

EXPLORATION OF NATIONAL IMAGE THROUGH YOUTUBE VIDEOS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine how user-generated content on social media can affect national image. YouTube is a good fit for this study due to its abundant data and influence. This study tries to examine which topics of videos related to a country are famous and being discussed on YouTube; how do viewers react to the videos (e.g., likes, dislikes, and comments); and cultivation or framing effects of depictions (e.g., negative, neutral, and positive) in the videos from viewers' reactions. To do so, this study uses content analysis and chooses South Korea as the subject country. This study selects and examines 50 YouTube videos related to South Korea sorted by the descending order of views and relevance. Coding categories are made based on the theoretical frameworks of Buhmann and Ingenhoff's "the 4D model of country image." The results show that the popularity of topics is related to unique and cultural images (i.e., the aesthetic dimension) of South Korea; a significant influence of Korean popular culture on increasing exposures of the videos; and the discrepancy between depiction tones of topics and overall tones of Korea (or Koreans).

Keywords: Social Media, National Image, Country Image, Cultivation theory, Framing theory,
South Korea

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The advent of the Internet has facilitated globalization and the democratization of information, which consequently strengthens individuals' voices and public opinions in countries' international relations. The Internet has helped people to attain information without restrictions on time and location. In particular, the dynamic flows of information and communication on the Internet (e.g., social media) have enabled the general public to become opinion leaders/makers and, thus, affecting countries' international relationships by building and affecting public opinions about country's image (Anholt, 2009).

Since people can easily get news about countries on the Internet and share their opinions or attitudes, building positive public opinions of countries becomes important (Dor, 2004). Positive national image derives from favorable public opinions that are based on individual's rational and emotional judgments. To build a positive national image, the comprehensions of public opinions about the country and the country's diversified aspects (e.g., political, social, economic, and cultural) are essential. Individuals' high level of comprehensions and positive attitudes toward countries can construct favorable public opinions of the countries (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015). Buhmann and Ingenhoff's study explained this national image construction process through a "4D Model of Country Image." The 4D model categorized images of a country by four dimensions (i.e., functional, normative, aesthetic, and sympathetic dimension) and addressed that the diversified aspects of the country (i.e., functional, normative, and aesthetic dimensions) can affect people's perceptions about the country (i.e., sympathetic dimension).

Social media play a critical role in this public opinion building process due to today's highly mediated lifestyle (Gil De Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012; Zhong & Lu, 2013).

According to a Pew Research Center's 2017 report, over 80 percent of U.S. citizens, whose age range from 18 to 49, have at least one social media account and connect on social media almost every day (PewResearchCenter, 2017). The exponential increase in social media users has intensified and diversified interaction, socialization, and communication on social media. The diversified social media interaction has significantly affected social media users' cognitive and affective aspects, which are prerequisites for building one's opinions or "images" about a subject (Fishbein & Middlestadt, 1995).

Since communication, interaction, and relationships are core components of social media, communication perspectives can provide in-depth explanations and implications for social media communication. In particular, public relations, which explain how communication and interaction develop relationships, is a good fit to understand social media. Implications of prior studies in public relations can provide critical implications to utilize social media for building positive national images (Cheng, Mitomo, Otsuka, & Jeon, 2016; Hayden, 2012; Xiang, 2013; Zhong & Lu, 2013). In addition, public diplomacy practitioners can adopt perspectives from public relations to utilize social media communication to build a positive national image given the fact that many social media users get news about foreign countries' from social media, thus affecting the construction of public sentiments (Hayden, 2012; Li & Rønning, 2013).

Understanding social media content may provide useful implications to construct a positive national image in today's digital era. Unlike traditional media, social media communication and information are real-time and accumulative, which allows individuals to quickly and repeatedly distribute the information. The repeatedly shared social media content may not only increase the exposures of messages but also may cause cumulative effects of messages. In addition, social

media users produce and share content based on their subjectivity, which acts as message frame and the source of interpretation.

