers to the possession of a capacity for political participation. In addition, research on party identification in new

democracies shows that partisanship enhances prospects of democratic consolidation (Almond and Verba 1963; Converse 1969; Converse and Dupeux 1962; Mainwaring 1999).

Actually, elections in Korea are dominated by political parties, although there is a major difference between the role of political parties in Korean elections and that in American elections. Because of a centralized power structure and regional party systems, Korean politics is party-centered politics (Cho 1998; Lee and Brunn 1996).³

The formation of the party around politically famous figures, party-dominated nominations, and the heavy reliance upon parties for campaign funds leads to the concentration of power in a few party leaders.

Major political parties in the history of Korean politics were constructed by politically famous figures (Lee and Brunn 1996). Political leaders have built their parties by relying heavily on their home province, and have personalized their parties.

In addition, because political leaders merged and split their parties so often and changed their party's name so frequently, there may have not been enough time for

³ Note on Names: Following customs in the use of personal names, this study presents American or Western surnames first, and their given names follow in the text and notes. Yet, Korean and Asian names are reversed: their surname or family names come first, and given names follow them (Shin 1999a). In the case of authors' names, their first initials and last names are used because there are many common surnames among Koreans. In the references, however, presentation of names is the same, regardless of whether it is an Asian or Western name. Names in the references are noted according to the *Style Manual for Political Science* (American Political Science Association. Committee on Publications. 2001).

voters to develop genuine party identification, as voters have in the U.S.⁴ Instead, voters have developed a strong attachment to their regional leader.

Moreover, “regional parties” cement party-centered politics (Clark 1988; Kang 1998; Lee and Brunn 1996; Lee 1993a; Morriss 1996; Park 1993a; b). The importance of a “regional party” reinforces the dominant influence of party leaders in Korean politics. A regional party means that the formation and importance of specific parties covaries in a regional context with voters often casting votes in line with the “regional party.” Recent electoral outcomes in Korea suggest that there are three regions that tend to exhibit partisan regionalism: Cholla, Kyungsang, and Chungchong. The Cholla region covers the Chunbuk and Chunnam areas. The Kyungsang region consists of the Kyoungbuk and Kyungsang areas, and the Chungchong region means the Chungbuk and Chungnam areas (See Figure 1).⁵

⁴ Perhaps no other countries have experienced party mergers and splits more frequently than Korea. Between January 1963 and January 2000, 82 parties have been formed. This means that about 2.2 parties have been built every year (The Korea Central Daily January 21, 2000). Yet, the parties are not totally new. They simply change their names while excluding or including some politicians. For instance, the Democratic Republican Party was formed by former president Park Jung-hee and disappeared with his death (1963-1980). Current president Roh Moo-hyun constructed the Uri Party (2004-current), the current ruling party. Former president Kim Dae-jung constructed the Party for Peace and Democracy (1971-1990), the Democratic Party (1990-1992), the National Congress for New Politics (1995-2000), and the Millennium Democratic Party (2000-present). Former president Kim Young-sam created the Unification and Democracy Party (1987-1990) and the Grand National Party (1995-present). Another famous Korean politician, Kim Jong-pil, put together the United Liberal Democrats (1995-present).

⁵ Regional dominance by a particular party was specified in terms of the birthplace of particular party leaders. Park Jung-hee, Chun Doo-hwan, Roh Tae-woo, and Kim Young-sam were born in Kyungsang province (southeast area); Kim Dae-jung in Cholla province (southwest area); and Kim Jong-pil in Chungchong province (central area). They were elected president by voters from their home provinces, with the exception of Kim Jong-pil. The regional conflicts occur most seriously between Cholla and Kyungsang provinces. This link between the birthplace of a party leader and the dominance of a



Figure 1: Major Cities and Provinces in Korean Peninsula

Source: Government of the Republic of Korea. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2005.

particular party is well documented in contemporary Korean politics (Lee and Brunn 1996; Lee 1997).

Regionalism⁶ engenders the expectation that voters will be receptive to appeals for support composed by political elites who share with them a common identification with a geographical region. In this way, Korean politics can become regionally “personalist,” or “caesaristic,” where political leaders are the “favorite sons” of regional voters, destined to be their protectors and benefactors against unwarranted and unsettling claims from other regions (Morris 1996).⁷

For example, voters whose hometown is in the Kyungsang region are likely to vote for a candidate of the “hometown party.” Since this appears to happen regardless of the quality of candidate or the ideology of party, voting patterns result in parties often being representatives of regions instead of districts of the nation. In such regions, if a candidate runs in an election bearing the “correct” regional party label for a particular region, then the probability of winning the election is extremely high. Thus, being nominated by party leaders in the correct place becomes, *de facto*, associated

⁶ The term “regionalism” is used in a variety of ways in the literature. For example, it sometimes refers to cultural characteristics that distinguish regions, while at other times it may refer to stereotyping and prejudices directed against people living in regions other than one’s own (e.g., Yu 1990). Here I shall interpret the concept of regionalism more narrowly as referring to alignments of voters from particular geographical regions. In other words, regionalism refers to political antagonisms among regions primarily manifested as confrontational regionalist voting in which voters cast their vote for candidates or parties only because they are based in their own regions.

⁷ The first regional voting is said to have appeared in the 1963 presidential election when Park Jung-hee and Yoon Po-sun competed. Also, there were regional differences in the 1971 presidential election. Kim Dae-jung, who is a favorite son of the Cholla province, obtained a greater proportion of votes in Cholla than nationwide. However, the magnitude was incomparably small. Therefore, many scholars who study regionalism in Korea note the strong and enduring regionalism after 1987.

with being elected.

In the most extreme case, as seen in Table 1, the presidential candidate Kim Dae-jung, who is from the Cholla province (which is located at the southwestern part of Korea) gained 94.4% of the votes in that province in the 1997 presidential election. In 1997, Lee Hoi-chang won 59.1 percent of the votes in the southeastern part of the country, while winning only 3.3 % of votes in the Cholla region. In the 2002 presidential election, the winning candidate Roh Moo-hyun, originally from the Kyungsang region and representing Kim Dae-jung's party, won 93.2 % of the votes in

Table 1: Regional Voting in the 1997 and 2002 Korean Presidential Elections (%)

<i>Region</i>	1997			2002	
	<i>Lee Hoi-chang^a</i>	<i>Kim Dae-jung^b</i>	<i>Lee In-je^c</i>	<i>Lee Hoi-chang^a</i>	<i>Roh Moo-hyun^d</i>
Seoul/Incheon/Kyunggi	38.3	42.0	18.1	44.6	50.9
Kyungsang	59.1	13.5	25.1	69.4	25.8
Kangwon	43.2	23.8	30.9	52.9	41.5
Cholla	3.3	94.4	1.5	4.9	93.2
Chungchong	27.4	43.9	26.6	41.3	52.5
Cheju	36.6	40.6	20.4	39.9	56.1
Overall	38.7	40.3	19.2	46.6	48.9

Source: Korean National Election Commission (www.nec.go.kr)

^a The candidate of the Grand National Party (GNP).

^b The candidate of New Politics Peoples' Assembly (NPPA), which is the direct descendant of the Millennium Democratic Party (MDP)

^c The candidate of the National New Party (NNP)

^d The candidate of the Millennium Democratic Party (MDP)

the Cholla region but only 25.8% of the votes in the Kyungsang region. Regional voting arises from regional factors such as a sense of regional belonging, personal attachment to regional leaders, ideologically induced regional nepotism, or expected individual benefits from improved regional conditions.

Most regional voting differences are closely related to ethnic, linguistic or religious differences similar to those seen in many European countries such as Switzerland and Belgium (Lijphart 1979). However, regional voting in Korea is unique. Korea is one of the most homogeneous nations in the world. The tendency of voters to support candidates on the basis of a party leader's regional connection has been extremely strong; therefore, most Korean scholars agree that regionalism is the most serious and persistent obstacle to progress in the country (Bae and Cotton 1993; Cho 2000; Lee 1997; Shin 1999b).⁸ The argument concludes that if politics based on regional interests persists, there is little hope that Korean political institutions will mature sufficiently to meet the political and economic requirements of a modern democratic society.

In sum, concentrations of votes along regional party lines reflect the regional

⁸ Why regionalism appears is beyond the scope of this research since I focus on the political consequences (political sophistication and party identification) of regionalism. In explaining the cause of regionalism, analysts have focused on a variety of cultural (Choi and Lee 1980; Kim and Koh 1980; Yang 1994; Yea 1994), economic (Cho 2000; Kim 1987; Kim 1990; Moon 1990), mobilization strategic factors (Choi 1993; Moon 1992; Sohn 1993), although they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. See Kang (2001).

nature of Korean parties (Cho 1998; Kang 2001; Lee and Brunn 1996; Lee 1997). The centralized leadership of Korean parties and their regional bases are indicative of party centered politics in Korea. Korean political parties can be seen, therefore, as dominating most candidates' electoral fortunes. Party support for a candidate is important because Korean voters heavily rely upon the party label of candidates when making their electoral choice (Cho 1998; Lee and Brunn 1996; Lee 1997).

Additionally, the importance of party voting cues can become enhanced when there is a strong linkage between a particular party and a particular region. In this context, the concept of party identification has been met quite critically in Korean electoral research. This is quite different from Americans politics, in particular in presidential elections, where the policy stands and characteristics of the candidates have an important weight in addition to their party background.

Party identification is a cost saving device, providing people with a shortcut to all kinds of decisions, including the decision for which party or candidate to vote (Downs 1957). However, Korean voters might not need party identification as a cost saving device, because that function was already fulfilled by people's ties to a region, which in turn was strongly associated with a particular party. Under these conditions expressed partisanship will be synonymous with the vote, and parties as such will not

serve as a guide to organize behavior. The logical extension of this argument might be that once the importance of regional cleavages declines and voters are deprived of their traditional shortcutting device, they will develop party identification in the same way as their American counterparts.

Korea undertook the transition to democracy with an ample reservoir of distrust for political parties due to decades of experience with authoritarian and military regimes. Korean critics maintain that Korean citizens usually do not think and deliberate about issues and lack the sophistication to do so. In particular, regionalism persists in the political processes of Korea, which hurts Korean democracy. There has been growing concern across a wide spectrum of Korean society, as well as among politicians and political scientists, about the implications of regionalism for sustainable democracy in Korea (Cho 1998; 2000; Kang 1993; Lee 1997; Park 2000; Park 2001). In fact, most studies of Korean elections have concluded that regionalism explains all elections in Korea.

However, growing interest in political and economic reform has recently led to changes in voting behavior. Past research suggests that country level factors such as democratic experience, the party system, strategic voting incentives, and the nature of social groups may influence the development and consequences of party identification

(Bowler, Lanoue, and Savoie 1994; Campbell et al. 1960; Crewe 1976; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002; Miller 1976; Niemi and Weisberg 2001). Park (1993a, 453) finds the impact of issue voting with a statistical analysis of survey data from the 1992 presidential election. Korean voters took into account their retrospective evaluations and the campaign issues of the candidates. Indeed, there is some preliminary empirical evidence to suggest that among Koreans the probability of partisan identification can be influenced by an individual's economic and educational circumstances.

In the 2002 presidential election, Roh Moo-hyun, the 16th President of Korea, won 48.9% (12,014,277 votes) of the valid ballots cast (24,561,916 votes) beating first runner-up Lee Hoi-chang by a margin of 2.3 percent (570,980 votes).⁹ Since this election, a number of scholars and election experts have noticed a gradual decline of regionalism, but an increase of generational gap and policy voting. This election signals an end to the politics of three Kims¹⁰ generation. A new generation of

⁹ Many aspects of Roh's victory over Lee made subsequent governing difficult. The small margin of victory made it more difficult for the losing side to accept the election result. Consequently, on March 12, 2004, a stunning political event happened in Korea as its National Assembly impeached President Roh Moo-hyun only a year into his term as President. The opposition parties -- with over two-thirds of the seats in the Assembly -- decided to use their numerical strength only one month before the National Assembly elections. As a result of the impeachment, the case was sent to the Constitutional Court for a final decision according to the Korean constitution. Roh's presidential powers were immediately suspended and Prime Minister Koh Gun became acting head of state. The opposition's reason for the impeachment was the President's public expression of support for the governing Uri Party for the upcoming National Assembly elections and his refusal to publicly apologize for his conduct as the position demanded.

¹⁰ Three Kims are Kim Young-sam, Kim Dae-jung, and Kim Jong-pil. They dominated Korean Politics

politicians have put their stamp on Korean politics. Post-modern and post-materialist political issues such as gender equality, environmental protection, peace, and civil society came to the fore of the political agenda. Moreover, after the 1987 election, issues such as the economy, democratization, and corruption became significant factors in Korean voting behavior (Cho 2002; Cho 2000; Kim and Kim 2000; Lee 1998).

To summarize, new voting behavior certainly emerged in Korea in the 1990s and 2000s. Specifically, issue voting appears to be on the rise in Korea (Cho 2002; Cho 2000; Kim and Kim 2000; Lee 1998). Moreover, Korean voters often vote for the party that maximizes their interests, as voters do in other democratic societies (Cho 1998; Lee and Brunn 1996; Lee 1997).

As a result of these changes in voting behavior, I believe, a peaceful power transfer from the ruling party to an opposition party took place for the first time in Korea's history in 1997. Considering a long electoral history, the shift in power was a miraculous event. Three government changes – intraparty changes in 1993 and 2002, and an interparty change in 1997 – have since taken place through three procedurally free and fair presidential elections. Assuming that sophisticated voters in Korea are

for four decades after the military coup d'état of 1961.

not likely to be mobilized in the ways they were under authoritarian regimes, I expect that more sophisticated individuals rely less on region and “boss” cues than less sophisticated voters. This is a meaningful clue that voters differ markedly in their understanding and conceptualization of politics, and this variation is likely to influence how political sophistication affects voting behavior.

This assumption raises important questions about the influence of political sophistication on the use of heuristics. For example, does the use of partisan cues depend on an individual’s level of political sophistication? Do informed voters always focus on sophisticated comparisons of candidates and issues without reference to party identification? To answer these questions we need to understand how political sophisticates and unsophisticates think about politics. South Korea’s 2002 presidential election is an interesting test case for this approach to explaining the electoral impact of political sophistication on the use of partisan cues.

There are, to my knowledge, no empirical studies that analyze the effects of political sophistication on South Korean voting behavior. Very little is known about the role of political sophistication in South Korean elections and how environmental variation may affect its distribution. With a few exceptions research on political sophistication has focused mostly on the United States. Empirical studies on political

sophistication are nearly nonexistent in Korean scholarship.

1.3 Outline, and Contribution of the Dissertation

This dissertation is a study of Korean voting behavior in the 2002 presidential election. In this dissertation, I analyze how Korean citizens make their vote choices. I focus on the level of political sophistication in the electorate and the use of partisan heuristics. The purpose of this dissertation is to study the effects of political sophistication on partisan cues in the 2002 Korean presidential election.

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter I provides the introduction, which includes a research question, background information on electoral studies in Korean politics, and an outline of this dissertation. In Chapter II, I begin by defining political sophistication and reviewing previous work on political sophistication and cognitive heuristics. Then I examine the relationship between political sophistication and partisan cues, focusing on the relationship between the level of political sophistication and the use of the partisan heuristic. Building on prior literature, I move to significantly expand our understanding of how political sophistication influences voters' decision and the use of partisan cues.

Chapter III explores the factors that determine the levels of political

sophistication and use of partisan cues. I also describe my dependent and independent variables. Next, I address methods of studying the relationship between political sophistication and the use of the partisan cues, voter turnout, and electoral choice in the 2002 Korean presidential election. Chapter IV presents and interprets the results of my empirical analyses. The purpose of Chapter IV is to probe the effects of political sophistication on the use of partisan cues in Korea in the 2002 presidential election. I investigate how the use of the partisan heuristic is conditioned by an individual's level of political sophistication. Finally, Chapter V sums up my findings and offers concluding observations about the effects of political sophistication on partisan voting and their implications.

This dissertation contributes to the literature on political sophistication in three ways. First, it improves our understanding of the effects of different levels of sophistication on the use of partisan cues. My goal is to contribute to the debate over the effects of political sophistication on the use of the partisan heuristic. I also examine the impact of political sophistication on the evaluative processes of voters and their choices. Most of the extant literature has omitted sophistication as an explanatory variable, instead assuming that voters make evaluations and decisions in roughly the same way regardless of their level of sophistication. By allowing the

impact of key explanatory variables to vary depending on the respondent's level of sophistication, we can see how voters' differing abilities to make informed political evaluations affect the decisions they make.

Second, this study advances our understanding of the development of partisanship. While party identification has long attracted the attention of scholars, most research has focused on established democracies, in particular the United States (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000). Such studies, however, are limited in their ability to test empirical predictions regarding the development of partisan attachments. Indeed, to explore these questions fully we need data from new democracies like Korea, where we can actually observe citizens as they become attached to political parties. For observers of Korean politics an accurate assessment of mass partisanship can shed light on the promise of stability in the fledgling democracy. For students of democracy, newly competitive political systems offer an extraordinary opportunity to learn about the origins of partisanship. These studies on the acquisition of party attachments in new democracies are particularly important given the prevalence of arguments that partisanship enhances prospects of democratic consolidation (Almond and Verba 1963; Converse 1969; Converse and Dupeux 1962; Mainwaring 1999). So I contribute to a more general understanding of how mass partisanship develops related

to political sophistication.

Third, my dissertation explores the universality of political sophistication; that is, it examines whether or not political sophistication is a meaningful concept outside the United States. While there are good reasons to believe that sophistication plays an important role in the decision-making of voters worldwide, few scholars have examined this role to confirm its apparent universality. Recent research in the United States and elsewhere has highlighted disparities in political sophistication within the general population, as well as how these disparities might be alleviated (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Holbrook 2002). So far, however, this research has been confined to established democratic systems. As a result, scholars know little about disparities in political sophistication in other countries, especially emerging democracies.

In most emerging democracies overall levels of political sophistication tend to be low, inequalities of all kinds are pronounced, and the overall quality of political representation is dubious. By measuring and testing the impact of sophistication in a very distinct electoral context, we can determine whether sophistication is truly a universal concept or if it is simply an artifact of the American political system.

Chapter II. Literature Review

The discussion of political sophistication is important in the study of voting behavior and political psychology (Niemi and Weisberg 2001). The pioneering studies of Lazarsfeld et al (1944) at Columbia University and Campbell et al (1960) at the University of Michigan generated a prolific research agenda that has been followed for over half a century. Though scholars disagree about how information or knowledge affects vote choice, some hypotheses have been supported by robust empirical testing.

The discussion has centered on whether this is a problem or not for democratic systems. Many studies are pessimistic. But the “new look” in public opinion research dispensed with reflexive pessimism (Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Popkin 1991; Sniderman 1993) and accepted instead that “the reasoning voter” might rely on cognitive shortcuts or heuristic cues to form meaningful appraisals of candidates and issues without expending excessive cognitive resources (Popkin 1994; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991b; Zaller 1992).

A great deal of scholarship has investigated the utility of party labels as

heuristic devices in various domains. In terms of voting, scholars have found that people rely on partisan cues in the voting booth (Lau and Redlawsk 2001a; Popkin 1994; Rahn 1993), especially in low information elections (Schaffner and Streb 2002; Squire and Smith 1988). So long as the positions of candidates are not inconsistent with those of the party, voters are likely to select the “correct” candidate if they are provided with the party of the candidate (Lau and Redlawsk 2001a; Rahn 1993). Furthermore, scholars have found that party cues help citizens predict the issue positions of candidates and place them on an ideological spectrum (Conover and Feldman 1981; 1989; Huckfeldt et al. 1999; Kahn 1994; Koch 2001; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Rahn 1993; Wright and Niemi 1983).

