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Fandom In Politics: Scale Development And Validation

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FANDOM IN POLITICS: SCALE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION

by

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ABSTRACT

Despite the importance of fandom in politics to understanding individuals' political behaviors, reliable scales measuring political fandom are lacking. To fill this gap, the present study constructs and validates a new scale for political fandom. First, by reforming existed questions and making new questions, the author derived 42 questions belonging to seven dimensions as an initial item pool based on conceptualization. Second, to refine and develop the scale, the researcher conducted exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. According to the result of the studies, the final factor model of political fandom retained 25 questions and seven dimensions. In addition, the model of political fandom had acceptable inter-item reliability and validity. The study contributes to an understanding of political behaviors and perceptions that are not fully explained by concepts of political ideology and partisanship.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Recent 2016 presidential elections provided an interesting phenomenon, fandom of politicians that illustrated people's perceptions of politicians. In general, fandom represents a group of numerous people (organized or not) who participate in various activities to consume the content related to specific figures or organizations, such as celebrities or sports teams (Wilson, 2011). Previous research has concluded that parts of the public communicate about elections and engage in politics in the same way as sports and entertainment fans because some people seek fun through political support (Erikson, 2008). These fan-type people are interested in the private lives of politicians beyond what is considered conventional political support. For instance, certain politicians' fans buy goods related to those politicians, make products such as fan fiction—a sort of fiction novel about fan objects (Hill, 2016, July 2)—and even create fan tribute songs (Miller & De Haes, 2015, June 10). Some Barack Obama admirers are still captivated by him— even now that his presidency is over (Coleman, 2017, June 7).

Not only in the United States, the tendency of fandomization of political supporters is happening in many democratic countries including South Korea and Canada (Bae, 2017, May 21; Lindzon, 2017, July 1). In South Korea, for example, enthusiastic supporters of the president Jae-in Moon have shown that interesting phenomena. They have made online fan community for the president or collected the souvenirs related to the president to express their affection for him (Morelli, 2018, March 23). Both in the US

and in South Korea, political fans help the government promote new policies or manage public relations. However, many political experts point out lack of understanding of political fans' activities is the problem because blind support of ardent suppoters could be harm to democracy (Koo, 2017, June 21; Hafner, J. (2018, May 2).

To reflect these interest of society, many studies have focused on fandom phenomena through qualitative research methods in the cultural context (Dean, 2017). Based on these studies, the activities of fans, as members of a highly engaged public in politics, should be considered as significant influencers in political communications and behaviors of the public as a whole (Erikson, 2008). However, despite the theoretical importance and thriving nature of political fandom in the real world, few scholarly attempts have been made to understand this concept in political communication. Thus, this study conceptualized and developed the scale for political fandom to help further investigations into citizens' perceptions and behaviors as related to the political fandom.

The current study aims to propose a scale of political fandom through several factor analyses and validity assessments. Based on sports and culture studies, the present study explores how to measure and operationalize the concept of fandom through the survey. The suggested factor model of political fandom can be an antecedent factor leading to perceptions, activities, and communication regarding politics as well as politicians. The results of this study can contribute to the understanding of fandom in politics and provide guidelines for future research that applies quantitative methods to the examination of political fandom.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REIVEW

2.1 FANDOM IN POLITICS

The development of communication technology and the change of political perceptions have brought the altered relationship between politicians and voters (Wilson, 2011). The importance of the individual politician has increased in the public's decision making and political behaviors (Takens, Kleinnijenhuis, Van Hoof, & Van Atteveldt, 2015). Political communication through social media becomes softer and more individual (Wilson, 2011). Individual citizens can meet the individual politician easily online (Sunstein, 2018). The public's tendency to focus on politicians as individuals have increased based on the level of online communication with politicians on social media (Erikson, 2008). Social media has blurred the line between the domain of politics and culture (Lee, 2013).

Van Zoonen (2004) cited the post-modern society has allowed the emergence of new types of political perceptions and behaviors. Different from society in the 20th century, which completely separated areas of politics and culture based on dignity in politics, current society allowed to break the border between the public sphere and private sphere (Wolin, 2016). In this view, individuals' motivation behind political support or participation needs to be rethought because not only political-public interest can play a role in individuals' political participation, but personal motivations can be an important factor of individuals' political participation (Inglehart, 2015). In other words, individuals

can support politicians to achieve their enjoyment, fulfillment, or affections as well as to obtain the opportunity of participating in political decision making democratically for society as a whole (Inglehart, 2000).

The altered views of political environments help to apprehend the phenomenon that the public regards politicians as a type of celebrity by focusing on the sensational aspects of politicians' lives and considering individual politicians' character traits (Parikh, 2012). The literature suggests that fandom, as seen in relation to celebrities, has also appeared in relation to politicians (Sandvoss, 2012). For instance, the fandom surrounding South Korean President Jae-in Moon, has become very large in online communities. Groups of the president's fans produce, or purchase products related to the president. In addition, they make memes about the president expressing their love and support for him (Bae, 2017, May 21). In this case, based on individual affections, fans participate in fandom behaviors for their politicians. Although these fans attempt to support their admired politician's political campaigns, this is not their only goal. Fans also attain enjoyment or emotional satisfaction from the personal relationships that they form with the politicians (Van Zoonen, 2004). These new types of political support and the underlying psychological processes are difficult to explain using the concepts of affiliation and partisanship (Wilson, 2011). This study proposes the concept of fandom to apply to the understanding of these particular types of behaviors and affections of the public.

Fandom indicates particular emotions and behaviors based on the relationship between the fan and an object of fandom. In cultural studies, fandom is "regular, emotionally involved consumption of a given popular narrative or text" (Sandvoss, 2005,

p. 8). Fandom includes both aspects of affection and activities in terms of the individual and the community levels (Dean, 2017) and can be used to explain the enthusiastic behaviors or emotions of individuals by applying an association between a fan and a fan object (Stevens, 2010). Because fandom helps to explain consumption related to an object of fandom, it is also a very important concept in sports studies (Reysen & Branscombe, 2010). The concept exercises significant influence on the market and certain segments of the public, so fans are important stakeholders and form advocacy groups in popular culture and sports (Stevens, 2010; Sutton, McDonald, Milne, & Cimperman, 1997). In political communication, fandom can provide an understanding of particular supporters' behaviors, such as political product purchasing and political meme sharing, and can further be applied to examining members of the public, regardless of partisan or political ideologies.

2.2 PREVIOUS POLITICAL FANDOM STUDIES

The relationship between individual politicians and individual citizens was discussed in numerous previous studies, categorizing it into two aspects of political fandom, celebrity politicians and politicizing fandom, depending on whether a researcher focused more on politicians or fans (Dean, 2017). Researchers of celebrity politicians have pointed out that some politicians' act as celebrities in the media to gain more popularity (Street, 2004). These studies consider that the emergence of mass media was the starting point of celebrity politicians (Street, 2012). Celebrity politicians have attempted to show themselves as particular figures they want people to see because they realized the importance of enthusiastic supporters who concentrate more on their specific images, appearances, or backgrounds than on policies or political ideologies (Dimitrova

& Bystrom, 2013).

The most famous example of a celebrity politician is President Kennedy and his political campaign that benefited from televised debates (Livingstone & Lunt, 2002). In the media, Kennedy's image on screen is considered to have led him to become the president (Druckman, 2003). Like pop stars or movie actors, after the 1960s, more politicians started to manage their public images as well as visual images (Sandvoss, 2004). Changes in the media environment and political campaigns have influenced the supporters of politicians. Political supporters have become more similar to fans of celebrities (Van Zoonen, 2004).

