What causes the frustration: perceptions on media consumers during the MERS outbreak in South Korea

Seilin Uhm

Kookmin University
@psychologyToki
suhm@kookmin.ac.kr

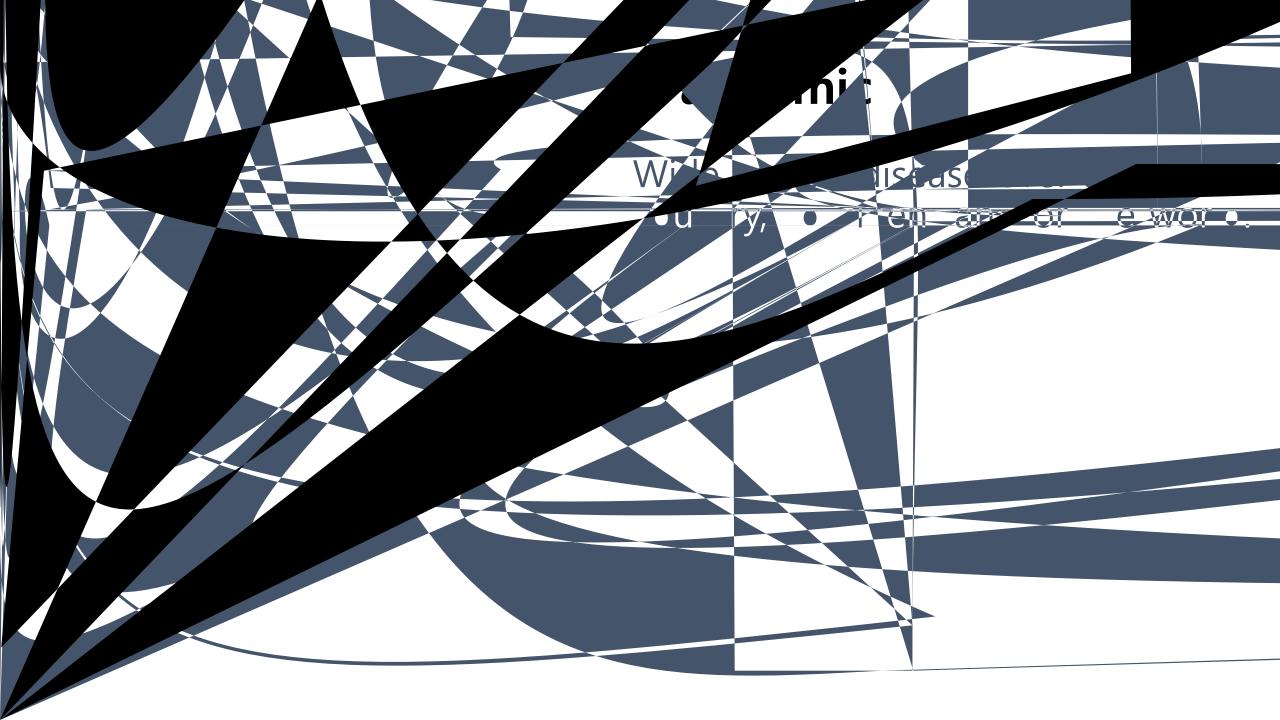


Backgrounds

MERS-CoV

- Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (MERS-Cov)
- Officially from 20th May 15
- 186 infected cases
- 37 death
- Rapidly spread in South Korea unexpectedly in 2015.





Health Perception of different social groups

- Different social groups treat health threat differently.
- It is more apparent when the citizen is in the dominant group or minor groups (Ford and Yep, 2003)
- This influences health qualities.
- Social group membership or identity based on race or culture would cause health disparities (Hecht et al, 2004)

What caused the MERS-Cov in Korea

(Hyun and Park 2015)

- the low index of suspicion caused a delay in the initial diagnosis.
- the accessibility and affordability of health care in South Korea.
- 'super-spreaders' among the secondary cases.

But what public would think?

Public involvement in health sector

(Uhm et al 2012)

- Involving public (patients and carers in health research and/or policy making).
- By involving them, we change power dynamics and decision making process.
- It is important to listen what public say about the outbreak.

Aims



Aims of the study

To identify barriers of communication by public involvement and to find out differences of perceptions between dominant and minor groups during the MERS outbreak.

This was also important to assess how issues raised by public were handled in the society.

