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Rethinking the Risk Culture: How Has Been a Risk Discourse on US Meat Imports Constructed Across the Nations?

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Abstract: The present study exploresthe distinctive way of constructing risk discourses with the exemplar case of South Korean protests against US meat imports during early 2008. Especially, the researcher highlights the contemporary globalized market can be characterized as global market of "organized irresponsibility" which leads us to rethink contemporary risk culture. Statistical assessment of risk, though is usually judge the likelihood that a damaging event will take place in the future and to predict the scale of such an event as well it does not associated with explaining what and why people recognize as risk, nor do they address individual's fear about taking risks even when they believe there is no "actual risk" involved in taking part in a certain movement. The researcher expectsthat Anti-US meat import protests in Korea 2008 is worth noting that though the protesters and the government disagreed with each other, each side based its opinion on the notion that it is impossible to calculate risk entirely and clearly by using current scientific methods. Instead, the government and its supporters insisted that they sufficiently calculate the probability of risk happening whereas the protesters argued that calculating probability would be meaningless. The conflict view between two sides reveals particular aspect of globalized risk culture. Specifically, neo-liberal government and policy organs drives their policies based on the scientific belief, thereby contributes to neo-liberal globalization.

Key words: Risk culture, risk management, risk communication, risk society, BSE crisis

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to the notion of risk, we would do well to raise questions about why some risks are considered significant or unacceptable in some countries are considered to be less so in others. Certainly, every country has its own unique culture that gives rise to specific ways of perceiving and evaluating risk. And of great importance in shaping what we will call the "risk culture" of any given country is the media.

The present study aims to explore a cultural aspect of risk by exploringthe notion of risk as it is culturally constructed in media discourse and by investigating the media's role in the process of risk revelation, the social contestation and social challenge to the risk society (Beck, 1992; Ulrich, 1994). That is this study focuses on how the culture of risk is constructed in media discourse. Definedin the academic literature as the opposite of "opportunity" in terms of probability, risk is characterized as a function of the relative likelihood of a future event coupled with its potential damage (Cottle, 1998). Statistical assessment of risk is usually used to judge the likelihood that a harmful event will take place in the future and also to predict the scale of such an event. However, such assessments, useful as they are, do nothing to explainwhat people consider to be risky and why; nor, do they explain people's feel fear of taking risks even when they have been told/believe that there is no "real risk" involved in taking a given step or engaging in a certain activity. This study focuses on the idea of risk cultures and as such posits the idea that risk culture is highly coupled with the society's overarching structure in that "culture is the sense-making activity that 'explains' and reproduces the structure". The purpose of this study is to investigate risk culture in terms of the contemporary market for meat in Korea, specifically in terms of construction of risk through media in regard to US meat imports into Korea during 2008. This event could be an exemplar case in studying a distinctive way of constructing media discourses, how the citizen-making discourse form the discourse of risk and of what kinds of issues are coupled with the risk discourse.

Literature review

Definitions of risk: To start with it is important to distinguish between the probability of actual risks and people's perceptions of danger. According to Furedi, "All risk concepts are based on the distinction between reality and possibility". That is, "risk" means not only the probability of actual risk including accident, injury, illness, death and so on but it is also coupled with the people's assessment of that risk.

Table 1: Class society versus risk society

Parameters	Class society	Risk society
Basic social organizing principle	Collectivization (into families, classes, corporations, status groups, etc.) plus tradition	Individualization plus reflexivity
From of inequality	Social class position	Social risk position
Core contentious issues/questions of justice and fairness focus on	distribution of scarce goods	distribution of "bads" (risks)
Experienced personally paradigmatically as	Hunger	Fear
Experienced collectively potentially as	Class consciousness	Risk consciousness
Utopian projects aimed at	Elimination of scarcity	Elimination of risk

(Scott, 2000)

Therefore, we first need to distinguish between two terms "risk" and "being at risk". Furedi points out that "to be at risk' is used to denote certain types of people who are particularly vulnerable to a hazard". According to Furedi "to be at risk" means that danger is the outcome of any individual act. That is when we take a position on a particular risk regarding technology, we easily overlook the importance of systematic and societal risk. This is because being at risk is a more inclusive condition of our everyday lives.