To date, researchers have paid more attention to the changed relationship between politicians and supporters because the understanding of the relationship can be a hint to comprehending underlying individual supporters' psychological processes of political behaviors including enthusiastic support (Dean, 2017). After the 2000s, authors of several studies combined the structure of political supporters with fans of popular culture (Van Zoonen, 2004). Many political supporters share their ideas regarding the celebrity politicians and even support politicians online by producing and consuming fan products (Sandvoss, 2004). These supporters enjoy expressing their affection for the celebrity politicians in public (Sandvoss, 2012). Because these types of political activities are very similar to the activities of fans of popular culture, scholars consider this changed relationship between politicians and supporters as the association between fans and an object of fandom (Dean, 2017).

2.3 FANDOM AND PARTISANSHIP

Concepts of partisanship, ideology, and affiliation provide variable explanations

of citizen's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward politics and political information; fandom cannot be elaborated upon in a way that is fully separate from these concepts. As a strong factor, partisanship can have a specific influence on citizen's rational thinking and information-gathering process, such as encouraging biased communicative action, which can restrict healthy skepticism in politics (Song & Boomgaarden, 2017). In general, partisanship is based on affiliation to a particular party (Iyengar, Sood, & Lelkes, 2012). As a variable to measure someone's social identity, political partisanship provides crucial insight for researchers and can be seen as a variable to explain differences in the information-gathering process and political behavior among a variety of citizen (Song & Boomgaarden, 2017). High affiliation with a party or a specific political group produces political behaviors such as enthusiastic support for or antagonism toward parties or groups (Bennett & Iyengar, 2008). With regard to the fact that partisanship generally belongs to political organizations or parties, it becomes difficult to explain the relationship between individual politicians and supporters in terms of partisanship (Valenzuela, Correa, & Gil de Zúñiga, 2017).

The concept of partisanship was applied to an explanation of why political supporters have different levels of initiative or involvement in political communication behaviors, including the information-gathering process (Weeks, 2015). Literature suggests that partisans who are involved in politics and have an affiliation with a specific party exhibit distinctive information-seeking and sharing behaviors based on their closed networks (e.g., filter bubble) and biased media use (Zhu, Skoric, & Shen, 2017). Healthy political communication, such as political discussion in the public sphere, is worth noting because it allows society to improve democracy and maintain itself (Schiffer, 2017).

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Although fandom seems to be similar to partisanship and shares some conceptual domains with it, fandom can also be distinguished from partisanship (De Backer, 2012; Pearson, 2010) because of above distinctive characteristics. First, fandom is an independent factor of the political behaviors from partisanship. Because affiliation of fans belongs to individual politicians, fans have comparatively less interest in political ideology or parties' common goals regarding policy than partisans (Parikh, 2012). Even some fans do not think it is necessary to join a party of their fan object, because they can participate in political activities based on the fandom community not traditional political supports (Dean, 2017). These tendencies show that the orthogonal relationship between fandom and partisanship. Fans focus on the individual-level issue of politicians rather than party or political ideology. Fans love their politicians based on the multiple traits of those politicians, such as character, speech style, appearance, or individual background, rather than considering their political ideology or policies only (Canovan, 1999). Second, fans deify their politicians. Many political fans worship their politicians in the same way as fans idolize their fan objects such as pop-stars or sports players (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002). In some cases, fandom represents blind support (Dwyer, Mudrick, Greenhalgh, LeCrom, & Drayer, 2015). For instance, the literature reports that consumers who are fans of celebrities ignore the rule of rational choice in terms of economics when purchasing products or services related to the celebrities they follow (De Backer, 2012; Kim & Kim, 2017). Third, productivity and consumption, which are related to politicians, are central activities of fans (Lee, Kim, Chu, & Seo, 2013). Fans create content relevant to fan objects because fans cannot build a direct relationship with politicians (Dean, 2017). Whereas partisans consider party activities—voting or participating political

convention—to be the center of their political participation, fans focus on unconventional political activities regardless of the political party. Fourth, although fans do not tend to separate their fan group from nonfans, an exclusive boundary between fandom and nonfans is maintained (Fiske, 1992). Participating in the fans' communication is often difficult for nonfans (Highfield, Harrington, & Bruns, 2013) because this information sharing requires an understanding of the fan object and fandom groups themselves to take part in the conversation (Hunt, 2003).

2.4 FOCUS OF PRESENT STUDY

This study's main purpose is to determine the best measurement of political fandom, particularly as it relates to understandings of fans perceptions of and behaviors for politicians. The first goal of the study is to develop the scale of political fandom on previous studies and theories and assess internal content validity through factor analysis. The researcher sought to build a unique approach on the conceptualizations of fandom in politics. Fandom was studied by numerous studies in sports, culture, and entertainments fields with qualitative and quantitative approaches. Some sociology, political science and political communication studies also looked into phenomena related to fans and fandom of politicians. In this view, this study attempts to understand fandom in politics from various academic views to improve the measurement for political fandom.

To test the scale's reliability and validity, the study attempt to determine the reliability of the political fandom scale across two domestic samples. Even though the scale of political fandom was produced based on theoretically driven measurement construct, this study conducted several statistical confirmations to modify and improve the model through exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis.

CHAPTER 3

SCALE DEVELOPMENT FOR POLITICAL FANDOM
AND VALIDATION

3.1 OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES

This study started by reviewing previous fandom research (Brough & Shresthova, 2011; Dean, 2017; Erikson, 2008; Sandvoss, 2012; Van Zoonen, 2004) to develop measures for political fandom. Second, the researcher generated an initial item pool through conceptualization of political fandom based on the literature. To find several variables that are used to measure fandom for sports and celebrities, the researcher reviewed fandom studies regarding sports and entertainment. Authors of published fandom-in-politics studies also suggested key concepts for structuring dimensions of fandom. Third, the generated item pool was purified through exploratory factor analysis and reliability testing. Finally, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the validity of determined items. Confirmatory factor analysis also allowed testing of the scale dimensionality of the political fandom scale. Figure 3.1 shows the several steps to the development and preliminary validation of political fandom.

3.2 ITEM POOL DEVELOPMENT

3.2.1 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF POLITICAL FANDOM

The author began to collect and summarize the findings of previous studies in order to determine dimensions of political fandom by understanding theoretical concepts of fandom in various fields including sports, entertainment, culture, and politics. Based

on a review of literature, the measurement model of political fandom was hypothesized. The construct of political fandom includes seven dimensions, theories regarding fans' perceptions and behaviors such as worship, self-awareness as a fan, identification, loyalty, playing, investment, and fan community engagement.

Some authors of published studies proposed diverse measurements of perceptional factors (worship, self-awareness as a fan, identification, and loyalty). Questions on fans' perceptions of politicians were developed from previous research. However, it was hard to find discussions on the three dimensions of political fandom (playing, investment, and fan-community engagement) by authors who used quantitative research that includes their approach to developing the measurement for the concept of political fandom. Thus, in the current study, the researcher developed some original questions to measure behaviors by fans of politicians based on existed fandom theories and focus group interviews with politicians' fans in literature.

In culture and sports-management studies, fandom generally encompasses emotions and behaviors of the public. Politicizing fandom also includes these two aspects: affection and activities (Dean, 2017). Thus, this study considers fan affection and fan activities as two entities of fandom.

Based on previous studies, this study built four dimensions of political fandom, namely *Self-awareness as a fan* (Wann, 2002), *worship* (Maltby, Day, McCutcheon, Houran, & Ashe, 2006; McCutcheon et al., 2002), *identification* (Lemert, Wanta, & Lee, 1999), and *loyalty* (Keaton & Gearhart, 2014). Self-awareness as a fan is a self-evaluation of the person who have the relationship with the politician. It can be applied to measure the individual's tendency of emotions of politicians that individuals' perceived affections

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of the relationship between themselves and politicians (Wann, 2002). This dimension includes fans' self-evaluation of relationship with celebrity politician (Wann, 2006).

Worship is a psychological obsession for a celebrity in an attempt to establish an identity and a sense of fulfillment (McCutcheon et al., 2002). In other words, worship is a kind of para-social relationship with the adoration of celebrities as if they were idols or role models (Maltby et al., 2006). Fans become virtually obsessed with one or more celebrities because of the tendency of individuals to compromise their identity structure (McCutcheon et al., 2002).