Methods



Methods

Qualitative Research Approach

On the 9th June 2015,

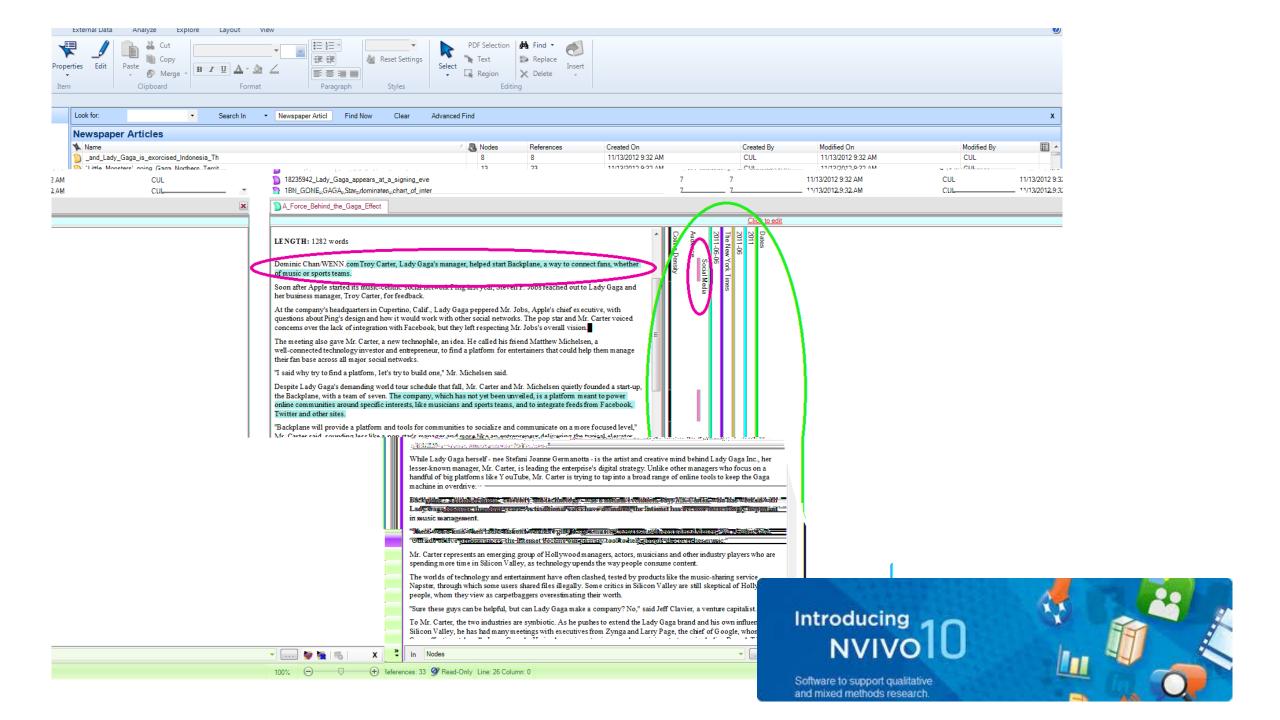
Participants (N=67) were asked to identify what caused the frustration.