Because social media platforms' messages are created by the users, the same logic can be applied to YouTube. In particular, YouTube has both attributes of social media and traditional media (i.e., television), which can show the impacts of influential individuals' subjective opinions on other users' perceptions. The power of individuals, in this mediated digital era, can be significantly increased based on the connectivity of social media platforms and websites. Popular social media content can repeatedly be shared across the platforms and websites, thereby generating a social trend or public opinion.

Videos may also affect and reflect the viewers' perceptions of national images. Thus, this study also adopts theoretical frameworks of framing and cultivation theory to examine the effects of user-generated content on national images given that famous social media users' content can repeatedly be shared through various social media platforms, affecting other social media users' constructions of reality (Cheng et al., 2016; Jiang, Leeman, & Fu, 2016; Kohm, Waid-Lindberg, Weinrath, Shelley, & Dobbs, 2012).

Cultivation theory and framing theory can provide beneficial explanations to understand the characteristics of social media content that are mentioned above—cumulative effects and subjective messages. Prior studies have examined the applications and influence of social media content and communication in politics (Enli & Simonsen, 2017; Kiouisis, Kim, Ragas, Wheat, Kochhar, Svensson, & Miles, 2015; Parmelee, 2014), in understanding social trends (Jacobson, 2013; Sayre, Bode, Shah, Wilcox, & Shah, 2010), and in building positive national images (N.

Chen, 2012; Hayden, 2012; Zhong & Lu, 2013). The prior studies have revealed that social media content can affect people's perceptions and attitudes through cultivation effects.

In this context, this study focuses on the influence of individual social media users and their messages on other users. YouTube has characteristics of both traditional (i.e., visual and auditory message) and new media (i.e., online interaction). Because of these characteristics, it is appropriate to utilize the two communication theories, cultivation theory and framing theory, to analyze social media messages' effects on the users' perceptions of national images. This study examines YouTube videos that are related to South Korea.

The purpose of this study is to examine the video depictions of a country's national image on YouTube. Based on the theoretical frameworks of cultivation theory and framing theory, this study examines YouTube videos' depictions of South Korea. Through the exploration of videos that focused on English-speaking users, this study investigates and infers the images of South Korea. This study analyzes descriptions related to South Korea in the content of the videos. This study uses the content analysis method on YouTube videos sorted by selected search terms. From the search results, this study selects videos based on their view counts. By doing so, this study categorizes topics and, thus, infers how people from other countries portray South Korea.

This study consists of four main sections: Literature review, methods, discussion, and conclusions. In the literature review section, this study examines prior studies that studied essential concepts for this study. The method section explains research designs and processes. In the discussion section, this study discusses results and implications about how social media may affect the development of national image. The conclusion section suggests limitations of the study and implications for future studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior studies have addressed the importance of individuals' opinions and attitudes about the construction of national images. Individuals' aggregated opinions and attitudes toward a country construct public opinions and sentiments, a construction that Buhmann and Ingenhoff (2015) refer to as a country's "image".

Multi-dimensional aspects of national image have drawn attention from studies in business, politics, social psychology, and communication addressing the importance of interdisciplinary studies of national image (Nicolas, 2004). In particular, Buhmann and Ingenhoff's (2015) study addressed the value of public relations to integrate and structure concepts of national images. In regard to the explanatory power of communication, current studies examined social media's impacts on individuals' perceptions of countries (Gil De Zúñiga et al., 2012; Hayden, 2012; Jiang et al., 2016; Zhao & Rosson, 2009; Zhong & Lu, 2013). Although many studies have examined social media's impact on national image, no studies have examined the effect of YouTube videos. Abundant data available on YouTube may well affect public opinion about countries.