With respect to *identification*, fans tend to identify themselves with the fan object (Al Ganideh & Good, 2015). Fans are highly engaged in an object of fandom emotionally. Fans accept evaluation, criticize, or praise to the politician as theirs (Stever, 2009). Identification is induced by individuals' high engagement (Branscombe & Wann, 1991).

Loyalty means that fans form a consistent relationship with a fan object in terms of attitude or behavior (Biscaia, Correia, Rosado, Ross, & Maroco, 2013). As identification with royalty suggests, fans are highly involved with an object of fandom (Morin, Ivory, & Tubbs, 2012). However, loyalty requires fans to have more behavioral and active engagement with a celebrity politician (Kim & Kim, 2017). Loyal fans tend to serve a politician as much as they can in their daily lives (Biscaia et al., 2013). They do not worry about showing their allegiance to others (Funk & Jeffrey, 2006).

There are three other dimensions related to behaviors of fans: *playing* (Wilson, 2011), *investment* (Dean, 2017), and engagement in fan-communities. *Playing* refers to making and sharing content relevant to the fan object (Parikh, 2012). This fan creativity

is a core activity of fans that contains fan products, fan fiction, and memes (Dean, 2017).

Fans tend to pursue enjoyment by creating and sharing the content related to their object

of fandom (Stever, 2009). *Playing* can be regarded as a new type of political activities of

fans (Gladden, 2001).

Fans have a desire to purchase and use products related to an object of fandom

(Stevens, 2010). They attempt to disclose their affection of the fan object through their

consumption of fan object-related products (Dean, 2017). This consumption is one of the

important ways fans of a celebrity politician show their affection and endorsement of the

politician (Dean, 2017). In the construct of political fandom, this political consumption is

called *investment*.

Fans usually show their support of a celebrity politician on the Internet with other

fans (Wakefield & Bennett, 2017). Fan community engagement includes behavioral

aspects related to a fandom community and fans' perceptions of their fandom community

(Van Zoonen, 2004). The structures of fan communities leads to collectivistic

participation in political activities (Kim & Won, 2002). Thus, engagement in fan

communities should be considered one of seven dimensions of political fandom (Dean,

2017).

Consequently, the construct definition of political fandom is composed of seven

dimensions based on the result of conceptualization: worship, identification, loyalty, self-

awareness as a fan, investment in a celebrity politician, playing with fan-relevant political

content, and engagement in fan community.

3.2.2 ITEM GENERATION

Based on a review of fandom and political communication literature, the

researcher generated an initial item pool of political fandom. The constructed definition of fandom is measured by seven dimensions in this item pool.

3.2.3 ITEM REFINEMENT

To test internal consistency among the initial question items, an online survey was conducted. All participants were recruited by Amazon's MTurk, which provides online survey program tools for researchers. Some critiques cast doubt on MTurk samples being representative of the U.S. population. However, in previous studies that used MTurk samples, demographic analysis demonstrated that the samples have no serious issues reflecting the U.S. population (see Table 3.1). A total of 211 participants were recruited for exploratory factor analysis, but 31 participants were excluded who did not complete the questionnaire or chose the wrong answer for an attention-check question. 180 participants were retained after data cleaning.

Because individuals' preferred politicians vary, the researcher asked for the participants' favorite politicians by providing a list of 30 famous politicians in U.S. history after 2000, such as Bill Clinton, Al Gore, John McCain, Mitt Romney, and Donald Trump (See Table 3.2). This survey also contained an open-ended question for participants who could not find their favorite politicians on the list. Based on the answer to the question "finding your favorite politician," the survey forms were automatically customized by using the function of the Qualtrics survey form. To be specific, the first question asking, 'who your favorite politician is' was shown when participants start to take a survey. Participants can pick a politician in options of the question or put the name of politician if there are no name of their favorite politician. After a participant select a particular politician, the survey questions were automatically modified for the participant

by using the name of politician. This customized survey form helped to make participants can focus on answering the survey regarding their favorite politician.

The initial item pool of political fandom included 35 items categorized by seven dimensions based on the literature. The author adopted the construct items from previous sports and entertainment fandom studies, with some modification to accommodate this study's political context. The four dimensions, "self-awareness as a fan" (Gladden, 2001; Wann, 2002; 2006), "loyalty" (Biscaia et al., 2013; Kim & Kim, 2017), "worship" (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002), and "identification" (Keaton & Gearhart, 2014; Kim & Kim, 2017), originated from the literature. Qualitative political fandom studies that used individual interviews (Sandvoss, 2012) or textual analysis (Erikson, 2008) provided sufficient ideas about fans' distinctive behaviors. The researcher proposes three dimensions of political fandom extracted from these published articles: the investment (Van Zoonen, 2004), playing (Wilson, 2011), and collectivistic participation in fan communities (Dean, 2017).

Each dimension contains several items using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Sample items are "I obsessed by detailed of <politician name>'s life (Worship)," "I consider that the success of <politician name> is my success (Identification)," and "I would be willing to purchase and use <politician name>'s goods, such as badges, t-shirts, cups, flags, or caps" (See Table 3.3).

The author used factor analysis with principal axis factoring and promax rotation to examine the seven-factor structure because of the correlation expected among factors of political fandom. The researcher used the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin test and the Bartlett test to evaluate sampling adequacy and sphericity of data. According to the KMO level (.929)

and the result of the Bartlett test (approximate chi-square = 4129.226, df = 378, significance < .001), the data was considered appropriate for factor analysis (Kaiser & Rice, 1974).

Seven question items from the original 35 were eliminated that had a loading factor lower than 0.4, as shown in Table 3.5. No items had communality lower than 0.4 after rounding. However, the factor analysis demonstrated that the seven dimensions of factor analysis corresponded to the results of conceptualization (i.e., worship, self-awareness as a fan, identification, loyalty, investment, playing, and fan community engagement). Reliability tests demonstrated that seven dimensions of fandom are reliable; the Cronbach's alphas were .928, .922, .856, .860, .714, and .927, respectively (See Table 3.4).

As a result of factor analysis, the factor model of political communication corresponded to the construct of political fandom made from a review of the literature. In addition, all seven factors had sufficient internal consistencies after dropping several scale items. Thus, this study confirmed that the factor structure reflect the theoretical basis of the scale and the political fandom scale was internally consistent according to Cronbach's alpha values.

3.3 LATENT STRUCTURE ANALYSIS AND VALIDITY ASSESSMENT

The concept of fandom can reflect the public's perceptions of individual politicians and particular behaviors by focusing on the relationship between fans and politicians. Based on the literature, including quantitative studies of sports and entertainment fandoms and qualitative studies of political fandom, this study proposes that the construct of political fandom is a hierarchical and multidimensional construct.

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to exam the possibility of latent structure and test the validity of the political fandom variable. The present study accepted the suggested second-order factor model through comparison of several competing models by performing several confirmatory factor analyses. Given the theoretical grounds and consideration of the model fits (Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson, 2010), the present study included the seven-factor modified model as the final measurement of political fandom (See Table 3.6).

The seven-factor model had an acceptable overall fit ($\chi^2 = 705.878$, $df = 265$, p < .001; RMSEA = .069, 90% confidence interval [CI] = [.062, .075]; CFI = .935; TLI = .927; and SRMR = .050). In the final model, shown in Figure 3.2, some question items were eliminated based on model modification indices (i.e., WO3, LO1, and FE 5). This final model reveals that the factor structure of political fandom has 25 emotional, perceptional, and behavioral indicators (i.e., obsession with politician, self-awareness as a fan of the politician, investment in politician, and community engagement) that belong to seven factors (See Table 3.7). Based on the set's final model, several validity and reliability tests were run to examine the discriminant validity of the construct of political fandom. According to the examinations' results, each factor had sufficient validity and reliability. Table 3.8 reports the tests' results.