In risk sociology, this definition is expanded. "Sociological risk analyses assume that human agency has an impact on both the likelihood and amount of harm induced by a specific risk". According to Luhmann, the notion of risk and the notion of danger are not synonymous with each other: risk is something that a person determines to take, whereas danger exists "out there" apart from human determination. Risk is expected and controllable to some extent; it is determined by policymaking. Danger is out of our control it comes from outside and and from "others". Accordingly, Luhmann suggests a paradigm shift from the distinction between risk and security to a distinction between risk and danger. That is, risk is determined by human beings and consequently the responsibility for determination of risk belongs to a determiner.

Although, it is part of the job of government to define acceptable risk and to not subject citizens to unacceptable work, some critics have argued that industry and science evince systematic irresponsibility for danger (Wynne, 1996) or as Beck (1992) has called it "organized irresponsibility" (Beck, 1992). We should consider, too as Lash (2000) appropriately puts it that risk cultures always start not from the idea of risk but from that of blame. The question is "Who is to blame"? In other words to understand risk culture, we need to look at society in terms of behavior and viewpoints that are self-interested and even irrational. Accordingly, in this study, I will explore, from the perspective of risk constructivism, how media discourse reflects and constructs a risk culture.

Risk society and risk culture: According to Beck late-modern Western industrial societies are in the process of becoming risk societies. For Beck (1992), risk society refers to "a phase of development of modern society in which the social, political, ecological and individual risks created by the momentum of innovation increasingly elude the control and protective institutions of industrial society". Although, I agree with risk society theorists on this point, I pay closer attention tounderscore cultural change, considering that we can witness, in the risk society, different cultural phenomenon in terms of risk culture.

At this point, we should consider the relationship between risk and society. In general, social scientists rethink this relationship in terms of the tension between risk-constructivism and risk-objectivism. Risk-objectivists argue that modern society is defined by technological risk and isdominated by the distribution of this risk, rather than by the stratification of traditional "class society".

Meanwhile, risk constructivists stress that risk perception and evaluation are differentiated, depending not only on people's attitudes about new technology but also their socio-cultural condition.

For example, Douglas and Wildavsky (1982) worked out a typology of the various cultures of risk. They explored the operation of social mechanisms whereby some risks are treated as politically significant and some as enormous. In their view, what is selected as a salient risk in a certain country depends on its particular institutionalization of the risk culture (Table 1).

As Douglas and Wildavsky (1982) note, "risk should be seen as a joint product of knowledge about the future and consent about the most desired prospects".

From this perspective, we can categorize four cases of risk as Table 2 shows. For example, given that knowledge is certain and consent is complete, the problem is just technical; consequently, the best approachto the problem is to calculate the probability of occurrence. In other cases, such as if there is a disagreement, we can approach a problem through discussion or if the problem is one of insufficient or inaccurate information, we can engage in research focused on finding ways to solve problem (Chekar and Kitzinger, 2007). However, in the last situation in which knowledge is uncertain and consent is not complete, it is hard to find the best approach when considering that the problem has a number of levels.

Table 2: Four problems of risk

	Knowledge	
Consent	Certain	Uncertain
Complete	Problem: Technical Solution: Calculation	Problem: Information Solution: Research
Contested	Problem: (dis) agreement Solution: Coercion or discussion	Problem: Knowledge and consent Solution

(Douglas and Wildavsky, 1982)

It is necessary, therefore to establish a deliberative approach to studying risk communication at the cultural level. According to Douglas and Wildavsky (1982), risks are selected for public concern depending on the strength and direction of social criticism. Obviously, the particular situation may be a general condition in terms of risk communication. If so, how can we best define the problem and how can we solve it? This question leads us to the issue of proposing a way to organize knowledge of risk.

The role of media in shaping the culture of risk: Risk communication itself is the process of shaping the culture of risk. And, it is clear that the media plays a crucial role in the process of risk revelation, perception and assessment (Fischhoff, 1995). People usually turn to mass media in order to obtain the relevant information and certainly, mass media plays an important role in mediating information and forming public opinion. Lichtenberg and MacLean (1991) suggestnot only that the media does not convey an accurate picture of reality but also that this new portrayal of reality by the media leads to a fundamental change in the public's views. Further, many empirical studies in the area of risk communication have attempted to establish the extent to whichthe media affectsthe public's risk perception and assessment (Mythen and Walklate, 2006). The primary concern of such studies inheres in determining whether a given risk has been assessed correctly and whether information is effectively distributed to public such that the public's ability to assess the risk is enhanced or damaged.

