

An exploratory study on the factors influencing credibility of television news and portal news*

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Abstract

News credibility is on a decline for many democratic countries. Among the countries, South Korea is currently witnessing one of the steepest declining curves. Since people obtain news from various media, for example, television and portals, news credibility can be measured for each of the media separately. Most often, television news credibility is much higher than portal news credibility because people tend to trust traditional media more than online ones. To understand the discrepancy between news credibility of the two media in specific relation to South Koreans' everyday news use and overall news credibility evaluation, this exploratory study examined how the factors that influence television news credibility and portal news credibility differ from each other by examining the relations of news credibility of the two media to credibility of news I use and of news in general. Drawing from previous research on partisan news use, it assumed that normative beliefs for television as a traditional medium work for television news credibility in the similar way as the mechanisms of selective exposure and bias perception do. It also assumed that the experiences dimension of news trust works for credibility of portal news and of news in general similarly. To verify these assumptions, a regression analysis was conducted from a sample of 58,936 South Koreans collected in 2022. As assumed, results revealed a greater relation between credibility of television news and of news I use, and between credibility of portal news and of news in general respectively. The findings suggest that measurement of credibility should be revised in the way that reflects media characteristics and the differing expectations held by news users.

Keywords: *News Credibility, Television News, Portal News, News I Use, News in General*

1. INTRODUCTION

Across the world, a decline in trust in news has become quite common [1]. For South Korea, it has been the object of both interest and concerns for many years now. According to the Edelman Trust Barometer Report [2], Korea recorded the lowest 27 points in news trust out of 27 countries that had been covered in the study. The score was a 6-point drop from the previous year, the biggest negative change among the 27 countries.

Reflecting this attention-worthy trend in many countries, a volume of research has accumulated on news

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credibility. Some research focused on the conceptualization and measurement of news credibility (e.g., [3]), while others addressed the factors that influence it (e.g., [4]). The studies attempted to predict news credibility and uncovered a volume of information about the concept in various aspects such as news quality (e.g., [5, 6]) and audience characteristics (e.g., [7-10]). With the rise of online news media, some studies focused on the features that were unique to online media and investigated the extent to which those features contributed to understanding and predicting credibility of online news media (e.g., [2, 11, 12]). While many of the studies have helped identify factors that influence credibility of online news media, there have not been many attempts of exploring how the predicting factors might differ between traditional and online news media, and the possibility of people evaluating news credibility of different media on different standards based on their use of the media with differing purposes and expectations.

‘News I use’ is news individuals use in everyday life, while ‘news in general’ is overall news on all news media. Previous studies have identified a number of user characteristics and psychological factors that work in combination in affecting the users’ evaluation of news I use and news in general. Drawing on the previous research, this study explores those user characteristics and psychological factors to test how they might work in a similar mechanism for respective news credibility of television and of portals. Specifically, it examines the relations of credibility of news I use and of news in general to news credibility of the two media respectively and demonstrates how some predicting factors of television news credibility and of portal news credibility differ from each other.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Factors influencing news credibility

News credibility is a complex, multi-dimensional concept. News credibility, or trust in news, is the perception possessed by the subject of credibility for the object of credibility [13]. It is composed of not only the properties of its own, but also the characteristics attributed to news by the [14-17]. The components that construct news credibility usually include expertise, trustworthiness, completeness, accuracy [18], fairness and bias [19]. Often times, these components are employed as measures in the evaluation of news credibility. Other times, a single direct measure is also used [20, 21].

The framework for measuring trust in news developed by [3] suggests a useful idea to understand trust and how it can be measured. In particular, the dimensions of trust in the framework shed light in understanding and aligning the factors affecting news credibility based on each of the factors’ realm of influence. According to the framework, trust can be assessed in the three dimensions of preconceptions, experiences and cues. The preconceptions dimension covers normative ideas about the role news should play in society and why. The experiences dimension is related to evaluations about actual journalistic performance which includes whether coverage has been accurate, fair, comprehensive, biased, etc., while the cues dimension addresses messages and claims about news that politicians and others deliberately circulate. These dimensions suggest that people’s evaluation of news credibility occurs primarily in one or more of the three dimensions, and thus measurement of news credibility should be able to reflect factors occurring in the three dimensions. As to the factors that influence news credibility, there is a plethora of research. The factors usually fall into the two broad categories of news properties and audience characteristics.