The current study applied two factor analyses (exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis) using two samples. In summary, the confirmatory factor analyses showed that the factor model of political fandom consisted of seven distinct but related dimensions that reflect individuals' diverse political perceptions and behaviors. Seven dimensions of the final model corresponded to seven dimensions belonging to the

factor model suggested by the result of exploratory factor analysis. Therefore, H2b and H2c were also supported (H2b. The political fandom scale will show similar factor structure across samples; H2c. Data from different samples will fit the hypothesized model, as shown by structural equation modeling).

3.4 RELATIONS OF POLITICAL FANDOM AND INDIVIDUALS' POLITICAL CHARACTERISTIC

According to literature, political fandom is independent of political partisanship or ideology. In other words, political fandom possibility exists in every relation between individuals and politicians regardless of individuals' political ideology or partisanship. The result of correlation analysis reveals the association of political fandom and other variables used to measure individuals' political perceptions.

In survey 2, the author asked participants about their partisanship (Variables coded so higher scores denote Republican partisanship, 1=Strong Republican, 7=Strong Democrat, M=4.35, SD=1.87), self-reported political ideology (1=Strong Republican, 7=Strong Democrat, M=4.47, SD=1.86), evaluated political ideology (M=3.67, SD=1.07, Cronbach's alpha=.810), political efficacy (M=5.15, SD=1.13, Cronbach's alpha=.821), and political fandom (M=4.02, SD=1.20, Cronbach's alpha=.955) as well. Partisanship and self-reported political ideology were measured by single self-reported item using a 7-point Likert scale. To measure evaluated political ideology and political efficacy, the researcher applied measurements that used by previous studies (ANES, 2016; Jang & Kim, 2018). These 7-point Likert scales included questions as "Do you a favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose the U.S. government paying for all necessary medical care for all Americans (Ideology)," "I think I am better informed about politics and government

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that most people (Efficacy)." The survey also included some questions to estimate for individuals' perceptions of the politician as the celebrity (M=3.50, SD=1.80, Cronbach's alpha=.897). The sample question of the 7-point Likert scale is "sometimes I think <politician name> is look like one of the celebrities such as pop-star or actors." This variable was made based on the theory of celebrity politician (Street, 2014). Participants put their age (M=37.41, SD=12.28), family income, and region (1=Rural and 3=urban, M=1.84, SD=0.71) in the end part of survey.

To reveal the relationship among political fandom, intensity of ideology, and partisanship of participants, measures for partisanship and ideology are merged. Partisanship and self-reported ideology were recalculated from 7-point Likert scales to 4-point Likert scales. For example, score 7 is recorded as 4. The researcher converted other scores likewise (6→3, 5→2, 4→1, 3→2, 2→3, and 1→4). Evaluated ideology was reconstructed from 5-point Likert scales to 3-point Likert scales (5→3, 4→2, and 3→1).

The result of correlation analysis showed that the positive association among political fandom, perceptions of political as celebrities, and political efficacy (see Table 3.9). It means that individuals who had more fandom characteristic had higher political efficacy than people who were evaluated as having low engagement with political fandom. In addition, enthusiastic fans have a tendency to think politicians are similar to celebrities or consider political support is the same with support sports team. Political fandom had no statistically significant correlations with partisanship and political ideology. Not surprisingly, partisanship corresponds with the political ideology of participants (liberal individuals support Democratic party more than Republican party).

In this study, the researcher recalculated scores of scales for political ideology and

partisanship to measure participants' levels of ideology and partisanship. As a result of the correlation analysis, political fandom has a positive relationship with intensity of ideology, while political ideologies (both self-reported and evaluated ideology) themselves have no significant relationships with political fandom. This result means that participants who have strong partisans are likely to have a stronger political fandom, regardless of which political party they are in and what political ideology they have.

Data also showed some other association between political fandom and socio-demographic variables. Based on the correlation analysis, people who have high levels of political fandom are more likely to have young age and experiences of higher education as well as they tend to live in urban area.
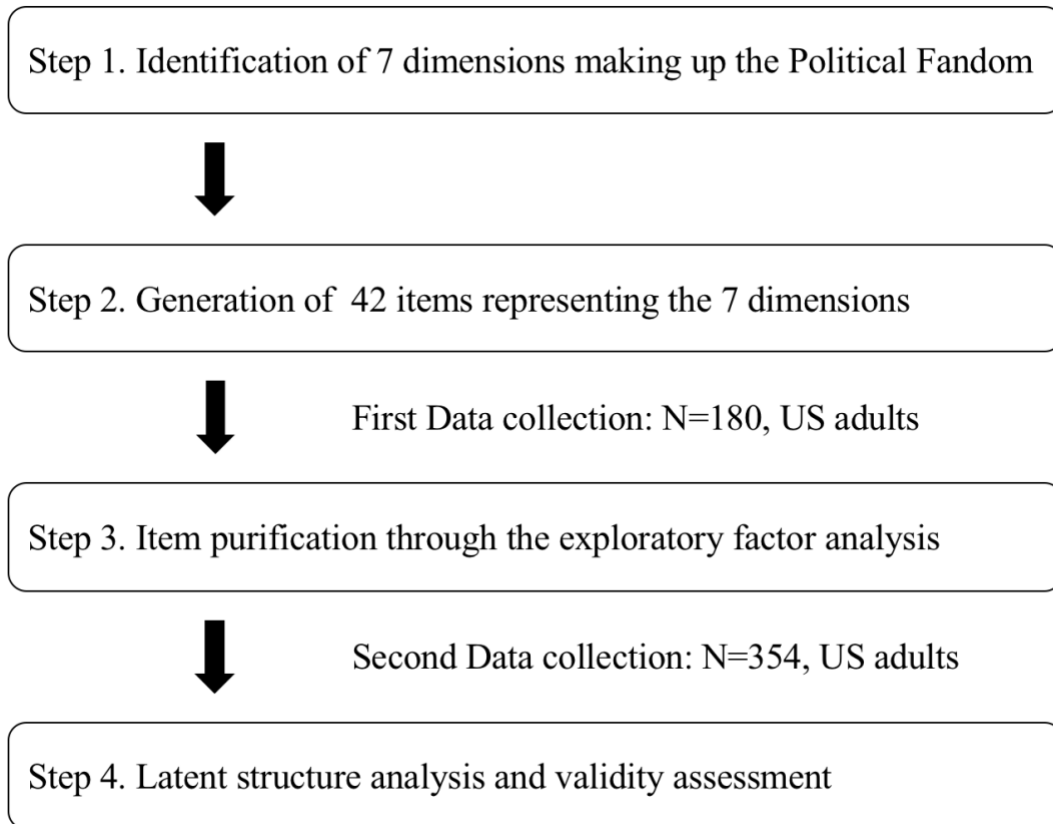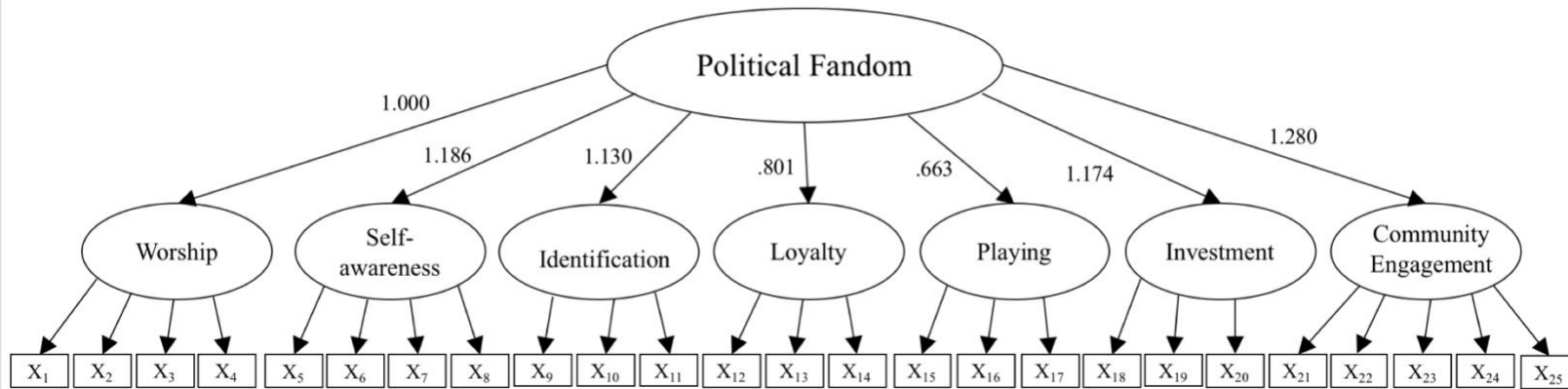
Step 1. Identification of 7 dimensions making up the Political Fandom

