

Online Appendix

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A1 Theory Summary

Our theoretical expectations are summarized in Table A.1. It indicates what kinds of bias people expect from each type of media in societies that expect neutrality from their public broadcasters. For example, left-leaning viewers generally expect private left-wing media to cover issues from left-wing perspectives, public broadcasters to be neutral, and private right-wing media to be more left-wing. When coverage deviates from these expectations, people are less likely to trust the coverage.

Table A.1: What viewers expect from media in societies that expect neutrality from their public broadcasters

Viewers' political ideology		Left-wing	Public	Right-wing
		private media	media	private media
	Left-leaning	Left bias	No bias	Left bias
	Center	No bias	No bias	No bias
	Right-leaning	Right bias	No bias	Right bias

As Table A.1 indicates, we expect that individuals, regardless of political ideology, will be less likely to trust biased media coverage from public media, while those who disagree with the biased coverage are more likely to distrust it from private media. Note that this expectation only holds in societies that expect neutrality from their public broadcasters; otherwise, the role of political ideology should become stronger when people evaluate biased coverage from public media.

We can illustrate our theoretical intuition with a hypothetical case. Suppose that there is an event in which a political actor is involved. Media may or may not add an ideological slant in covering the event more favorably or unfavorably towards the actor. In this case, we argue that people expect that public media should not add a slant to the coverage, and if they detect such a slant in the coverage, they are less likely to trust it. By contrast, people expect that private media should cover the event in a way that is consistent with their own political ideology. Thus, if they detect a slant in the coverage that is not consistent with their political ideology, they are less likely to trust it.

A2 TV Program Analyses

A2.1 Summary of the Data

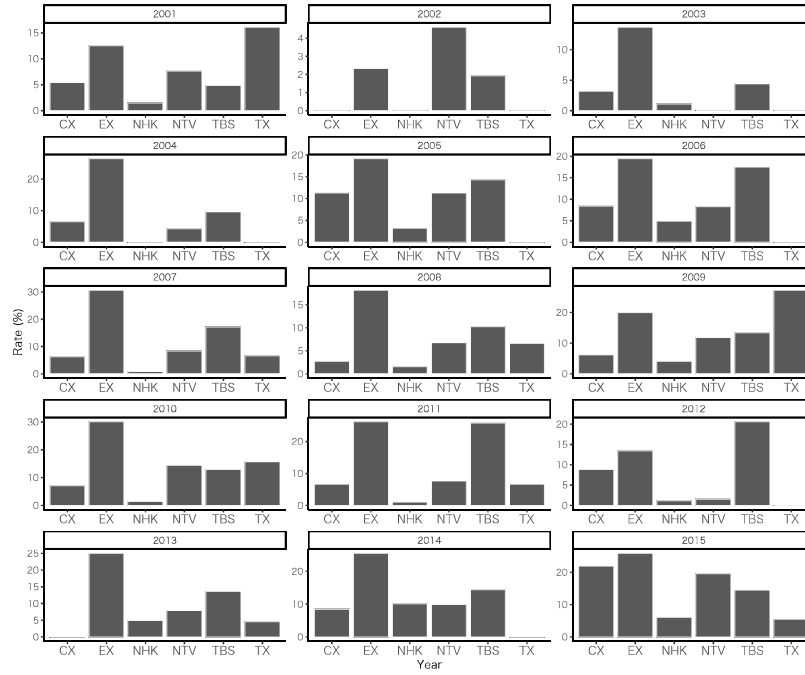
Before administering the survey and survey experiment to ascertain our assumption about public media neutrality, we collected unique textual data about Japanese television programs through *M Data*, which collects and transcribes visual information into textual information. The data we collected cover programs broadcast between 2001 and 2015 by NHK and the five major private companies – Nippon TV (NTV), Asahi TV (EX), TBS, Fuji TV (CX), and TV Tokyo (TX). We used Tokyo-based program listings.

From the vast amount of data available through *M Data*, we used keywords to extract war-related programs and their textual information. We employed the following search words: “sensou” [war], “heiwa” [peace], “shusen” [end of war], and Yasukuni. The variables we collected include the title of each program, the frequency of war-related words within the program, a summarized content of the program, length of coverage, date of broadcast and television station. In total, we collected 8,119 programs. We combined the rows for the title and content variables in our analyses.

We took several common measures to analyze Japanese textual information. We first replaced Arabic numbers with Chinese characters. We then used MeCab (a morphological language analysis tool for Japanese developed by Taku Kudo, <http://taku910.github.io/mecab/>) and mecab-ipadic-NEologd (a dictionary for MeCab developed by Toshinori Sato, <https://github.com/neologd/mecab-ipadic-neologd>) to disaggregate each sentence into different parts of speech. Third, we removed terms that do not contain meaningful information, such as terms composed of only hiragana letters or numbers. Excluding terms with only hiragana letters corresponds to excluding stop words in other languages. All analyses were done with the statistical software R.