In this context, the possibility of the use of party as a heuristic by voters has been acknowledged in political science for over 40 years. The concept of party identification offered one explanation for how the average individual managed the complexities of democratic politics. Downs (1957) pointed out that party identifications constitute a crucial information shortcut for voters. Lau and Redlawsk (2001a) also find the party identification is the most important heuristic.¹¹ Party

¹¹ According to Lau and Redlawsk (2001a), the following possible shortcuts and heuristics can be identified; 1) Relying on party affiliation, 2) Relying on a candidates/party ideology for cognitive savings, and 3) Endorsements. The second shortcut is a slightly similar heuristic as the party heuristic. However, it is not so much the party label but the connotation of conservative/progressive that is used to make a political choice. And “Endorsements” means using the opinion of interest groups, or respected individuals etc. to make a choice. Voters can simply use the recommendation of interest

identification is purportedly among the most useful of such aids because it is very accessible and “travels so well” across different decision domains (Huckfeldt et al. 1999). In fact, nearly every theory of voting includes party identification as a critical factor explaining vote choice. Even when information about candidates is in short supply, voters can rely on partisan information.

In the remainder of this chapter, I review the relevant literature. I begin with a discussion of the concept of political sophistication, and then focus on several cognitive shortcuts or heuristics. I use this literature review as a basis for discussing the predicted effects of political sophistication on the use of cognitive shortcuts or heuristics.

2.1 The Concept of Political Sophistication, and Empirical Studies

Citizens use a variety of means to evaluate the political world and guide political choice. Scholars have proposed differentiating voters according to their “levels of conceptualization” (Campbell et al. 1960), “belief systems” (Converse 1964), “education” (Carmines and Stimson 1980), “level of political sophistication” (Luskin 1987), “political awareness” (Zaller 1992), and so on.

groups and/or individuals to make their mind up and do not need to inform themselves about the party programmer.

Political sophistication can broadly be defined as the understanding of politics. Political sophistication is related to the ability to “comprehend the political world and develop attitudes about politics that are consistent with one’s basic values and orientations” (Delli Carpini and Keeter 2000, 23). More specifically, politically sophisticated individuals should be able to evaluate effectively politics in terms of competing interests and actors, and make associative and causal linkages between these factors. Political sophisticates identify political problems, locate the sources of the problems, and determine potential solutions. There is also an expectation that political sophisticates are engaged in politics. To be adept at assessing the political landscape there must be ongoing attention paid to political issues and actors.

In the same context, political sophistication can be also defined as the conjunction of interest in politics, knowledge about public affairs, and conceptual skill in organizing and using this knowledge in making sense of the political universe. Political interest is the extent to which people follow political news and developments, and the amount of concern and involvement they have with the political world (Krosnick 1990; Neuman 1986; Zaller 1992). Political knowledge refers to knowing what government is, how government functions, and being familiar with the roles and positions taken by prominent public actors and groups (Delli Carpini and Keeter

1993; Luskin 1987; Neuman 1986; Zaller 1992). Conceptualization is defined as the ability to differentiate between types of political information and to integrate this information into a wide-ranging associative network (Converse 1964; Luskin 1987; Neuman 1986; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a).

Political sophistication enhances the extent to which people comprehend politics and make attributions. Sophisticates understand the complexities of political problems, while non-sophisticates may cease looking after encountering an obvious answer. Because political sophisticates are able to think about politics outside their own local sphere of reference, they have a comprehensive, more complex understanding of politics. Due to their frequent attention to politics, sophisticates must constantly update their assessments in order to maintain an overall evaluation of beliefs. When new information comes in, it must be integrated with the existing disparate sets of knowledge. That new information comes in frequently and integration with existing beliefs must occur often.

Political sophistication is a concept introduced by Campbell et al. (1960) to describe the extent to which voters conceptualized their likes and dislikes about candidates and parties in ideological terms (although they did not directly employ that term). Campbell et al. (1960) stratified survey respondents according to their “levels

of conceptualization,” representing the degree to which voters employ ideological language in explaining their attitudes towards parties and candidates. They described what they sought to measure as follows:

We are interested in the presence or absence of certain abstractions that have to do with ideology; but we are also interested in the degree to which an individual’s political world is differentiated, and, most important, in the nature of the degree of “connectedness” between the elements that are successfully discriminated. In short, we are interested in the structure of thought that the individual applies to politics; and this interest forces us to deal in typologies and qualitative differences (Campbell et al. 1960, 221-2).

They develop a system for evaluating the level of conceptualization at which individuals understand and integrate bits of political knowledge. This system has four categories, from a low group with a complete absence of issue content in their political information structure, to a high group that relies on an overarching ideology to organize political information.¹²

Converse (1964) expanded on and revised the levels of conceptualization and introduced the concept of a “belief system” to generalize the concept of ideology used

¹² Meanwhile, the social-psychological school downplays the ideological dimension of voting, whereas the rational choice school begins with that dimension. *The American Voter* model holds that political ideology matters only when voters show a consistent cognitive attitude structure. Campbell et al. (1960, Ch 10, Table 10-1) show that only 2.5 percent of the American public actively relies on the ideological dimension, while 88.5 percent of the public shows at best a minimal understanding of ideology. The authors contend that they could not find any significant evidence showing that voters understand the diverse aspects of ideology.

by Campbell et al. Converse (1976) examines the extent to which individuals use their overarching beliefs to constrain their attitudes on particular issues. He defined a belief system as “a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional dependence” (Converse 1964, 207). Converse argues that the level of constraint in a person’s belief system is largely a function of the level of information that individual possesses. By information he means both simple facts and the “contextual knowledge” or essential relationships between those facts (Converse 1964, 212-3).

While there is much debate about Converse’s assumptions about and measurements of belief constraint, the idea that sophisticated individuals use a general theory about the world to structure particular opinions is closely tied to Campbell et al.’s (1960) levels of conceptualization. This definition of sophistication centers on the ability of an individual to use broad-spectrum ideologies to shape specific decisions.

Converse noted that high levels of sophistication according to both measures were associated with higher levels of political activity and education, consistent with the findings of Campbell et al. Converse (1964) found little consistency between respondents’ political attitudes, suggesting that not only do citizens fail to organize

their political attitudes consistently around the ideological dimensions assumed by most political scientists, but they also fail to organize their thoughts about politics in a consistent matter at all. The implication of these and related findings was that the American electorate was hardly capable of making reasonable decisions.

Although variously defined and operationalized in the succeeding literature, at its core political sophistication has been used to refer to the extent to which voters think in ideological terms – that is, the extent to which they represent and evaluate information in categories differentiated in terms of liberalism and conservatism. This conception of the ideologue is the basis for much of the research on political sophistication since the 1960s (Luskin 1987). The basis for this classification is cognitive in nature. The sophisticated voter understands the political world in terms of a more general political belief system, or an overarching theory used to interpret political surroundings (Converse 1964).

The concept of political sophistication in terms of the levels of conceptualization continued to have some currency in the literature throughout the 1970s. Pierce (1970), Pierce and Hagner (1982) and Nie, Verba, and Petrocik (1976) used Campbell et al.'s levels of conceptualization in various forms to illustrate the changing role of ideology in voters making political decisions, arguing that voters had

in general increased their sophistication in the 1960s and 1970s.¹³ Many researchers build on operationalizations of definitions based on Converse (1976) and Campbell et al. (1960), including issue congruence and ideology (Luskin 1987). What is clear, however, is that there is not a consensus as to what political sophistication is, what it should be, and how it should be measured (Luskin 1987).

Meanwhile, Carmines and Stimson (1980) introduced another factor, “education” to explain levels of political sophistication. Carmines and Stimson (1980) argue that an increase in issue voting during the 1960s was not the result of a better-informed electorate. Carmines and Stimson differentiate between “easy issues” and “hard issues.” “Easy issues” are those issues that even uninterested and less informed voters have opinions about. An easy issue is: 1) “symbolic rather than technical,” 2) “more likely to deal with policy ends than means,” and 3) “an issue long on the political agenda” (Carmines and Stimson 1980, 80). Only “hard issues” require conscious calculation of policy benefits and thus are the basis for more sophisticated and reasoned electoral choice. They posit that the likelihood of voting on “hard issues” is greater among voters who are better educated and/or better informed.

Sniderman, Glaser and Griffin (1990) compare voters without a high-school

¹³ These works, however, were strongly criticized by Smith (1980), who argued that voters in general were no more ideological or sophisticated than they were at the time of *The American Voter*.

diploma to those with some college education in their study of voting in the 1980 presidential election. Their main findings are: (1) in deciding how to vote, less educated voters rely more heavily on incumbent approval, while well educated voters rely more heavily on the comparative competence of the candidates and on their own policy goals; (2) less educated voters rely more heavily on partisan considerations in judging both the incumbent's performance and the comparative competence of candidates; and (3) well educated voters rely more heavily on economic retrospections and policy goals in judging the incumbent's performance, and rely more heavily on ideological considerations to judge the candidates' comparative competence and to determine policy goals.

Zaller (1990, 131) discusses awareness as playing a role in "reception of political messages and ... the availability of these messages in memory." He notes that the concept of political awareness is perhaps best measured by political information (as opposed to measures including education, reported media exposure, and political participation), because it "captures political learning that has actually occurred – that is, political ideas that have been encountered and comprehended and remain available for use" (Zaller 1990, 131).

Zaller (1992) states that the best measures of "political attentiveness" are

factual knowledge questions that “capture what’s gotten into people’s minds,” although he supplements these measures with education and other proxies when knowledge questions are not available. To measure the public’s understanding of politics it is necessary to identify an appropriate gauge of political awareness or sophistication. Zaller makes the case for the use of questions of “neutral factual knowledge,” arguing that:

Neutral factual knowledge about politics captures political learning that has actually occurred, political ideals that the individual has encountered, understood, and stored in his head, while avoiding the problems associated with social desirability, response effects, and over-estimation associated with most subjective assessments of political understanding (Zaller 1992, 335).

Delli Carpini and Keeter have carried out the most extensive and recent study of the American electorate. Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) perform a series of studies to determine what Americans know about politics. They advance four propositions to help answer this question. First, the American political system is built upon a variety of inconsistent normative theories. Second, “Factual knowledge about politics is a critical component of citizenship” (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996, 3). Third, what, how much, and how citizens know about politics is distributed among different groups of citizens based on individual and systemic forces. Finally, “varied

opportunities to participate; the centrality of information to effective participation; and systematic biases in the ability, opportunity and motivation to learn about politics combine to produce a stratified political system that affords different access to political power” (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996, 3-4). These propositions are central to their book, as it is hard to evaluate their work apart from them.

They focus on three categories representing the components of politics about which citizens should know: “what government is” (the rules of the game), “what government does” (the substance of politics), and “who government is” (people and parties in politics). Delli Carpini and Keeter (1993; 1996) use a five-item measure of political knowledge, assessing the voter’s correct answers on the following: party control of the House, the relative ideological location of the two major parties, the size of supermajority required to override a presidential veto, identification of the vice president, and identification of the branch of government responsible for striking down laws as unconstitutional.¹⁴

¹⁴ Gomez and Wilson (2001) employ a similar eight-item measure of political sophistication in the 1992 election; they drop the relative ideological locations altogether, and employ four name-and-office identification questions (Dan Quayle again, plus Boris Yeltsin, Tom Foley, and William Rehnquist), two civics questions (judicial review and judicial nominations), and party control of both House and Senate. Because Gomez and Wilson’s study is of economic voting, the version of sophistication they must employ must stratify voters according to the ability to make causal associations; they explain that attributing credit and blame requires both sufficient factual knowledge to understand the legislative process and the capacity to think abstractly about cause-and-effect. Their strongest findings are that in 1992, more sophisticated voters were more likely than unsophisticated voters both to blame government for their personal economic circumstances and to engage in pocketbook voting in the 1992 presidential election; unsophisticated voters instead voted according to sociotropic retrospections.

The Delli Carpini and Keeter scale has become the standard measure of political knowledge, which seems to be synonymous with Zaller's "political attentiveness," and political sophistication. Consequently, the contemporary study of political sophistication increasingly focuses on the importance of factual political knowledge when assessing what the public knows about politics, recognizing knowledge to be "both an important political resource in its own right and a facilitator of other forms of political and thus, indirectly, socioeconomic power (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). By assessing the "range of factual information about politics stored in long-term memory," political knowledge is suggested to be the "most important component of a broader notion of political sophistication" (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996).

Delli Carpini and Keeter assess the overall knowledge of American voters by summarizing the results of a large sample of surveys between 1940 and 1994. In total, there are 448 factual questions about institutions and processes, people and players, domestic and foreign affairs. The ability of the electorate to answer correctly varies from 99 percent (e.g., naming the president of the U.S.) to 1 percent (e.g., naming the prime minister of Norway). On average, the voters manage to give the correct answer to 41 percent of the questions (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996, 62-104). They discover

that Americans do not know much by any measure about any of these categories, and never have known that much. However, they argue that it does not follow that the American public consists of a bunch of ignoramuses. Instead, they argue that it is meaningless to talk about how much Americans know about politics because enough citizens know enough about politics to evaluate candidate, parties, and issues (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996).

Scholars have provided evidence that demonstrates how political sophistication conditions political thought and judgment (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Knight 1985; Krosnick 1990; Lau 1985; Luskin 1987; Neuman 1986; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a). According to this emerging body of research, what one knows and how deeply one thinks about politics strongly affect political information processing and choice.

To take some examples, sophistication leads to higher levels of policy attitude holding (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Goren 1997; Jacoby 1995; Krosnick 1990)¹⁵, attitude structure and stability (Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Norpoth and Lodge 1985; Stimson 1975), ideological reasoning (Converse 1964;

¹⁵ For instance, Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) show that experts are much more likely than novices to make judgments about the policy positions held by public officials, candidates for office, and the two major parties, which can be viewed as a form of attitude expression. Jacoby (1995) shows that increasing sophistication leads to increasing attitude expression across a wide range of ideological, domestic policy, and foreign policy issues.

Hamill, Lodge, and Blake 1985; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a; Stimson 1975), information processing efficiency (Lodge and Hamill 1986; McGraw, Lodge, and Stroh 1990), campaign contributions (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), and voter turnout (Neuman 1986).

Sophistication also makes people more likely to judge political messages by their content rather than their sources (Iyengar and Valentino 2000). The sophisticated are more likely to resist weak or specious counterarguments, they are more susceptible to priming effects (Krosnick and Berent 1993), more likely to vote along party lines (Zaller 1992), and more likely to decide on a candidate months in advance of an election (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). Moreover, sophisticates are more likely to make voting decisions on a broad array of factors, with a higher propensity to “use issues as a criterion” (Brady and Ansolabehere 1989; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a). Most importantly, perhaps, sophistication enhances one’s ability to determine his/her “enlightened” self interest, which is the decision one would make with full and perfect information and if one could fully preview the results of each alternative (Dahl 1989; Delli Carpini and Keeter 2000).

Palfrey and Poole (1987) perform empirical study of the relationship between voter sophistication and how respondents to the 1980 NES voted in the 1980

presidential election. They did this by performing a series of Monte Carlo simulations on their dataset in which they varied each individual's level of information. They discovered that individuals with a high level of information tend to hold more politically extreme views than those with lower levels of information (Palfrey and Poole 1987). Second, they found that those with more information are more likely to vote. These findings imply that sophistication effects exist in a few different ways, as those with more information hold different political views than those who are less informed. Moreover, more extreme voters are more likely to vote in a presidential election.

Lau and Redlawsk (1997) build upon online and memory-based voting models by asking what determines whether people vote correctly. Lau and Redlawsk defined a correct vote as, "one that is the same as a choice that would have been made under conditions of full information" (Lau and Redlawsk 1997, 586). They test their research question by examining the results of a 1994 experiment in which 303 eligible voters were subjected to a mock election campaign (Lau and Redlawsk 1997). After the election campaign, they voted in the "primary" election campaign and afterward, were given complete information about the candidates in question. They analyzed the results of this experiment and found that new information changes how people vote in

an election (Lau and Redlawsk 1997, 591). They also tested their research question on NES data on presidential elections between 1972 and 1998 and obtained results consistent with those of their experiment as new information altered how people voted in these elections (Lau and Redlawsk 1997). Their results imply that information effects exist as new information changes how people vote.

Finally, Althaus (1998; 2003) extends Delli Carpini and Keeter's (1996) and Bartels's works by looking at NES data from the 1988, 1992, and 1996 NES to determine whether having more information alters a person's response to a survey question. He examines survey respondents' responses to various policy questions to determine the role of information in shaping an individual's responses. Moreover, he controls for a variety of demographic factors like income, age, partisanship and the like (Althaus 1998; 2003). Further, he simulates the effect of having more information on societal preferences by setting each individual's level of information to the highest available. He discovers that those who have more information are more likely to have a different set of political preferences than those with less information (Althaus 1998; 2003). As a result of this finding, he finds support that favors information effects in NES responses to policy questions.

To summarize, political scientists have demonstrated a long-standing concern

with identifying how well the American electorate understands politics, recognizing political sophistication as the cornerstone of effective democratic participation (Dahl 1967; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). It is generally understood that the level of political knowledge in the American electorate is very low (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Sniderman 1993). In effect, as Zaller (1992) points out, people vary greatly in their general attentiveness to politics, and by and large, the overall level of information is limited.¹⁶

Empirical evidence suggests that some kinds of people tend to be more informed than others. That is, there is an important amount of variance in the level of factual political knowledge among citizens, and this variance is said to be unevenly distributed, since the highest degree of political knowledge tends to be concentrated among those who are politically and socially advantaged. In fact, according to the literature much of the empirical variation in the propensity to know about politics is explained by individual differences in motivation, ability, and opportunity (Althaus 2003; Bennett 1995; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). At this point, then, the general assumption of the theories of voting behavior that all citizens are similarly informed needs to be tested.

¹⁶ Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) estimate the proportion of high sophisticates at around 30%.

Nonetheless, the early literature was largely silent on the question of how evaluation and voting decisions are actually made, given that voters rely on incomplete information. Survey research is strikingly uniform in its conclusions regarding the ignorance of the public. Subsequent work did establish that information levels fluctuate over time (Bennett 1988), but no one disputes the long-established fact that most voters are politically ignorant (Althaus 1998; 2003; Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Neuman 1986; Zaller 1992).

The recent focus on political sophistication presents an opportunity to think of sophistication in new ways. In essence, this research agenda resurrects the role of citizens and their preferences in the practice of politics. That is, rather than lament the lack of political sophistication, this process-centered approach depicts citizens as neither fools nor philosophers. Instead, citizen preferences, while not well-informed, are not random, whimsical, inconsistent or ill-founded. This research challenges the minimalists' claims by arguing that citizens can make reasonable choices with limited information through the use of information shortcuts, or heuristics (Downs 1957; Hinich and Munger 1994; McKelvey and Ordeshook 1985; 1986; Neuman 1986; Page and Shapiro 1992; Popkin 1994; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a).

2.2 Cognitive Shortcuts or Heuristics

Although “voters are not fools” (Key 1966, 7), they clearly lack the requisite political information required by traditional democratic theory (Bennett 1988; Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Neuman 1986). The opinion that a low level of knowledge leads to poor quality decisions has been challenged. Do people with little knowledge really make unqualified decisions? A lack of political information seriously inhibits voters’ ability to make informed or “correct” vote choices (Bartels 1996). Yet many citizens nevertheless do make informed voting decisions (Lau and Redlawsk 1997).

Several political scholars in recent years have argued that people make comprehensive use of what little information they have because they replace factual information with cognitive shortcuts, or heuristics in political judgments. For example, voters may use heuristics or information shortcuts, such as following the position taken by a group or leader that the citizen believes has their interests at heart (Graber 2001; Neuman, Just, and Crigler 1992; Popkin 1994; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a; Zaller 1992). Yet this does not mean that they are not acting in a rational way. The cognitive literature suggests that individuals rely on different knowledge structures and cues, depending on their expertise. The individual differences captured

by political sophistication are critical to political decision-making.

This growing body of literature in political science is largely grounded in findings that citizens lack information about political affairs. As Converse (1990, 372) put it, “the two simplest truths I know about the distribution of political information in modern electorates are that the mean is low and variance high.” This line of work has its early roots in research on opinion-leadership, in which citizens who lacked political information relied on others to funnel information to them or to provide a cue for political judgments (Campbell et al. 1960; Katz and Lazarsfeld 1964; Key 1961). Since then, recent work by authors such as Popkin (1991), Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991a), and Lupia and McCubbins (1998) has looked more closely at how individuals deal with their paltry stores of knowledge.