2.2 News properties

Property of news that is most often examined in relation to news credibility is the quality. Previous studies

have yielded mixed results about whether higher news quality improves news credibility. In their comparative study on credibility perceptions among Americans and Chinese, [6] found that both Americans and Chinese rated news with identified sources more highly than stories with anonymous news sources. Another research contended that the media framing of politics as a strategic game contributed negatively to news credibility. They found that the more people were exposed to game-framed news, the less they tended to trust the media [5]. These results appear to suggest that news quality has a meaningful relation to news credibility. However, other studies have suggested otherwise. For example, in his examination of contemporary American journalism and news quality, [22] found that horse race journalism, which is often considered as one of the major culprits for the decline of news trust among citizens, was not a significant factor in explaining trust in news. Considering these contradicting results, it is still less than clear whether to draw definite conclusions about news quality as a factor that influences news credibility.

2.3 Audience characteristics

Studies have focused primarily on the demographic profiles and political attitudes of news users. For demographic characteristics, age, gender and education have been studied, but with differing findings. In some studies, age and education were found related to credibility [7, 8, 23], but in another, the same have been found to be not associated with credibility of network television and Internet news [24]. Political attitudes as factors affecting news credibility have usually included news users' political ideology, partisanship and the strength of ideology. Research on political attitudes has shown relatively consistent findings. A number of studies agree that, depending on the user's political ideology or partisanship, i.e., conservative or liberal, Republican or Democrat, news, source or media that support the user's beliefs is rated more credible, while the same that is in opposition to the user's viewpoints is rated less credible [9, 10, 25, 26].

2.4 External communication and information processing

Another audience factor that can influence news credibility is found in the relationship between politicians and opinion leaders, and news audience. People use the evaluations of news and media by politicians they support as a cue and take the cognitive shortcut to form their attitudes towards the news and media [3]. This is more closely explained by the studies of information processing. From their examination of the ways in which news and media as information is perceived and cognized by users, [27] concluded that there were two routes of processing news: the route with bias perception such as hostile media perception, friendly media perception, self-categorization, etc., and the route without it. They found that credibility evaluation through the route with bias perception was distorted and unstable, while credibility assessment through the route without was objective and reasonable particularly when in high elaboration. Based on this conclusion, it can be said that people who take the evaluation of certain news and media by the politicians they support as a cue, take the cognitive shortcut, rather than engaging in high elaboration such as a serious appraisal of the information, and form their attitude to the news. In other words, the cognitive shortcut people take is the route with bias perception, thus their credibility assessment of the news is distorted rather than objective and reasonable. Together with studies on audience characteristics as factors explaining news credibility, the literature on information processing suggests that news users' characteristics of political attitudes can influence how they perceive news and the perception of news can affect how news is processed by users, and, in turn, how news is processed finally influences users' credibility assessment of news.

2.5 Media characteristics and differing evaluation criteria

Since the rise of the Internet as a mainstream news media, research on news credibility has paid attention to media characteristics as predictors of news credibility. Specifically, studies focused on the ways in which online news media may differ from traditional media in terms of technology, functionality, usage and content, and how such difference might predict news credibility of online media. [11] examined interactivity, multimodality and hypertextuality as characteristics of news portals and found a significant relation between hypertextuality and portal news credibility. [4] demonstrated that reliance, information-seeking motivations and depth of news coverage predicted credibility of blogs. According to their research, information-seeking motivations and depth of news coverage are the attributes that apply to online media better than to traditional media such as television as the former allows a variety of in-depth information and wider user choice and experience, and interactivity. [24] is also in support of depth of information as a significant factor predicting credibility of Internet news. The scholars examined frequency of media use and credibility for various traditional and online media and discovered the strongest relation between the two for Internet news. They concluded that the result was indicative of depth of information on Internet news translating to credibility. These studies agree that, for online news media, factors that are associated with user experience is a significant predictor of credibility. From [3], the presentation of the three dimensions of trust, user experience is part of the experiences dimension, which covers users' evaluations about actual journalistic performance addressing whether coverage was fair, accurate, fair, biased and so on. Therefore, it can be concluded that, based on the literature of online news media and credibility, people's evaluation of credibility of online news is likely to occur primarily in the experience dimension of trust.