Other studies have focused on the different process inhering in the construction of risk information by analyzing how the media select and use differentiated frames for constructing risk knowledge (Brookes, 1999). However, none of these studies consider how the public's knowledge of risk is shaped. Nor do they consider why experts disagree on the level of risk posed by different activities. Certainly, though, risk perception assessment and management are related social processes. Moreover, the whole of society depends on a combination of consent and knowledge in order to function. To consider such processes in a study of risk then is to consider central elements inhering in how risk is presented, understood and accepted.

Stressing that risk communication shapes our daily lives in various ways such as via imaginative advertising, formal government statements, commercials and even informal community papers (Hansson, 2005). Plough and Krimsky (1987) stated that risk communication is more than a framework for research it is instead an ongoing and encompassing element of most people's lives. In addition, Plough and Krimsky distinguished between narrow risk communication and broad risk communication, pointing out that the definition of risk communication has been narrowly used in terms of risk management. That is the narrow concept of risk communication focuses on "an intentional transfer of information designed to respond to public concerns or public needs related to real or perceived hazards". Therefore, in order to understand the symbolic meaning of risk communication they stressed the importance of studying risk within a social and political context (Dannreuther and Lekhi, 2000).

Therefore, we need to distinguish between accepting the correct information and organizing the information appropriately. The former relates to the production of information for providers while the latter relates to meaning practice for the public. That is at the cultural level it is important to consider both how the public organizes relevant information and how they use that knowledge within a socio-cultural context.

Why Korea in 2008?: In 2008 from early May to the end of June, Koreans from all walks of life including high school students and families, participated in candle rallies every evening for two reasons: to protest against the hastily signed agreement between Korea and the US regarding US beef imports an agreement that the protesters considered to pose a risk to public health and to urge the Korean government to re-negotiate a beef import agreement that would better protect public health.

The anti US beef coalition consists of 1,700 civic groups, among which is the Civil Society Organizations Network in Korea, a group of nationwide non-governmental groups. This coalition called on the government to participate in a public debate regarding the safety of meat imported from the US. In fact, hundreds of thousands of people participated in the candle rallies, eventually, forcing the government to negotiate added safeguards with the United States. The coalition even had the satisfaction of a public apology from President Lee. However, the protesters were far from satisfied with the negotiations because they felt that the

new agreement fell short of guaranteeing the safety of US meat imports. Further, the protesters complained that the government was not willing to communicate with the public. They even characterized the renegotiation as a "deceptive quick-fix solution".

An interesting and instructive point here is that the conservative media promulgated its own point of view, publishing reports that cast the largely peaceful candlelight rallies in the light of riots attempted to overthrow the government a point of view at odds with understanding the rallies in my view as evidence of the vibrancy of Korean democracy. In this way, several trivial clashes that took place during the rallies paved the way for triggering a new controversy on the legitimacy of the candlelight rallies.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research question: The research question explores the systematic off-loading of responsibility for dangers by industry and science onto the lay public as the latter's "responsibilization" (Wynne, 1996). All risks are primarily social constructions: risks are always a question of purity and danger of some sort of ritual pollution: indeed that natural pollution is just one variety of ritual pollution. Their viewsare that organized irresponsibility may not be a main problem. Rather, risk cultures always start not from the risk but from the blame, start from the 'who to blame'" (Lash, 2000).

Accordingly, this study focuses on how a risk culture was formed in terms of the protests against the importing of US beef in Korea in 2008. However, my concern focuses more on the theoretical applicability of the concept of a risk society in terms of risk culture, rather than on carrying out a content analysis of the press coverage. That is, in this study, I conduct analysis on a key aspect of the (public) discourse in regard to the construction of a risk culture. In order to explore the theoretical applicability of the risk society this study seeks to answer the question of How the culture of risk has been constructed in media discourse, particularly in the mass media including newspapers and broadcast news in South Korea in 2008? (Further, a chain of events occurred in South Korea led a lot of commentators to discuss the possibility of direct democracy as well as to identify the particular risk in South Korea). For specific investigation, thesub-questions are as follows:

- RQ1: What distinctions can be made between two different media discourses?
- RQ2: How does civic participation contribute to the formation of discourses of risk?
- RQ3: How is risk discourse associated with structural problems?

The present study pays attention tohow risk culture discourse is constructed by analyzing official reports from key players: the government, media and the anti-US meat imports coalition. Therefore, I will conduct a discourse analysis on the press coverage, civic engagementon the Internet and official governmentreports.

Selection of data: In Korea, some commentators accused the three conservative newspapers of siding with the government and misleading the public with biased reports of the rallies, whereas others argued that the candle rally was represented in inaccurate special investigative program PD Notebook by MBC, one of the big 3 broadcasting companies which caused a widespread scare about mad cow disease by implying that it could be carried here through imports of US beef.