Step 2. Generation of 42 items representing the 7 dimensions

First Data collection: N=180, US adults

Step 3. Item purification through the exploratory factor analysis

Second Data collection: N=354, US adults

Step 4. Latent structure analysis and validity assessment

Figure 3.1 Scale development process

Figure 3.2 The second-order measurement model

Table 3.1 Sample description

Variable	Study for EFA		Study for CFA	
	Frequency (N=180)	Percent (%)	Frequency (N=354)	Percent (%)
Gender				
Female	78	43.3	169	47.7
Male	102	56.7	185	52.3
Age (M=35.6, SD=12.2)				
20-29	73	40.7	98	27.7
30-39	61	33.8	139	39.3
40-49	20	11.2	52	14.6
50-59	14	8.0	38	10.5
60-69	11	6.3	22	6.3
Over 70	1	1.0	5	1.5
Race				
White or Caucasian	135	75	271	76.6
Black or African American	16	8.9	32	9
Hispanic or Latino	13	7.2	22	6.2
Native American or Alaska Native	2	1.1	0	0
Asian or Asian American	11	6.1	25	7.1
Other	3	1.7	4	1.1

Table 3.1 (continued)

Variable	Study for EFA		Study for CFA	
	Frequency (N=180)	Percent (%)	Frequency (N=354)	Percent (%)
Education				
Some high school	2	1.1	3	0.8
High school graduate	18	10	36	10.2
Some college	33	18.3	65	18.4
Associate's degree	26	14.4	51	14.4
Bachelor's degree	75	41.7	149	42.1
Master's degree	20	11.1	42	11.9
Professional degree	4	2.2	6	1.7
Doctorate degree	2	1.1	2	0.6
Income				
Less than $10,000	7	3.9	18	5.1
$10,000 - $29,999	43	23.9	60	16.9
$30,000 - $49,999	48	26.7	83	24.5
$50,000 - $69,999	35	19.4	72	20.3
$70,000 - $89,999	18	10	58	16.4
More than $90,000	18	10	54	15.3

Table 3.2 Selected politicians as participants favorite

	Study for EFA		Study for CFA	
Politician	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
George W. Bush	5	2.8	23	6.5
George H. W. Bush	2	1.1	4	1.1
Jimmy Carter	5	2.8	9	2.5
Bill Clinton	13	7.2	28	7.9
Hillary Clinton	10	5.6	12	3.4
Ted Cruz	2	1.1	3	0.8
Al Gore	2	1.1	7	2
John Kasich	3	1.7	4	1.1
John Kerry	0	0	2	0.6
Walter Mondale	0	0	1	0.3
John McCain	2	1.1	1	0.3
Robert Mueller	4	2.2	1	0.3
Barack Obama	42	23.3	101	28.5
Mike Pence	0	0	2	0.6
Ronald Reagan	13	7.2	30	8.5
Mitt Romney	0	0	1	0.3
Paul Ryan	3	1.7	5	1.4
Bernie Sanders	39	21.7	41	11.6
Jeff Sessions	0	0	1	0.3
Chuck Schumer	0	0	2	0.6
Rex Tillerson	1	0.6	0	0
Donald Trump	22	12.2	53	15
Elizabeth Warren	3	1.7	11	3.1
Not listed above	9	5	12	3.4

Table 3.3 Initial item pool

Expected Dimensions	Items
Worship	I obsessed by detailed of <politician name>'s life.
	I have frequent thoughts about <politician name>, even when I don't want to.
	"Following" <politician name> is like daydreaming, takes me away from life's hassles.
	I often feel compelled to learn the personal habits of <politician name>.
	If I were to meet <politician name> in person, the politician would already somehow know that I am the politician's biggest fan.
Self-awareness as a fan	I consider myself to be a huge fan of <politician name>.
	Being a fan of <politician name> is very important to me.
	My friends or families see me as a fan of <politician name>.
	I feel so good when people consider me as a fan of <politician name>.
	I consider myself as a committed fan of <politician name>.
Identification	When someone criticizes <politician name>, it feels like a personal insult to me.
	I consider that the success of <politician name> is my success.
	When someone praises <politician name>, it feels like a personal compliment to me.
	When a story in the media criticized <politician name>, I would feel embarrassed.
	I consider <politician name> to be my soul mate.
Loyalty	I would be willing to attend political events related to <politician name> even if the location is far from my current residence.
	I would support <politician name> regardless of the result of election.
	I would likely recommend <politician name> to my friends and family for voting regardless of their political opinion.
	I always say positive things about <politician name> to my friends and family.
	I always say positive things about <politician name>'s fan community to my friends and family.

Table 3.3 (Continued)

Expected Dimensions	Items
Investment	I would be willing to spend my time and money to support <politician name>.
	I would be willing to purchase and use <politician name> goods, such as badges, t-shirts, cups, flags, or caps.
	I would be willing to engage in making <politician name> goods, such as badges, t-shirts, cups, flags, or caps.
	I would be willing to use the service or purchase the product from the corporations that support <politician name>.
Playing	I enjoy reading memes or watching parody content related to <politician name>.
	I enjoy creating and/or using memes or parody content related to <politician name>.
	I enjoy sharing the content (including video, news, blog, or micro-blog) about <politician name>.
	I enjoy reading news related to <politician name>.
	I enjoy sharing news related to <politician name>.
Fan Community engagement	I enjoy talking about <politician name> with other <politician name> 's fans online.
	Meeting with a fan of <politician name> is always my pleasure, even though I have no idea about him or her.
	I feel comfortable when I meet the fans of <politician name>.
	I would be willing to participate in events for fans of <politician name>.
	I would be willing to engage in organization of <politician name>'s fans.
	When I talk about the fans of <politician name>, I usually say "we" rather than "they."

Table 3.4. Exploratory factor analysis of political fandom (seven-factor structure)

Dimensions	Factor loading
Worship (Mean=2.86, SD=1.57)	
WO1: I obsessed by detailed of <politician name>'s life.	0.933
WO2: I have frequent thoughts about <politician name>, even when I don't want to.	0.792
WO3: "Following" <politician name> is like daydreaming, takes me away from life's hassles.	0.885
WO4: I often feel compelled to learn the personal habits of <politician name>.	0.738
WO5: If I were to meet <politician name> in person, the politician would already somehow know that I am the politician's biggest fan.	0.737
Self-awareness as a fan (Mean=4.42, SD=1.53)	
I consider myself to be a huge fan of <politician name>.	eliminated
SA1: Being a fan of <politician name> is very important to me.	0.774
SA2: My friends or families see me as a fan of <politician name>.	0.762
SA3: I feel so good when people consider me as a fan of <politician name>.	0.878
SA4: I consider myself as a committed fan of <politician name>.	0.629
Identification (Mean=3.67, SD=1.66)	
ID1: When someone criticizes <politician name>, it feels like a personal insult to me.	0.528
ID2: I consider that the success of <politician name> is my success.	0.458
When someone praises <politician name>, it feels like a personal compliment to me.	eliminated
ID3: When a story in the media criticized <politician name>, I would feel embarrassed.	0.631
I consider <politician name> to be my soul mate.	eliminated