Recognizing the cognitive limitations of decision-making, the idea goes back to Simon’s pioneering work on “satisficing” and “bounded rationality” (1957a; 1957b; 1997)¹⁷. Confronted with a decision-making problem people behave as “cognitive minimalists”, i.e. they try to limit the cognitive investment and they are satisfied with

¹⁷ Speaking about rationality, it is necessary to specify further what it actually means. Among many existing definitions I will use here a very broad and minimal definition which is that a rational choice is a choice where people have reasons, irrespective of what these reasons might be (Lupia and McCubbins 2000a, 7). This does not imply that people are driven by benefit maximizing strategies to increase their economic wealth when making political choices. People’s ability to make constant calculations about the consequences of their actions are limited, and many other sources, such as (often altruistic) ideologies and ethical consideration may influence their decision to a large or even greater extent than benefit-maximizing thoughts. However it means “People usually have reasons for what they do” (Simon 1995, 45). They are able to justify with some arguments why they have reached a certain conclusion and why they have made a certain choice.

acceptable (not optimal) strategies. It drops the use of comprehensive decision rules, like the optimization of subjective utility, which may be applied to any and all circumstances. “Like comprehensive rationality, bounded rationality assumes that actors are goal-oriented, but bounded rationality takes into account the cognitive limitations of decision makers in attempting to achieve those goals” (Jones 1999, 299).

Consider as well Gigerenzer’s and Selten’s (2001, 8) presentation: “models of bounded rationality consist of simple step-by-step rules that function well under the constraints of limited search, knowledge, and time--whether or not an optimal procedure is available.” In this view, people make decisions by applying heuristics to specific domains that are linked to more general building blocks. The rules are not “domain general as would be the case in subjective expected utility” (Gigerenzer 2001, 38).¹⁸ Bounded rationality points to simple heuristics that guide people’s choices and behavior.

Downs (1957) has already applied this insight to choice in representative democracies. He argued that citizens simplify their choice by using cognitive shortcuts and by delegating the search for information or even the decisions to other

¹⁸ Klein (1998; 2001) and the other essays collected in Gigerenzer and Selten (2001) criticize those who rely only on the optimization of expected utility as the explanatory mechanism at the individual level. They argue on behalf of a set of alternatives, bounded rationality and “adaptive toolbox.” Furthermore, Klein (1998) provides evidence and analysis that denies Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen’s (2000) claim that crises engender rational calculations and action. Instead in those circumstances, Klein argues, individuals usually narrow the set of choices and follow established procedures.

actors whom they trust and believe to be competent. As Downs (1957) argues, it is rational for voters not to seek information about candidates and issues; it follows that what little knowledge most people have about politics comes as a by-product of experiences encountered when they are not looking for political messages, rather than from specifically searching for political information (Page and Shapiro 1992, ch. 2).

Popkin (1991, 49) suggests that cognitive shortcuts serve the needs of rational voters: “just as fire alarms alert the firefighters to fire, saving them the effort of patrolling to look for smoke, so do information shortcuts save voters the effort of constantly searching for relevant facts.” Popkin (1991, 212) argues that voters use shortcuts such as party identification and personal information about the candidates to reduce their uncertainty about the candidates; he calls this mode of reasoning “low-information rationality, or gut reasoning.” Popkin (1994) finds that there is a low information rationality and people have a very practical way of thinking about government. They combine information from past experiences, validate and incorporate information in conversation with other people, and finally come to conclusions based on information from various sources of direct or indirect information (Lupia 1994; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; 2000a; McKelvey and Ordeshook 1986; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a).

Voters apparently do not need to be fully informed about politics to choose a candidate or participate in a campaign. Voters do not need to have “encyclopedic” knowledge about politics in order to make reasoned choices (Lupia and McCubbins 2000b)¹⁹ Summary information about candidates abounds and suffices to instruct voters about candidates’ issue positions and policy preferences.²⁰ Although these decisions are not as well informed as classical democratic theory requires, scholars have found that citizens make wide-ranging use of information shortcuts, cues, or heuristics to make “second-best” decisions or the same decisions had they had complete information (Mondak 1993a; Popkin 1994).

For example, a person can buy a technologically complicated product, such as a computer, without knowing anything about how it works. She puts her trust in choosing a product from a reliable company. Bowler and Donovan (1998, 30) use a very effective analogy to illustrate the difference between the old and the new look in public opinion research: “Voters, to use an analogy, may know very little about the workings of the internal combustion engine, but they do know how to drive. And

¹⁹ Lupia and McCubbins define a “reasoned choice” as one in which an individual knows the consequences of their action (2000b, 47-8).

²⁰ There are various ways information is presented to voters in a summarized way. The most common sources of cues are political parties, endorsers and incumbency status. All of these factors are shortcuts that provide evidence of how a candidate has performed in the past and many position him/herself in the future. In other words, knowing a candidate’s political party, endorsers and incumbency status may suffice to instruct voters because it provides signals of a candidate’s views on issues and policies.

while we might say that early voting studies focused on voter ignorance of the engine, these newer studies pay more attention to the ability to drive.”

In the same way, voters make use of political parties or ideologies as “trademarks.” Being uninformed is thus not entirely the same as making an irrational choice (Niemi and Weisberg 2001, 105-6). For another example, voters faced with the task of voting on ballot propositions may use credible sources of information such as an elite endorsement as a guide to making a reasoned judgment (Lupia 1994).

Similarly, voters in congressional elections often rely on party identification or name recognition to help them navigate the waters of political judgment.

The optimism is understandable because it offers evidence of how to solve the democratic dilemma and this research can give valuable insight as to how people possibly deal with information shortfalls. However, there are several question marks about this theory. First, there is a lack of empirical evidence. Most of the empirical studies are experimental studies in which citizens are exposed to different kinds of information and they are offered various shortcuts to make up their minds instead of direct issue-related information. These studies then show that voters can fill the information shortfall by using different cues and heuristics, and that people can come to similar conclusions by using heuristics.

However, this might not be a reflection of the real world. Perhaps both information and shortcuts are lacking. It remains unclear how often citizens replace information with shortcuts and cues taking into account that both are costly and require some effort. The use of heuristics and cues might require even more political knowledge than having knowledge specific to party or candidate. The above argument assumes that people use shortcuts as a replacement for primary information. But it could be the case that there is a positive linear relationship between the amount of information people have and the shortcuts they use. In fact, it is likely that people with a lot of substantive knowledge make use of several cues and shortcuts as well to validate their information and come to a better conclusion.

The second problem is that using shortcuts and cues in a comprehensive way requires institutional and political knowledge. Voters can use party positions or media opinion only when they trust these opinions, and they only trust them if they have a previous record about the parties or media positions. It is impossible to use shortcuts and cues if there is no previous record of where parties and leaders stand and how political institutions work. But Delli Carpini, and Keeter (1996) show that people lack this kind of knowledge to a great extent, too. In addition, if people use shortcuts and cues, they do not do so in a strategic way but automatically do so without major

reasoning.

Information shortcuts are nonetheless information (Luskin 2002). Voters still need to know something about politics for informational shortcuts to be effective.

Almost all accounts of the use of political cues agree that voters should be able to identify the candidates, either through their names or party affiliation, know whether a candidate is an incumbent or a challenger, who endorses that candidate, and what the different parties stand for. The literature appears to agree that there are minimal informational requirements for voting.²¹

Consequently, the heuristics available to voters are limited by their level of political sophistication. The ability of voters to use heuristics is thus also limited by their level of political knowledge -- specifically, their ability to associate political objects with other salient referents. While there is considerable debate in the literature over whether heuristic reasoning is able to compensate for the public's overall lack of knowledge about politics, it appears that most voters can do better than push buttons or mark circles at random in the voting booth.²²

²¹ Obviously, those who know more than the minimal levels of information are always better off. Bartels argues that fully informed voters act differently from other voters (Bartels 1993). In addition, better-informed voters tend to vote more moderately than less informed voters (Luskin, Fishkin, and Jowell 2002) and are less hesitant about candidates' policy positions (Alvarez and Brehm 2002).

²² Although heuristics often inform, they may also misinform. A female candidate running for office will likely be perceived as more liberal than a male opponent since voters believe women, generally speaking, are more liberal than men (McDermott 1997). This cue may be accurate much of the time, but it surely fails on occasion. The cure for such information failures, of course, is more information.

Finally, cognitive heuristics do not explain why more knowledgeable or sophisticated individuals behave differently than their less knowledgeable counterparts (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). In effect, better-informed citizens are significantly more likely to participate in politics, are better able to link their self-interests to specific opinions about the political world, are more likely to have stable and internally consistent opinions over time, and have a greater chance of coordinating their opinions with political participation in a meaningful and rational way (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). Furthermore, as Lau and Redlawsk (2001a), Kuklinski and Quirk (2000), and Bartels (1996) indicate, to show that information shortcuts allow uninformed voters to act as if they were fully informed is not easy.

In conclusion, while the American electorate is not particularly well informed, voters possess enough political savvy adequately to perform their civic responsibility. Utilizing theories of bounded rationality and heuristic shortcuts, these perspectives suggest that citizens are able to adequately fill in the gaps in their political understanding and make decisions that are both informed and rational (Lodge, Steenbergen, and Brau 1995; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Popkin 1994). These scholars suggest that citizens need not be experts about politics to participate; rather, the decisions they are asked to make are widely salient and information is readily

available, meaning they are able to act competently.

2.3 Party Identification as a Heuristic

E.E. Schattschneider once observed, “modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties” (Schattschneider 1942, 1). When electoral competition is organized by parties, party identification can benefit both established parties and voters (Aldrich 1995; Miller and Shanks 1996). Voters can simplify their decision making by identifying a party that has reliably served their interests in the past and using it as a guide to political judgment. In other words, party identification is a stance that people take toward political parties. The concept of party identification has been central to our understanding of electoral behavior (Bartels 2000; Campbell et al. 1960; Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002; Miller and Shanks 1996).

Party identification is one potential heuristic aid.²³ Researchers describe partisanship as a heuristic for organizing political information, evaluations, and behaviors. The cue-giving function of partisanship is strongest for voting behavior,

²³ There are a number of heuristic shortcuts that may play a role in voting behavior. It is understood that there are several heuristic shortcuts, such as the “party identification heuristic,” the “status quo heuristic” (Bowler and Donovan 1998), the “trust heuristic,” the “duty heuristic” (Scholz and Pinney 1995), the “likeability heuristic” (Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a), the “accessibility heuristic” (Iyengar and Kinder 1987) or “interpersonal heuristics” (Popkin 1993).

because citizens make explicit partisan choices. Popkin and Dimock (1999, 142) state, “many citizens with little or no understanding of the institutions of government do hold partisan identification and do identify with individual characters on the political scene.” Moreover, party attachments are relevant to a much broader range of political phenomena than social group cues or other heuristics, because parties are so central to the political process. Issues and events frequently are presented to the public in partisan terms, and nearly all politicians are affiliated with a political party. In this context, the most reliable and “cheapest cue” available to voters is a candidate’s party affiliation (Downs 1957; Fiorina 1990; Rahn 1993).²⁴

Thus, in the United States at least, party labels help individuals predict the issue positions of political candidates, determine and organize their own issue positions, and “correctly” select political leaders without possessing “encyclopedic” levels of information (Downs 1957; Huckfeldt et al. 1999; Lau and Redlawsk 2001a; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Popkin 1994; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a). In fact, Rahn (1993, 473) states:

²⁴ This does not mean that party identification is a perfect cue. In fact, the issue of abortion shows that this is not the case. Many Republicans are pro-choice, as some Democrats are pro-life. Nevertheless, in the absence of other information, party identification is normally quite reliable. Rahn (1993) notes, even when candidates’ positions are inconsistent with that of the party, citizens ignore the conflicting information and still rely on party as a cue.

In partisan elections, the most powerful cue provided by the political environment is the candidate's membership in a particular political party. Even if voters know nothing else about a candidate, the ballot provides them with one important piece of information. The cue provided by the party label is simple, direct, and ... consequential in shaping individuals' perceptions and evaluations of political candidates.

Most modern research in the field of voting behavior has been organized around three schools of thought about how voters arrive at their decisions. Given the concept's intellectual history, I will present the relevant theoretical sources beginning with the Columbia school, proceeding to the Michigan school, and concluding with the response of rational choice theory. After that, I will explore the relationship between political sophistication and party identification.

2.3.1 Traditional Theoretical Studies of Party Identification²⁵

The Sociological Model

The first major theory of voting behavior—advanced by Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee (1954)—emphasizes the role of social structures as determinants of voting behavior. This approach, often called the “Columbia” model of voting, posits that voting decisions are based on “relating voters’ socioeconomic status (education,

²⁵ I use the terms “partisanship,” “party attachment,” “party closeness,” and “party identification” interchangeably and understand them to mean some underlying affinity for a political party felt by a voter.

income, and class), religion, and place of residence (urban or rural) to their vote” (Niemi and Weisberg 2001, 8). The Columbia model essentially argues for a “stimulus-response” concept of voting; the same stimulus should always produce the same response in the voter, regardless of changes in the voter’s immediate environment.

The Columbia approach argues that voters make evaluations based primarily on their socioeconomic status; it is almost as if voters are wired by their socialization processes to respond to particular political stimuli in certain, specific ways. In particular, it argues for strong influence by members of relevant social groups, such as peers and relatives, on voting behavior.

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady call the relationship between “socioeconomic status -- levels of education, income, and occupation -- and citizen activity” a relationship “with long pedigrees in social science analysis ... with a firm empirical footing through the decades and across politics, but with a less compelling theoretical grounding” (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995, 4-5). Sociological factors include but are not limited to education, income, and occupation. According to this model, citizen activity in both politics and society correlates with socioeconomic status variables; that is, people with higher education, income, and vocation status tend to

participate more frequently (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Conway 2000; Lijphart 1997; Ragsdale and Rusk 1993; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Verba et al. 1993; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980).

The Socio-Psychological Model

An alternative model was advanced by Campbell et al. (1960), working from national voting studies conducted at the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan. This approach posits a socio-psychological framework in which vote choice is not simply a function of sociological factors. Instead, the Michigan school argued, voters integrated new political stimuli from their environment into their decision-making process, augmenting their socialization with some internal processing of new information.

Campbell et al. (1960) laid out one of the most important treatises on the centrality of parties in political decision-making, arguing that party identifications are psychological attachments that shape political attitudes and evaluations and help individuals to establish coherent sets of political opinions (Campbell et al. 1960, 128-36). The authors of *The American Voter* characterized the party as “a supplier of cues by which the individual may evaluate the elements of politics” (Campbell et al. 1960,

128) and described partisanship as a “perceptual screen” through which individuals interpret and evaluate political experiences. Thus, the common party identification scale used in the United States was defined by Campbell et al. (1960) as a measure of a citizen’s “affective orientation” toward the two major parties.

This theoretical school expects persistent adherence to a particular party; conversions are infrequent (Campbell et al. 1960, 162; Miller and Shanks 1996, 120). Campbell et al. (1960; 1966) take party identification as an immediate determinant which has a direct and significant influence on voters’ decisions. In their social-psychological model, party identification is considered to be the single most important determinant of vote choice.

According to Campbell et al., party identification is a psychological attachment adopted at an early age, primarily from one’s parents, without any specific knowledge of issues or parties’ issue positions.²⁶ Indeed, the developers of the concept stressed its functional importance:

²⁶ Converse (1969, 148) formalized the argument, proposing a model with four elements: 1) a *learning* process, the basic increments in partisan loyalties shown by the individuals over their life cycles as a direct function of their continuing experience with the party system; 2) a *resistance* phenomenon, representing the declining ease of learning as a function of the absolute age at which individuals commence their experience within the system; 3) a *transmission* process, capturing whatever vicissitudes may surround the transfer of partisan feeling from one generation to the next, and 4) a *forgetting* process, handling the rate of decay in retention of partisan loyalties subsequent to any suspension of democratic process, eliminating the mass relevance of traditional parties. The most important elements are the learning and transmission processes.

The present analysis of party identification is based on the assumption that the ... parties serve as standard-setting groups for a significant proportion of the people in the country. In other words, it is assumed that many people associate themselves psychologically with one or the other of the parties, and that this identification has predictable relationship with their perceptions, evaluation, and actions (Campbell, Gurin, and Miller 1971, 90).

Consider some exemplary statements: At any one election, Converse and Pierce (1986, 96-7) maintain, "We expect to find a rather clear positive correlation between age and the strength of party identification." Miller and Shanks specify the relationship between age and habituation: "For most young adults (ages 26-29) there is much less malleability after the third election experience" (1996, 130-1). In countries with established histories of democratic elections, age and electoral experience go together; where elections are new, age is not a surrogate for exposure to elections. Also, "There is evidence of a kind of 'settling down' or habituation to a competitive party system, which occurs at a mass level as a secular trend over time" (Converse 1969, 141). In this perspective, party identification is a persistent loyalty to a political party.

The authors hold that voting is the only political activity for most people, and that voters do not behave rationally because they are significantly influenced by almost blind allegiance to party identification. In addition, they note that a voter's

socioeconomic status has a significant relationship to his or her level of political interests. Those who show a high degree of political interest have a correspondingly high socio-economic status, while those who have a low degree of interest have a low socio-economic status.

Converse (1969), in his extension of *The American Voter* model, employs the concept of a “normal vote” to explain changing electoral results and their meanings by providing a baseline for American electoral divisions. While taking party identification as the prevailing long-term force, Converse underlines elections in which many voters defect to the other party because of such short-term forces as candidates’ personalities, and voters’ issue orientations. Yet it should be noted that what Converse calls short-term forces are not necessarily consistent positions of voters.

The Rational Choice Model

A third approach, advanced initially by Downs (1957)²⁷, argues that voters make decisions based on “rational choice.”²⁸ The essence of rational choice theory is

²⁷ Downs’ *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957) marks the first application of rational choice theory to the study of political behavior. The debates between the behavioralists and the rationalists have conditioned the study of political behavior for half a century. Both groups pushed aside a third rival, the Columbia school, which emphasized the social context of political behavior. See Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995) for a recent full elaboration.

²⁸ Downs (1957, 4-20) uses a narrow definition of rationality that allows for possible errors of rational

that individuals are motivated by self-interest and that they seek to maximize their utility.²⁹ Nevertheless, to maximize the utility of a given decision, an individual needs to have a certain amount of information at hand. Rational choice theory's conceptualization substitutes reasoned decisions for the emotional and affective elements included by the Michigan school.

Given that individuals do not always have a clear notion of what they want as an outcome, of how the alternatives relate to such an outcome, or how the different outcomes relate to their own interests, Downs assumed that citizens do not make their political decisions under conditions of perfect information. Rather, they live in a world of uncertainty where they need to search for information before coming to a decision, because information gathering is a costly action. The problem of imperfect information then implies that often citizens are uncertain about their political decisions. In its place, party preference is the result of people's reasoned calculations,

men, imperfection of political rationality, and inefficiency of political systems. Downs does not deal with "the whole personality of each individual" when the rationality of this individual matters. That is, Downs' model takes into account a narrowly defined rationality, involving only the economic and political goals of each individual or group. Downs' conception is supported by many empirical studies in the 1970s and the 1980s that emphasize the substantial increase in the number of sophisticated voters (Nie and Andersen 1974; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1976).

²⁹ In Downs' initial formulation, the act of voting in and of itself was seen as irrational. Regarding political participation, because the net gain in participation is relatively small compared to the cost of participation, the theory argues that citizens will not participate and simply catch a "free-ride" from those who do participate (Olson 1965). Attempts to reconcile this "paradox of voting" have had decidedly mixed results, see e.g. Ricker and Ordeshook (1968), Ferejohn and Fiorina (1974), Cyr (1975), Katosh and Traugott (1982), Sigelman and Berry (1982), and Fiorina (1990). More recently, Bendor, Diermeier and Ting (2003) attempt to resolve the paradox by fusing rational choice and psychological explanations.

which view the parties as alternatives in a choice set and which link the selection to variations in policy preferences and perceptions of self-interest (Achen 1992; Downs 1957; Fiorina 1981; Key 1966; Kiewiet 1983).