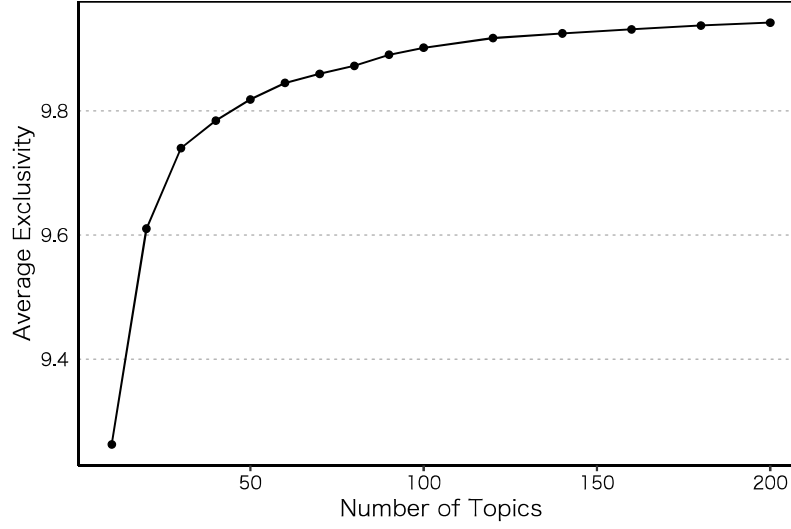
A2.2 Analyses

Figure A.1: Percentage of programs including editorial by commentators



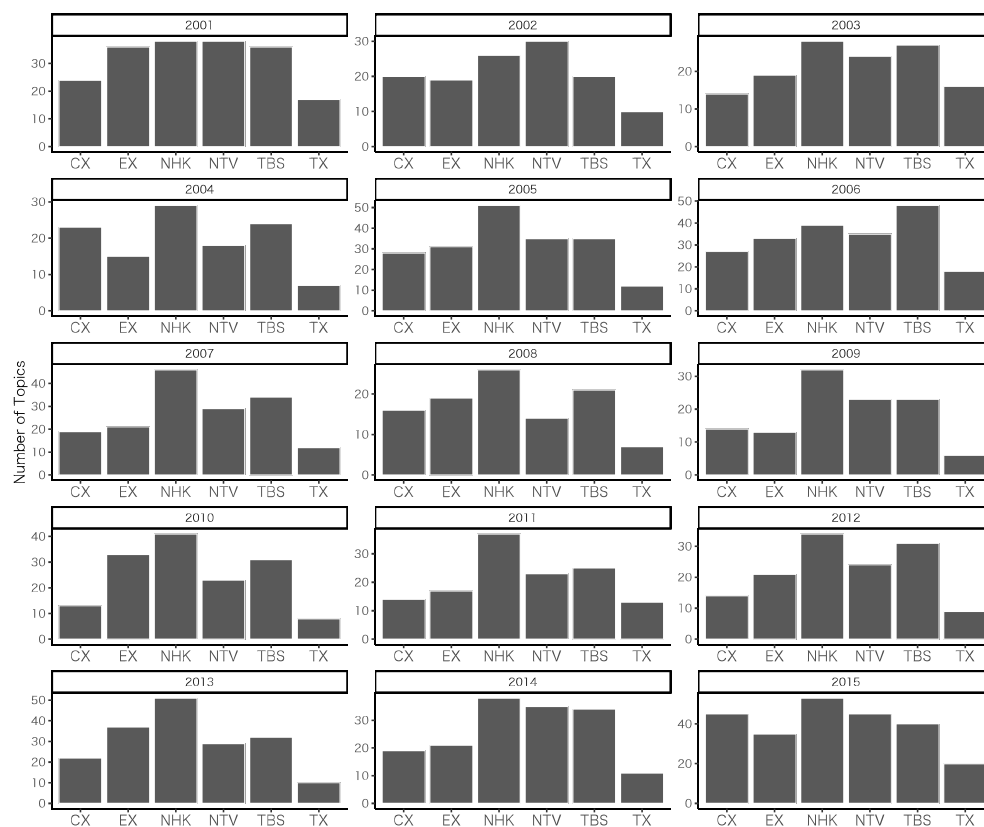
Note: We extracted the programs containing “komenteita” [commentator], “kaisetsu” [explanation] and “sutajio” [TV studio] from the text data. Krauss (1998) considers television reports without editorial or commentary as straight news, which simply report events as they are. Although gate-keeping or coverage bias can occur in straight news, such reports are often considered to have less statement bias, which is what this paper examines. Krauss (1998) also points out that NHK has a higher percentage of straight news than commercial broadcasters.

Figure A.2: Exclusivity for each topic (from 10 to 200 Topics)



Note: we used the structural topic model (STM) developed by Roberts et al. (2016) and classified topics into different categories and then examined how many topics each TV station covered each year. We first created a $8,119 \times 21,266$ document-feature matrix, where 8,119 is the number of programs and 21,266 the number of terms. We then determined the effective number of categories by calculating the so-called exclusivity measure. The figure shows the exclusivity measures for each topic calculated by the model. We can see that the exclusivity value becomes stable after the number of topics hits 100. Following the finding, we adopted the 100-topic model.

Figure A.3: Number of topics reported by each TV station



A3 **Descriptive Statistics**

Table A.2: Summary of experimental design

	Public media	Left-leaning media	Right-leaning media
No bias	Group 1 (NHK, Control)	Group 3 (Ex, Control)	Group 5 (NTV, Control)
Pro-government bias	Group 2 (NHK, Bias)	Group 4 (EX, Bias)	Group 6 (NTV, Bias)

Table A.3: Summary statistics for key demographic variables

Characteristic	EX	EX	NHK	NHK	NTV	NTV
	Control N = 381	Bias N = 382	Control N = 374	Bias N = 380	Control N = 384	Bias N = 385
Female	174 (46%)	187 (49%)	163 (44%)	197 (52%)	184 (48%)	183 (48%)
Age	50 (12)	49 (12)	49 (12)	48 (13)	49 (12)	50 (12)
College education	217 (57%)	249 (65%)	218 (58%)	219 (58%)	234 (61%)	233 (61%)
Respondent's ideology	5.28 (1.84)	5.07 (1.80)	5.22 (1.96)	5.07 (1.85)	5.05 (1.69)	5.28 (1.78)
Political Interest	2.64 (1.15)	2.63 (1.19)	2.68 (1.20)	2.78 (1.17)	2.74 (1.17)	2.60 (1.15)
Frequency of Viewing TV	4.24 (1.26)	4.05 (1.35)	4.17 (1.27)	4.19 (1.27)	4.21 (1.20)	4.17 (1.27)
Credibility of EX	3.44 (1.04)	3.55 (1.00)	3.35 (1.12)	3.54 (1.03)	3.31 (1.02)	3.33 (1.01)
Credibility of NHK	3.15 (1.06)	3.27 (1.11)	3.09 (1.08)	3.23 (1.07)	3.08 (1.12)	3.08 (1.03)
Credibility of NTV	3.18 (0.94)	3.34 (0.93)	3.10 (0.98)	3.26 (0.92)	3.13 (0.92)	3.17 (0.93)
Credibility of Abe Administration	3.30 (1.18)	3.43 (1.21)	3.41 (1.22)	3.40 (1.19)	3.45 (1.17)	3.30 (1.17)
Mean (Standard deviation); N (%) for female and college education						

Table A.4: A comparison between the sample and the national census (2015)

	Census (2015)	Our sample
Female	51.32%	47.06%
Age 18–29	13.61%	6.02%
Age 30–39	14.53%	21.88%
Age 40–49	17.30%	25.26%
Age 50–59	14.60%	22.70%
Age 60–	39.97%	24.13%

Source: <https://www.e-stat.go.jp/stat-search/file-download?statInfId=000031473212&fileKind=1>

A4 Survey Procedure

We conducted our online survey via Nikkei Research Inc. (<https://www.nikkei-r.co.jp/english/>). We recruited survey participants from August 27 to 29, 2019. We asked Nikkei Research to send an invitation email to their sample pool, who were then directed to our Qualtrics survey website.

We obtained a total of 2,656 respondents. We included three screening questions: whether respondents were over the age of 18, held Japanese citizenship, and lived in Japan. Those who failed to meet these criteria were excluded from our analyses. Following Aronow et al. (2019), we employed attention check questions to ensure sample quality. In this question, regardless of the actual question, survey respondents were asked to choose the answer option “somewhat oppose,” and we considered those who fail to follow the instruction as inattentive respondents. We had 369 respondents who failed to follow our instruction. We also collected respondents’ survey duration. By using the two variables, we conducted robustness checks and ensured that our findings are not sensitive to respondents’ shirking behavior.

We embedded a randomized survey experiment to test the hypotheses in the survey. The survey began with conventional demographic questions and several pre-treatment questions, followed by the survey experiment and our dependent variable questions. In the end, we also asked questions about respondents’ media preference such as their favorite television programs (see below for the complete questionnaires in Japanese and English).