Setup window content

Data collection procedure

Framework analysis

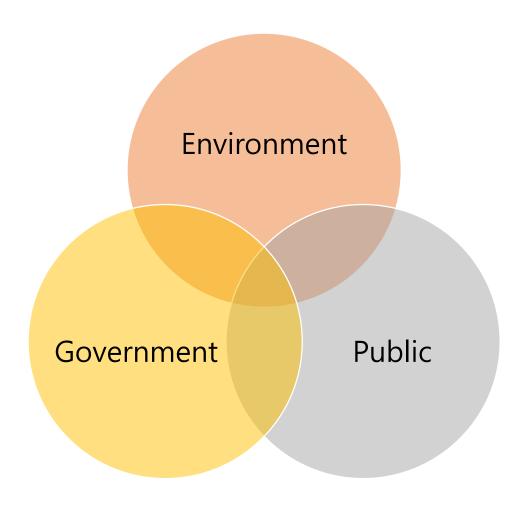




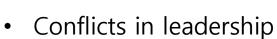


Outcomes

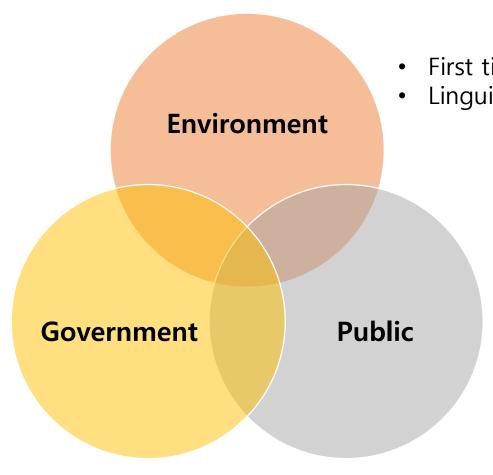
Defined domains – level 1



Defined themes – level 2



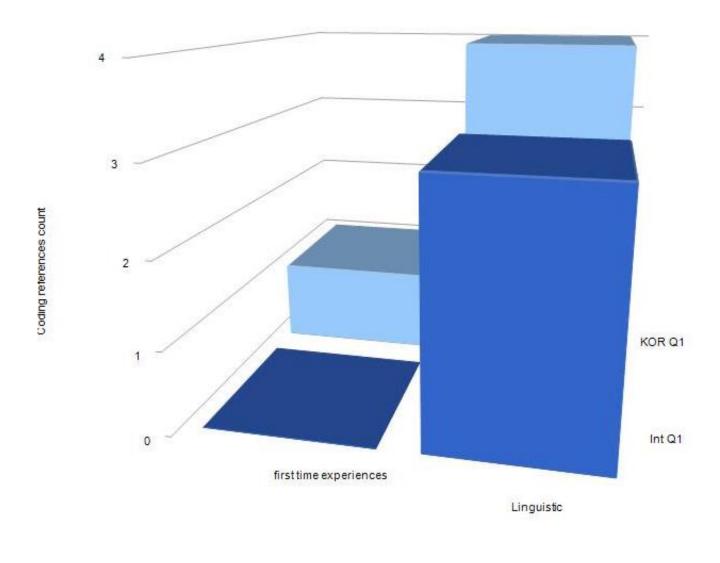
- Inappropriate reaction at the initial stage
- Dissemination of incorrect information
- Lack of transparency
- One way communication
- Slow reaction



- First time experience
- Linguistic barriers

- Horn's effect
- Lack of attention
- Too much fear

Environmental issues



olumn

Environmental issues

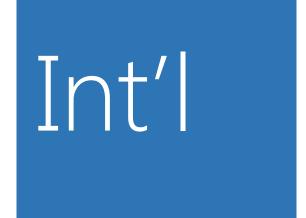
"the Korean government might have a hard time using the right or effective 'language' or 'words' to send a message to the public."

"Medical terms may not be familiar to the public so the jargon needs to be appropriate when addressing the public."

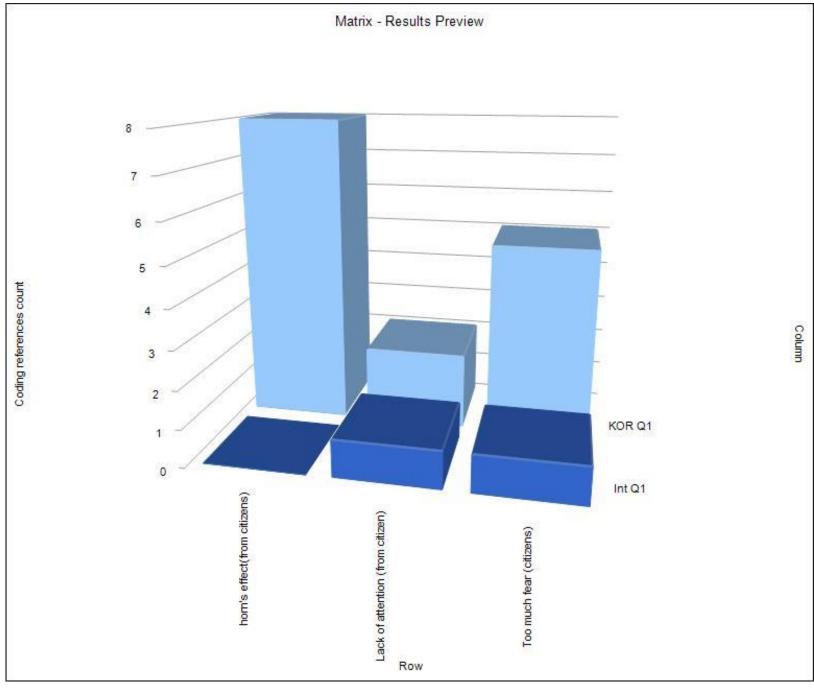


"somehow vague, unclear and even contradicts the facts that are delivered in the same report which indicates that the outbreak is still serious."

"technical terms from the field of medicine which is unfamiliar to the population "Government made statements in Korean only which can lead to translation errors"



Issues from public



Issues from Public – lack of attention

"When Korean government sends the message to listeners. Listeners can jump into the conclusions."

"lack of attention or interest can be a barrier. Without the Korean population's attention, it is hard to take safety measures."

KOR

"not all the Korean citizens are watching and listening the news from the government."



Issues from Public – Too much fear

"Because of these worries and fear, Korean citizen can over acting for MERS, and do not following well what Korean government said. It can cause more big problem, and this is the problem from ineffective communication.

"Having a closed mind and also feeling anxious or self- conscious can be a barriers of effective communication."

"nations are 'Feel anxious and nervous', so they 'trying to ignore the opinion of government and just focus about the information they are interested in'" "Because of the fear of the epidemic, the citizens are less logical, more emotional in listening to any kind of information."