Under these conditions, parties' ideologies appear as information shortcuts for voters who cannot judge politics expertly. Citizens vote for the party that is perceived closer to their ideal position on the left-right dimension. Given the lack of perfect information for the electorate, Downs conceived ideology as an information saving device. That is, it is a perceptual cue that helps ordinary citizens to have a general idea about policy positions of the main parties of their political system. In this view, partisan identification is a choice to prefer one party selected from a set of alternative political parties.

Challenging the social-psychological school's model, Key (1966, 7-8) contends that voters are not ignorant and are able to consider "central and relevant questions of public policy, of governmental performance, and of executive personality." Key (1966, 64-71) downplays voters' psychological identification with political parties and points out that party switchers cross party lines in accordance with their policy preferences. Key notes that voters are issue-oriented, politically sophisticated, and rational enough to analyze available information. Key's position is

largely consistent with Downs' (1957) rational choice perspective, which emphasizes an atomized individual voter who is considered to have a high degree of political interest and who behaves with a rational orientation or political ideology while being independent from social organizations and/or political parties.

Adopting Downs' perspective on rationality, Fiorina (1981) also assumes a critical position toward the social-psychological school's views on party identification and voters' rationality. Fiorina (1981, 198-9) holds that "past predispositions do not completely overcome the face of reality," and maintains that there are always "predictable changes in party identification" since voters' past predispositions are challenged by their perception of a changing reality. Fiorina (1981, 83) offers "a model of the individual voting decision that depends on the notion that citizens monitor party promises and past performances over time, and encapsulate their observations in a summary judgment termed 'party identification'."³⁰ However,

Achen (1992) modifies this claim. He accepts that citizens evaluate the past behavior

³⁰ Empirical studies suggest that voters do so by engaging in retrospective voting (Fiorina 1981; Key 1966; Kramer 1971) -- that is, by evaluating candidates and parties based on their past performance, rather than evaluating them prospectively based on their promises of future behavior. Much of the literature on this question has focused on economic voting, a form of retrospective voting that focuses on the performance of the economy under the stewardship of a particular candidate or party (Lewis-Beck 1988). However, the ability of voters to engage in any form of retrospective voting is necessarily limited by their ability to attribute blame or credit to a particular party or candidate. Duch, Palmer and Anderson (2000) find that politically sophisticated voters' retrospective and prospective evaluations of the American national economy are strongly affected by their partisan preferences, thus producing a systematic bias in individual-level measures of economic voting, while Gomez and Wilson (2001) find that less sophisticated American voters attribute credit and blame for macroeconomic conditions to the president, while more sophisticated voters do not, as they recognize the president's relative lack of control over the economy.

of the parties. They do so, he maintains, as they evaluate prospective benefits to be obtained from the political parties. This approach to partisanship insists that citizens view the parties as variable alternatives.

Like members of the Michigan school, rational choice theorists expect relatively stable partisan attachments. Indeed, Fiorina cites approvingly Key's metaphor, "standing decision," an image that reflects persistent concerns and associated political judgments. Switching from party to party, however, is systematic and not uncommon. What accounts for changes in partisan preferences? When individuals alter their views of the benefits of the relationship between their policy preferences and the political parties, they change their partisan preferences (Fiorina 1981, 410-1). More recent refinements of rational choice theory (Althaus 1998; Enelow and Hinich 1984) have suggested that voters use the difference between their position on the issues and the perceived positions of candidates ("issue distance") as a measure of how various outcomes will affect them, even when they possess limited information. Each framework offers a valuable contribution to understanding voting decisions.

In sum, partisanship is thought of as a political guide (Miller 1976; Wattenberg and Wattenberg 1996, ch. 2). Regardless of whether scholars perceive party

identification as a psychological attachment (Campbell et al. 1960), a social identity (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002), or a running tally of past evaluations (Fiorina 1981), all agree that party loyalties condition political opinions and behavior within the U.S. (Fiorina 2002) and other countries (Dalton 2006; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). Studies of party identification offer some of the best scholarship in political science. The analyses apply to newly forming as well as established democracies, and they address dynamic patterns as well as single points in times.

2.3.2 Empirical Studies of Political Sophistication and the Partisan Heuristic

Much literature has focused on the influence of party identification on voter decision making. Specifically, the relationship between sophistication and partisanship is at the center of the sophistication debate. Parties can act as a heuristic device for people at all different levels of political knowledge and interest, and can play an important role in the processing of political information (Rahn 1993). The reason for the importance of party in voting models is simple: parties lower the costs of voting by providing citizens with fairly reliable cues. Party identification may be thought of as “a relatively cheap cognitive cue, but its maintenance costs are not nil” (Martinez 1990, 824).

Therefore, partisanship has often been associated with low levels of political sophistication (Carmines and Stimson 1980; Kahn and Kenney 1997; Lau and Redlawsk 1997; McKelvey and Ordeshook 1986). In this view, relying on party cues is a simplistic way to make decisions about politics. Campbell et al. (1960) argue that reliance solely on party cues makes it impossible to keep abreast of any change in party stance that might bring the party farther from the individual's particular ideology. In this sense, the person blindly using party cues is not using his own general ideology or theory to monitor the appropriateness of the party affiliation shortcut.

Downs (1957) posits party labels as an elite-provided cue to overcome voters' incentives for rational ignorance. Building on this perspective, Shively (1979) poses the "decision function" hypothesis: The fewer "resources" a voter possesses to "pay the costs" of information needed to make an electoral choice, the more likely she is to acquire a party identification. Recent research reaffirms voters' reliance on judgmental shortcuts; for example, voters can infer attitudes toward new policies according to where fellow partisans stand (Popkin 1994; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991b). If partisanship works as a decision-making crutch for those who lack information, then we expect informationally-handicapped voters to depend on it most.

Rational choice theorists argue that the primary reason that parties exist in all

modern democracies is to mobilize low-information voters (Downs 1957; Popkin 1994). From this perspective, the most partisan of voters should be individuals who know the least about key political actors and whose day-to-day activities provide insufficient information to allow them to begin to carefully evaluate individual candidates and policy positions on a case-by-case basis. As Shively (1979) argues, it is much more “expensive” for poorly informed voters, both in terms of time and “the strain that comes with dealing with specific bits of information,” to acquire the information needed to cast an informed vote, and thus these voters are more inclined to turn to the “informational shortcuts” that parties provide (Shively 1979, 1040-1).

Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991a) suggest that there is an interaction between political sophistication and decision rules such that less politically sophisticated voters tend to rely on heuristics as they construct their political judgments. They suggest that, in particular, the less-sophisticated may rely on an affective (or “likeability”) heuristic. Lupia and McCubbins (1998) also examine political reasoning in the face of low information. They argue that citizens can be persuaded by credible endorsements on issues. They show that people tend to follow those source cues that they find credible, and they are repelled by those source cues that they find untrustworthy. Their main point is “people are selective about whom

they choose to believe” (Lupia and McCubbins 1998, 184).

However, decades of empirical research point in the opposition direction that voters with higher levels of political knowledge also have higher levels of partisanship (Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964; Miller and Shanks 1996; Palfrey and Poole 1987; Zaller 1991). These findings suggest that party identification emerges as a product of rational information-seeking, rather than as a solution to rational ignorance. Although sophisticated voters expose themselves more frequently to information that could change their preferences, the repository of prior information that under girds their predispositions is many times larger than among the less informed (Converse 1962; Fiorina 1981; Zaller 1992). Voters who are interested in politics also acquire information more readily (Fiorina 1990).

There is also a tremendous amount of evidence from the advanced industrial democracies pointing to a powerful and positive relationship between political sophistication and partisanship: studies have consistently found that better-informed citizens are not only typically more partisan (Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), but also they are more tolerant, exhibit higher levels of external political efficacy, possess lower levels of political cynicism, vote at higher rates, and are more likely to become involved in non-electoral forms of political

participation (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). The limited empirical research that has been undertaken in emerging democracies finds a positive relationship between political sophistication, as seen in the results from survey-based studies of the Russian electorate and partisanship (Brader and Tucker 2001; Colton 2000).

If we consider that both sophisticated and non-sophisticated people may indeed use partisanship as a heuristic for other political decisions (DeSart 1995), it becomes difficult to observe a difference between sophisticated and non-sophisticated voters in terms of the use of political party cues. Since many researchers argue that reliance on partisanship is indicative of a non-sophisticated voter, recognizing that the sophisticated voter may also use party cues blurs the line between the two groups. Perhaps this point helps to explain the disagreement in the literature as to whether party-switchers and ticket-splitters are sophisticated or unsophisticated (Campbell et al. 1960; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1944). Consequently, it is very possible that partisanship can be the tool of the sophisticated and the unsophisticated alike. With this background in place, it is quite difficult to discern whether party cues belong typically to the less sophisticated or the more sophisticated.

2.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed the relevant literature on political conceptualization, political sophistication, and heuristics. Since political scientists have recognized political sophistication as the cornerstone of effective democratic participation, they have been concerned with identifying how well voters understand politics. Levels of political sophistication are very low. Empirical evidence shows that the public has a low level of political sophistication. Many citizens don't even possess basic knowledge about the functioning of the government. Democracy with many badly-informed citizens is dysfunctional because the interests of many citizens are not reflected or are underrepresented in the decision making process.

However, many studies show that poorly-sophisticated citizens do vote correctly. The critical question is how ordinary citizens are able to make a reasonable choice in elections with low levels of political sophistication. The possible answer is that people replace factual information with shortcuts or heuristic cues to compensate for their lack of information or knowledge. By specifically focusing on shortcuts and heuristics some scholars assume that a negative relationship exists between sophistication and the use of heuristics because less sophisticated citizens are more likely to use heuristics than more sophisticated citizens.

Referring to these studies, I reviewed the relationship between political sophistication and the use of partisan cues. The relationship between sophistication and partisan cues is at the center of the sophistication debate. Scholars think of partisanship as a heuristic for organizing political information, evaluations, and behaviors. This cue-giving function of partisanship is strongest for voting behavior, because citizens make explicit partisan choices when they vote. Moreover, scholars have found that party cues help citizens predict the issue positions of candidates and place them on an ideological spectrum.

Partisanship is often associated with low levels of political sophistication. Though this idea is good in theory, it is not supported by empirical analyses. If we consider that both sophisticated and non-sophisticated people may use partisanship as a heuristic, however, it becomes difficult to observe a difference between sophisticated and non-sophisticated voters in terms of the use of political party cues. Some scholars have argued that voters with higher levels of political sophistication also have higher levels of partisanship. Thus, it is possible that partisanship can be the tool of the sophisticated and the unsophisticated alike.

Chapter III. Data and Methodology

This chapter focuses on my measurement strategies and data. Translating any theoretical concept into empirical measures is difficult. But doing so with my seven measures of political sophistication is particularly complicated because each has been measured in previous work with different strategies and data sets.

Using the logit regression models described in the following, I explore the relationship between the level of political sophistication and the use of partisan cues in the 2002 Korean presidential election. Next, this study seeks to discover how levels of political sophistication affect voter turnout. Finally, I compare the separate effects of political sophistication on the voter choice model. The dependent variables in my statistical models are party identification, voter turnout, and presidential vote choice. The primary independent variable is political sophistication. All statistical analyses were conducted using the STATA 8.2 software package.

3.1 Data and Statistics

My data come from a post-election survey of the 2002 Korean presidential election (“The 16th Korean Presidential Election Study”) conducted by the Korean Social Science Data Center (KSDC). It was conducted between 20 December and 27 December 2002, immediately after the election (See Table 2). In the survey, citizens are asked about their participation in the vote and their voting choices, as well as a number of standard social-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, level of income, place of origin, and occupation.

Table 2: Dates of, and Voter Turnout in, National Elections in Korea since 1987

	Presidential Election	National Assembly Election ³¹
1	December 16, 1987/ 89.2	
2		April 26, 1988/ 75.8
3		March 24, 1992/ 71.9
4	December 18, 1992/ 81.9	
5		April 11, 1996/ 63.9
6	December 18, 1997/ 80.7	
7		April 13, 2000/ 57.2
8	December 19, 2002/ 70.8	
9		April 14, 2004/ 60.6

Note: Bolded election is under investigation.

Source: National Election Commission Homepage (www.nec.go.kr).

³¹ In 1987 Korea adopted a full-fledged democratic system. In this system, presidential elections and congressional elections are irregularly staggered. The single-term president is elected by a direct popular vote every five years starting December 1987. The last presidential election was held in December 2002 when the current President Roh Moo-hyun was elected. On the other hand, congressional elections are held every four years starting April 1988. The term limit for the President was adopted to prevent any long-lasting dictatorships.

The data were gathered by telephone interviews with 1,500 random voters chosen in a stratified, multi-stage probability design. In the first stage, each province (except Cheju province, the smallest province and an island) was allocated a number of observations proportional to its population of 20 years and older in the 1995 census. In the second stage, numbers were allocated to reflect the age distribution in each province. Male and female voters were selected in equal numbers in all provinces. In the third stage, based on the target number of observations for each province, a random sample of election districts was chosen. For each election district, two voting places were randomly selected, and in each voting place 15 voters were chosen. This data represents the most comprehensive post-election data available on Korean presidential elections.

My statistical analyses rely on a series of logit regression models predicting party identification, voter turnout, and candidate choice, because these dependent variables are dichotomous. All models include a range of standard socio-demographic variables such as gender, age, education, income, residential areas, origin or region, ideology, and political sophistication. All variables are drawn from theories of party identification and political behavior in established democracies.

In social science, binary dependent variables are commonly used (Kilwein and Brisbin 1997; Krain 1997; Poirier 1994; Swers 1998). Common examples of these in logit models include workers choosing whether to join workers' unions, married women deciding whether to work, or voters deciding whether to vote. Since there are only two choices in the dependent variable, one is unable to use regular regression analysis because it may cause a problem for estimating coefficients. For instance, the regression line may yield a negative probability for extremely low values of independent variables. For extremely high values of independent variables the regression line may indicate a probability much higher than one. Outcomes of lower than zero or higher than one are not feasible because there are only two values (zero and one) of the dependent variable.

Logit is the natural log of the odds. While using logistic errors produces the logit model, using normal errors produces the probit model. The choice between logit and probit is a personal preference. "These two functions [logit and probit] are very similar and in today's software environment, the choice between them is a matter of taste because both are so easy to estimate" (Kennedy 1998, 234). Since the dependent variables of this dissertation, party identification, voter turnout, and presidential vote choice have all two categories, the logit model is used to analyze the outcome variable

in terms of several covariates.

Interpreting logit regression is more complicated than interpreting standard ordinary least square (OLS) regressions. Unlike OLS regression, logit regression does not assume a linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, does not require normally distributed variables, and also does not assume homoscedasticity. Logit regression applies maximum likelihood estimation after transforming the dependent into a logit variable. Therefore, to estimate the probability of a certain event occurring, logit regression calculates changes in the log odds of the dependent variable, not changes in the dependent variable itself as OLS regression does.

The success of a logit regression can be assessed by looking at the classification table, showing correct and incorrect classifications of the dichotomous dependent variable. Also, goodness-of-fit tests, such as model chi-square, are available as indicators of model appropriateness, as is the Wald statistic to test the significance of individual independent variables. To interpret the results of my logit regression analyses, I will examine the fit of each model. In addition to examining the goodness-of-fit statistics for the models, I can present pseudo- R^2 scores. But I still need to look closely at the coefficients of the variables included in the models, their level of

significance, and the corresponding Wald statistics.

I include all coefficients, their standard errors, level of significance, and the Wald statistics in the tables presented in the next chapter. As Gary King suggests, when we share our research findings, we should report all coefficients of our explanatory variables, even the level at which these coefficients are conventionally not considered significant. Since many scholars often delete a coefficient which is above a significance level, King's recommendation actually is to:

Present the marginal probability level (the exact "level of significance") for each coefficient, regardless of what it is; the author can argue whatever he or she wants and readers would still be able to draw their own conclusions. Statistical significance and substantive importance have no necessary relationship (King 1986, 684).

It should also be noted that the coefficients shown in all the tables in this chapter are logit coefficients. Logit coefficients, also called unstandardized logit regression coefficients or effect coefficients, correspond to the unstandardized regression coefficients in ordinary least squares regression. But logits are the natural log of the odds. They are used in the logit regression equation to estimate or predict the log odds that the dependent equal 1 (binominal logit regression) or that the dependent variable equals its highest/last value (multinomial logit regression). For the

dichotomous case, if the logit for a given independent variable is b_1 change in the log odds of the dependent variable (the natural log of the probability that the dependent = 1 divided by the probability that the dependent = 0).

A key concept for understanding the tests used in logit regression is that of log likelihood. Likelihood means probability under a specified set of variables. The result is nearly always a small number, and to make it easier to handle, we take its natural logarithm, i.e. its log base e , giving us a log likelihood. Probabilities are always less than one, so log likelihood is always negative.

3.2 The Dependent Variables

To address my research questions I created three dependent variables: party identification, voter turnout, and candidate choice in the 2002 presidential election. With regard to party identification, the literature suggests that party identification is related to political sophistication (Harvey and Harvey 1970; Neuman 1981). Like conventional approaches in established democracies (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000; Johnston 1992), I use self-reported party identification as my measure of partisanship. I assume the following: (1) if an individual feels extremely positive toward the party, she will be more likely to use the party cue informing her preference and increasing

her certainty over the issue and candidates, (2) if an individual feels extremely negative toward a party, he will be more likely to reject the given party's position on an issue and a candidate, making him/her more certain in his response, and (3) individuals who are neutral toward the party are unlikely to find the cue very useful in reducing uncertainty in their political opinions. With regard to party identification, respondents answered the following: "Do you think of yourself as a supporter of any political party?" Thus, I have regrouped the responses to this question into the two political camps: partisan, and nonpartisan. A party identifier is someone who says they support a party. I assign nonpartisans a value of 0, and partisans a value of 1. In all, 40.5 percent of respondents are classified as non-partisans.

The second dependent variable is voter turnout, which I code 0 for respondents who reported not voting, and 1 for respondents who reported voted. There are many empirical studies that articulate that political sophistication is closely related to political participation and turnout (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Milbrath 1965; Palfrey and Poole 1987). According to traditional arguments, political sophistication increases the stability of political attitudes, allows for distinctive party preferences, and therefore increases the probability of voting. Furthermore, well informed respondents feel not only more competent to vote but are also more likely to have

positive evaluations of the democratic process, which also might mobilize them to vote (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Campbell et al. 1960; Campbell, Gurin, and Miller 1971; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Gidengil 2004; Rahn, Aldrich, and Borgida 1994).

The third dependent variable, candidate choice, represents who each respondent voted for in the 2002 presidential election. Respondents were asked immediately following the election which way they voted. I assign a value of 0 to voters who voted for an opposition party candidate, and a value of 1 to voters who voted for the governing Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) candidate, the current Korean president Roh Moo-hyun.

Generally, the Korean electorate has shown coherent support for either the candidate of the ruling party or one or two candidates from the major opposition parties, regardless of the number of candidates from different parties. For instance, until the democratic transition in 1987, the main source of the government-opposition cleavage among the electorate was an individual's view about democracy – whether democracy is an appropriate political system in the Korean context. After the democratic transition in 1987, this government-opposition division became unimportant. Instead, there are fairly stable political-social value orientations among

the candidates. Put another way, the orientational affinity between voters and candidates is a factor that the Korean voters take into account in their decision making process. This is due to the lack of distinctive policies and splits and merges of parties after democratic reform. This is closely related to the fact that Korean political parties are based on the charisma of individual leaders rather than on grassroots movements.

3.3 Measurement of Political Sophistication and Other Independent Variables

3.3.1 Literature Review on Measurement of Political Sophistication

How can we measure political sophistication? Many citizens spend very little time attending to the details of politics. This makes us suspicious of what they have in mind when they vote. Since voting scholars cannot observe voters' thoughts directly, they often turn to surveys for proxy measures.