A5 Survey Instruments

A5.1 Original version

Q0. この度はお忙しい中、アンケートにご協力いただきありがとうございます。アンケートへお答え頂く前に、まずは以下の文をよくお読みください。

[この調査の目的]

このアンケートは、大学に所属する国際関係論の研究者が、日本の政治や国際情勢についてどのように考えているかを、学術的に調査するものです。このあとのページでは、いくつかの簡単な質問にお答えいただきます。

[プライバシーの保護]

調査を通じて得られたデータは厳重に管理されるため、情報の漏えい等の心配はありません。調査の結果は研究目的のみで使用され、公表にあたって個人が特定されることも決してありません。また、調査の結果は統計的に処理されます。

本アンケートの趣旨を理解し、参加に同意いただける場合は「同意する」を選択し、右下の「>>」をクリックして先に進んでください。

0. 同意しない

1. 同意する

Q1. あなたの性別をお答えください。

0. 男性

1. 女性

9. その他

Q2. 現在の年齢はいくつですか。

Q3. あなたが最後に在籍した（または現在、在籍している）学校はこの中のどれに

あたりますか。

1. 小学校 / 中学校
2. 高校
3. 短大 / 高専 / 専門学校
4. 大学 / 大学院

Q4. あなたは日本国籍をお持ちですか。

0. いいえ
1. はい

Q5. 日本に限らず、世界各国では政治的立場を「左」―「右」の言葉で表現することがよくあります。このものさしで、ご自身や以下の組織、個人の立場を示すとしたら、どうなりますか。0（＝最も左）10（＝最も右）のうち、あてはまる数字を選んでください。

- (1) あなたご自身
- (2) 自民党
- (3) 安倍晋三首相
- (4) 立憲民主党
- (5) 中央官僚
- (6) 最高裁判所の裁判官
- (7) NHK (日本の公共放送)
- (8) 日本テレビ (読売新聞系列の民放テレビ局)
- (9) テレビ朝日 (朝日新聞系列の民放テレビ局)
- (10) 読売新聞
- (11) 朝日新聞

Q6. あなたと政治や社会の関わりについて、あなたのお気持ちをお答えください。

- (1) 私は政治に関心を持っている方だ
- (2) 自分には政府のすることに対して、それを左右する力はない

- (3) 政治とか政府とかは、あまりに複雑なので自分にはよく理解できないことがある
- (4) 国会議員は、おおざっぱに言って当選したらすぐ国民のことを考えなくなる

Q7. 多くの人が「長期的に見ると、自分は△△党寄りだ」とお考えのようです。短期的に他の政党へ投票することはもちろんあり得るとして、長い目で見ると、あなたは「何党寄り」と言えるでしょうか。

1. 自民党
2. 公明党
3. 立憲民主党
4. 国民民主党
5. 共産党
6. 日本維新の会
7. 社民党
8. れいわ新選組
9. NHKから国民を守る党
10. その他の政党
11. どの政党でもない

Q8. あなたは日本人であることにどのくらい誇りを感じますか。

1. 非常に感じる
2. かなり感じる
3. あまり感じない
4. 全く感じない
5. 私は日本人ではない

Q9. あなたは以下の主張にどれくらい同意、あるいは賛成しますか。全く同意しなかったり、反対する場合を1、完全に同意したり、賛成する場合を7として答えてください。あまり深く考えないで、直感的に答えてください。

- (1) 物事の優先順位を決めるときには、あらゆる集団に配慮すべきだ。

- (2) 私たちは集団間の平等を追求すべきではない。
- (3) 私たちは集団間の平等を理想とすべきだ。
- (4) 優れた人の集団は劣った人の集団を支配すべきだ。

(実験群1～実験群6のうちランダムに1つを回答者に割り当て) *Note: texts colored in red were not shown to participants.

(実験群1：NHKによる報道、プロパガンダなし)

以下のNHK（日本の公共放送）による架空の報道をよく読み、次のページの質問に答えてください。

NHKによると、超党派の「みんなで靖国神社に参拝する国会議員の会」の衆参議員約50人が、終戦記念日の8月15日に東京・九段北の靖国神社を参拝しました。第二次安倍政権以降は、首相自らの公式の参拝は見送られていますが、このように多くの国会議員が例祭などのタイミングで参拝をしています。参拝に対して中国政府からの抗議はありませんでした。

(実験群2：テレビ朝日による報道、プロパガンダなし)

以下のテレビ朝日（朝日新聞系列の民放テレビ局）による架空の報道をよく読み、次のページの質問に答えてください。

テレビ朝日によると、超党派の「みんなで靖国神社に参拝する国会議員の会」の衆参議員約50人が、終戦記念日の8月15日に東京・九段北の靖国神社を参拝しました。第二次安倍政権以降は、首相自らの公式の参拝は見送られていますが、このように多くの国会議員が例祭などのタイミングで参拝をしています。参拝に対して中国政府からの抗議はありませんでした。

(実験群3：日本テレビによる報道、プロパガンダなし)

以下の日本テレビ（読売新聞系列の民放テレビ局）による架空の報道をよく読み、次のページの質問に答えてください。

日本テレビによると、超党派の「みんなで靖国神社に参拝する国会議員の会」の衆参議員約50人が、終戦記念日の8月15日に東京・九段北の靖国神社を参拝しました。第二次安倍政権以降は、首相自らの公式の参拝は見送られていますが、このように多くの国会議員が例祭などのタイミングで参拝をしています。参拝に対して中国政府からの抗議はありませんでした。

(実験群4：NHKによる報道、プロパガンダあり)

以下のNHK（日本の公共放送）による架空の報道をよく読み、次のページの質問に答えてください。

NHKによると、超党派の「みんなで靖国神社に参拝する国会議員の会」の衆参議員約50人が、終戦記念日の8月15日に東京・九段北の靖国神社を参拝しました。第二次安倍政権以降は、首相自らの公式の参拝は見送られていますが、このように多くの国会議員が例祭などのタイミングで参拝をしています。参拝に対して中国政府からの抗議はありませんでした。NHKのニュース解説者は、「中国政府から抗議がなかったのは、安倍首相の外交努力によるところが大きい」として、安倍首相の手腕を賞賛しています。

(実験群5：テレビ朝日による報道、プロパガンダあり)

以下のテレビ朝日（朝日新聞系列の民放テレビ局）による架空の報道をよく読み、次のページの質問に答えてください。

テレビ朝日によると、超党派の「みんなで靖国神社に参拝する国会議員の会」の衆参議員約50人が、終戦記念日の8月15日に東京・九段北の靖国神社を参拝しました。第二次安倍政権以降は、首相自らの公式の参拝は見送られていますが、このように多くの国会議員が例祭などのタイミングで参拝をしています。参拝に対して中国政府からの抗議はありませんでした。テレビ朝日のニュース解説者は、「中国政府から抗議がなかったのは、安倍首相の外交努力によるところが大きい」として、

安倍首相の手腕を賞賛しています。

(実験群6：日本テレビによる報道、プロパガンダあり)

以下の日本テレビ（読売新聞系列の民放テレビ局）による架空の報道をよく読み、次のページの質問に答えてください。

日本テレビによると、超党派の「みんなで靖国神社に参拝する国会議員の会」の衆参議員約50人が、終戦記念日の8月15日に東京・九段北の靖国神社を参拝しました。第二次安倍政権以降は、首相自らの公式の参拝は見送られていますが、このように多くの国会議員が例祭などのタイミングで参拝をしています。参拝に対して中国政府からの抗議はありませんでした。日本テレビのニュース解説者は、「中国政府から抗議がなかったのは、安倍首相の外交努力によるところが大きい」として、安倍首相の手腕を賞賛しています。