I analyzed the discourses of three major debate television programs in Korea. Nine Midnight Debates programs, Korea Broadcasting System (KBS), eight Hundred Minute Discussion programs, Munhwa Broadcasting Company (MBC) and seven Discussion: Right and Wrong programs, Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS) all of which aired during the period 27th April to 6th July. MBC's problematic PD notebook is also included for analysis.

In addition, I selected the civic reports on the website of Anti-US meat coalition's website for analysis in order to observe the construction of civic discourse. Further, in order to analyze the public's participation in the consuming process, I selected 692 online debate records in press section by searching the Daum Agora website, one of the most popular online sites in Korea.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSON

Distributing information and shaping risk: different perspectives in viewing risk: Risk culture is constructed by knowledge about the future in conjunction with consent regarding what constitutes the best solution. In the case under discussion, the protesters position is that the problem of risk is caused by uncertain knowledge and disagreement over that knowledge, whereas the government's position is that the idea of riskinheres in contested consent despite certain knowledge.

It is worth noting that though the protesters and the government disagreed with each other each side based its opinion on the notion that it is impossible to calculate the risk entirely and clearly by using current scientific methods. Instead, the government and its supporters on this issue insisted that they could calculate the probability of an MCD infection, instead of analyzing the reason for possible infections. Meanwhile, the protesters argued that calculating probability would not be meaningful if there was to be analysis of the actual reason. Also, it is noteworthy that experts entered the

Table 3: Summary of the construction of media discourse

Variables	Supports	Protests
Problem	Extreme protest Exaggeration of MCD risk	Insufficient security system
Reason	Distribution of perverse information	Rough-and-ready treaty
Solution	Effective PR for correct information Belief in governmental policy	Renegotiation of US meat imports Strengthening security by nation Government's actual communication "will" rather than communication "skill"
Main arguments	Few reports of US meat having been implicated in MCD cases	Current MCD scare is theresultofinadequate safeguards
Evidence	Probability of MCD infection is very low	Probability of MCD infection is unclear
Experts as evidence	Senior Governmental officials Professors Economists Lawyers	Civil coalition representatives Professors Veterinarians Lawyers
Roll of experts	Justify the safety of US meats (by the probability of MCD infection)	Emphasis on insecurity of national security system, rather than US meat itself
Media	Three Conservative newspapers Chosun Ilbo Chungang Ilbo Donga Ilbo	Two progressive newspapers Hankyoreh sinmun Kyunghyang sinmun Broadcasting Company: MBC Civic websites: Daum Agora
Expected results from US meat imports	Easy to ratify FTA Development of national economy	Responsibilization Suspicion of actual economic development Government will drive neo-liberal policies

fray to express views that supported one side or the other depending on the field of their expertise. Economists were with the government; veterinarians and many others in scientific professions joined the side of the protesters. With the expert support neatly polarized to put economists on one side and protesters on the other, the discourse on economic efficacy lent weight exclusively to the government's position and the discourse on scientific uncertainty backed up the protesters.

Further, it was clear that the role of experts turned out to be quite different depending on their fields. With the economic perspective, experts argued for the safety of US beef, emphasizing that the probability of an MCD infection was very low. Likewise, scientific experts issued warnings about the inadequacy of the national security system, rather than focusing on the US meat imports. Three conservative newspapers at first blamed the Korean government for perpetrating a "deceptive quick-fix treaty of US meat imports". However, they came to express different opinions in order to take a pro-government stancethat emphasized national economic interests.

The papers took the position that the real problem lay in the distribution ofmisinformation thus, they posited effective public relations strategies as a proper governmental solution (Table 3):

- The best way is to follow the global standard (for meat imports)
- Chosun Ilbo, May, 2nd, 2008: US meat's security is evaluated by scientific evidence and international criteria
- Dona Ilbo April, 23rd, 2008: President Lee should re-negotiate first and recover the public trust
- Hankyoreh, June, 17th, 2008: What the government should do is to do its best for retaking the national quarantine authority and for recovering public trust until public feel trust
- Kyung Hyang, June, 23rd, 2008

In addition, depending on whether the media was more conservative or more liberal, their emphases were different. The conservative media attempted to give evidence to justify importing the US meat, whereas the progressive media stressed the protests' justification. Some studies have empirically investigated and established the different ways in which media presents news. For example, Im (2009)'s study explored how the two newspapers differently construct the news frames in the reporting of the agreement on the US, meat imports and the related candlelight protest rallies. From his analysis, I conclude that the conservative newspaper stressed the importance of the government's public relations work whereas the progressive newspaper used a relatively high ratio of frames showing the protesters as compared to those showing the government.