Thus, scholars have measured political sophistication in various ways, sometimes relying on factual knowledge questions (Bennett 1994; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1993; 1996; Junn 1991; Zaller 1990), past political participation, interviewer ratings of knowledge (Bartels 1996), political engagement, and content coding of open-ended responses (Luskin 1990), and additive scales of elements listed above (Chong, McClosky, and Zaller 1983; Fiske, Kinder, and Larter 1983; McGraw, Lodge,

and Stroh 1990).

Since the publication of *The American Voter* in 1960, many political scientists have made serious efforts to measure and monitor the political sophistication of the American electorate (Cassel 1984; Converse 1964; Hamill and Lodge 1986; Lau and Sears 1986; Luskin 1987; McClosky and Zaller 1984; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1976; Smith 1980; Zaller 1992). In their studies, political sophistication has been often equated with informed, structured, or ideological thinking.

However, scholars largely criticize early investigations of the electorate's political sophistication for concentrating almost entirely on the ideological component of an individual's political understanding.³² These approaches have generally relied on the levels of conceptualization index (Converse 1964) and education to measure sophistication. Some research shows that when more direct indicators of political expertise are included in models alongside education, the effects of the latter on political behavior choice are sharply attenuated (Luskin 1990). Other work shows that the levels of the conceptualization index does not behave monotonically as would be

³² There is a good deal of debate in the literature about what makes for a sophisticated voter. Some researchers have argued that simply having an ideology and being able to translate ideological sentiments into decisions is enough to be considered a political sophisticate (Knight 1985; Norrander 1989). Others require that ideological judgments be coupled with issue judgments and economic assessments in order to reach the level of sophisticate (Kahn and Kenney 1997). Still others do not require ideology explicitly, and instead rely on things like knowledge of and interest in the political system and players (Abramson et al. 1992; Carmines and Stimson 1980; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Rahn, Aldrich, and Borgida 1994).

expected by theory. The point here is not that education and the levels of conceptualization index are invalid indicators of political sophistication, but that relative to political knowledge scales they are rather crude.

Recent work suggests the superiority of a measure of political knowledge (Zaller 1992). The idea is that knowledge is not simply a cognitive construct but also a political resource that can benefit the individual and the polity. In this context, political knowledge is defined as “the range of factual knowledge about politics that is stored in long-term memory” (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996, 10). For example, Fiske, Lau, and Smith (1990) look at how alternative measures of political sophistication such as media exposure, political interest, political activity, political self-schema, education, and political knowledge predict political information processing, and they find that political knowledge is most important.

Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) suggest measuring sophistication with a specific set of questions that encompass a broad range of topics. By asking respondents right-or-wrong questions regarding current politics and political figures, one achieves a better understanding of what political information has already gotten into a respondent’s mind. As sophistication is so fundamentally based on having knowledge of politics, this strategy has been widely adopted (Delli Carpini and Keeter

1996; Gomez and Wilson 2001; Jacoby 1995; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Martinez 1990; Mutz 1993; Zaller 1992).

Assessing trends in political sophistication represents a significant challenge because of measurement inconsistency over time. Unlike other survey items, which are often replicated without modification from one point in time to the next, political knowledge questions are normally updated to reflect changes in the political landscape. This is particularly true of the most common type of knowledge items that measure what Jennings (1996) has dubbed “surveillance” knowledge.

There are two arguments for why these knowledge scales are valid measures of voter sophistication. First, there is a high likelihood that people with high institutional knowledge have a high degree of other political knowledge as well, which helps them to make an informed political choice more directly (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). After all, with more information, there is reason to suppose that people’s opinions will change. Gilens (2001) focused on the effects of providing factual information to respondents. He shows that it makes a difference: when given correct information, many respondents changed their preferences. Clearly this is an important finding with potentially big implications.

Second, questions assessing an individual’s level of political knowledge are

relatively immune to self-report biases, such as social desirability response sets or differences in “standards of self-description” (Fiske, Lau, and Smith 1990; Zaller 1992). Also, this measure of political expertise requires no “judgment calls” from the researcher; each knowledge question has an objective and consensual answer (Fiske, Lau, and Smith 1990).

Although the factual knowledge scale has become the customary measure of political sophistication, it is not undisputed. Mondak (2001) has been a leading critic of this measure. He argues that the usual format of these questions encourages people who are unsure but nonetheless know the correct response to answer “don’t know.” This leads to an invalid measure of sophistication. Because so many things can systematically affect a respondent’s willingness to answer a question, bias is introduced.³³ Based on similar reasons, Bennett focuses on the group of voters that are undoubtedly ignorant. In two similar surveys he tries to assess the size of the group that he calls the “know nothings.” This group hardly manages to answer any question correctly (Bennett 1988; 1996).³⁴

³³ Mondak (2001) suggests that the wording of these questions actually encourages “don’t know.” Questions are prefaced with “many people don’t know the answers to the following questions,” or worded by saying “do you happen to know...” In both of these instances, the wording of the questions suggests to the respondent that not only is it okay for them not to know the answer, but in fact a large number of others do not either. For respondents who are not confident in their political knowledge, this gives them an “easy out”; respondents who are not inclined to search their memories for an answer are also given a reprieve.

³⁴ Bennett argues that the choice of foreign politics does not affect the results significantly. People who totally lack information in one policy area most likely also lack information in other areas.

Second, Lupia (1994) emphasizes two alternative types of information. First, there is election-specific political knowledge, which in his case meant correctly identifying characteristics of California ballot propositions regarding insurance industry reforms. Second, there is knowing the preferences of certain groups or individuals, which provides an adequate substitute for the first type of knowledge, permitting badly informed voters to emulate the behavior of relatively well informed voters.

Lupia (1994) examined how Los Angeles County residents voted on a series of insurance reform propositions in California's 1988 General Election. He gathered exit poll data from L.A. County residents on Election Day to discover how they voted and how much information they were exposed to prior to the election. He analyzed the results of his poll and found that less informed voters used shortcuts to emulate the behavior of well-informed voters. Further, less-informed voters voted as if they were well-informed. Therefore, no information effects existed, as he found that there was no bias in his sample with respect to political knowledge, as the less-informed emulated the behavior of well-informed voters.³⁵

³⁵ However, he only conducted an exit poll of Los Angeles County residents at only a few polling places. He generalized these results to apply to all American voters. This is problematic because Los Angeles County voters are significantly different from all other voters within California, much less the United States. Los Angeles is the second largest media market in America. Accordingly, those who live in Los Angeles County have a greater opportunity to be exposed to political ads than those who live in other parts of the United States. These residents may, therefore, be better informed. King, Keohane and

Finally, Lau and Redlawsk try to find out how many voters vote “incorrectly,” – that is, vote for a candidate whose opinions they do not share. They find that 25 percent of the electorate vote directly against their own opinions (Lau and Redlawsk 2001c). Lau and Redlawsk’s (2001b) experiments indicate that out of five types of sophistication, factual knowledge is the best predictor of the individual’s use of ideological schema in a mock presidential election. However they did not control for individuals’ understanding of ideological concepts. Instead, Luskin (1987) recommends using relative placements of candidates for office or parties on the ideological spectrum to measure political sophistication, because correct performance of these tasks requires both recognition and understanding of the ideological dimension.

3.3.2 Operationalizing and Measuring Political Sophistication

The primary independent variable in this study is political sophistication. As noted above, the standard approach for measuring political sophistication is the use of factual or knowledge-based questions. However, it is unfortunate that even the most up-to-date surveys of political attitudes and behavior in Korea rarely include more

Verba (1994) argue that researchers should select their cases such that they are typical cases within a given population. If researchers fail to do this, then any results they obtain will be biased. Lupia’s (1994) work is guilty of selection bias as he selected an atypical case that may have influenced his findings.

than two items that measure basic political sophistication. Thus, I do not use a direct measure of political sophistication in this work.

Previous studies have documented that political interest is a major determinant of political sophistication.³⁶ Political interest has a “huge effect” on political sophistication (Harvey and Harvey 1970; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Luskin 1990, 344; Rahn, Aldrich, and Borgida 1994), and in a European context it has been found that its influence is larger than that of education (Klingemann 1979). Television news viewing in the United States, Britain, and a number of other countries has been associated with higher levels of political sophistication and participation (Brehm and Rahn 1997; Norris 1996; 2000). The 1997 British election study, for example, revealed a positive association between attention to news and higher levels of political sophistication and civic engagement (Norris 1999). Interest in politics is expected to have a positive relationship with political sophistication, as a more interested person would be more likely to gather the necessary information.

I assume that political knowledge and interest are essentially indicators of the same latent “political sophistication” construct. This perspective posits that

³⁶ Zaller (1992) proposes a non-monotonic relationship among political knowledge and opinion change in response to persuasive messages in the mass media. Well-informed citizens are more likely than poorly informed citizens to attend and to understand such messages, but at the same time, they are less likely to be influenced by them. As a consequence, moderately well-informed citizens will show the greatest levels of media-induced opinion change in comparison with both ill-informed and well-informed citizens.

knowledge and interest can be regarded as synonymous. Indeed, several authors investigating the conceptual basis of political sophistication use these indicators interchangeably, or combine them into an additive scale (MacDonald, Rabinowitz, and Listhaug 1995). Thus, I have defined political sophistication as the conjunction of political interest and political knowledge in this dissertation.

How then should political sophistication be measured? In an empirical analysis that attempts to assess the importance of voter's political sophistication, it would be ideal to be able to measure people's knowledge level as well as political interest. In other words, logic would suggest that separate indicators for the two components should be developed and combined into a single index.

The line of reasoning is perhaps most readily apparent in the work of Neuman (1986), who develops a complex, composite measure using multiple indicators of salience, knowledge, and conceptualization. In contrast, some hold that carefully designed political knowledge scales can parsimoniously measure expertise (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1993; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Mondak and Anderson 2004; Zaller 1992). Measures lying between these two extremes are also used (Rahn et al. 1990; Stimson 1975). Although the measurement strategy employed by Neuman is compelling, one could argue that separate measures of interest and conceptualization

are unnecessary, because sophistication can be validly measured with political knowledge scales.³⁷

Although there is a dispute over the relationship between these underlying traits and how they affect information processing, the important point to remember is that they are strongly and reciprocally related, and exert comparable effects on political behavior. For instance, someone who is very interested in politics will be motivated to seek out new political knowledge and assess its implications within the context of current beliefs and attitudes. Similarly, someone who knows a great deal about public affairs will take an avid interest in political news, actively seek out new political knowledge, and be able to efficiently process it, and so on. Consequently, to construct the measure of political sophistication, my variable is composed of seven variables measuring respondents' knowledge and political interest. The questions used to build my index of political sophistication for the 2002 Korean presidential election are given in Table 3.

³⁷ While this may result in models that are able to reliably predict variation in citizen sophistication, there is a clear danger that these estimates suffer a significant endogeneity bias. For, while political interest may indeed be fully exogenous to information holding, it is easy to construct a coherent narrative which suggests that increased knowledge of a subjective such as politics might also lead to a concomitant increase in interest in that subject. As Smith puts it: "Interest in politics presumably causes people to pay more attention to politics and thus to learn more about politics ... but knowing a good deal about politics is likely to make people more interested in it" (Smith 1989, 192).

Table 3: Questionnaire Items for Political Sophistication

<i>Indicators of Political Sophistication</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>Response Alternatives and Coding</i>
Political Knowledge	Do you know how many years a presidential term is?	1)wrong, 2)right
	Can you recall the name of the Governor of your province or city Mayor in which you live?	1)wrong, 2)right
	Compared to your neighbor, do you think your information and knowledge about this election is higher?	1) not very highly – 7) very highly
Political Interest	Do you belong to any groups which support a political leader or candidate?	1) no, 2) yes
	What degree of attention did you pay to the televised debate between the candidates during the campaign?	1) not at all, 2) very little, 3) quite a bit, 4) a great deal
	How interested were you in the election?	1) not interested at all, 2) not so much interested, 3) somewhat interested, 4) very much interested
	Do you generally follow political events and elections?	1) not at all closely -- 7) very much closely

My measure of political knowledge relies on two measures of subjective factual knowledge and one self-reported measure of political knowledge. The two factual knowledge variables have two values: 1 and 2, indicating correct and wrong, respectively. The other variable is a 7-point subjective interviewee rating of his/her general level of knowledge about politics and public affairs. Despite the inherent subjectivity of the item, Delli Carpini and Keeter (1993) and Zaller (1992) have presented evidence that it is a highly valid measure of political knowledge.

Another indicator of political sophistication, political interest, is operationalized in this study by four survey questions concerning: (1) participation in political groups; (2) respondents' use of the media to obtain voting information; (3) level of interest in the election; and (4) the tracking of political events. The first variable has two values -- 1 and 2. The second two questions have responses ranging from 1 to 4. The third political interest variable is a 7-point subjective rating of the respondent's general level of tracking of political events. Table 4 provides the descriptive characteristics of all the variables for the index of political sophistication.

Several diagnostic statistical tests were run to assess the scale. I ran both an internal consistency and a principal components analysis (PCA) using STATA. First, I

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Indicators of Political Sophistication (SOPH)

<i>Variable Name</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD.</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
Presidential Term (Q1)	1500	1.919	0.272	1	2
Governor Name (Q2)	1500	1.608	0.488	1	2
Self-Reported Knowledge (PKNO)	1500	3.977	1.459	1	7
Political Activities (POACT)	1500	1.042	0.201	1	2
TV Debate (TVDEB)	1500	2.871	0.733	1	4
Election Interest (ELIN)	1500	3.263	0.759	1	4
Political Interest (POIN)	1500	4.005	1.549	1	7
Political Sophistication(SOPH) ³⁸	1500	-1.87e-09	1	-4.072	2.067

used multi-trait analysis to test the hypothesized item groupings for the political sophistication (SOPH) scales by examining the internal consistency reliability of the items. Item internal consistency was used to test the assumption that the item is linearly related to the underlying concept being measured. Pearson correlations between items and scales (correcting for overlap) and between item means and standard deviations were calculated. Item internal consistency is considered satisfactory if the Pearson correlation between an item and its hypothesized scale is

³⁸ Note that the original observed variables are standardized before analysis so that their ranges and variations do not affect their index coefficients. The coefficients apply to the variables in their standardized form. First, I transformed the scores of these seven variables by using natural logs for a more normal distribution. Second, a standard or z score, like a percentile rank, is used to express the relative standing of a score with respect to the distribution to which it belongs. The mean of any standard score is always 0 and the standard deviation is always 1. The standard score for a particular raw score expresses its distance from the mean, expressed in units of standard deviation. It is calculated by subtracting the mean from each score and dividing by the standard deviation.

greater than 0.1.

I hypothesize that the seven indicators described above are all positively associated with the underlying construct “political sophistication” and that the intercorrelations among them are due to this commonality. Table 5 presents the correlation matrix. All statistically significant correlations are positive, ranging from 0.0010 to 0.6464. The strongest correlations are between *POIN* and *PKNO* (0.6464) and between *POIN* and *ELIN* (0.3971). *POACT* is significantly correlated with *PKNO*, but is not correlated with *Q1* and *Q2*. These correlations are adequate for performing a factor analysis.

Scale internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (α), which is based on the number of items in a scale and the item homogeneity. It has a correlation of 0-1 with higher values indicating a closer correlation, thus suggesting that the scale is assessing a single domain within the questionnaire. Coefficients above 0.7 and less than 0.9 are recommended (Carmines and Zeller 1979; McIver and Carmines 1981; Nunnally 1978; Streiner and Norman 2003). For my data, a simple scale of these seven items was constructed, and the reliability was estimated at alpha = 0.6327. This is slightly lower than the preferred level of .7.³⁹ When the scale

³⁹ Using the STATA, I calculated reliability at scale level using the alpha “Cronbach’s alpha” option.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix for Indicators of Political Sophistication

	Presidential Term (Q1)	Governor Name (Q2)	Self-Reported Knowledge (PKNO)	Political Activity (POACT)	TV Debate (TVDEB)	Election Interest (ELIN)	Political Interest (POIN)
Presidential Term (Q1)	1						
Governor Name (Q2)	0.2235***	1					
Self-Reported Knowledge (PKNO)	0.1636***	0.1879***	1				
Political Activity (POACT)	0.0010	0.0320	0.0933***	1			
TV Debate (TVDEB)	0.1770***	0.1614***	0.3178***	0.0468	1		
Election Interest (ELIN)	0.1081***	0.0894***	0.3334***	0.0692**	0.3125***	1	
Political Interest (POIN)	0.1562***	0.1847***	0.6464***	0.1225***	0.3240***	0.3971***	1

Note: * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001

reliability was tested using political knowledge only, the value of alpha was 0.4156.

For political interest only the value of alpha was 0.5184. This shows that these questions “hang together” a little better for political knowledge than for political interest, which suggests that they comprise a better indicator of political sophistication than political knowledge.

Next I employ principal factor analysis to combine the seven indicators into an index. This “data reduction” technique reduces a set of observed variables that are hypothesized to be related to one another to a smaller number of unobserved, more fundamental constructs called “factors” (Mardia, Bibby, and Kent 1979, 255; Nunnally 1978). It does so by detecting structure in the relationships among the observed variables as represented by their correlation matrix. All variables involved in the factor analysis need to be continuous and are assumed to be normally distributed. Since these factors are not directly observable, principal factors analysis is well suited to the area of political politics and psychology (Schonemann 1990; Steiger 1990; Velicer and Jackson 1990). In fact, psychologists originally developed the concept (Mardia, Bibby, and Kent 1979, 255).

According to Putnam (1993), the most ‘reliable and valid’ means of combining multiple indicators into a single index is principal component analysis (PCA). This

technique produces a linear combination of correlated variables such that it maximizes the joint variance of its components. In a sense, it extracts from a matrix of indicators only a small number of variables that in some sense account for most of the variation in that matrix. The principal component analysis considers the variability in a variable that is common with other variables, factor analysis finds q common factors that reconstruct the p original variables.

$$Y_{ij} = z_{i1}b_{1j} + z_{i2}b_{2j} + \dots + z_{iq}b_{qj} + e_{ij}$$

Where Y_{ij} is the value of the j th observation on the j th variable, z_{ik} is the j th observation on the k th common factor, b_{kj} is the set of linear coefficients known as the factor loadings, and e_{ij} is similar to a residual but known as the j th variable's unique factor. Principal factor analysis and varimax rotation methods were used to classify the seven variables into common groups.

I therefore generate the first principal component of the seven types of political sophistication to identify which items were correlated with each other. For each identified factor, the analysis produces "loadings," -- one for each variable -- which are estimated drawing only on the shared variance of the variables. Loadings represent the correlation between the observed variables and the factor. If, after examining the loadings, the hypothesis is borne out, then new variables (indexes, or

“factor scores”) that are linear combinations of the observed variables are estimated based on the loadings.

Table 6 contains the factor analysis output. Of the seven factors identified, only the first two capture sufficient variance to be retained.⁴⁰ In the first analysis, no restriction was made on the number of factors to be extracted, only that those with eigenvalues over 1, a standard cut-off for when a component is considered usable (Kim and Mueller 1978). Two factors were extracted (using varimax rotation)⁴¹; the first with an eigenvalue of 2.3758 with 33.94 percent of variance explained, and a second with an eigenvalue of 1.0882 and 15.55 percent of the variance explained. A close look at the factors shows that they may be an artifact of the measurement scales, which differed by question.

The loadings of all seven indicators are positive for the first factor. This is the factor that was chosen to represent the level of political sophistication. The second factor has a positive loading for *Q1*, *Q2*, *PKNO*, *TVDEB*, and *POIN*, but negative loadings for the other indicators. The first component’s highest loadings are for self-

⁴⁰ The factor analysis was conducted in STATA (version Intercooled/8.2) using the default “principal-component factors” (*pcf*) option. Note that by default, STATA will retain all factors with positive eigenvalues. The *factors(#)* option does not specify the number of solution to retain, but rather the largest number of solutions to retain.

⁴¹ Factor loadings are often rotated in an attempt to make them more interpretable. STATA performs both varimax and promax rotations. The purpose of rotation of factors is to get the variables to load either very high or very low on each factor. In the data, because all of the variables loaded onto neither factor 1 nor factor 2, the rotation aided in the interpretation. Thus, it made the results easier to interpret.