Q10. あなたはこの報道内容を信頼できますか。それとも信頼できませんか。

1. 信頼できる 2. やや信頼できる 3. どちらとも言えない 4. やや信頼できない 5. 信頼できない

Q11. あなたは以下の組織を信頼できますか、それとも信頼できませんか。

- (1) NHK (日本の公共放送)
- (2) 日本テレビ (読売新聞系列の民放テレビ局)
- (3) テレビ朝日 (朝日新聞系列の民放テレビ局)
- (4) マスメディア全般
- (5) 安倍政権
- (6) 中国政府

Q12. 次に挙げる意見について、あなたは賛成ですか、それとも反対ですか。

- (1) 首相には靖国神社に参拝して欲しい。
- (2) 靖国神社に替わる、国立の追悼施設を設置するべきだ。

- (3) 日本は戦前・戦中の出来事について、近隣諸国に謝罪をするべきでない。
- (4) この行は、あなたが各項目をきちんと読んでいるか判断するものです。この行では、「やや反対」を選んでください。

Q13. あなたは安倍政権の外交政策を評価しますか、それとも評価しませんか。

1. 評価する
2. やや評価する
3. どちらとも言えない
4. やや評価しない
5. 評価しない

Q14. 安倍政権の外交政策に反対するデモが実施されたとします。あなたはこのデモに参加しますか、それとも参加しませんか。

1. 参加する
2. どちらかと言えば参加する
3. どちらとも言えない
4. どちらかと言えば参加しない
5. 参加しない

Q15. 日本に対する中国の姿勢に抗議するための街頭運動、いわゆる対中抗議デモが行われたとします。あなたはこのデモに参加しますか、それとも参加しませんか。

1. 参加する
2. どちらかと言えば参加する
3. どちらとも言えない
4. どちらかと言えば参加しない
5. 参加しない

Q16-1. あなたが読んだ記事は、どこのメディアによって報道されていましたか。

1. NHK (日本の公共放送)

2. テレビ朝日 (朝日新聞系列の民放テレビ局)
3. 日本テレビ (読売新聞系列の民放テレビ局)

Q16-2. あなたが読んだ記事では、ニュース解説者によって安倍首相の外交が称賛されていましたか。

1. 称賛されていた
2. 称賛されていなかった

Q16-3. あなたは、〇〇（割り当てられたテレビ局名を表示）は他のテレビ局よりも、報道内容に信頼を置けると思いますか。それともそう思いませんか。

1. そう思う
2. どちらかと言えばそう思う
3. どちらとも言えない
4. どちらかと言えばそう思わない
5. そう思わない

Q16-4. あなたは、〇〇（割り当てられたテレビ局名を表示）は他のテレビ局よりも、政治的に中立的な報道を求められると思いますか、それともそう思いませんか。

1. そう思う
2. どちらかと言えばそう思う
3. どちらとも言えない
4. どちらかと言えばそう思わない
5. そう思わない

Q16-5. マスメディアへ求める役割に対しては、多くの意見があります。あなたは、〇〇（割り当てられたテレビ局名を表示）にとって、次の役割がどのくらい重要だと思いますか。

- (1) 政府を監視・批判する

- (2) 権力者に伴走して、政府の主張を伝える
- (3) 観察者に徹する
- (4) 世論をリードする
- (5) 政治的課題を設定する

Q17. あなたは普段、テレビのニュース番組をどのくらい観ますか。

- 1. まったく観ない
- 2. 週に1日くらい
- 3. 週に2～3日くらい
- 4. 週に4～5日くらい
- 5. 毎日またはほぼ毎日

Q17-2. あなたは朝（午前9時まで）に、次のニュース番組を観ますか。観ている番組を全て選んでください。

- (1) おはよう日本（NHK）
- (2) あさイチ（NHK）
- (3) ZIP!（日本テレビ系）
- (4) グッド！モーニング（テレビ朝日系）
- (5) あさチャン！（TBS系）
- (6) めざましテレビ（フジテレビ系）
- (7) 羽鳥慎一モーニングショー（テレビ朝日系）
- (8) ビビット（TBS系）
- (9) いずれの番組も観ていない

Q17-3. あなたは朝（午前9時以降）に、次のニュース番組を観ますか。観ている番組を全て選んでください。

- (1) とくダネ！（フジテレビ系）
- (2) バゲット（日本テレビ系）
- (3) ノンストップ！（フジテレビ系）

- (4) スッキリ (日本テレビ系)
- (5) 情報ライブ ミヤネ屋 (日本テレビ系)
- (6) ゴゴスマ (TBS系)
- (7) 直撃LIVE グッディ! (フジテレビ系)
- (8) ワイド!スクランブル (テレビ朝日系)
- (9) ひるおび! (TBS系)
- (10) いずれの番組も観ていない

Q17-4. あなたは夕方から夜に、次のニュース番組を観ますか。観ている番組を全て選んでください。

- (1) news every. (日本テレビ系)
- (2) スーパーJチャンネル (テレビ朝日系)
- (3) Nスタ (TBS系)
- (4) Live News it! (フジテレビ系)
- (5) NHKニュース7 (NHK)
- (6) ニュースウオッチ9 (NHK)
- (7) news zero (日本テレビ系)
- (8) 報道ステーション (テレビ朝日系)
- (9) NEWS23 (TBS系)
- (10) FNN Live News α
- (11) いずれの番組も観ていない

Q18. 長い時間、調査にご協力ありがとうございました。なお、この調査でお読みいただいた報道記事は、専門家の見解を含めて架空のものであり、事実ではありません。このことをご理解いただき、下記をチェックしてお進みください。

調査で読んだ報道記事は架空だったと了解した。

A5.2 English translation

Q0. Thank you very much for participating in our survey. Please read the following instructions carefully before you answer the survey questions.

[Purpose of the survey]

This survey is conducted by a group of International Relations scholars to understand Japanese public opinion on politics and international affairs. You will be asked to answer some questions about the topic in the following pages.

[Privacy protection]

We will make sure to collect and store your responses in a secure work environment. All responses will be kept confidential and no effort will be made to determine the individual identity of respondents. The data will be used only for research purposes, and only aggregate responses will be reported.

If you understand the purpose and privacy protection of the survey and agree to participate in the survey, please select “Agree” and click “>>” at the bottom of this page.

0. Do not agree

1. Agree

Q1. What is your gender?

0. Male

1. Female

9. Other

Q2. How old are you?

Q3. What is your (completed) education level?

1. Primary / middle school

2. High school
3. Some college
4. College or graduate school

Q4. Do you have Japanese citizenship?

0. No
1. Yes

Q5. In Japan as well as in many other countries, we often use the word “left” or “right” to describe your political attitudes. If you use such a measurement for your own political attitudes and those of the following people and organizations, how would you rate them on a scale of 11, with 0 being “left” and 10 being “right”?