Television, as a traditional medium, has generally gained higher credibility than the other media have, particularly online media [28]. From his analyses of credibility of various traditional and online media, [29] concluded that social significance and political progressivity were the factors significant to credibility of traditional news media. According to this conclusion, social significance and political progressivity are values television as a traditional medium is expected to carry and the role television is expected to play. From [3]'s three dimensions of trust, the values and role of social significance and political progressivity are addressed in the dimension of preconception, normative ideas about the role news should play in society and why. People may hold such expectations for television as a traditional medium and evaluate television news based on those expectations. Therefore, the relatively high credibility of television news is likely to be reflective more of the normative ideas about television as a traditional news medium rather than of people's actual experience television news.

2.6 Credibility of news I use

'News I use' is news one uses every day. Despite its simplicity in definition and meaning, news I use has involved a volume of research and theories in literature for scholars to explain. The previous section reviewed the traditional and more recently found factors that affect news credibility. The factors discussed can apply to credibility of news in general, as will be discussed in the next section. However, it becomes more complex and challenging to understand how people evaluate credibility of news they use. It is primarily because news I use is not any news, but the news a user selects through a number of different physical and psychological routes, consumes, and then evaluates in a different way than he or she evaluates news in general. While the factors previously discussed may apply to credibility of news I use, studies have shown that the influences of the factors work differently, are distorted or are reduced at best, due to the strong mechanisms of selective exposure and bias perception.

Studies that dealt with credibility of news I use tended to focus on news users' bias in the process of news

selection and evaluation by examining the item in comparison to ‘overall trust in news’ (e.g., [30]). Indeed, Digital News Report 2022 shows that trust in news I use is higher than overall trust in news in most of the 46 countries studied, which reflects people’s higher evaluation of the news they use than that of news in general [1]. Research on such bias perception in news evaluation is most frequently found in literature on partisan bias. The studies examined partisan bias via items such as credibility of ‘attitude-consistent news’ or ‘news that match my beliefs.’ Some other studies examined news users’ evaluation of specific news, source or media preselected to present either of the two mainstream political views with the consideration of the users’ own political ideology (e.g., [25]). Most of the studies have reported that people evaluate attitude-consistent news more highly than attitude-challenging news [9, 25].

Higher credibility evaluation of attitude-consistent news is most frequently explained by selective exposure and bias perception. The selective exposure thesis is the claim that individuals generally prefer attitude-consistent information than counter-attitudinal information, thereby exposing themselves selectively to like-minded information while avoiding the unlike-minded. The avoidance of unlike-minded information is explained by cognitive dissonance [31]. Cognitive dissonance is the psychological discomfort that occurs when one encounters counter-attitudinal information, which puts the person under the pressure to reduce it. In order to reduce cognitive dissonance, people seek out congruent information, while avoiding the counter-attitudinal. There is abundant evidence for selective exposure (e.g., [32-35]). [32] found that when given a choice between attitude-consistent and attitude-challenging news, people tended to choose the former if they found it would support their existing beliefs and experienced negative feelings about selecting the latter. [33] showed that people were more likely to read the news when they found the headline of the news congruent to their views. [34] found that people relied on at least one attitude-congruent news source in their news use. Therefore, news people use every day is highly likely to include news that is in line with their political inclinations.

As to how people judge attitude-confirming news, [15] explained with bias perception. They found that people perceived attitude-consistent news fair even when the news was biased in reality. In other words, people evaluated biased but attitude-congruent news as unbiased and fair. People tend to use like-minded news as a positive credibility cue and unlike-minded news as a negative credibility cue [25]. People are likely to evaluate like-minded information more highly in credibility than unlike-minded information [10, 26, 36]. This biased credibility perception is explained by the cultural cognition view. The view suggests that people process information through the filters of their personal and cultural identity, and, when encountered new information, they consider any likely relations and effects to the values and beliefs supported by their identity, and then finally form opinions about the information [9]. According to this explanation, people rate news in due consideration of their existing values and perspectives, and when the news corresponds to their values, they are likely to evaluate it positively, and in the opposite case, they may view it negatively.