Table 6: Results of Factor Analysis of Political Sophistication Indicators

<i>Factor</i>		<i>Eigenvalue</i>	
	1		2.3758
	2		1.0882
	3		0.9698
	4		0.8004
	5		0.7508
	6		0.6668
	7		0.3482

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Factor Loadings of First Component</i>	<i>Factor Loadings of Second Component</i>	<i>Uniqueness</i>
Presidential Term (Q1)	0.1123	0.7546	0.4179
Governor Name (Q2)	0.1487	0.7070	0.4781
Self-Reported Knowledge (PKNO)	0.7894	0.1367	0.3582
Political Activities (POACT)	0.3165	-0.2983	0.8108
TV Debate (TVDEB)	0.5580	0.2635	0.6192
Election Interest (ELIN)	0.6739	-0.0006	0.5459
Political Interest (POIN)	0.8268	0.1021	0.3060

Note: Using Varimax Rotation and Principal Components Analysis

reported political knowledge and four questions dealing with political interest. The second component's highest are for the two factual questions. The uniqueness reported represents the proportion of variance of each indicator that is shared with the others. On substantive grounds it is difficult to interpret these results.

Because I am ultimately interested in political sophistication it is very cumbersome to have to deal with two different components of political sophistication and it would be nearly impossible to interpret two components interacted with sophistication. Thus, a second factor analysis was run, this time constraining the solution to only one factor. In this case, the solution showed that this primary factor explained 33.94% of the variance, with the eigenvalue of 2.376. This is exactly the same in the initial unconstrained solution.

A principal component factor analysis of the seven items yielded a single factor with an eigenvalue greater than one and a strong Cronbach alpha (0.6327). This factor was labeled political sophistication, *SOPH*. Table 7 shows the scoring coefficient of each component; that is, its individual weights in the index.

A factor score based on the regression method was derived for each group of items. The factor scores could be interpreted as a subscale of the scores of the grouped items. Hence, my measure of political sophistication is comprised of each individual's

Table 7: Factor Analysis of Political Sophistication Items Constrained to Single Factor

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>	<i>Scoring Coefficients</i>
Presidential Term (<i>Q1</i>)	0.3778	0.1590
Governor Name (<i>Q2</i>)	0.3944	0.1660
Self-Reported Knowledge (<i>PKNO</i>)	0.7853	0.3306
Political Activities (<i>POACT</i>)	0.1871	0.0788
TV Debate (<i>TVDEB</i>)	0.6155	0.2591
Election Interest (<i>ELIN</i>)	0.6280	0.2643
Political Interest (<i>POIN</i>)	0.8077	0.3400

Note: Using Principal Components Analysis

regression scores explaining this political sophistication factor. Thus, the political sophistication (*SOPH*) variable is calculated as follows:

$$SOPH = 0.1590*Q1 + 0.1660*Q2 + 0.3306*PKNO + 0.0788*POACT + 0.2591*TVDEB + 0.2643*ELIN + 0.3400*POIN,$$

where the values of the indicators are standardized values. Accordingly, *POIN* is given the greatest weight, followed by *PKNO*, *ELIN*, *TVDEB*, *Q2*, *Q1*, and *POACT*.

Factor scores are computed such that the mean is set at zero; values below the mean are negative and values above the mean are positive. Principal components analysis yields an index almost identical to the factor analysis index. The shape of its probability distribution is almost normal, as shown in Figure 2.

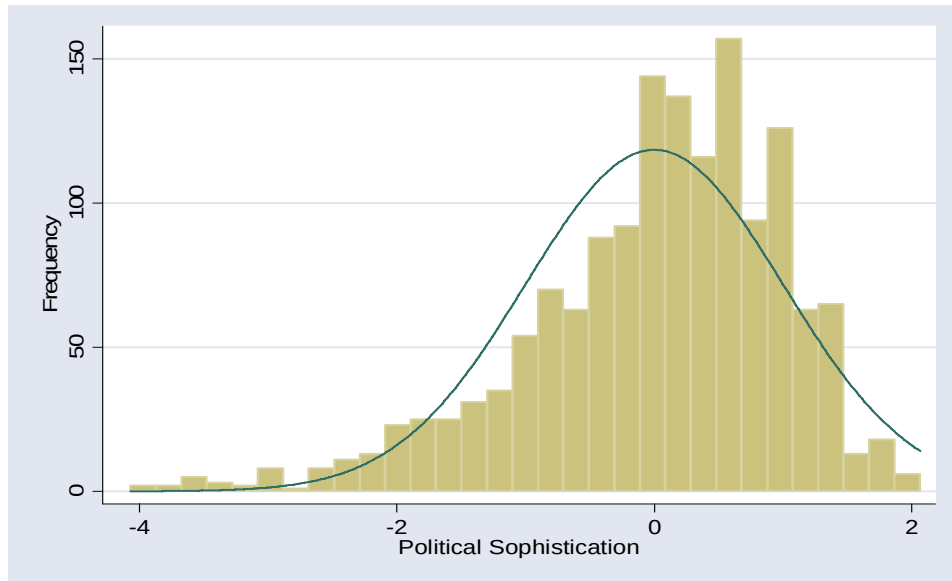


Figure 2: Distribution of Values for Political Sophistication

Finally, a number of demographic variables are included in my analyses. The literature suggests that a number of variables should be important in explaining political sophistication, political party identification, and voter turnout. My models control for the effects of seven demographic and social-psychological variables, all of which could be considered fundamental variables: age, gender, education, income, residential size, region, and ideology.

Regarding the determinants of Korean voters' choices, regionalism has been identified as the most significant (Lee 1993a; Morriss 1996; Park 1993a; b). In other words, voters are likely to cast their ballots for the party that is led by the leaders from the same home province as the voters. The regional dummy variables are included to

explore how much regional voting differs across levels of party identification and vote choice. There are two dummy variables, one each for birth in the Cholla and Kyungsang regions, leaving the other provinces as the omitted category. Regionalism is the serious factor between these two provinces as we reviewed in the above chapter. In each case, birth in the region is coded as a 1, and birth elsewhere as a 0. Thus, *CHOLLA* represents Cholla province hometown. I coded 1 for these voters and 0 for the others. *KYUNGS* represents Kyungsang province hometown. I coded 1 for these voters and 0 for the others.⁴² The statistical models I will use to test my research questions contain each of these variables. More details on the explanatory variables are given in Tables 8 and 9.

⁴² 'Hometown' rather than 'region of residence' was chosen to represent regionalism. For the purpose of explaining vote choice, it is critical to know where voters were born. Using Alford's class voting index, Jaung's (2000) measure of the regional voting index in Korea shows that political parties have very low representatives across regions. Studies show that the hometown matters more than the region of current residence in terms of mass political behavior. According to Lee (1997), a voter's hometown explains voting behavior better than present place of residence. That is, voters who left their hometown are more likely to support the party of their hometown than the party of their current residence. Lee reaches this conclusion by comparing the explanatory power of two logit models, which respectively predict regional party support in terms of the voters' hometown or place of residence. Lee finds that the variable for a voter's hometown explains about 4 percent more of the variation in regional party support than the variable for a voter's place of residence. In the survey, hometown is measured by the following closed-ended question: "where is your hometown?"

Table 8: Summary of Variables

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Description</i> ⁴³
Dependent Variables:	
Party Identifier (PID)	“Do you think of yourself as a supporter of any political party?” 0 = no, 1 = yes
Voter Turnout (VOTE)	“Did you vote in the election?” 0 = no, 1 = yes
Candidate Choice (ROH)	“(If voted) Who did you vote for in the election?” 0 = voted for an opposition party candidate, 1 = voted for the governing party candidate
Independent Variables:	
Political Sophistication (SOPH)	Index composed of seven variables relating to political sophistication. See each questionnaire in Table 4. Scale = -4.0720 to 2.067.
Age (OLDER)	“How old are you?” 1 = 20-29, 2 = 30-39, 3 = 40-49, 4 = 50 and over
Gender (MALE)	“What is your gender?” 1 = female, 2 = male
Educational Attainment (EDUCAT)	“What is your education level?” 1 = elementary school graduate and below, 2 = middle school graduate, 3 = high school graduate, 4 = college graduate and beyond
Income (RICHER)	“What is your average household monthly salary?” 1 = earned 700,000 won ~ 8 = earned 4 million won ⁴⁴
Residential Size (URBAN)	“Where do you live?” 1 = rural area, 2 = suburban area, 3 = urban area.

⁴³ The following questionnaires are translated from Korean. They are sometimes reworded and recoded.

⁴⁴ In 2002, the exchange rate was around 1,200 won per dollar and now reached to around 1,000 won per dollar.

Table 8: Continued.

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Description</i>
Hometown	“Where were you born?”
(<i>CHOLLA</i> and <i>KYUNGS</i>)	<i>CHOLLA</i> : 0 = birth elsewhere, 1 = birth in the Cholla region <i>KYUNGS</i> : 0 = birth elsewhere, 1 = birth in the Kyungsang region
Ideology (<i>PROG</i>)	“How do you describe your ideological orientation?” 1 = conservative, 2 = moderate, 3 = progressive voters

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics for Variables

<i>Variable Name</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
Party Identifier (<i>PID</i>)	1500	0.595	0.491	0	1
Voter Turnout (<i>VOTE</i>)	1500	0.884	0.320	0	1
Candidate Choice (<i>ROH</i>)	1314	0.564	0.496	0	1
Political Sophistication (<i>SOPH</i>)	1500	-1.87e- 09	1	-4.072	2.067
Age (<i>OLDER</i>)	1500	2.555	1.138	1	4
Gender (<i>MALE</i>)	1500	1.493	0.500	1	2
Education (<i>EDUCAT</i>)	1492	3.082	0.959	1	4
Income (<i>RICHER</i>)	1435	4.385	2.054	1	8
Residential Size (<i>URBAN</i>)	1500	2.378	0.673	1	3
Hometown (<i>CHOLLA</i>)	1494	0.186	0.389	0	1
Hometown (<i>KYUNS</i>)	1494	0.334	0.472	0	1
Ideology (<i>PROG</i>)	1500	2.144	0.811	1	3

3.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I explain my data measurement strategies. The main research question in this dissertation is: What is the relationship between political sophistication and the use of partisan cues? The data comes from a post-election survey of the 2002 Korean presidential election conducted by the Korean Social Science Data Center. It was conducted between 20 December and 27 December 2002. The data were gathered by telephone interviews with 1,500 random voters chosen through a stratified, multi-stage probability design.

To test the relationship between political sophistication and the use of partisan cues, I created three dependent variables: party identification, voter turnout, and candidate choice. One of the important jobs in this dissertation is to create a political sophistication variable. Due to the short of items in my data, I have redefined political sophistication as the conjunction of political interest and political knowledge instead of a direct measure of political sophistication. My political sophistication variable is an index of seven variables measuring respondents' knowledge and political interest.

After running several diagnostic statistical tests such as reliability and factor analyses, I created the new variable, political sophistication. Because of the obvious

interpretational advantages of single dimensions and the small number of items analyzed, I stick to the results of factor analysis with a single component. A principal component factor analysis of the seven items yielded a single factor with an eigenvalue greater than one and a strong Cronbach alpha (0.6327). This factor was labeled political sophistication, *SOPH*. In addition, I include seven demographic and social-psychological variables: age, gender, education, income, residential area, region and ideology.

I will rely on a series of logit regression models predicting party identification, voter turnout, and candidate choice, because the dependent variable in all my models is dichotomous. All models include a range of socio-demographic variables which are mostly drawn from theories of political sophistication, party identification and political behavior in established democracies.

Chapter IV. Analyses and Results

This chapter focuses on the relationship between political sophistication and the use of partisan cues in Korea's 2002 presidential election. According to the literature presented in Chapter Two, there should be a relationship between political sophistication and the use of partisan cues. I performed a regression analysis and a series of logit regression analyses to address my questions.

4.1 Individual Characteristics and Political Sophistication

A number of scholars have demonstrated that voters vary dramatically in their attention to politics, in their general understanding of political phenomena, in their ability to synthesize new political information, and in the cohesiveness and persistence of their political predispositions (Converse 1962; 1964; Converse and Markus 1979; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Luskin 1987; Sniderman, Glaser, and Griffin 1990; Zaller 1992). Converse (1990, 372), reflecting on the differing levels of political sophistication in the electorate, notes, "the two simple truths I know about the distribution of political information in modern electorates are that the mean is low

and the variance is high.”

Delli Carpini and Keeter argue that it is necessary to look at those who know a lot about politics to see if they are systematically different from the rest of the population. They find that Americans who know more about politics are different from everyone else. Those who have a higher sense of political efficacy, discuss politics regularly, make more money, read the newspaper, are male, have a strong sense of civic duty, are strong partisans, are nonsoutherners, are white, are more educated and are older, are more likely to know about politics (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). Moreover, they discover that societal factors affect a person’s political knowledge as these factors underlie individual factors (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). They provide evidence that information effects exist, as those with certain characteristics are more likely to know about politics than those without those characteristics.

Thus, I begin by examining the relationship between individual characteristics and political sophistication. Table 10 shows the results of an ANOVA analysis that compares the political sophistication (*SOPH*) scores of different groups. The results show that there are significant differences in levels of sophistication across age, gender, education, and ideology groups. There are also differences across income

Table 10: ANOVA Results for Differences in Political Sophistication (*SOPH*)**Scores**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>F-ratio</i>	<i>P</i>
Age (<i>OLDER</i>)					
20s	-0.154	0.984	357	8.11	0.000
30s	0.026	0.879	382		
40s	0.205	0.914	333		
50s and over	-0.055	1.143	428		
Gender (<i>MALE</i>)					
Female	-0.235	1.019	761	90.73	0.000
Male	0.242	0.919	739		
Education (<i>EDUCAT</i>)					
Elementary School Graduate and Below	-0.579	1.276	150	25.29	0.000
Middle School Graduate	-0.193	1.106	180		
High School Graduate	0.052	0.905	560		
College Graduate and Beyond	0.151	0.911	602		
Income (<i>RICHER</i>)					
Earned 700,000 won	-0.100	1.152	157	3.11	0.003
Earned 900,000 won	-0.233	1.037	129		
Earned 1.2 million won	-0.055	1.006	201		
Earned 1.5 million won	-0.070	1.003	271		
Earned 2 million won	0.143	0.843	269		
Earned 2.5 million won	0.055	0.883	130		
Earned 3 million won	0.136	0.993	158		
Earned 4 million won	0.124	1.014	120		

Table 10: Continued.

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>F-ratio</i>	<i>P</i>
Residential Size (<i>URBUN</i>)					
Rural Area	-0.210	1.147	163		
Suburban Area	0.025	1.000	607	4.03	0.018
Urban Area	0.026	0.960	730		
Ideology (<i>PROG</i>)					
Conservative	-0.113	1.068	400		
Moderate	-0.274	1.055	484	49.33	0.000
Progressive	0.289	0.820	616		

groups and residential groups.

The mean is low, and the variance is high. That is, there is an important amount of variance in the level of political sophistication among citizens, and this variance is unevenly distributed, since the highest degree of political sophistication tends to be concentrated among those who are politically and socially advantaged.

From the standpoint of democratic theory, this highly unequal distribution of political sophistication may be as troubling as low levels of political sophistication. Because people with fewer resources – such as income and education – tend to be less informed about politics, they are likely to be less politically engaged and effectual.

These points will be revisited later in the chapter.

Next, the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model shown in Table 11 uses political sophistication as the dependent variable. The Table reports

Table 11: OLS Results: The Determinants of Political Sophistication

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>t-ratio</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Beta</i>
Age (<i>OLDER</i>)	0.203***	0.026	7.83	0.000	0.231
Gender (<i>MALE</i>)	0.393***	0.050	7.93	0.000	0.198
Education (<i>EDUCAT</i>)	0.256***	0.034	7.63	0.000	0.242
Income (<i>RICHER</i>)	0.017	0.013	1.28	0.200	0.035
Residential Size (<i>RURAL</i>)	0.027	0.037	0.73	0.466	0.018
Ideology (<i>PROG</i>)	0.214***	0.031	6.90	0.000	0.175
Constant	-2.495***	0.182	-13.73	0.000	
Number of Observations	1428				
F-ratio	40.55***				
R ² (Adjusted R ²)	0.146 (0.143)				

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed).

unstandardized coefficients (b), and standardized coefficients (Beta) for the independent variables to assess the relative strength of each variable in affecting the level of political sophistication.

The results show that the effects of four variables are positive and statistically significant. Respondents who are older, male, highly educated, and progressive are more politically sophisticated than their opposites. The relationships between sophistication and age (*OLDER*), gender (*MALE*), education (*EDUCAT*), and ideology (*PROG*) are all significant and positive. This model provides considerable support for Delli Carpini and Keeter's work and a number of the traditional

relationships between the levels of political sophistication and the explanatory variables. Specifically, a one standard-deviation increase for older people, males, those with more education, and progressives produces an increase in sophistication of 23%, 20%, 24% and 18%, respectively. In this model, education (*EDUCAT*) has the largest standardized coefficient, 0.24 (in absolute value), and ideology (*PROG*) has the smallest, 0.18.

Thus, a one standard deviation increase in level of education leads to a 0.24 standard deviation increase in predicted political sophistication (*SOPH*), with the other variables held constant at their means. And a one standard deviation increase in ideology leads to a 0.18 standard deviation increase in predicted *SOPH* (with other variables held constant). The estimated regression coefficients for these variables are significant at the 0.001 level (two-tailed test).

4.2 The Impact of Political Sophistication on Party Identification

Next, I examine the main research question. That is, I explore how individual characteristics and political sophistication influence political party identification. Partisans seem to engage their civic responsibilities more competently and more enthusiastically than nonpartisans, or “independents,” whether measured by an

individual's information, sophistication or participation levels (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). The success of party identification in explaining American political behavior has inspired continued research on the topic.

In Korean politics, important demographic determinants of party identification include region of origin, age, income, education, occupation, and gender (Horowitz and Kim 2002; Kil and Moon 2001; Mo and Moon 1999; Oh 1999). Although I do not expect to observe fully-developed party identification at such an early stage of democratic transition, I can distinguish between Koreans who exhibit initial tendencies toward partisanship and those who do not. In doing so, we not only begin to study how party identification emerges in new democracies, but also have an opportunity to shed light on debates about the cause of partisanship more broadly. This suggests at least a partial resolution to debates about the relationship between sophistication and party identification. Other factors matter as well.

The results reported in Table 12 summarize the determinants of party identification as measured by whether or not a respondent sympathizes with a political party. Given the intense focus in the Korean party literature on the lack of popular support for political parties, the most important result is that political sophistication (*SOPH*) explains much of the variation in party identification. Among other

Table 12: Logit Results: The Determinants of Party Identification

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>z-ratio</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Age (<i>OLDER</i>)	0.012	0.060	0.20	0.844
Gender (<i>MALE</i>)	0.024	0.116	0.21	0.835
Education (<i>EDUCAT</i>)	-0.122	0.079	-1.54	0.124
Income (<i>RICHER</i>)	0.020	0.030	0.68	0.498
Residential Size (<i>URBAN</i>)	-0.085	0.086	-0.99	0.324
From Cholla (<i>CHOLLA</i>)	0.741***	0.166	4.46	0.000
From Kyungsang (<i>KYUNGS</i>)	-0.017	0.123	-0.13	0.893
Ideology (<i>PROG</i>)	-0.177*	0.073	-2.41	0.016
Political Sophistication (<i>SOPH</i>)	0.434***	0.063	6.92	0.000
Constant	1.068	0.453	2.36	0.018
Number of Observations	1423			
Log Likelihood	-920.78			
LR χ^2 (9)	84.47***			
Pseudo R^2	0.044			
Prob. > χ^2	0.000			
ROC: Area Under Curve ⁴⁵	0.6388			

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed).