- (1) Yourself
- (2) Liberal Democratic Party
- (3) Prime Minister Shinzo Abe
- (4) Constitutional Democratic Party
- (5) Bureaucrats in the central government
- (6) Judges of the Supreme Court
- (7) NHK (public broadcasting service in Japan)
- (8) NTV (Nippon Television Network), a private broadcasting service associated with Yomiuri Shimbun
- (9) TV Asahi, a private broadcasting service associated with Asahi Shimbun
- (10) Yomiuri Shimbun
- (11) Asahi Shimbun

Q6. We would like to ask your opinion about politics and society:

- (1) Generally speaking, I am interested in politics
- (2) I cannot change what the government does
- (3) They are so complicated that I sometimes have a difficulty in understanding how

politics and the government work

(4) Generally speaking, Diet members stop thinking about voters once they are elected

Q7. Many people tend to think that “I am inclined to support Party A in the long run.”

Of course you may sometimes vote for other parties, but which party are you inclined to support in the long run?

1. Liberal Democratic Party
2. New Komeito Party
3. Constitutional Democratic Party
4. National Democratic Party
5. Communist Party of Japan
6. Japan Innovation Party
7. Social Democratic Party
8. Reiwa Shinsengumi
9. Party to Protect the People from NHK
10. Other party
11. No party affiliation

Q8. How proud are you to be Japanese?

1. Very much
2. To a certain degree
3. Not so much
4. Not at all
5. I am not Japanese

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? 1 corresponds to completely disagree and object, and 7 corresponds to completely agree and support. Please answer the questions intuitively without thinking deeply.

(1) We should care about the interests of all groups when we decide about what our

priorities are.

- (2) We should not seek for equality of condition for different groups.
- (3) We should aim at achieving equality for different groups.
- (4) It is probably a good thing that certain groups are on top and they rule other inferior groups.

(One of the following six experimental groups was randomly assigned) *Note: texts colored in red were not shown to participants.

(Experiment group 1: NHK without pro-government bias)

Please read the following fictional news report by NHK (Japanese public broadcasting service in Japan) and answer the following questions.

According to NHK, about 50 lower and upper house Diet members who belong to the all-party parliamentary group called “Diet member group for visiting Yasukuni shrine” visited Yasukuni Shrine in Kudan-kita in Tokyo on August 15, when Japan commemorates the anniversary of the end of World War II. Since the second Abe administration, the Prime Minister has not visited the shrine, but many Diet members go to the shrine on occasions like this kind of spring/fall festival. There was no protest by the Chinese government on this particular visit.

(Experiment group 2: TV Asahi without pro-government bias)

Please read the following fictional news report by TV Asahi (private broadcasting service associated with Asahi Shimbun) and answer the following questions.

According to TV Asahi, about 50 lower and upper house Diet members who belong to the all-party parliamentary group called “Diet member group for visiting Yasukuni shrine” visited Yasukuni Shrine in Kudan-kita in Tokyo on August 15, when Japan commemorates the anniversary of the end of World War II. Since the second Abe administration, the Prime Minister has not visited the shrine, but many Diet members go to the shrine

on occasions like this kind of spring/fall festival. There was no protest by the Chinese government on this particular visit.

(Experiment group 3: NTV without pro-government bias)

Please read the following fictional news report by NTV (private broadcasting service associated with Yomiuri Shimbun) and answer the following questions.

According to NTV, about 50 lower and upper house Diet members who belong to the all-party parliamentary group called “Diet member group for visiting Yasukuni shrine” visited Yasukuni Shrine in Kudan-kita in Tokyo on August 15, when Japan commemorates the anniversary of the end of World War II. Since the second Abe administration, the Prime Minister has not visited the shrine, but many Diet members go to the shrine on occasions like this kind of spring/fall festival. There was no protest by the Chinese government on this particular visit.

(Experiment group 4: NHK with pro-government bias)

Please read the following fictional news report by NHK (Japanese public broadcasting service in Japan) and answer the following questions.

According to NHK, about 50 lower and upper house Diet members who belong to the all-party parliamentary group called “Diet member group for visiting Yasukuni shrine” visited Yasukuni Shrine in Kudan-kita in Tokyo on August 15, when Japan commemorates the anniversary of the end of World War II. Since the second Abe administration, the Prime Minister has not visited the shrine, but many Diet members go to the shrine on occasions like this kind of spring/fall festival. There was no protest by the Chinese government on this particular visit. The NHK’s news commentator praises Prime Minister Abe by saying that the lack of Chinese protest is largely due to Prime Minister Abe’s diplomatic efforts.

(Experiment group 5: TV Asahi with pro-government bias)

Please read the following fictional news report by TV Asahi (private broadcasting service associated with Asahi Shimbun) and answer the following questions.

According to TV Asahi, about 50 lower and upper house Diet members who belong to the all-party parliamentary group called “Diet member group for visiting Yasukuni shrine” visited Yasukuni Shrine in Kudan-kita in Tokyo on August 15, when Japan commemorates the anniversary of the end of World War II. Since the second Abe administration, the Prime Minister has not visited the shrine, but many Diet members go to the shrine on occasions like this kind of spring/fall festival. There was no protest by the Chinese government on this particular visit. The TV Asahi’s news commentator praises Prime Minister Abe by saying that the lack of Chinese protest is largely due to Prime Minister Abe’s diplomatic efforts.

(Experiment group 6: NTV with pro-government bias)

Please read the following fictional news report by NTV (private broadcasting service associated with Yomiuri Shimbun) and answer the following questions.

According to NTV, about 50 lower and upper house Diet members who belong to the all-party parliamentary group called “Diet member group for visiting Yasukuni shrine” visited Yasukuni Shrine in Kudan-kita in Tokyo on August 15, when Japan commemorates the anniversary of the end of World War II. Since the second Abe administration, the Prime Minister has not visited the shrine, but many Diet members go to the shrine on occasions like this kind of spring/fall festival. There was no protest by the Chinese government on this particular visit. The NTV’s news commentator praises Prime Minister Abe by saying that the lack of Chinese protest is largely due to Prime Minister Abe’s diplomatic efforts.

Q10. Do you trust the news report?

1. Yes, completely
2. Somewhat (yes)
3. Neither
4. Somewhat (no)
5. Not at all

Q11. Do you trust the following organizations?

- (1) NHK (public broadcasting service)
- (2) NTV (private broadcasting service associated with Yomiuri Shimbun)
- (3) TV Asahi (private broadcasting service associated with Asahi Shimbun)
- (4) Japanese mass media in general
- (5) Abe administration
- (6) Chinese government

Q12. Do you agree or disagree with the following policy opinions?

- (1) I would like Prime Ministers to visit Yasukuni Shrine
- (2) Japan should construct a new national war memorial as an alternative to Yasukuni Shrine
- (3) Japan should not apologize to its neighboring countries for its acts before and during WWII
- (4) For this question, we check if you carefully read our instruction. Please select “Somewhat disagree”

Q13. How do you evaluate the foreign policies of the Abe administration?

1. Very positively
2. Somewhat positively
3. Neither
4. Somewhat negatively
5. Very negatively

Q14. If there were a protest rally against the Abe administration's foreign policy, would you participate in the rally?