Cultural Influence on National Image

National image is generally defined as the aggregation of people's beliefs, rational and emotional notions, and general descriptions of a country or its citizenry based on direct and indirect experiences (Kaynak & Kucukemiroglu, 1992; Kelman, 1961; Martin & Eroglu, 1993). Prior studies have addressed how a country's communities, economy, politics, society and relationships with other countries affect the construction of its national image. For instance, according to Kaynak and Kucukemiroglu's definition (1992), a country's image consists not only of cognitive factors such as the country's culture, economy, politics, and society, but also

emotional factors such as people's direct and indirect experiences with the country such as using a product, meeting a person, and visiting the country.

In a similar context, Buhmann and Ingenhoff's (2015) study examined prior pertinent studies and suggested an integrated model of national image. The researchers proposed 'The 4D Model' of national image, which integrates perspectives from politics, business, social psychology, and communication. The 4D Model defines four dimensions—functional, normative, aesthetic, and sympathetic—derived from a country's diverse dimensions (e.g., economy, politics, culture, etc.) which reciprocally affect each other. The four dimensions are connected to countries' political, economic, and cultural actions, which consequently affect the sympathetic dimension, "people's general feelings of sympathy and fascination for countries" (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015, p. 14). The study introduced core concepts of prior studies from various fields and thereby addressed the importance of interdisciplinary studies to provide a theoretical framework for meta-analysis of national image. The gist of the study was that the four dimensions of national image are closely related to each other. Since people's perceptions of a country are based on aggregated information about the country including its economy, politics, and efforts to communicate with foreign publics, the 4D Model can provide integrated and detailed information with which to develop a positive national image.

Prior studies have addressed how people's perceptions of national image can be affected by various factors (Bohas, 2006; Fullerton, Hamilton, & Kendrick, 2007; White, 2010). The studies observed polarized or mixed attitudes of foreign publics toward the United States and Americans. While some people had favorable opinions or attitudes toward the United States and Americans, others had negative sentiments toward the United States or Americans. In particular, prior studies

examined the cultural influence of American popular culture on respondents' favorable or negative reactions. A common finding of the prior studies was that people do not always have the same opinion of the United States as a country as they have of Americans, and the cultural attractiveness of the United States can be diminished by historical, economic, or political frictions between the United States and other countries. Results from prior studies addressed the importance of considering the multiple dimensions of a country's international relations efforts and understanding foreign publics to build a positive national image.

People's positive perceptions of national images, which are derived from individuals' emotional and rational interpretations of a country, bring competitive advantage to countries in their international relations. In particular, this competitive advantage can stem from a country's cultural exchanges with other countries (Nye, 2008). A country's cultural attractiveness, or soft power as Nye named it, has a profound and extensive influence on people's perceptions of its image (Nye, 1990). Cultural attractiveness can effectively appeal to people's emotional and rational interpretations of a country because cultural factors are based on people's self-interests.

Popular culture is a good example in explaining the source of soft power. Countries' characteristic popular cultures such as Hollywood movies of the United States, Telenovelas of Latin American countries and the Korean Wave (Hallyu) of South Korea have successfully attracted other countries' publics and built positive images of their countries through dramatized depictions of their countries (Fullerton et al., 2007; Iwabuchi, 2015; Shim, 2006). People's positive attitudes toward a country's culture can play a critical role in international relations and diplomacy because cultural attractiveness appeals strongly to people's emotions and can increase their involvement and participation.

The prior studies mentioned above addressed the importance of considering countries' various aspects (e.g., civic, economic, political, cultural, and social) when communicating with foreign or domestic publics to build positive national images or identities. The implications of prior studies may also be applied to countries' efforts to build positive national images online. In the next section, this study examines prior studies that adopted communication theories to analyze the applications of social media in international relations.

Influence of Social Media Messages on Public Opinion and Perception

Social media platforms offer messages and news to their users tailored to their self-interests, which can easily attract users' attention and exert a strong influence on them. According to a 2016 report by the Pew Research Center, 62% of U.S. adults reported obtaining news from social media platforms (Gottfried & Shearer, 2016). In addition, PR Newswire's 2010 media survey reported that 52 % of U.S. micro-bloggers consider themselves journalists and regularly update their social media presences hoping to affect others' perceptions and attitudes (Iacono & Skerik, 2010).