⁴⁵ The final diagnostic may be applied to evaluate the quality of the models. Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curves show that the models using survey data have moderate predictive power. The ROC curve is a graph of sensitivity compared to 1-specificity (Swets 1996). Sensitivity reflects observed positive outcome cases that a model correctly classifies, while specificity reflects negative outcome cases that the model correctly classifies. The 45-degree line in the graph shows no predictive power of a model that is 0.5 as the predictive power increases, the area under the curve also increases. The area beneath the curve is almost 64 percent, indicating the model's moderate performance. In other words, the logit regression equation of Table 11 correctly predicted responses for 63.88% of the 1,500 respondents included in the analyses.

demographic and social-psychological variables, Cholla natives (*CHOLLA*) and ideology (*PROG*) explain the most. Specifically, a one standard-deviation increase in *CHOLLA* and *PROG* produces an increase in *PID* of 210% and a decrease of 84%, respectively.

My analysis most strongly supports the view that sophistication accelerates the development of partisanship (See Figure 3). The effects are substantial. A one standard-deviation increase in *SOPH* produces an increase in *PID* of 154%. This finding should not come as a surprise, as Gomez and Wilson (2001) and Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) have demonstrated that political sophistication is a strong predictor of ideological and partisan thinking.⁴⁶

I believe that there are two reasons that sophisticated voters tend to identify with a political party. First, in a new democracy such as Korea, citizens face relatively high information costs. In making a choice, voters must navigate new political

⁴⁶ In STATA, in the case of “political sophistication” (*SOPH*), there is a direct relationship between the coefficients produced by *logit* and the odds ratios produced by *logistic*. A logit is defined as the log base e (log) of the odds,

$$\text{logit}(p) = \log(\text{odds}) = \log(p/q)$$

Logistic regression is in reality ordinary regression using the logit as the response variable,

$$\text{logit}(p) = a + bX \text{ or } \log(p/q) = a + bX$$

This means that the coefficients in logistic regression are in terms of the log odds, that is, the coefficient 0.43186 implies that a one unit change in *SOPH* results in a 0.43186 unit change in the log of the odds. The equation above can be expressed in odds by getting rid of the log. This is done by taking e to the power for both sides of the equation.

$$p/q = e^{a + bX}$$

The end result of all the mathematical manipulations is that the odds ratio can be computed by raising e to the power of the logistic coefficient (exponentiated coefficients),

$$e^b = e^{0.43186} = 1.5401$$

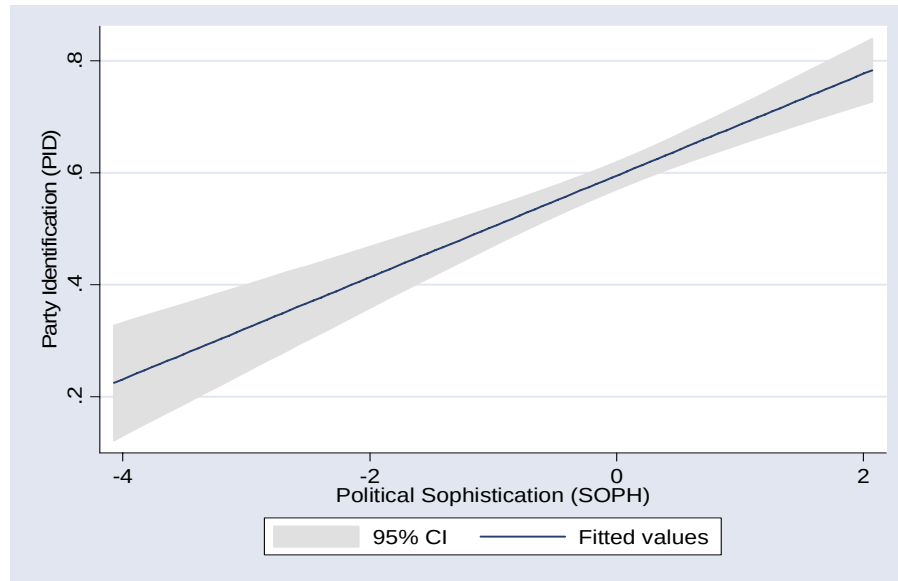


Figure 3: Effects of Political Sophistication on Level of Party Identification

procedures without the benefit of repeated experience in casting a vote that matters.

Current Korean voters need much different perspectives and voting systems than those who lived under military or authoritarian regimes. Given the large gap between information demands and political experience for most of the electorate, politically sophisticated Koreans tend to acquire partisanship.

Second, in terms of reliability, I refer to whether the voter perceives the party as providing useful information. For example, at the aggregate level, if members within a party take inconsistent positions, knowing the party's position on that issue will not be extremely useful (Ray 2003). Furthermore, if the party takes ambiguous stands in the center of the political spectrum, the value of the cue will also be less

reliable in terms of providing information to citizens (Downs 1957). If an individual is familiar with a party and perceives that party as providing reliable information, then the party identification serves as a useful heuristic device, even if an individual does not identify with the party (Lupia and McCubbins 1998). For example, it was the norm in Canada until the 1990s for the major parties to avoid taking strong ideological stances; such parties may be unable to provide strong cues for citizens to follow.

Another interesting result in Table 12 is that region of origin has an extremely important impact on party identification. Although Cholla voters (*CHOLLA*) are more likely to support a political party, Kyungsang voters (*KYUNGS*) are less likely to do so. This implies that Cholla voters' support of their regional party is stronger than Kyungsang voters' support. The southeastern Kyungsang region has traditionally been more supportive of the Grand National Party (GNP) and its predecessors. The southwestern Cholla region has strongly supported Kim Dae-jung and his party vehicles, including MDP. The Kyungsang-Cholla rivalry is a staple of Korean politics. Even after people migrate to other regions (particularly the Seoul region), early socialization along with family and personal ties are likely to preserve such regional identities. Membership in ethnic, linguistic, regional and other social groups that have

clear linkages to specific parties also encourages party identification (Campbell et al. 1960).

Meanwhile, the direct effects of individual levels of age, education, income are surprisingly weak predictors of the probability a Korean will self-identify as a partisan. Especially, age is not very important in the development of party identification in Korea. Dalton (2006) finds a positive relationship between age and partisanship in Britain and France, and Jennings (1979) demonstrates that early life experiences shape party attachments in Britain and Germany. In established democracies, a life-cycle perspective on age figures prominently in account for how partisanship develops and strengthens (Converse 1969; Jennings and Niemi 1981). Although a life-cycle approach seems ill-suited to the study of partisanship in Korea, a perspective that views age in terms of generational differences is appropriate. This means that age in itself is not important, but it can be a proxy for the length of time people have experience with a particular party or the length of time people have been able to confirm their identification with a particular party. This runs contrary to Converse's argument (1969; 1976). As shown in Table 13, the results of the analysis that older voters were significantly more likely than younger voters to have a partisanship ($\chi^2 = 7.1858$, $p < 0.1$).

Table 13: Party Identification by Age

		Party Identification		Total
		Nonpartisan	Partisan	
Age Groups	20s	164 (45.94)	193 (54.06)	357 (100)
	30s	158 (41.36)	224 (58.64)	382 (100)
	40s	125 (37.54)	208 (62.46)	333 (100)
	50s and Over	161 (37.62)	267 (62.38)	428 (100)

Note: Numbers in parentheses represent row percent. $\chi^2 = 7.1858$; $p < 0.1$.

4.3 Party Mobilization and Cognitive Mobilization

The relationship between party identification and political sophistication implies that these two dimensions of how voters make decisions can be used dependently. This means that political sophistication contributes to party identification; political sophistication had a positively significant relationship with party identification. To explore these two different dimensions I will use a concept introduced by Dalton (1984).

Dalton points to two different mobilization forces in the politics of advanced industrial nations: partisan mobilization and cognitive mobilization. These are not mutually exclusive -- there are voters who draw on both or neither -- but Dalton argues that they can be distinct. Those with high cognitive mobilization “posses both

the skills and mobilization to grapple with politics on their own” and, because they are more attentive, they rely on information rather than predispositions to make political decisions (Dalton 1984, 267).

According to Dalton, the dramatic spread of education in advanced industrial democracies has produced a qualitative change in the political sophistication of citizens. At the same time, these societies have experienced an information explosion through the mass media. Both developments have led to a substantial decrease in information costs. Because of this cognitive mobilization, more voters now are able to deal with the complexities of politics and make their own political decisions. Thus, the functional need for partisan cues to guide voting behavior is declining for a growing number of citizens (Dalton 1984). At its core, Dalton’s theory discusses how the dynamics of dealignment have led to a new landscape for voters in advanced industrial nations. He says:

Although many voters continue to rely on the decisional cues emanating from partisan ties, the need for such cues declines as the political skills of the voters increase and information costs decrease ... Because of this cognitive mobilization, more voters now are able to deal with the complexities of politics and make their own political decisions. Thus, the functional need for partisan cues to guide voting behavior, evaluate political issues, and mobilize political involvement is declining for a growing sector of society (Dalton 1984, 265).

Dalton's study was designed to identify electoral changes in advanced industrial societies and to explain decline in partisanship as a source of voter mobilization that is replaced by cognitive mobilization. However, because he makes a distinction between a cognitive dimension and a partisanship dimension, Dalton's typology is a very useful concept for this analysis. Dalton distinguished between different types of voters, drawing on the following scheme in Table 14.

According to Dalton there are four groups of voters: (1) *apartisans*, who are only cognitively mobilized (sophisticated independents); (2) *cognitive partisans*, who have both strong party attachment and high levels of cognitive mobilization (sophisticated partisans); (3) *ritual partisans*, who are strongly attached to a party but are not cognitively mobilized (unsophisticated partisans); and (4) *apoliticals*, who have neither a strong party identification nor a high level of cognitive mobilization (unsophisticated independents).

Table 14: Dalton's Political Mobilization Typology

	Strength of Partisan		
	Weak		Strong
	High	Apartisan	Cognitive Partisan
Cognitive Mobilization	Low	Apolitical	Ritual Partisan

Source: Russell Dalton (1984, 270).

Dalton's typology explains how three groups of voters make decisions. The ritual partisans use the partisanship cue to make a vote choice. The cognitive partisans use both partisan cues and information. The apartisans have no party attachment but do not need them because they are cognitively mobilized. However, this leaves a fourth group of voters. How they make political decisions is unclear. This group is not small. This group is the largest group of all in many of the countries Dalton has studied. For example in Australia this group consists of 43.2% of voters, In the US, the figure is 11.8% (Dalton 1984, 272).⁴⁷

I will repeat Dalton's initial analysis, again using the data from the Korean election study. I use political sophistication as an indicator of cognitive mobilization, while Dalton uses political interest, political knowledge, and education. Political sophistication seems to be a better indicator of cognitive mobilization than education, political interest, and political knowledge. Although a high level of political interest does influence cognitive mobilization, we are not yet sure whether a higher level of voter education means that cognitive mobilization is high.⁴⁸ Therefore, using this

⁴⁷ Inglehart (1990) finds sharp generational differences in the patterns of partisan and cognitive mobilization for Europeans, which suggest the distribution of mobilization types will continue to shift as a consequence of generational change.

⁴⁸ Education can also be used to measure sophistication because it covaries with more direct indicators of the construct (Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a). While this is certainly true at the empirical level, it makes more sense to develop indicators that directly tap sophistication. One can easily imagine two college graduates, one who takes little or no interest in politics and is marginally familiar with public officials and policy disputes, and another who follows political news in the *Wall Street Journal* and on the Sunday morning talk shows and knows a great deal about public affairs. An education proxy

information will produce more reliable comparisons.

To construct the typology, I group people using attachment to any party in one group, and people indicating nonpartisanship in another group, exactly as Dalton (1984) did. For cognitive mobilization, I divide people at the 50th percentile on the political sophistication index (*SOPH*).⁴⁹ Table 15 shows the four groups of voters.

Table 15: Voter Types in Korea

		Strength of Partisanship		Total
		Nonpartisan	Partisan	
Cognitive mobilization	High	Apartisan (Sophisticated Independent)	Cognitive Partisan (Sophisticated Partisan)	750
		254 (34/42/16.9%)	496 (66/56/33.1%)	
	Low	Apolitical (Unsophisticated Independent)	Ritual Partisan (Unsophisticated Partisan)	750
		354 (47/58/23.6%)	396 (53/44/26.4%)	
Total		608	892	1500

Notes: Numbers in parentheses represent row/column/total percents. The high level of political sophistication is significantly more prone to having a party identification than the low level of political sophistication ($\chi^2 (1) = 27.6581$; $p < 0.001$)

would erroneously treat these two the same. Not surprisingly, some research shows that when more direct indicators of sophistication are included in multivariate models, the effects of education on political decision making are sharply attenuated (Bobo and Licari 1989). One study has even claimed that education and political expertise are unrelated to one another (Luskin 1990).

⁴⁹ Political sophistication is a continuous variable. Realistically, it is not simply a matter of being sophisticated or not; there are degrees of sophistication. However, one of the main purposes of the analysis is to compare groups of people (sophisticated versus unsophisticated voter), and this comparison is most cleanly done when there is a clear definition of who falls into which group. Thus, the dichotomized version of political sophistication is generally used here. Determining the cut-off for who is coded as sophisticated and who is not is somewhat arbitrary. The dichotomized measure is split so that 0-50 percentage scores are coded as zero, and 50-100 percent are coded as one.

Table 15 shows that politically sophisticated voters are more likely to have a party identification than unsophisticated ones. Cognitive partisans – those with party identifications and high cognitive mobilization – are the modal type (33%). These are the voters who depend on both partisan heuristics and information to manage the complex world of politics. Among independents, a much larger proportion of the public is apoliticals (24%) who lack party cues or cognitive skills to deal with politics, and the proportion of apartisans is relatively small (17%).

The distribution of mobilization types in the Korean electorate is almost the same as that period during 1992-1998 as described by Dalton (1984; 2004) in his study of the American electorate, as seen in Table 16. In the case of the American electorate, growing sophistication has expanded the pool of Cognitive Partisans and Apartisans. And the proportion of voters who approach each election based on ritual dependence on party cues has decreased most dramatically. The mobilization patterns of the electorate have been transformed. Based on this analysis, the contemporary Korean electorate is less partisan, but also more likely to possess the cognitive skills and resources independently to manage the complexities of politics. The relatively large size of the “independent” population in Korea means that there is weaker party allegiance in Korea than in other countries, especially most Western countries. The

Table 16: The Distribution of Mobilization Types in America over Time, 1964-2000

Mobilization Type	1964-1966	1968-1978	1980-1990	1992-1998	2000	Change
Ritual Partisan	47.1	37.4	35.6	29.9	26.8	-20%
Cognitive Partisan	27.1	26.2	29.1	34.1	32.8	+6%
Apartisan	10.0	16.3	14.2	16.5	20.1	+10%
Apolitical	16.0	20.1	21.1	19.6	19.8	+4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Source: Dalton (2004, 6).

Korean electorate is more unpredictable and influenced by short-term effects than many Western societies.

4.4 The Effects of Political Sophistication and Partisanship on Voter Turnout

Korean politics, unexceptionally, reflects the worldwide trend of declining voter turnout, which is more frequently observed in advanced industrial societies. As illustrated in Table 2, the number of voters who participate in presidential and parliamentary elections has gradually decreased over the years. Official voter turnout rates in presidential elections have gradually decreased compared to those in past elections. For instance, the first direct presidential election in 1987 marked a record high turnout of 89.2 percent. Since then, voter turnout rates in the presidential election

dropped to 81.9% (1992), 80.7% (1997), and then to 70.8% (2002).

Turnout was high when social constraints and party loyalties were at high levels but have since become more variable and dependent on the specific circumstances of an election (Dalton 1984; Dalton, Beck, and Flanagan 1984; Franklin, Mackie, and Valen 1992). In this sense, political sophistication has further implications for the choice of whether citizens cast a vote or abstain. Politically informed respondents do not simply follow longstanding loyalties but reconsider costs and benefits of casting a ballot in each election again. Thus, understanding political sophistication is vital if we are to heighten participation and improve representation. The aim of the next model is to explore how political sophistication affects voter turnout at the individual level. The dependent variable (*VOTE*) is self-reported voter turnout (1 = respondent reported having voted, 0 = respondent reported having not voted) and calls for logit regression analysis.

To begin with, the results in Table 17 demonstrate the solid influence of the classical political variables on voter turnout. Almost 75% of the observations are accurately predicted, the pseudo- R^2 is 0.1274, and some regressors have statistically significant impact. The results indicate that three variables explain voter turnout at the individual level. First, highly sophisticated respondents are more likely to vote.

Table 17: Logit Results: The Determinants of Voter Turnout

<i>Independent Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>z-ratio</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Age (<i>OLDER</i>)	0.266**	0.097	2.73	0.006
Gender (<i>MALE</i>)	-0.023	0.181	-0.13	0.897
Education (<i>EDUCAT</i>)	-0.136	0.130	-1.05	0.294
Income (<i>RICHER</i>)	0.007	0.047	0.15	0.883
Residential Size (<i>URBAN</i>)	-0.180	0.136	-1.32	0.186
From Cholla (<i>CHOLLA</i>)	0.425	0.266	1.60	0.109
From Kyungsang (<i>KYUNGS</i>)	0.363	0.194	1.86	0.062
Ideology (<i>PROG</i>)	-0.011	0.117	-0.09	0.926
Party Identification (<i>PID</i>)	0.559**	0.176	3.17	0.002
Political Sophistication (<i>SOPH</i>)	0.760***	0.089	8.50	0.000
Constant	1.987	0.735	2.70	0.007
Number of Observations	1423			
Log Likelihood	-457.75			
LR Chi ² (10)	133.70***			
Pseudo R ²	0.1274			
Prob. > R ²	0.000			
ROC: Area Under Curve	0.7498			

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed).

Second, party supporters are more likely to vote than independent voters.

Finally, older people are more likely to vote. Political sophistication (*SOPH*)

significantly influenced the odds of voter turnout at the 0.001 level, and age (*OLDER*)

and party identification (*PID*) are statistically significant at the 0.01 level. These three

variables are positively connected to voter turnout.

The results show that political sophistication (*SOPH*) is the most important

independent variable, followed by party identification (*PID*), and age (*OLDER*). The

odds that a sophisticated voter voted are about 2.14 times greater than the odds that an

unsophisticated voter did. The odds that a party identifier voted are about 1.75 times

greater than the odds that an independent did. The odds that the older vote (*OLDER*)

are about 1.30 times greater than the odds that the young do.

The estimates of this model for the 2002 presidential election suggest that

none of the sociological factors except age reached statistical significance. The

younger generation's lower turnout is associated with generational differences in

Korea.⁵⁰ The older generation feels more responsibility for the society than the

⁵⁰ Jennings and Markus (1984) use a generational approach to examine party loyalty. "The circle is thus closed: the younger voters have stabilized at an overall weaker level of partisanship than that of their elders, leading to mass volatile electoral behavior, which, in turn, fails to provide the consistent reinforcement needed to intensify preexisting partisan leanings" (Jennings and Markus 1984, 1014; Sears and Valentino 1997, 47). In essence, the younger generation is becoming more disengaged from the political process than the older one. However, Miller and Shanks (1996) argue that those who become comfortable voting at a young age continue to do so throughout life, making voting a habitual

younger generation does, thus, the older generation votes more. Through the World Values Survey conducted in 1990-91, Abramson and Inglehart (1995) found that the South Korean society is on the path to post-materialism in a similar way to that experienced by the Western countries. Korea has experienced very rapid economic growth since the mid-1960s, with the result that “the youngest South Koreans show a clear preponderance of postmaterialist values, with the trend line rising so steeply that this youngest cohort actually converges with its American counterpart” (Abramson and Inglehart 1995, 133). The old cohorts of Koreans included in the survey, however, still showed predominantly materialist values leading to an overall low level of post-materialism in Korea.

These results raise new questions about the causal relationships between education and voter turnout. Education produces a puzzle. As Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980, 102) point out, “personal qualities that raise the probability of voting are the skills that make learning about politics easier and more gratifying and reduce the difficulties of voting.” Nonetheless, the increased level of educational attainment is not accompanied by an increase in voter turnout (Brody 1978, 296). Since education alone cannot explain electoral turnout, the “puzzle” may be solved by

practice; on the other hand, they write, those who do not vote as young people continue to avoid going to the polls.

relating the decline in electoral participation not to education but to other socioeconomic factors. As far as education is concerned, higher educational attainment is expected to produce a higher rate of voter turnout, other things being equal.