Table 3.4. (Continued)

Dimensions	Factor loading
Loyalty (Mean=5.37, SD=1.19)	
I would be willing to attend political events related to \<politician name\> even if the location is far from my current residence.	eliminated
LO1: I would support \<politician name\> regardless of the result of election.	0.699
LO2: I would likely recommend \<politician name\> to my friends and family for voting regardless of their political opinion.	0.762
LO3: I always say positive things about \<politician name\> to my friends and family.	0.878
LO4: I always say positive things about \<politician name\>'s fan community to my friends and family.	0.629
Investment (Mean=4.58, SD=1.55)	
I would be willing to spend my time and money to support \<politician name\>.	eliminated
IV1: I would be willing to purchase and use \<politician name\> goods, such as badges, t-shirts, cups, flags, or caps.	0.685
IV2: I would be willing to engage in making \<politician name\> goods, such as badges, t-shirts, cups, flags, or caps.	0.721
IV3: I would be willing to use the service or purchase the product from the corporations that support \<politician name\>.	0.584
Playing (Mean=4.24, SD=1.30)	
PL1: I enjoy reading memes or watching parody content related to \<politician name\>.	0.573
PL2: I enjoy creating and/or using memes or parody content related to \<politician name\>.	0.778
PL3: I enjoy sharing the content (including video, news, blog, or micro-blog) about \<politician name\>.	0.403
I enjoy reading news related to \<politician name\>.	eliminated
I enjoy sharing news related to \<politician name\>.	eliminated

Table 3.4. (Continued)

Dimensions	Factor loading
Fan-community engagement (Mean=4.29, SD=1.53)	
FE1: I enjoy talking about <politician name> with other <politician name> 's fans online.	0.686
FE2: Meeting with a fan of <politician name> is always my pleasure, even though I have no idea about him or her.	0.600
FE3: I feel comfortable when I meet the fans of <politician name>.	0.568
FE4: I would be willing to participate in events for fans of <politician name>.	0.941
FE5: I would be willing to engage in organization of <politician name>'s fans.	1.008
FE6: When I talk about the fans of <politician name>, I usually say "we" rather than "they."	0.838

Table 3.5 Statics for exploratory factor analysis

Factor	No. of items	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	α
Worship	5	7.638	45.184	45.184	.928
Self-awareness as a fan	4	9.978	3.095	48.279	.922
Identification	3	7.470	1.402	49.681	.856
Loyalty	4	6.323	4.030	53.711	.860
Investment	3	7.093	2.435	56.146	.868
Playing	3	5.687	2.011	58.157	.714
Community engagement	6	10.475	12.103	70.260	.927

Table 3.6 Confirmatory factor analysis results

Model	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Seven-factor model	705.878***	265	.936	.927	.069	.050

Note. CFI: Comparative Fit Index; TLI: Tucker-Lewis Index; RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR: Standardized Root Mean Square Residual.

Table 3.7 The modified factor model of political fandom

Factor	CR	AVE	Items	Factor Loading
Worship	.926	.759	Obsession with politicians' life	0.854
			The frequency of thoughts about an object of fandom	0.883
			Learning about politicians	0.895
			My celebrity politician can recognize me as a fan	0.852
Self-awareness	.916	.732	Awareness of myself as a fan of my celebrity politician	0.832
			Friends aware me as a celebrity politician' fan	0.852
			Having a good feeling of being a fan of a celebrity politician	0.893
			Aware of myself as a committed fan of a celebrity politician	0.845
Identification	.885	.719	Identifying insulted a celebrity politician with myself	0.844
			Identifying a celebrity politician's success with mine	0.857
			Identifying praised a celebrity politician with myself	0.843
Loyalty	.826	.615	Support my celebrity politician regardless of the result of an election	0.678
			Recommend my celebrity politician to others	0.830
			Telling positive things about my celebrity politician	0.834

Note. CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted

Table 3.7 (continued)

Factor	CR	AVE	Items	Factor Loading
Investment	.855	.665	Purchase and use of celebrity politician goods	0.860
			Engagement in making celebrity politician goods	0.847
			Support company that supports my celebrity politician	0.733
Play	.783	.555	Enjoyment of reading memes and parodies about my celebrity politician	0.555
			Enjoyment of creating meme about my celebrity politician	0.755
			Enjoyment of sharing content about my celebrity politician	0.887
Fan Community Engagement	.912	.676	Engagement in a celebrity politician's online fan-group	0.805
			Engagement in celebrity politician's other fans	0.859
			Engagement in celebrity politician's groups of fans	0.773
			Participation in celebrity politician's fan organizations	0.848
			Identification with celebrity politician's fan-groups	0.823

Note. CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted

Table 3.8 The discriminant validity index summary for the construct

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Worship	**0.871**						
2. Self-awareness	0.605	**0.856**					
3. Identification	0.734	0.671	**0.848**				
4. Loyalty	0.189	0.492	0.311	**0.784**			
5. Investment	0.487	0.610	0.530	0.501	**0.815**		
6. Playing	0.526	0.497	0.467	0.388	0.471	**0.745**	
7. Engagement	0.632	0.687	0.657	0.466	0.662	0.633	**0.822**

Note. The diagonal values (in bold) is Construct Reliability (the square root of AVE); All variables significantly correlated with others ($p < .001$)

Table 3.9 Correlations of political fandom and other variables

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Political Fandom	-											
2. Perceptions of politician	.665***	-										
3. Political Efficacy	.367**	.173**	-									
4. Partisanship	.059	-.058	.027	-								
5. Intensity of Partisanship	.210**	.082	.187**	.139**	-							
6. Self-reported political ideology	.027	-.089	.015	.867**	.041	-						
7. Intensity of ideology (self-reported)	.091	-.037	.173**	.080	.650**	.176**	-					
8. Evaluated political ideology	.036	-.065	.071	.574**	.077	.637**	.203**	-				
9. Intensity of ideology (evaluated)	-.071	-.233**	.259**	.168**	.203**	.224**	.379**	.364**	-			
10. Age	-.176**	-187**	.134*	-.114*	.052	-.157**	.087	-.071	.092	-		
11. Education	.132*	.048	.089	.032	.199**	.068	.122*	.035	.044	-.075	-	
12. Family income	-.018	.005	.022	-.100	.058	-.138**	.023	-.124*	-.038	.014	.256**	-
13. Region	-.191**	-.165**	-.051	-.183**	-.031	-.206**	-.025	-.089	.036	.140**	-.178**	.009

Note. $*p < .05$, $** p < .01$, $***p < .001$

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CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

To contribute to the understanding of individuals' political perceptions and

behaviors in terms of relationship with politicians, in the present study, the researcher

proposed a measurement scale based on the results of three analyses (conceptualization

and item pool generation, item refinement through exploratory factor analysis, and latent

structure analysis and validity assessment). By summarizing the literature regarding

fandom studies in sports, culture, and entertainment studies, the researcher initially made

42 questions. The analyses' results showed that these 42 questions were narrowed down

to 25 through exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. In addition,

the data confirmed that the factor model of political fandom includes seven dimensions

conceptually made from a literature review.

4.1 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Numerous news articles in many countries expressed worry about political fans as

biased activists who attempt to pressure political campaigns, governments, or media

organizations. As an extremely active group of supporters, fans are very important

players in political campaigns, especially in shaping public opinion. However, little is

known about who the fans of politicians are and what they do. To address this gap in the

literature, this study reveals how political fandom can be categorized and measured in

terms of lay people's perceptions and behaviors. By covering the relationships between

the public and politicians, the present study suggests seven factors of political fandom,

reflecting intensity-levels of individual affection or support for individual politicians.