In the context mentioned above, the characteristics of social media address the importance of users' interactions and messages in constructing public opinions. Social media users' consumption and interpretation of information increased the impacts of individuals as opinion makers. Prior studies (Cheng et al., 2016; Gil De Zúñiga et al., 2012; Hayden, 2012; Intravia, Wolff, Paez, & Gibbs, 2017; Yoo, Choi, Choi, & Rho, 2014) examined the influence of social media messages on individuals' perceptions and discovered that traditional communication theories could be applied to social media communication. The commonality and important implication of the prior studies was that individual social media users can act as information

sources in today's highly mediated society. Social media users not only share information and opinions but also generate content based on their own interpretations, which significantly reflect, as well as affect, public opinion. Communication theories can provide explanations for the impacts of individuals and their messages on the formation of public perceptions and opinions related to national images.

Jiang, Leeman, and Fu (2015) conducted content analysis on China-based social media and showed that the message frames of famous independent Chinese micro-bloggers could affect Chinese social media users' opinions about U.S. electoral politics during the 2012 Democratic National Convention. Although reputable micro-bloggers' messages communicated subjective opinions, the micro-bloggers earned credibility from other users because of their high social, financial, or educational statuses and were conversant with U.S. culture and politics. In addition, the micro-bloggers presented their opinions as those of private individuals and not organizations' official representatives, which led other Chinese social media users to identify with the micro-bloggers and believe their messages (Jiang et al., 2016). The implications of the study share the core ideas of this study: Critical and practical aspects of social media communication such as opinion leaders and their messages have effects on public opinion.

Li and Ronnig's (2013) study also showed the influence of social media and Internet messages and information on people's perceptions of a country. The study conducted surveys to examine Chinese college students' perceptions of Africa and Africans and revealed that the students had constructed stereotypes of Africa based on limited information from sources such as television and Internet news, movies and textbooks. The students responded that Africa and Africans are associated with poverty and underdevelopment, AIDS, musical talent and wildlife.

The study concluded that the students' perceptions of Africa might have been derived from depictions of the country in the media, which also can be connected to framing effects of messages, since a significant number of survey respondents received information about Africa through the press or the Internet (21.3%) and film or TV (21.2%) (Li & Rønning, 2013). The results of the study confirmed, again, that online communication or messages can affect people's perceptions. In particular, the study implied that media consumption could significantly affect people's constructions of their realities when sources of information are limited.

The two prior studies addressed how messages affect people's perceptions and build public opinion. In particular, the core concept of the two studies was that the ways countries are described can significantly affect consumers of those descriptions. For instance, Chinese students from Li and Ronnig's (2013) study held stereotypes of Africa based on media depictions. In Jiang et al.'s (2015) study, social media users were affected by the messages of influential micro-bloggers. The crucial implication of Jiang et al.'s study was that opinion leaders' (i.e., micro-bloggers') messages can act as frames of messages; that is, the subjectivity of social media users shaped message frames and affected message viewers, leading them to form similar opinions.

Framing Effects of Social Media Messages

Framing theory explains the impact of media's messages on people's perceptions. Framing can denote the media's depiction of a subject to shape consumers' perceptions (Entman, 1993; Scheufele, 1999). The gist of framing theory is that the media's purposeful depictions (i.e., message frames) can have strong impacts on people's interpretations, thus affecting their opinions or attitudes. Media's depiction of issues cannot only dominate public communication by providing topics of conversation but also affect how people think about issues.