In the 2002 presidential election, the older generation, sophisticated voters, and party identifiers were more likely to vote than their young, unsophisticated, and independent counterparts. Nevertheless, this must have had little to do with the traditional voter mobilization. During the Korean authoritarian era, mobilized voters were more likely to be older people, women, less educated people, and rural residents (Kim 1998). Rapid economic development in the 1960s and 1970s had many younger and educated male workers move from their homes to urban industrial areas. As a result, the ruling party won in rural areas where older people, females, and less educated people were more likely to live, while opposition parties won in urban areas where younger people, males, and the more educated people lived. Thus, traditional voter mobilization was challenged by the people and the new democratic governments as well.

4.5 The Effects of Political Sophistication and Partisanship on Electoral Choice

Political sophistication has substantial effects on political behavior.

Information about candidates' party affiliations or party ties can shape opinion-holding on candidates (Mondak 1993a), the direction of citizens' preferences (Jacoby 1988; Mondak 1993b; Squire and Smith 1988), and perceptions of candidates' issue positions (Conover and Feldman 1989; Feldman and Conover 1983). Politically sophisticated individuals are better able to link their individual and group interests with their issue positions (Althaus 1998; Gidengil 2004) and vote choice (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Johnston 1996).

In Table 18, age (*OLDER*), residential Area (*URBAN*), voters' hometown (*CHOLLA* and *KYUNGS*), ideology (*PROG*), and party identification (*PID*) have statistically significant effects on voters' support for candidates. Table 18 also indicates that none of the demographic variables except *OLDER* and *URBAN* have a significant effect on support for the MDP candidate.

Next, consider the substantive interpretation of effects of the variables that are statistically significant. First, the odds that party identifiers oppose Roh Moo-hyun (*ROH*) are about 0.53 times greater than odds that others do. The party identifier was less likely to vote for the incumbent party's Roh Moo-hyun. In short, party

Table 18: Logit Results: The Determinants of Voter Choice

<i>Independent Variables</i>	Support For Roh Moo-hyun (Millennium Democratic Party)			
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>z-ratio</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Age (<i>OLDER</i>)	-0.274***	0.073	-3.76	0.000
Gender (<i>MALE</i>)	0.020	0.139	0.15	0.883
Education (<i>EDUCAT</i>)	-0.058	0.093	-0.62	0.536
Income (<i>RICHER</i>)	-0.042	0.037	-1.15	0.252
Residential Size (<i>URBAN</i>)	-0.265*	0.106	-2.51	0.012
From Cholla (<i>CHOLLA</i>)	2.509***	0.284	8.84	0.000
From Kyungsang (<i>KYUNGS</i>)	-0.828***	0.141	-5.87	0.000
Ideology (<i>PROG</i>)	0.717***	0.087	8.25	0.000
Party Identification (<i>PID</i>)	-0.632***	0.140	-4.53	0.000
Political Sophistication (<i>SOPH</i>)	0.110	0.080	1.38	0.166
Constant	0.743	0.544	1.37	0.172
Number of Observations	1240			
Log Likelihood	-664.69			
LR Chi ² (10)	373.33***			
Pseudo R ²	0.219			
Prob. > chi ²	0.000			
ROC: Area Under Curve	0.8041			

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed).

identification played a significant role in voter choice.

Second, the effects of voters' hometown (*CHOLLA* and *KYUNGS*) are surprising. Cholla natives (*CHOLLA*) are more likely to support the MDP candidate (*ROH*) than non-natives. The odds that Cholla natives support Roh are about 12 times greater than the odds that natives in other regions do so. In contrast, the odds that Kyungsang natives (*KYUNGS*) oppose Roh are about 0.44 times greater than the odds that natives in other regions do. These figures suggest not only that regionalism was one of the strongest factors in the 2002 election, but also that Cholla natives were more likely to be regional voters.

Third, the odds that progressive voters voted for Roh are about 2 times greater than for moderate voters and about 4 times greater than for conservative voters.⁵¹ The average ideological position of Roh' supporters was skewed in a progressive direction. Recently, Koreans have witnessed the significant growth of liberalism after the economic crisis in 1997 and under the Kim Dae-jung government. This survey research reveals that Korean society is currently weakly progressive on the

⁵¹ Using another formula, a one-unit increase in *PROG* increases the log odds that a voter votes for Roh by 0.717. Equivalently, a one-unit increase in *PROG* (from a conservative to a moderate) multiplies the odds that a voter votes for *ROH* by $e^{0.717}$ (or 2). A two-unit increase in *PROG* (from a conservative to a progressive) multiplies the odds that voters vote for Roh by $(e^{0.717})^2$ (or 4).

progressive-conservative continuum.⁵² Respondents in the sample are distributed among the ideological categories of liberalism (41.1%), conservatism (26.7%), and centrist (32.3%). Liberal respondents are much more prevalent than conservatives.

Fourth, due to regional cleavages, the influence of other sociological factors is weak on electoral choice in Korea (Lee 1993b; Shin 1999a). However, Table 19 indicates that the younger generation had moved into the mainstream and assumed a leading role in Korean politics through this election, although regional politics still played an important role. Table 19 shows the split between the old and the young in the presidential election of 2002. As we can see, voters in their 20s and 30s overwhelmingly supported Roh Moo-hyun. On the other hand, voters in their 50s and over voted the same for two candidates. Those in their 40s constitute some sort of boundary between the two contending generations.

⁵² In a survey conducted after the election (January 4-13, 2003), it was ascertained that the self-reported ideological inclination of the Korean people had shifted from a moderate position to more a clearly expressed conservative or progressive positions. A distinct trend is a substantial increase in the progressive category, accompanied by a decline of the moderate group, and a minor rise of conservatives (*Joong-Ang Ilbo* [Korean]. February 10, 2003). In terms of ideological inclination scores (range: most progressive 0, middle 5, and most conservative 10), the average has fallen from 5.2 in January 2002 to 4.97 in January 2003, slightly tilting toward the progressive end. This shift has been observed for all age groups except for those 50 and older, and the largest shift has been found among those in their 40s, from 5.4 to 4.88. Applying the same score, Roh scored 4.2 and Lee 6.4 in August 2002, but this changed to 3.88 for Roh and 6.27 for Lee in January 2003, indicating that Roh's score moved further towards the progressive pole. In August 2002, the distance in ideology scores for the two candidates was identical -- 1.1 points. In January 2003, the distance had widened for Lee to 1.30 from 1.1, but it remained about the same for Roh (1.14). Lee must have been perceived as having become more conservative over time.

Table 19: Voter Choice by Age in the 2002 Presidential Election

Age Groups	Roh Moo-hyun	Lee Hoi-chang	Others	Number
20s	68.04	24.74	7.22	291
30s	61.26	32.73	6.01	333
40s	49.32	45.58	5.10	294
50s and over	48.99	48.99	2.02	396

Note: $\chi^2 = 57.7760$; $p < 0.001$.

This analysis identified the generational cleavage in Korean voting behavior.

This was the first national-level election in the history of Korea in which generational differences played a critical role in the election outcome -- the elderly primarily supported Lee Hoi-chang, while the young preferred Roh Moo-hyun. Even though in previous elections older voters tended to prefer conservative candidates and younger voters liked progressive candidates, the difference in age preferences was not so striking (Kang 2003, 54-57).

According to Inglehart (1977; 1997), there has been a revolutionary change since World War II in which societies are becoming increasingly “post materialistic” – endorsing values relating to self-expression, the quality of life, and the need for belongs – and less “materialistic” – endorsing values relating to economic and security concerns. Inglehart argues that this value shift can be best explained by a “cohort effect” or an intergenerational pattern of change. According to Inglehart, younger cohorts are more likely to endorse postmaterialist values because they have

been growing up in a more affluent environment in which lower order needs or materialist concerns are taken care of and taken for granted.⁵³

In this regard, Table 20 shows a clear difference in ideological stances between age groups, indicating that young voters tend to be progressive while older voters, especially in their 50s and older, are conservative. The younger a voter is the more progressive stance he/she takes. It is noteworthy that voters in their 30s, not in their 20s, were most progressive in 2002. The results in Table 20 indicate that ideological connotations in Korea may be different from those in other democracies.

Table 20: Ideological Self-placement by Age

		Ideology			Total
		Conservative	Moderate	Progressive	
Age Groups	20s	61 (17.1)	120 (33.6)	176 (49.3)	357 (100)
	30s	62 (16.2)	119 (31.2)	201 (52.6)	382 (100)
	40s	111 (33.3)	97 (29.1)	125 (37.5)	333 (100)
	50s and over	166 (38.8)	148 (34.6)	114 (26.6)	428 (100)

Note: Number in parentheses represent row percent. $\chi^2 = 100.1007$; $p < 0.001$.

⁵³ Inglehart believes that the growth of post-materialist values and ideology will decrease in importance because of their link within the old cleavage structure, and their lack of a link with value changes. Thus, liberalism and post-materialism should not necessarily go hand in hand. Postmaterialists do not automatically adopt whatever happens to be the conventional left position. On many issues, they do gravitate toward the left. But the rise of postmaterialism has brought a new perspective into play, one that sometimes runs against established political orthodoxy; it is reshaping the meaning of left and right (Kang 2003, 292-300). However, this does not seem to be the case in Korea. Ideology has been a strong cleavage throughout the 1990s and into the new millennium. The ideological preferences of Korean post-materialists have not fluctuated throughout the last three presidential elections.

This appears to be the effect of the democratization experience.⁵⁴ Going one step further, it was claimed that the power of generation has demonstrated the possibility of overcoming regionalism in Korean politics. It is suggested that this was possible because in this election, the attitude of the younger generation shifted from apathy and indifference to participation.

Finally, the odds that urban residents do not vote for Roh are about 0.8 times greater than for rural residents. Among the demographic variables, residential size (*URBAN*) is especially relevant to the Korean case. While studies before the 1990s mostly focused on the difference between rural and urban voters, research conducted as early as 1972 found strong regional patterns that cut across the urban/rural divide (Kim and Koh 1972). One peculiar conclusion drawn from these studies is that after controlling for region, standard demographic and socio-economic factors do not explain one's voting choice very well.

However, Korea has undergone rapid economic growth over the last 50 years.

Unlike rural areas, urban areas are mixed with many people from all over the country,

⁵⁴ Voters in their 30s have often been dubbed as the "386 generation." The number 3 stands for the fact that they are now in their 30s. The number 8 indicates they went to colleges and universities in the 1980s. The number 6 represents that they were born in the 1960s. In comparison with the older generation who experienced the Korean War and subsequent absolute poverty, the 386 generation was the first beneficiary of economic development. They were actively involved in the pro-democracy movement against a military-based authoritarian regime in the 1980s. A shared experience of such political protest against the anti-authoritarian regime made them a "cohort" with similar political values. They are generally reform-minded and have an affinity with progressive ideology. Various poll results also show that the 386 generation is ideologically more progressive than other age groups (Kang 2003, 292-300).

resulting in weaker regional identities than in rural areas. There is also more mobility among people who live in urban areas, and they tend to be younger and more highly educated than their rural counterparts. Before the emergence of regionalist party politics with the 1987 presidential election, urban areas have tended to vote for opposition parties and rural areas for the incumbent party. This urban-rural distinction in terms of electoral support for certain parties has long been an established voting pattern in Korea (Cho 1998; Kim and Choe 1988; Kim and Kihl 1988). While urban residents tend to support opposition parties, they are not as likely to vote as rural residents.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter analyzed survey data on political sophistication in Korea to identify the causal relationships between political sophistication and the use of partisan cues. A set of logistic regressions demonstrated several findings. First, consistent with the arguments of the impact of political sophistication, it was proved that political sophistication contributes to party identification in Korea; political sophistication had a positively significant relationship with party identification. The most surprising finding is that the relationship between party identification and

political sophistication is positive. For example, a one standard deviation increase in political sophistication yields a 1.54 times increase in the probability that one would have a distinct party identification.

Secondly, as Dalton's (1984) cognitive mobilization typology illustrates, voters with a higher level of political sophistication indeed tend to use partisan cues more than unsophisticated voters do in Korea. The existence of sophisticated voters resulted in increasing the commitment to voting and more progressive Korean politics. It is obvious that citizens' knowledge and interest in politics play an important role in the relationship between levels of political sophistication and the use of partisan cues.

Third, with regard to voter turnout, the traditional mobilization factors were not as significant as in previous authoritarian elections. Age and political sophistication were the factors that had significant impacts on voter turnout. Regionalism was not significant in the voter turnout models.

Finally, with regard to the effects of political sophistication and partisan identification, the resulting analysis demonstrated that only the party identification variable was positively related to candidate choices. At the same time, regional cleavages remained a significant factor for voter decisions in Korea. The shift of determinants of candidate choice from regionalism to other factors may be an

indication of the advancement of Korean democracy. Nonetheless, long-lasting regional conflicts between Cholla province and Kyungsang province still have a significant impact on vote decisions.

Chapter V. Conclusion

Political scholars have long debated “political sophistication” and whether or not average citizens can effectively play their part in a democratic system; that is, whether inattentive, poorly informed citizens are capable of sound political judgment and choice. In recent years this discussion has been dominated by the notion of cognitive heuristics, and by the optimistic argument that average citizens can use simple cues to compensate for their limited knowledge base (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Carmines and Kuklinski 1990; Downs 1957; Graber 2001; Lupia 1994; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Mondak 1993a; b; Neuman, Just, and Crigler 1992; Popkin 1991; 1994; Rahn 1993; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991a; Zaller 1992). The idea that political sophisticates do not use partisan cues in their decision making processes is a long-standing one.

In this dissertation, I analyzed how Korean citizens make their vote choices. I focused on the relationship between the level of political sophistication and the use of partisan cues in the 2002 Korean presidential election. Political sophistication is not homogeneously distributed across the population. The mean is low, and the variance

is high. This highly unequal distribution of political sophistication may be as troubling as low levels of political sophistication. And the most important finding here is that more sophisticated voters behave differently from less sophisticated ones. The more Koreans know about and follow politics, the more likely they are to sympathize with a political party. There is no doubt that political sophistication influences voting behavior.

This finding supports Delli Carpini and Keeter's argument (1996) that political sophistication matters and that the more knowledge citizens bring to bear on politics, the better they are in linking their political behavior with their political attitudes. However, while the direct effects of individual levels of age, education, and income are surprisingly weak predictors of the probability a Korean will self-identify as a partisan, this study finds considerable support for the claim that regional political cultures shape partisan attachments.

Moreover, I found a positive relationship between the level of political sophistication and the use of partisan cues. The use of party labels as a heuristic device does indeed work only for sophisticated voters. This does not imply that political sophisticates in Korea engage in party-centric voting by using partisan cues. Whether a Korean voter is sophisticated or unsophisticated, it is unreasonable to

expect that he/she would be able to collect detailed information about each and every candidate and issue (Gant and Davis 1984). While the implications of this finding are ambiguous at this point, it appears that the use of party cues by voters may not preclude them from acting like sophisticated voters.

Nonetheless, the main finding of the dissertation is that political sophistication conceptually seems to possess an explanatory power of its own. Political sophistication contributes to party identification in Korea. That is, political sophistication has a positively significant relationship with party identification. Moreover, the existence of sophisticated voters has resulted in an increasing commitment to voting, and more progressive Korean politics. However, the concept of political sophistication and its role in relation to other variables should be studied more closely.

There is one important implication of my findings for improving the quality of Korean democracy. The literature argues that the deepening of democracy should reduce inequalities, especially in the political sphere. Minimal informational requirements for making electoral choices and participating in elections are not readily available to all voters. This brings us back to the issue of inequality. The political sophistication and informational shortcuts that exist in the mass public in

Korea are not evenly distributed. (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Luskin 2002).

Conventional democratic studies (Barber 1984; Conway 2000; Pateman 1970; Powell 1982; Verba and Nie 1972) have argued that citizens in democratic countries are interested and participate in politics. Political sophistication and participation are valued as contributors to strong democracy.⁵⁵ Thus, Robert Dahl argued that a democracy, “should guarantee all of the rights to participate in the decision of the association” which implies political participation though suffrage or other means of influence (Dahl 1998, 36). From the standpoint of democratic theory this highly unequal distribution of political knowledge may be as troubling as low levels of political knowledge. Because people with fewer resources -- such as income and education -- tend to be less informed about politics, they are likely to be less politically engaged and effectual. As a result, inequalities in political sophistication tend to reproduce or reinforce broader inequalities in political life (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996, ch. 6; Eveland Jr and Scheufele 2000; Schattschneider 1960; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995).

Unfortunately, reducing the “sophistication gap” may be as difficult as increasing average levels of political sophistication. Most people are not especially

⁵⁵ It must, however, be pointed out that a high level of participation is not necessarily good for democracy (Tingsten and Hammarling 1963, 225-6). Neither does a high participation level guarantee influence on policy; this is the case especially in totalitarian states where the leader wants his followers to attend meetings and similar activities in order to indoctrinate them (Lipset 1960, 183).

interested in politics, and acquiring information carries an opportunity cost. Moreover, neither political interest, time, nor the capacity to absorb new information is distributed equally in the population. As a result, those who have less inclination or ability to acquire more knowledge about politics are unlikely on their own to suddenly start obtaining more of it, and some citizens will remain consistently more informed than others.

However, the acquisition of political information and knowledge is dependent on environmental, institutional, and historical characteristics as well as on individual traits. For instance, Lupica and McCubbins (1998) argue that for political parties to serve as a source of information for voters, parties must be linked with specific policy preferences or ideological positions and must have consolidated “brand” names (reputations) that are discernable by the electorate. In other words, the impact of partisanship is conditional upon the historical factors that condition party strength. In cross-national research, Gordon and Segura (1997) and Berggren (2001) show that the level of political sophistication within a country can depend on the nation’s party and electoral systems. They go on to explicitly claim that the role of informational shortcuts is conditioned by institutions (Lupia and McCubbins 1998; 2000b; Shugart, Valdini, and Suominen 2005).

Several authors have gone further and have actually mapped systematic biases in the distribution of information based on historical inequalities (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Mondak and Anderson 2004). In other words, inequalities in the distribution of economic resources transfer to and are reinforced by inequalities in the distribution of political information and voice. It must be clear that the systematic biases are attributable not to personal characteristics of members of the underprivileged group, but to constraints that have been structurally imposed upon these groups over time. Hence, inequalities in political information are likely to mirror inequalities that affect other resources.

5.1 Caveats and Suggestions

This dissertation is by no means the end of the story. I recognize that there are limitations to my study. Much more research needs to be done on the following the problems: First, I am aware that the sophistication measures used here have considerable limitations. Conceptualizing sophistication with proxy variables such as political interest and the number of correct answers to a particular set of name recognition surveys is far from ideal. Various levels of political sophistication need to be taken into account adequately to estimate the impact of sophistication on the vote.

This paper falls very short of defining a new measure of the sophisticated voter. Instead, it merely shows the possibility that the exclusion of the party cue option may not be necessary in defining the sophisticated voter. Thus, it is my belief that a properly defined model of political sophistication, including a reliable scale of sophistication, would provide a better test for the cognitive theory. Further study may be able to clarify the concept of the sophisticated partisan in a more testable way. The preliminary distinction made between the sophisticated voter and the unsophisticated voter is a crude one, and it leaves a large group of respondents in the middle. Thus, we continuously pursue the valuable and effective way to figure out political sophistication.

Second, an important caveat of this dissertation is that just as individuals are expected to vary in levels of sophistication, there also could be systematic differences across parties. The Korean parties and party systems that I investigated in this dissertation are very different from those of Western countries. The level of competition, the age of the parties, their ideologies, and their interaction with the public and with each other all influence to what degree these elements contribute to the usefulness of party cues. The usefulness of party labels and the effect of party reputation factors do vary by party and country. As I have indicated, this finding is the

most pervasive and significant, as it points toward a strong future research agenda. It is clear that future research needs to probe deeper into cross-national (and cross-party) differences.

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