The hostile media perception thesis also supports the tendency of negative evaluation of unlike-minded news. Hostile media perception is a concept that was built upon the social judgment theory [37] and the social identity theory [38]. The social judgment theory informs that people position news information in one of the zones of acceptance, noncommitment and rejection. When it is acceptance, assimilation, a perceptual error where people feel the information as more congruent to their own attitude than it really is, occurs. When in rejection, contrast, where people perceive the information as more distant from their own view than it really is, follows. The social identity theory holds that people categorize groups into either ingroup or outgroup, where assimilation or contrast occurs accordingly. These theories suggest that people perceive attitude-challenging news as belonging to outgroup, which is followed by outgroup contrast, and thus negative evaluation of the information and news [39, 40]. In sum, the strong mechanisms of selective exposure and bias

perception operate in people's credibility evaluation of news I use, which explains the generally higher level of credibility of news I use.

It was discussed earlier that people's credibility assessment of television news tends to occur primarily in the preconceptions dimension [3]. The consistent higher credibility of television news is reflective of the normative ideas about television as a traditional news medium maintained by people, rather than people's actual experience of television news. Portal news, on the other hand, is likely to be evaluated based on the actual experience in the experiences dimension. Credibility of news I use is explained by selective exposure and bias perception. While people actually use the news they use, their evaluation of it occurs through the strong mechanisms of selective exposure and bias perception. These mechanisms keep people from taking the information processing route without bias perception [27], and provide a strong positive credibility cue of attitude-consistency [25]. Similarly, people's evaluation of television news credibility occurs with due consideration of the normative ideas about television as a traditional mainstream medium, which again puts people out of the information processing route without bias perception. The strong mechanisms of selective exposure and bias perception for news I use and the mechanism of the normative ideas about traditional media for television news operate in a similar way, affecting credibility to be consistent and less reflective of the actual user experience and the quality of news content itself. In contrast, portal news is more likely to be evaluated by factors in the experiences dimension. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Credibility of news I use will have a greater relation with television news credibility than with portal news credibility.

2.7 Credibility of news in general

Credibility of news in general provides a general view of the performance of journalism and news media in society. Different from news I use, news in general is, in essence, any news. It is inclusive of news that one uses and news one does not use. While news I use is likely to include more of attitude-consistent news, news in general is not necessarily so. For most people, news in general includes attitude-congruent news, counter-attitudinal news and balanced news. The strong mechanisms of selective exposure and bias perception that apply to credibility of news I use are much less likely to apply to how people assess news in general. Rather, the traditional predictors of news credibility are likely to apply to news in general without so much distortion caused by selective exposure and bias perception.

From the earlier discussion of the factors that influence news credibility, it can be said that the predictors of news in general are likely to include news quality and audience characteristics. Since news in general is not media-specific, media characteristics are less likely to be part of the predictors. External communication, which works between political leaders issuing messages about certain news or media and the supporters using the messages as a cue to take a cognitive shortcut, applies to specific news or media rather than overall news or media in general. Thus, external communication appears to be less likely to apply to people's credibility evaluation of news in general. As for information processing, literature on partisan news use shows how news users might assess overall news credibility based on their political attitudes.

The studies have demonstrated that partisan news users who identify themselves as belonging to a politically non-dominant group tend to have higher hostile media perception, which can result in lower credibility for news in general. In the United States, where Democrats are generally seen as dominant in media, Republicans were found to feel a higher level of hostile media perception [41, 42]. Consequently, their

evaluation of news credibility was found to be lower than the same of Democrats [43]. In South Korea, conservative ideology is generally considered to be dominant in media, and, correspondingly, studies found that liberal supporters had a higher level of hostile media perception, which in turn influenced the lower level of credibility among them than among the conservative supporters [44]. These studies suggest that credibility of news in general can be affected by political ideology and partisanship in the process of their news information processing.

The discussion of news in general thus far suggests that news in general is likely to be evaluated primarily for news properties and news users' characteristics, and how some partisan users process information. These factors apply well in the dimension of experiences, which indicates news users' experiences and evaluations of actual journalistic performance [3]. Earlier, it was contended that portal news was more likely to be evaluated by the factors in the experiences dimension, while television news was likely to be assessed primarily by the factors in the preconceptions dimension. People can use similar criteria in their evaluation of credibility of news in general and of portal news, while applying different criteria, i.e., normative ideas about traditional media, for television news. Based on this argument, it is likely that evaluation of news in general corresponds evaluation of portal news more closely than evaluation television news. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2: Credibility of news in general will have a greater relation with portal news credibility than with television news credibility.