The current research's theoretical implications are three-fold. First, the present research provides a starting point for extending political communication studies of political perceptions and behaviors. Several studies in this paper indicated that people have unique political perceptions of individual politicians and distinctive ways of supporting politicians. The study aimed to improve understanding of how lay people's engagement in politics would help scholars understand people's political behaviors and perceptions. This study suggests that personal affections and support can exist independent of partisanship or other political traits. In other words, in this study, the researcher defined the concept of political fandom as the independent construct with the factor model for future studies that aim to understand the psychological process of individuals' political support from various viewpoints. Because political candidates are all delegates from parties or regions, previous studies examined the relationship between parties and individuals, not direct relationships between individual politicians and lay people. However, in this study, the author has focused on psychological constructs based on an individual's political support as a fan of the politician. The author developed the construct and scale of political fandom by applying unfamiliar variables in political communication or political science studies (i.e., worship, identification, and loyalty).

Second, by proposing the integrated conceptualization of political fandom, this study can guide future research on political fandom. The factor model of political fandom incorporates diverse theories from political science, communication, entertainment, and sports research. Scholars in various fields have attempted to explain fans and their activities from various viewpoints corresponding to their fields. However, no agreement

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exists about what political fandom is and who the fans of politicians are because the research area of political fandom is in its initial stage. The researcher explored the meaning of fandom in politics and attempted to build the foundation of political fandom studies. Based on reviews of the literature and conceptualization, this paper contributes insights into the potential role of political fandom in various fields.

Specifically, the *worship* dimension can suggest that the political fandom scale indicates a strong bond between politicians and fans (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002). *Loyalty* denotes that fans' affiliation with politicians is a meaningful factor of the political fandom construct (Biscaia et al., 2013). *Investment* shows that the concept of political fandom also includes the concept of consumer behaviors (Van Zoonen, 2004). Political fandom also can play an important role in fans' consumer behaviors and political activities. *Playing* reveals that fans do not only engage in elections or political decision-making processes as political supporters; they also tend to pursue enjoyment in their fan activities by sharing and creating memes and parodic content online (Wilson, 2011). Last, *fan community engagement* is also noteworthy because it demonstrates that researchers should consider fans' group activities a salient aspect of political fandom (Dean, 2017). Originally, fandom was a term for a massive number of fans' collective actions related to the admired figure and common perceptions of that figure. The results of this study also show that engagement of fans in the fan community is a crucial part of fandom activities.

Third, development of the scale of political fandom is this study's primary contribution to theory. Future studies can use the suggested factor model to capture political fandom. The scale will be applicable in political science and communication

studies that aim to understand the relationship between the public's political decision-making process and perceptions of politicians. Because the factor model of political fandom is also an applicable predictor of individuals' behaviors toward politicians, researchers can apply this exploratory study's results to understand a variety of phenomena in marketing, psychology, politics, communication, and strategic communication research. For example, political fandom can be the key to elucidating particular communicative actions of political supporters, especially problematic actions such as fake news sharing to support their politicians. Many news articles warned about political fans giving politicians excessive and/or blind support without considering the results of such support. The factor model of political fandom can help others examine it as a very strong emotional force behind individuals' political behaviors

To sum up, by summarizing the literature on political fandom and devising the scale to measure the concept, the author concludes that political fandom should be considered as partisanship or political ideology in research on individuals' political perceptions and behaviors.

4.2 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

In a practical sense, the political fandom measurement is helpful to practitioners in several ways. First, political marketers, public relations managers, and communication managers of political campaigns can use the data collected through the political fandom scale to manage their media planning. Practitioners can segment the public based on the degree of political fandom. They can then build more efficient public relations campaigns or advertising plans that have more precise targets. Practitioners also can generate customized media messages for each group (i.e., a group of huge fans, a group of

moderate fans, or a group of non-fans). For example, political fandom can help distribute contents for politicians in the early stages of political campaigns' content sharing. Political fans are active communicators who tend to share and seek political information regarding politicians based on this study. Thus, it is acceptable expectation that fans of politicians not only play a role in distributing contents that are shared by a political party or a politician, but in shaping positive public opinion regarding those contents. Political marketers' developing communication strategies will be facilitated by using this understanding of the characteristics of political fans as active audiences.

Second, the understanding of political fandom contributes to politicians' and governments' risk and crisis management. Fans of politicians are very enthusiastic supporters who attempt to sway public opinion to create a more advantageous environment for their politicians. Thus, politicians and governments should manage their fans because they are valuable influencers. Activist fans, however, can benefit or harm their preferred politicians. On one hand, fans are loyal supporters who can play important roles during politicians' crises. The concepts of worship and loyalty in the construct of political fandom show that fans support and believe their politicians even when public opinion about those politicians is not favorable. Therefore, fans may be the crucial stakeholders for politicians in terms of crisis management. On the other hand, politicians should manage their fans carefully because fans may also become their worst nemeses when they change their minds and turn against their preferred politicians.

Ironically, fans should be considered a potential risk. Fans have thorough knowledge about politicians based on numerous communication experiences with those politicians (or politicians' aides). Because fans hold a high level of engagement in

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political campaigns and in the activities of politicians as activists who have extensive influence on public opinion regarding politicians, fans can play an important role in forming negative or positive public views of politicians. In other words, fans may change to anti-fans who seek to harm politicians in particular situations. For instance, if a politician or his/her campaign has a moral hazard problem and it is unveiled, political fans might change from fans to anti-fans. The factor model of political fandom offers practitioners a measurement of fans' perceptions and activities that can help them forecast fans' future actions.

Finally, this study allows researchers to measure individuals' activities related to fan communities. Fans' collective actions did not draw attention from researchers and practitioners even though fan communities' strong bonds and collectivism based on fanship is one of the crucial points for understanding political fandom. Thus, by using the political fandom scale, practitioners can better understand political fandom, including fans' engagement in fan communities that would help political practitioners manage groups of supporters when they plan election gatherings and political campaigns for other reasons.

4.3 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Despite the given interesting implications, this study has several limitations. Some politicians who were used in the data collections already retired. Although this fact would not make a significant difference, it should be considered in the interpretation of this study's results. Online sampling with MTurk is another limitation of this study. The present study is not sample-sensitive, but the results are not completely generalizable. In addition, this study accepted modest standards to evaluate model fits of the factor model

when confirmatory factor analysis was applied. The specific statistical standards can vary by researcher. However, many scale development studies employ very restrictive standards for model fits of confirmatory factor analysis. It would be better for future researchers to attempt to provide the political fandom model that has better model fits.

As an explorative study developing a multiple-item scale to measure political fandom, this study serves as a starting point for future political fandom studies and suggests noteworthy future research topics. First, in the future, a more comprehensive study is needed to explain the interaction between celebrity politicians and political fans. Previous studies pointed out that politicians plan strategic communications to gain popularity bases like political fans. Therefore, future researchers can explore the relationship between politicians' applications of political fandom to their political campaigns and political fans' reactions. Second, the factor model of political fandom can explain diverse aspects of political fandom, but the construct of political fandom, of course, could be more refined through further research. Therefore, future researchers may find other dimensions of political fandom and remove dimensions in the model suggested in this study. Third, the political fandom scale can extend to other countries even though this study was conducted in the U.S. because political fandom has been generally reported by media around the world. Further research should investigate political fandom in other countries based on various samples.

Political fandom is not easy to define. Even the researcher cannot ensure that this scale of fandom can measure whole aspects of political fandom because the concept of political fandom includes several theories across diverse political and communication-related

fields. To understand the relationship between politicians and lay people, political

fandom research needs to be conducted using an interdisciplinary approach.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Consent

Dear Participant:

      This study is being conducted in an effort to determine your opinions on your favorite politicians. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire about your attitudes toward a particular politician who is/was mostly supported by you.

      Your participation is completely voluntary and confidential and you do not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. Data collected from the survey will be used only for research and no one other than our research team will have access to the responses. The survey should last no more than 15 minutes. No risks are anticipated from your participation in this study.

      Upon completion of the survey, you will receive Seventy five cents ($0.75) from Amazon Mechanical Turk for your participation. All information will be kept completely confidential. Your MTurk worker ID will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team. It will also be removed from the data set. You will never be identified in any presentations or papers that we might submit for publication.