1. I would participate
2. I would probably participate
3. Neither
4. I would probably not participate
5. I would not participate

Q15. If there were a protest rally against China (so-called "anti-China demonstration"), would you participate in the rally?

1. I would participate
2. I would probably participate
3. Neither
4. I would probably not participate
5. I would not participate

Q16-1. Which media reported the news that you just read?

- (1) NHK (public broadcasting service)
- (2) TV Asahi (private broadcasting service associated with Asahi Shimbun)
- (3) NTV (private broadcasting service associated with Yomiuri Shimbun)

Q16-2. In the news report that you just read, did the news commentator praise Prime Minister Abe's foreign policy?

1. Yes
2. No

Q16-3. Do you trust XXX (XXX is replaced with the assigned media company's name) to be more neutral than other TV companies in its news content?

1. Yes, completely
2. Somewhat (yes)
3. Neither
4. Somewhat (no)
5. Not at all

Q16-4. Do you think XXX (XXX is replaced with the assigned media company's name) should be more neutral in its news content than other TV companies?

1. Yes, completely
2. Somewhat (yes)
3. Neither
4. Somewhat (no)
5. Not at all

Q16-5. There are many different opinions about the expected role of mass media. For XXX (XXX is replaced with the assigned media company's name), how important are the following roles to you?

- (1) Monitoring and criticizing the government
- (2) Informing and supporting the government's policy positions
- (3) Being a neutral third-party
- (4) Taking a lead in forming public opinion
- (5) Setting the political agenda

Q17. How often do you watch news on TV?

1. Not at all
2. Once a week
3. A few times a week
4. Four or five times a week
5. Every day or almost everyday

Q17-2. In the morning (up until 9 am), do you watch the following news programs?

Please select all the programs that you watch.

- (1) Ohayo Nippon (NHK)
- (2) Asa Ichi (NHK)
- (3) ZIP! (NTV)
- (4) Good Morning (TV Asahi)
- (5) Asa Chan! (TBS)
- (6) Mezamashi Terebi (Fuji TV)
- (7) Hatori Shin-ichi Morning Show (TV Asahi)
- (8) Bibit (TBS)
- (9) None of the above

Q17-3. In the morning (after 9 am), do you watch the following news programs? Please select all the programs that you watch.

- (1) Toku Dane! (Fuji TV)
- (2) Baget (NTV)
- (3) Non Stop! (Fuji TV)
- (4) Sukkiri (NTV)
- (5) Joho Live Miyaneya (NTV)
- (6) Gogo Suma (NTV)
- (7) Chokugeki Live Gooday! (Fuji TV)
- (8) Wide! Scramble (TV Asahi)
- (9) Hiruobi! (TBS)
- (10) None of the above

Q17-4. In the evening, do you watch the following news programs? Please select all the programs that you watch

- (1) news every (NTV)

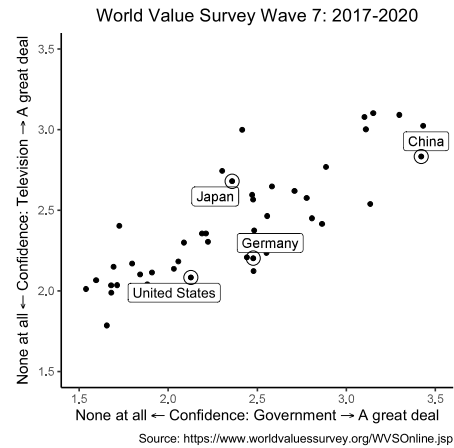
- (2) Super J Channel (TV Asahi)
- (3) N Sta (TBS)
- (4) Live News it! (Fuji TV)
- (5) NHK News Seven (NHK)
- (6) News Watch Nine (NHK)
- (7) news zero (NTV)
- (8) Hodo Station (TV Asahi)
- (9) NEWS23 (TBS)
- (10) FNN Live News α (Fuji TV)
- (11) None of the above

Q18. We highly appreciate your participation in our survey. Please note that the news report we provided, including the comments by the commentator, was fictional. Please check the mark at the right bottom and complete the survey.

I understand the news report that I read was fictional.

A6 Additional Analyses

Figure A.4: Cross-country variation in confidence in government and TV stations



Note: Respondents were asked to indicate how much they trusted each organization by choosing “A great deal,” “Quite a lot,” “Not very much,” or “None at all”. We coded the responses so that a higher value denotes a higher level of trust and calculated the average values for each country (we also label three other countries as reference points: the U.S., Germany, and China).

Table A.5: Effect of pro-government bias on distrust in the provided information, by respondent's views on the neutrality of the assigned TV station

	Assigned TV Station		
	EX	NHK	NTV
Intercept	1.05*** (0.28)	1.28*** (0.28)	0.78** (0.30)
Pro-government Bias	1.03*** (0.20)	1.05*** (0.14)	0.40 (0.23)
Neutrality of Assigned TV Station	0.07 (0.04)	0.13** (0.05)	0.02 (0.06)
Female	-0.03 (0.07)	0.13 (0.08)	0.10 (0.07)
Age	0.01** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01* (0.00)
College Education	-0.10 (0.07)	0.10 (0.08)	0.04 (0.07)
Political Interest	0.01 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Frequency of Viewing Assigned TV Station	0.04 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Credibility of Assigned TV Station	0.34*** (0.03)	0.33*** (0.03)	0.46*** (0.04)
Pro-government Bias $\times$ Neutrality	-0.09 (0.06)	-0.27*** (0.06)	0.05 (0.07)
Observations	763	754	769
R ²	0.25	0.19	0.25
Adjusted R ²	0.24	0.18	0.24
Residual Std. Error	0.94	0.98	0.93
F Statistic	27.68***	19.69***	27.42***

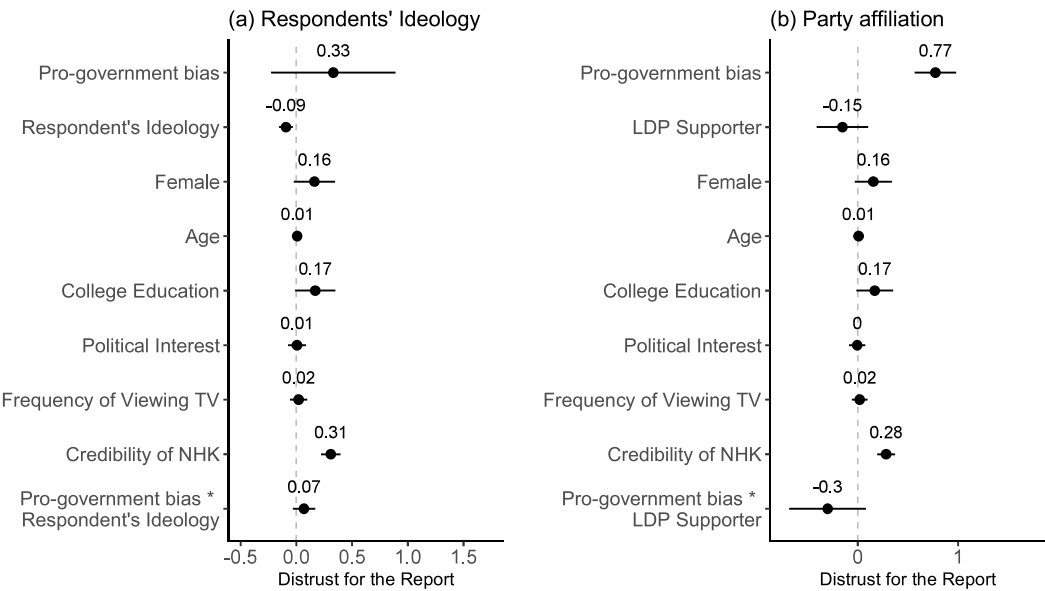
Standard errors in parentheses; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table A.6: Effect of pro-government bias on distrust in the provided information, by respondent's ideology or party affiliation