Since people's evaluation of portal news is likely to occur primarily in the experiences dimension, while the same of television takes place in the preconceptions one, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: The relation between portal news use and portal news credibility will be greater than television news use and television news credibility.

3. METHOD

3.1 Data and analysis

This study analyzed data obtained from 2022 News Audience Survey administered by Korea Press Foundation. The nationwide survey had been conducted by the organization bi-annually from 1984 and was turned annual in 2010. It is comprised of items concerning news media use and audience perception of news and media. The 2022 survey was conducted between July 28 and October 20, 2022, via face-to-face interviews with all individuals of 19 years of age and older in each of the 30,138 families pre-selected to proportionally represent 17 metropolitan areas in the country. The sample size was 58,936, which included 29,288 men and 29,648 women with the proportion of 49.7% and 50.3% respectively. Of the sample, 16.4% was 19 years of age and in twenties, 15.6% in thirties, 18.4% in forties, 19.6% in fifties, 16.4% in sixties and 13.6% in seventies or older. Forty nine point four percent of the sample received university education or higher, 37.7% had high school diploma and 13% received education lower than high school. The median household income was between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 Korean Won.

3.2 Variables

3.2.1 Television news credibility and portal news credibility

Television news credibility and portal news credibility are the two dependent variables in this study. For the measures, respondents were asked to indicate how much they found news and current affairs information on television and portals credible on a scale of 1 (not at all credible) to 5 (highly credible) (television news credibility: $M = 3.67$, $SD = .79$; portal news credibility: $M = 3.36$, $SD = .83$). As discussed earlier, news credibility is often measured by a composite variable that contains different dimensions particularly for measuring credibility of certain specific sources or news. However, a single direct measure is also used to evaluate credibility of overall news or credibility of press in general in the institutional point of [45, 46]. The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors affecting credibility of overall news on television and portals by examining their relations with credibility of news I use news and of in general. Thus, a single direct measure was deemed serving the purpose.

3.2.2 Credibility of news I use and credibility of news in general

Respondents were asked to indicate how credible they found news and current affairs information they actually use for credibility of news I use and how credible they found news and current affairs information in general for credibility of news in general on a scale of 1 (not at all credible) to 5 (highly credible) (credibility of news I use: $M = 3.44$, $SD = .66$; credibility of news in general: $M = 3.15$, $SD = .78$).

3.2.3 Television news use and portal news use

For television news use, respondents were asked how many days in the past one week they had watched television news on television, computer, or mobile devices. For portal news, respondents were asked, in the past one week, how many days they had used portal news on mobile devices. The answers were recorded on a six-point scale of 0 (did not use) to 5 (5 days) (television news use: $M = 3.19$, $SD = 2.03$; portal news use: $M = 2.83$, $SD = 2.06$).

3.2.4 Control variables

Controls included the basic demographic variables of gender (male = 1, female = 2), age ($M = 48.50$, $SD = 15.87$) and education (1 = elementary school, 2 = middle school, 3 = high school, 4 = college and 5 = graduate school; $M = 2.37$, $SD = .71$), and household income (1 = 1,000,000 Korean Won per month or below to 7 = 6,000,000 Korean Won or above; $M = 4.74$, $SD = 1.75$). The political attitudes variables of political ideology and political interest were also included as controls. For political ideology, respondents were asked to indicate their political ideology on a five-point scale of 1 (strongly liberal) to 5 (strongly conservative) ($M = 3.03$, $SD = .80$). For political interest, respondents were asked to indicate how much they were interested in politics and social issues on a five-point scale of 1 (not at all interested) to 5 (highly interested) ($M = 3.01$, $SD = .82$).

4. RESULTS

A multivariate regression analysis was performed for each of television news credibility and portal news credibility. For Hypothesis 1, results from the regression analyses in Table 1 show a greater coefficient value of credibility of news I use in the television news credibility model than in the portal news credibility model, given the explanatory power of 26% for television news credibility and 29% for portal news credibility (credibility of news I use for television news credibility $\beta = .31$, $p = .000$; for portal news credibility $\beta = .18$, $p = .000$). In order to determine if the difference in the two regression coefficients was statistically significant, critical ratio of difference between parameters was calculated. For the calculation, Z was computed based on the t -test principle from the two unstandardized regression coefficients and their respective standard errors. If the absolute value of Z was greater than 1.96, the difference between the two coefficients was deemed