"their emotions were very frightened."

Issues from Public – Horn's effect

"personal opinions can also be a barrier that the Korean government must address. Personal ideals or opinions prevent individuals from fully understanding the dangers in the current situation"

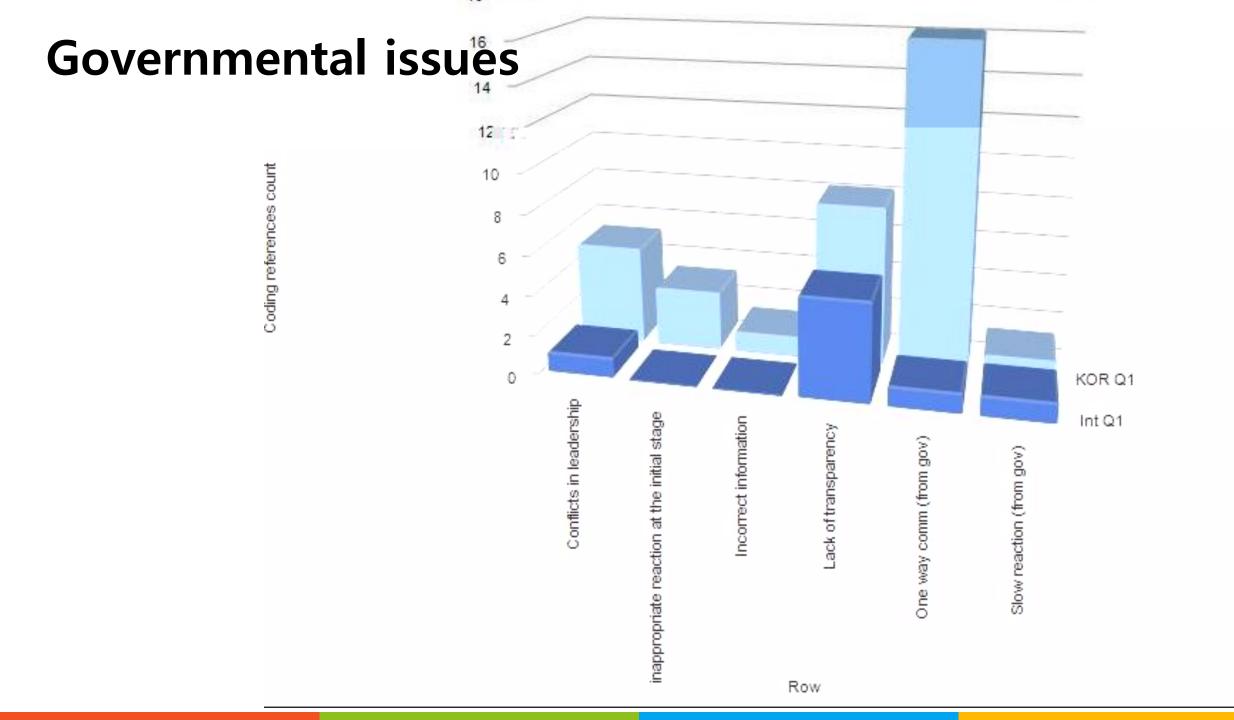
"there are people who has a stereotype that the government is always bad, then the Korean government will have a hard time sending the message as it is to them."

"the Korean citizens are mistrusting the people in the government people. citizen's mistrust or judgement toward government, hearing what citizens want to hear."

"If a person who receive the message from the government has political inclination or has stereotype to the announcer, that person don't even try to hear the statement from the government."







Governmental issues – lack of transparency

"they give the wrong report to citizen"

"not sharing information efficiently each other"

"why didn't you share the information of the hospitals which occurred so many patients?"

"the Korean government keep up with 'moral silence', failing to speak up about issues that are known to be wrong [...]"

"making a shortcutting data distort the original information about the MERS informed from government."

"the government tries to hide the real fact of this situation to control the society."

"they jumped to the conclusion that it's controllable."

"hid the reasons of the 80-year old man's death"

"He[Health Minister] said every thing is under control that they closed many schools and tracking the cellphones of those under quarantine[...]" "the government could have announced the hospitals where the virus has

spread, to avoid more citizens of catching the virus."

"There is no detailed information and description what they are doing to prevent disaster."





Governmental issues - One way communication

"there was some problem like one-way communication, differences in values and perceptions"

"government is just telling the information, not reflecting and answering the citizens' demanded concerns"

"Not understanding the citizens feeling such as fear and anger by taking a late action would be another barrier which blocks the communication's effectiveness."

"does not listen what Korean citizens say."

"Therefore they might omit what citizens want to hear"

"They simply announce an information and hopefully people believe what they say and be happy about it."

"that they just say what they want to say"





Thank Ques

@psych