      I am happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact Mr. Moon at moonw@email.sc.edu or Dr. Mo Jang at jangsm@mailbox.sc.edu if you have study related questions or problems.

With kind regards,
Won-Ki Moon,
Master's of Arts University of South Carolina
moonw@email.sc.edu

Agree Thank you for your consideration. If you would like to participate, please indicate your agreement to participate by selecting "Yes" to the question below.
  I hereby consent to participate in this experiment. I affirm that I am of age 18 years or older. I have been informed of the purposes and procedures of this project, to the extent that they can be divulged in advance.

    ◯ Yes (1)

    ◯ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Thank you for your consideration. If you would like to participate, please indicate your agreemen... = No

Politicians Please choose the name of your MOST favorite politician (Listing Names in Alphabetical Order)

○ George W. Bush (1)

○ George H. W. Bush (2)

○ Jimmy Carter (3)

○ Bill Clinton (4)

○ Hillary Clinton (5)

○ Ted Cruz (6)

○ Bob Dole (7)

○ Michael Dukakis (8)

○ Al Gore (9)

○ John Kasich (10)

○ John Kelly (11)

○ John Kerry (12)

○ Walter Mondale (13)

○ Andrew McCabe (14)

○ John McCain (15)

○ Mitch McConnell (16)

○ Robert Mueller (17)

○ Barack Obama (18)

○ Nancy Pelosi (19)

○ Mike Pence (20)

○ Ronald Reagon (21)

○ Mitt Romney (22)

○ Marco Rubio (23)

○ Paul Ryan (24)

○ Bernie Sanders (25)

○ Jeff Sessions (26)

○ Chuck Schumer (27)

○ Rex Tillerson (28)

○ Donald Trump (29)

○ Elizabeth Warren (30)

○ Not listed above (31) _____

Page Break ————————————————————————

Worship: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I obsessed by detailed of <politician's name>'s life. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have frequent thoughts about <politician's name>, even when I don't want to. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
"Following" <politician's name> is like daydreaming, takes me away from life's hassles. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often feel compelled to learn the personal habits of <politician's name>. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I were to meet <politician's name> in person, the politician would already somehow know that I am the politician's biggest fan. (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Identification: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
When someone criticizes <politician's name>, it feels like a personal insult to me. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I consider that the success of <politician's name> is my success. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When someone praises <politician's name>, it feels like a personal compliment to me. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When a story in the media criticized <politician's name>, I would feel embarrassed. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I consider <politician's name> to be my soul mate. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Self-awareness as a fan: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I consider myself to be a huge fan of \<politician's name\>. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Being a fan of \<politician's name\> is very important to me. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My friends or families see me as a fan of \<politician's name\>. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel so good when people consider me as a fan of \<politician's name\>. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I consider myself as a committed fan of \<politician's name\>. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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The following questions are about your behaviors related to your favorite politician, <politician's name>.

Investment: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I would be willing to spend my time and money to support <politician's name>. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would be willing to purchase and use <politician's name> goods, such as badges, t-shirts, cups, flags, or caps. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would be willing to engage in making <politician's name> goods, such as badges, t-shirts, cups, flags, or caps. (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would be willing to use the service or purchase the product from the corporations that support <politician's name>. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Loyalty: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I would be willing to attend political events related to <politician's name> even if the location is far from my current residence. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would support <politician's name> regardless of the result of election. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would likely recommend <politician's name> to my friends and family for voting regardless of their political opinion. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I always say positive things about <politician's name> to my friends and family. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I always say positive things about <politician's name>'s fan community to my friends and family. (13)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Playing: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I enjoy reading memes or watching parody content related to <politician's name>. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy creating and/or using memes or parody content related to <politician's name>. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy sharing the content (including video, news, blog, or micro-blog) about <politician's name>. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy reading news related to <politician's name>. (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy sharing news related to <politician's name>. (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Fan community engagement: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewh at disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewh at agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I enjoy talking about <politician's name> with other <politician's name> 's fans online. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Meeting with a fan of <politician's name> is always my pleasure, even though I have no idea about him or her. (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel comfortable when I meet the fans of <politician's name>. (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would be willing to participate in events for fans of <politician's name>. (12)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would be willing to engage in organizations of <politician's name>'s fans. (13)	○	○	○	○	○	○	
When I talk about the fans of <politician's name>, I usually say "we" rather than "they." (14)	○	○	○	○	○	○	

Perceptions of politician as a celebrity: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Sometimes I think <politician's name> is look like one of the celebrities such as pop-star or actors. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	
Sometimes I think popularity is important for <politician's name> as the celebrities such as pop-star or actors. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	
Sometimes I think being the fan of <politician's name> is similar to being the fan of sports team. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	

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Political Efficacy: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I have a pretty good understanding of the important issues facing this country. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I consider myself well qualified to participate in politics and community affairs. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I think I am better informed about politics and government that most people. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
People like me don't have any say about what the government does. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Under our form of government, the people have the final say about how the country is run, no matter who is in office. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
There are many legal ways for citizens to successfully influence what government does. (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Political ideology (Evaluated): Please state your opinion on some political issues following statements on the scale below.

	Strongly Oppose (1)	Somewhat Oppose (2)	neither favor nor oppose (3)	Somewhat Favor (4)	Strongly Favor (5)
An amendment to the U.S. Constitution banning marriage between two people who are the same sex. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Raising federal income taxes for people who make more than $200,000 per year. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
The U.S. government paying for all of the cost of prescription drugs for senior citizens who are living on very little income? (3)	○	○	○	○	○
The U.S. government paying for all necessary medical care for all Americans? (4)	○	○	○	○	○
The U.S. government being required to get a court order before it can listen in on phone calls made by American citizens who are suspected of being terrorists. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
The U.S. government making it possible for illegal immigrants to become U.S. citizens? (6)	○	○	○	○	○

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Partisanship:
What is your partisan membership?

○ Strong Republican (1)

○ Republican (2)

○ Independent leaning Republican (3)

○ Independent (4)

○ Independent leaning Democrat (5)

○ Democrat (6)

○ Strong Democrat (7)

Political Ideology (self-reported):
What is your political view?

○ Very conservative (1)

○ Conservative (2)

○ Somewhat conservative (3)

○ Moderate (4)

○ Somewhat liberal (5)

○ Liberal (6)

○ Very liberal (7)

Gender: What is your gender?

○ Female (1)

○ Male (2)

○ Not listed (3) _____

Age: What is your age in years? (Please use whole numbers only. Ex: 30.)

_____

Race: What is your race?

○ White or Caucasian (1)

○ Black or African American (2)

○ Hispanic or Latino (3)

○ Native American or Alaska Native (4)

○ Asian or Asian American (5)

○ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (6)

○ Other (7)

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Education: What is your highest level of education completed? If currently enrolled, choose the highest degree received.

○ No schooling completed (1)

○ Some high school (2)

○ High school graduate (3)

○ Some college (4)

○ Associate's degree (5)

○ Bachelor's degree (6)

○ Master's degree (7)

○ Professional degree (8)

○ Doctorate degree (9)

Family Income: Last year, what was your family's total household income, before taxes?

○ Less than $10,000 (1)

○ $10,000 - $19,999 (2)

○ $20,000 - $29,999 (3)

○ $30,000 - $39,999 (4)

○ $40,000 - $49,999 (5)

○ $50,000 - $59,999 (6)

○ $60,000 - $69,999 (7)

○ $70,000 - $79,999 (8)

○ $80,000 - $89,999 (9)

○ $90,000 - $99,999 (10)

○ $100,000 - $149,999 (11)

○ More than $150,000 (12)

Job: What is your current employment status?

○ Employed full time (1)

○ Employed part time (2)

○ Unemployed looking for work (3)

○ Unemployed not looking for work (4)

○ Retired (5)

○ Student (6)

Region:
How do you describe your resident area?

○ Urban (1)

○ Suburban (2)

○ Rural (3)