Civic participation and meaning practice: With the purpose of analyzing how civic discourse is constructed, I conducted qualitative textual analysis on the civic participant web-boards posted on Daum Agora, one of the most popular debate sites in Korea (www.daum.net). Of the millions of texts available, I selected the 692 online debate records in the "press section" because people can express their opinions without any restriction. Most of the 692 records were against the government's decision to allow US meat imports because they felt proper

consideration had not been given to the possible health ramifications for the country. In addition, in finding the government to be blameworthy, the public's opinions evinced several distinctive points. First, people considered the history of Mad Cow disease and also began to keep a record of this information. As stated earlier, MBC's PD notebook first triggered the debate on mad cow disease (The programaired on April 28th, 2008, reported that the death of Aretha Vinson was caused by vCJD or the human form of mad cow disease. This program stressed the importance of the risk of Mad Cow disease in the United States). After this program showed a video clip about the cause of death of Aretha Vinson, people began to seek scientific evidence pertaining to mad cow disease. In this way, many citizens compiled collections of historical evidence. The evidence included that of both political and scientific relevance. Kelleher argued, in his documentary that 2010 may be the peak year in terms of a human form of mad cow disease. He presented historical scientific evidence about the dangers of mad cow disease. Another commentator on the website referred to the results of experiments conducted at Yale and Pittsburgh Universities, specifically that the experiments suggested that 5-13% of people who had originally been thought to have died of Alzheimer's (disease) actually died of vCJD (a human form of BSE). And, in fact, the story of is a widely accepted exemplar in this regard (John Gummer, Agriculture Minister in the Conservative government, made great public show of feeding his 4 year old daughter Cordelia a hamburger in the midst of the "mad cow disease" scare at a boat show in Suffolk on May 6th, 1990). John Gummer insisted human is "perfectly safe" from mad cow disease. However, 8 year later in 1990, thirty-two people had died of CJD and even a friend of his daughter's died of a human form of BSE last year. Gummer's story also became a popular story in Korea. In fact, many people referred to this story on debate sites other online communities and blogs.

In general, civic participants sought relevant information in order to strengthen their thinking regarding the danger of importing US meat. However, I also could observe that supporters for of the agreement for importing the meat also participated in the formation of discourse like protesters. For example, one of the civic participants, who appeared to be a doctoral student, argued erroneously that the name of a disease of Aretha Vinson was Wernicke's encephalopathy, not mad cow disease (or vCJD). That is, even opponents participated in debates using specific evidence that did not in actually support their positions.

Second, the civic participants criticizedthe way the conservative media had dealt with the subject of importing US meat in the past. One of the participants selected reports from three conservative newspapers, criticizing them for changing their point of view from protests to supports. This participant also took the papers to task because they had incorrectly stated that only that cows identified as "downers" that is unable to stand, werelikely to infect the public with mad cow disease (The report's title in Chungang Ilbo, Chosun Ilbo and Donga Ilbo (February 19th, 2008) is "The greatest amount of US meat recalls". These newspapers reported that downers could not be used as food because they could cause higher levels of infection than other cows). In addition, some participants sought past reports about this issue and collected some further incorrect reports from these newspapers.

Further, it is distinctive that citizen engagement was characterized by a sarcastic tone. When the government announced that there was an anti-governmental power behind the peaceful protests, high school students sneered, saying "I'm the person who is behind people". Even mothers, who participated in rallies with their babies, ridiculed the government, saying" My baby is the anti-governmental person behind me"! Certainly, a chain of these kinds of comments covered the main portal websites. Whenever the government announced a follow-up measure, people saw an opportunity to ridicule the government. For example, when President Lee announced that "I will stop the US meat imports when mad cow disease occurs" people made comparative comments such as "I will stop smoking when lung cancer occurs" and "I will stop my car when an accident occurs." In addition, it is worth considering that the citizens' discourse was associated with actual participation. That is, citizens made practical suggestions for civic engagement. For example, one participant suggested boycottingthe goods of government supporters. Many people responded positively to this idea and eventually it was expanded to a movement of anti-advertisement in conservative newspapers.