significant at the level of $p < .05$.¹ The result from the calculation showed that the coefficient value of credibility of news I use was statistically greater for television news credibility than for portal news credibility ($Z = -20.08, p < .05$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

$$1 \quad Z = \left(\frac{(b_1 - b_2)}{\sqrt{(seb_1)^2 + (seb_2)^2}} \right)$$

Table 1 Predicting television news credibility and portal news credibility

	Television news credibility			Portal news credibility		
	β	b	se	β	b	se
Gender	.02***	.04	.006	.00	.01	.006
Age	.04***	.00	.000	-.07***	.00	.000
Education	-.01*	-.01	.006	.06***	.07	.006
Income	-.02***	-.01	.002	.03***	.02	.002
Political ideology	.02***	.02	.004	-.03***	-.04	.004
Political interest	-.01***	-.01	.004	.00	.00	.004
Television news use	.12***	.05	.002	.01#	.00	.002
Portal news use	-.05***	-.02	.002	.15***	.06	.002
Credibility of news I use	.31***	.37	.005	.18***	.23	.005
Credibility of news in general	.25***	.25	.004	.35***	.37	.004
Adj. R2		.26			.29	

Notes: $N = 58,936$. # $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

For Hypothesis 2, Table 1 shows a greater coefficient value of credibility of news in general for the portal news credibility model than for the other model (credibility of news in general for television news credibility: $\beta = .25, p = .000$; for portal news credibility: $\beta = .35, p = .000$). The result of the critical ratio for difference procedure showed that the difference in the two coefficient values of credibility of news in general for the two media was statistically significant ($Z = 21.74, p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Finally, the standardized coefficient value of portal news use was slightly greater than the same of television news use (television news use: $\beta = .12, p = .000$; portal news use: $\beta = .15, p = .000$). The computation of critical ratio for difference showed that the difference in the two coefficient values of media use was statistically

significant ($Z = 5.30, p < .05$). Thus, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

5. CONCLUSION

The mechanisms of selective exposure and bias perception for news I use and the mechanism of the preconception dimension for television news seem to work in a similar way, keeping a higher correspondence between the two news. This result shows that news I use and television news are not evaluated for the quality of the actual news contents, but for attitude-consistency for the former and the normative beliefs for the latter.

The greater relation of credibility of news in general with portal news credibility than with television news credibility showed that the evaluation of overall news and portal news occurs more similarly. This result indicates that people apply a different set of evaluation criteria for portal news than television news.

These findings certainly warrant a need to revise the measurement method of news credibility of the two media. It suggests that the current one-dimensional, uniform method of news credibility measurement for the two very different media of television and portals may not be practically useful. Television and portals are not merely two separate technologies but two distinctly different information sources, which the users seek news with correspondingly different purposes and expectations from. The measurement of news credibility could be refined for television and portals in the way that reflects media characteristics and people's use of and expectations for the two respective media.

In support of previous research, age, education and household income were significant predictors of television news credibility and portal news credibility (e.g., [7, 11, 47, 48]). The older, less educated, and smaller the income, the more likely to trust television news. Females were more likely to find television news credible. In contrast, the younger, more educated and higher the income, the more likely to believe portal news.

Politically conservative people were more likely to trust television news, while liberal users were for portal news. This result seems to indicate a political divide in media in South Korea. In fact, television as a traditional medium can provide limited ideas due to ethical, managerial and physical reasons, particularly in comparison to news portals. Thus, the conservative-dominant media presentation of news in Korea is more of a case for television than portals. Liberal news users may seek out news that match their preferences on the alternative portals. This result is also in agreement with the research by [49] that found the tendency of avoidance of counter-attitudinal news for conservative news users and the tendency of active news search for liberal users. For political interest, its negative relation to television news credibility posits the possibility of television use for soft news such as entertainment and sports. This result is in support of [50]'s finding of a positive relation between soft news and news credibility.

This exploratory study demonstrated that factors influencing television news credibility and portal news credibility are not identical but can be different since news users' credibility evaluation occurs through different mechanisms in differing dimensions of trust. This research explored this possibility via the indirect method of examining credibility of news I use and news in general. Future research may be able to overcome the limitation in the indirect method and identify and measure the actual factors for television news and portal news respectively. It will help develop a method for practical measurement of news credibility of different media.

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