	Respondents Assigned to NHK			
	Those Who Believe NHK Should Be Neutral		Those Who Don't Believe NHK Should Be Neutral	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Intercept	1.75*** (0.38)	1.41*** (0.34)	2.60*** (0.49)	2.31*** (0.43)
Pro-government Bias	0.33 (0.27)	0.77*** (0.10)	0.21 (0.32)	0.19 (0.14)
Respondent's Ideology	-0.09** (0.03)		-0.05 (0.04)	
LDP Supporter		-0.15 (0.13)		-0.01 (0.20)
Female	0.16 (0.09)	0.16 (0.09)	0.01 (0.13)	-0.01 (0.13)
Age	0.01* (0.00)	0.01* (0.00)	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)
College Education	0.17 (0.09)	0.17 (0.09)	-0.06 (0.13)	-0.07 (0.13)
Political Interest	0.01 (0.04)	-0.00 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.05 (0.05)
Frequency of Viewing NHK	0.02 (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)	0.01 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)
Credibility of NHK	0.31*** (0.04)	0.28*** (0.04)	0.34*** (0.06)	0.33*** (0.06)
Pro-government Bias $\times$ Ideology	0.07 (0.05)		-0.03 (0.06)	
Pro-government Bias $\times$ LDP Supporter		-0.30 (0.19)		-0.42 (0.28)
Observations	540	540	214	214
R ²	0.21	0.22	0.18	0.17
Adjusted R ²	0.20	0.20	0.14	0.14
Residual Std. Error	1.01	1.01	0.87	0.87
F Statistic	16.06***	16.42***	4.89***	4.73***

Standard errors in parentheses; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Figure A.5: Moderation effect of respondents' ideology or party affiliation on distrust in the provided information among people who believe NHK should be neutral (Bootstrap samples)



Note: Whiskers indicate 95% CI

Table A.7: Effect of pro-government bias on distrust in the provided information, by respondents' ideology

	Assigned TV Station		
	EX	NHK	NTV
Intercept	1.19*** (0.29)	2.02*** (0.31)	1.31*** (0.31)
Pro-government Bias	1.16*** (0.20)	0.31 (0.21)	1.04*** (0.21)
Respondents' Ideology	-0.00 (0.03)	-0.08** (0.03)	-0.06* (0.03)
Female	-0.03 (0.07)	0.12 (0.08)	0.07 (0.07)
Age	0.01*** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01* (0.00)
College Education	-0.11 (0.07)	0.10 (0.08)	0.01 (0.07)
Political Interest	0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)
Frequency of Viewing Assigned TV Station	0.04 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Credibility of Assigned TV Station	0.37*** (0.03)	0.32*** (0.03)	0.44*** (0.04)
Pro-government Bias $\times$ Respondent's Ideology	-0.08* (0.04)	0.04 (0.04)	-0.09* (0.04)
Observations	763	754	769
R ²	0.26	0.19	0.28
Adjusted R ²	0.25	0.18	0.27
Residual Std. Error	0.93	0.98	0.91
F Statistic	28.68***	18.86***	32.53***

Standard errors in parentheses; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table A.8: Effect of pro-government bias on distrust in media overall

	Control	Pro-government bias	p-value
	<i>Do you trust Japanese mass media in general?</i>		
EX	3.51 (0.88)	3.67 (0.89)	0.009
NHK	3.47 (0.94)	3.56 (0.89)	0.2
NTV	3.62 (0.88)	3.44 (0.92)	0.2

Note: Although the treatment has a statistically significant effect for the EX TV groups, the effect size is small and given the other results, we cannot discount the possibility that it may be due to random chance. This is also confirmed by our replication analysis with the sample that passed the manipulation check question. We find that none of the treatment groups has a statistically significant result at the 10% level (the results are available upon request).

Table A.9: Manipulation check I: Which media reported the news you read?

	NHK	EX	NTV
NHK $\times$ No pro-government bias	271	51	52
NHK $\times$ Pro-government bias	288	46	46
EX $\times$ No pro-government bias	56	269	57
EX $\times$ Pro-government bias	70	270	42
NTV $\times$ No pro-government bias	66	69	249
NTV $\times$ Pro-government bias	63	67	255

Table A.10: Manipulation check II: Did the news praise Prime Minister Abe’s foreign policy?

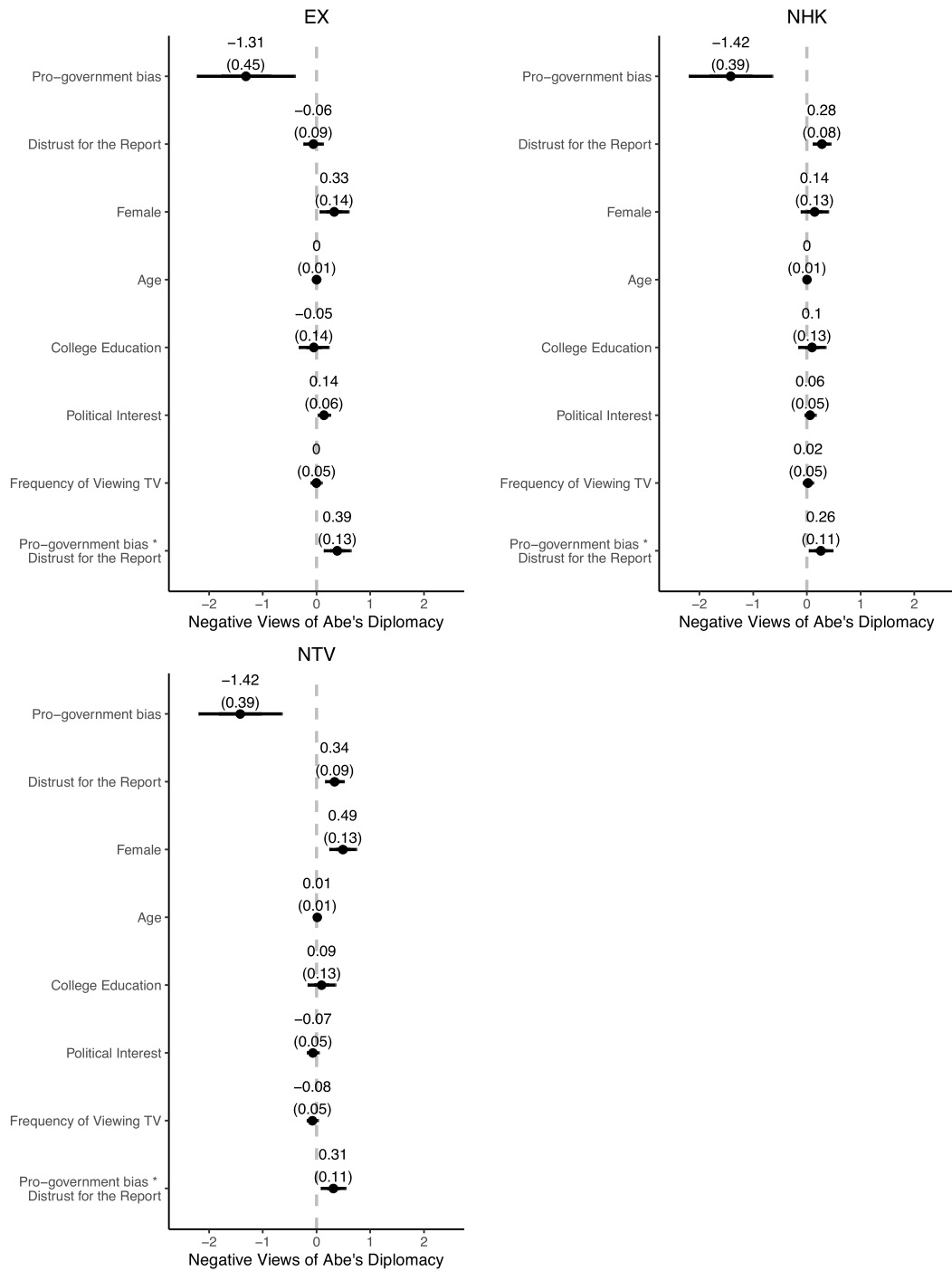
	Yes	No
NHK $\times$ No pro-government bias	100	274
NHK $\times$ Pro-government bias	265	115
EX $\times$ No pro-government bias	91	291
EX $\times$ Pro-government bias	279	103
NTV $\times$ No pro-government bias	101	283
NTV $\times$ Pro-government bias	287	98