The citizens' discourse is significant for at least two reasons. Primarily, civic participants showed that they no longer rely on experts' opinions in terms in order to make their own value judgments. As described above, people organize and evaluate information by themselves. It is telling, also that this characteristic looks very similar to that of the concept of sub-politics. People, sometimes, make fun of a dominant power and collaborate for the purpose of organizing relevant information. In the area of risk communication, the professionalization of risk has been justified. This means that people cannot help relying on the evaluation of risk offered by experts. This is problematic because as Plough and Krimsky (1987)

pointed out, professionalized risk assessment generally disregards many points salient to risk issues. However, it is also the case that the citizens became civic-expert in terms of meaning practice. That could be one way in which the risk culture is socially constructed by the people's meaning practices.

Second, civic participation enables the discourse of risk to be emphasized and downplayed at different times. Therefore, on must ask how is the discourse transformed and who leads the process.

The shift of discourse on risk: from "natural" risk to "political" risk: As shown in the various television programs, the debates highlighted new information about the US meat imports treaty. One panel of MBC's hundred minute discussion clarified that the content announced by the Korean government was different from that published in the USofficial gazette. The dissemination of this information played a critical role in undermining the discourse of the government's supporters, although, it must be said that this discourse had not been particularly strong from the first signs of opposition. Finally, this information provided a powerful impetus for the government's renegotiation of the agreement with the US Predictably, too this governmental lie greatly fuelled the public's anger over this issue at hand.

People expressed their opinions about the public policies of the Lee Myung Bak government and their censure expanded to educational policy, labor policy and even health insurance policy. These policies were fundamentally coupled with privatization. But, it was not surprising that people protested against these policies in that the first participants were high school students who offered sometimes quite strident complaints about the competition-based education policy. Further as progressive organizations, such as the Korean Teachers and Educational Workers Union (KTEWU) and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), joined the anti-US meat protests, more general governmental public policies also began to come under fire. That is, the discourse of risk became interconnected with other political issues.

At that time, the shift in discourse happened in conjunction with other discourses. The government began to regulate the candlelight rallies, identifying rallies as an illegal demonstration. In addition, the three major conservative newspapers also began to stress illegal aspects of the demonstration. Accordingly, emphasis on the issue of BSE risk shifted to the issue of political threat. Also, a controversy on illegal demonstrations shifted the discourse of risk from emphasis on the problem of "content" to emphasis on the problem of "presentation".

That is the government began to focus on the idea that the people were behaving in an "aggressive way" instead of addressing the actual issues.

This case shows that the problem of risk is closely correlated to the governmental ruling. As Douglas and Wildavsky (1982) pointed out, most risk problems currently occur between consent and knowledge. It is, therefore, a matter of no small importance that the construction of knowledge is related to a communication process through all kinds of media, whereas consent completion is close to the construction of risk.

CONCLUSION

In general, people believe that they can control risk and that they can consequently guarantee social security by using progressive science technologies. Ironically, on account of the progress made in the field of science technology due to increased uncertainty, we are faced with myriad risks without understandingwhy. That is, complicated, diffused and heterogeneous risks coexist in the risk culture. This study investigated how risk culture is socially constructed within media discourse. For a deeper understanding, the study also asked three sub-questions:

- What is a distinctive way of constructing media discourses?
- How does civic participation contribute to the formation of the discourse of risk?
- And How is risk discourse associated with the political and economic structure?

There are various types of risk, from higher social sensitivity associated with obscure risk to lower social sensitivity associated with obvious risk. I could find that particular events enable risk to be selectively accepted. Also, I would like to mention that responsibility is no longer taken by anyone, even government. Responsibilization of risk is due to "organized irresponsibility". That is, responsibilization of risk occurs systematically. Further, dominant power intervenes in the discourse of risk and shifts it in order to preserve the political status quo.

In addition, it is important to consider that the possibility that a county can control risk independently has decreased. The case of the anti-US meat imports to Korea reminds us that as Beck stated, risk itself is universal and globally diffuse. Therefore, in contemporary society, we should consider the globalized production and control mechanism of risk.

The act of looking back over the historical contexts involved inproducing risk and understanding the shortcomings in the modes of risk production and consumption is an essential one. This means that the question of how we organize the knowledge of risk and how we practice in consuming the meaning of risk, is ultimately important in the culture of risk. And that risk culture must not be considered apart from societal structure, particularly political and economic structure must also be held as a clear principle. Most risk problems are caused by overriding economic interests which are in turn, supported by political power. Risk culture is easily transformed by the intervention of political power, particularly where the media presents an uneven picture and this is so even when people endeavor to think and act rationally.

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