Table A.11: Manipulation check III: Effect of pro-government bias on distrust in provided information

	Control	Pro-government bias	p-value
<i>Do you trust the news report?</i>			
Those who pass two attention checks			
EX	2.99 (1.03)	3.86 (1.00)	< 0.001
NHK	2.98 (1.05)	3.68 (1.09)	< 0.001
NTV	2.88 (1.03)	3.64 (1.11)	< 0.001
Those who do not pass two attention checks			
EX	3.12 (0.96)	3.72 (1.02)	< 0.001
NHK	2.96 (1.00)	3.32 (0.97)	0.001
NTV	2.94 (0.96)	3.27 (0.97)	0.001

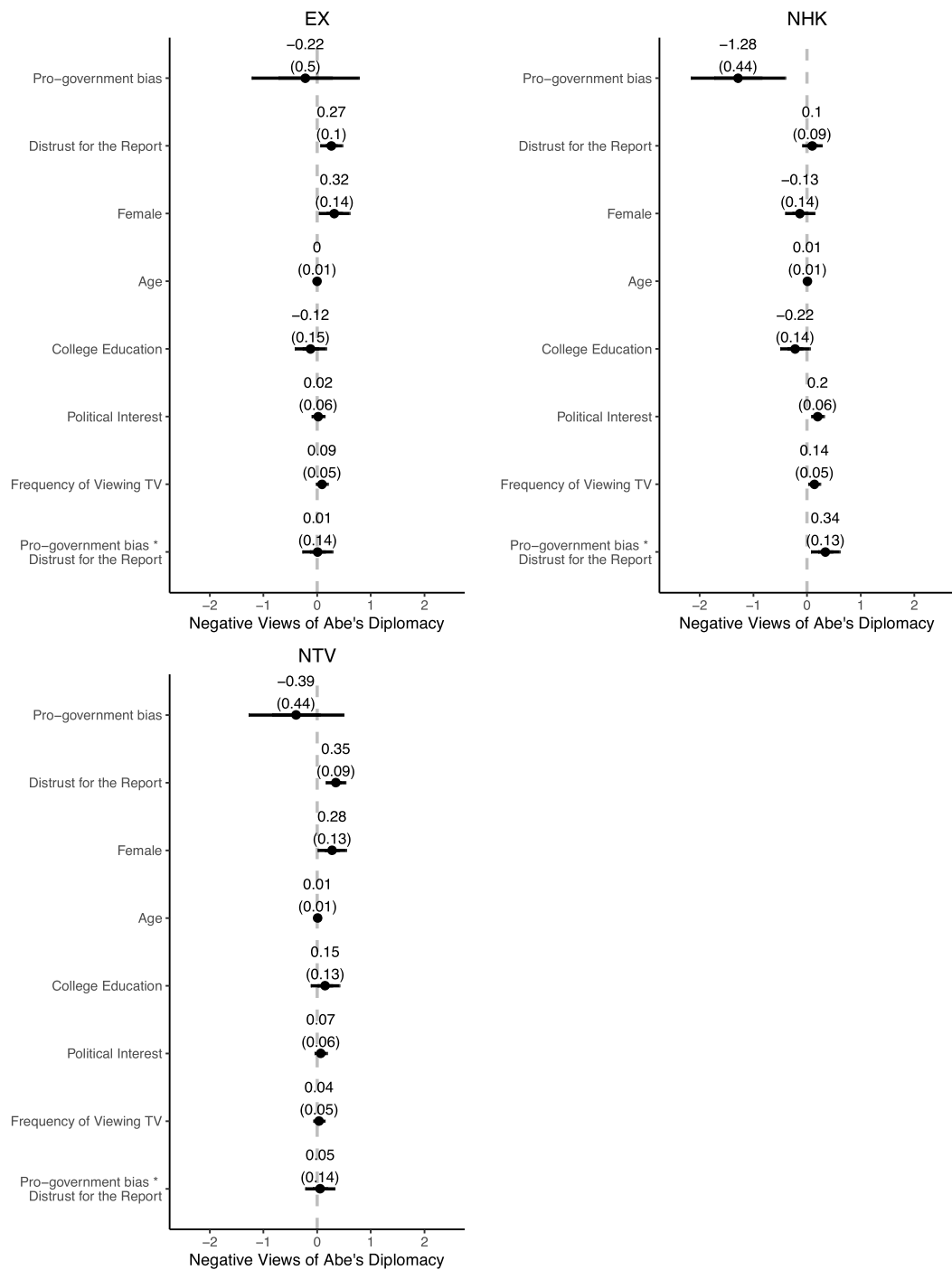
Note: We provide mean values and standard deviation in parentheses. t-test is used for statistical tests. The scale ranges from 1 (Yes) to 5 (No).

Figure A.6: Moderation effect of distrust in the provided information on respondent's negative views of Abe's diplomacy (only those who pass the two manipulation checks)



Note: Whiskers indicate 95% CI; Standard error in parentheses

Figure A.7: Moderation effect of distrust in the provided information on respondent's negative views of Abe's diplomacy (only those who fail at least one of the two manipulation checks)



Note: Whiskers indicate 95% CI; Standard error in parentheses