Framing theory can provide fruitful explanations of the effects of messages because the theory explains how purposeful depictions may affect individual's interpretations and judgments. Some researchers addressed the importance of message frames in social media in building positive public opinion of national images (G. M. Chen, 2012; N. Chen, 2012; Xiang, 2013), social issues (Jacobson, 2013; Sayre et al., 2010), and political decision making (Enli & Simonsen, 2017; Kioussis et al., 2015; Parmelee, 2014). Although prior studies adopted definitions of framing from other researchers (e.g., Chyi & McCombs, 2004; Entman, 1993; De Vreese, 2005), the studies agreed that purposeful depictions can affect people's interpretations and perceptions.

For instance, two studies from Asia also examined effects of social media messages and interactions that may affect national images (G. M. Chen, 2012; Xiang, 2013). The two studies focused on the impacts of social media on intercultural communication, especially between China and the United States. Chen's (2012) study reviewed prior studies and suggested correlations between new media and cultural identity, intercultural interaction and intercultural conflicts. The study addressed that social media communication and interaction act as a melting pot that can affect cultural identities and amplify their dynamics.

One important implication of the study was that social media can affect the development of national image through intercultural interaction. Chen's (2012) study found that social media can facilitate the adaptation of immigrants and international students to host countries by providing information about the host countries and providing a sense of comfort through communication with people in their home countries. Chen (2012) also suggested that cultivation effects can occur during an intercultural adaptation period. Immigrants or international students gradually

become conversant with their host countries' cultures through repeated exposure to social media. Consequently, immigrants and international students who were able to adapt to their host countries could affect the host countries' national images through social media communication with people in their home countries.

Another implication of the study was that social media can affect national images and intercultural conflicts. In particular, Chen (2012) found that the use of message frames in new media coverage can affect national images. The study compared Chinese (*China Daily*) and American (*The Wall Street Journal*) media coverage of Google's withdrawal from China in 2010. The study showed that *China Daily* mainly criticized Google and the U.S. government by covering Google's failures and efforts to avoid censorship while *The Wall Street Journal* reported on China's infringement of human rights, government censorship, crony capitalism, etc. This example showed that framing issues in media coverage can intensify intercultural conflicts and affect national images through journalists' purposeful depictions. Since online environments are highly mediated, and many people get their news from social media, message frames from media coverage may also affect social media users' perceptions of national images (Intravia et al., 2017).

Xiang's (2013) study focused more on how social media messages depict and affect China's national image. The study used content analysis to examine China's national image reflected in English-based social media platforms (e.g., WordPress, Technorati, Digg, Reddit, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Topix, NowPublic and CNN iReport). The results showed that social media depictions of China were more neutral and diverse than those of the mainstream media, e.g., television or newspapers. However, the study discovered that social media used

stereotypical political, social, cultural, and ethnic images used by international mainstream media to describe China, confirming that social media can adopt traditional media's frames.

Prior studies (G. M. Chen, 2012; Xiang, 2013) that examined the framing effects of social media messages on the construction of national images showed that individual users' distribution of framed messages or personal opinions through their networks can affect other users' perceptions of countries. The implications also suggested that social media users' dissemination of information, opinions, and messages about countries can affect public opinion when the messages are repeatedly shared across social media platforms and the Internet. This repeated sharing of information can significantly affect social media users' perceptions of their countries and realities, which may be predictors of countries' reputations or images.

Other prior studies that examined the effect of social media messages' framing in politics addressed the interrelationships between issue providers (e.g., politicians' tweets) and frame makers (e.g., journalists) (Enli & Simonsen, 2017; Kioussis et al., 2015).

Enli and Simonsen's (2017) study examined how the different roles of politicians and journalists affect their social media communication. The study analyzed 10 Norwegian politicians' and ten journalists' tweets and identified different social media communication patterns and uses of hashtags between the two groups. The results showed that the different professional norms between the two groups affect their social media use patterns. The politicians preferred to retweet posts from other users or journalists, while the journalists published original posts. In addition, the politicians' tweets used trending hashtags to engage the issue, whereas the journalists were more "protective of their own media companies and publications (p.12)."

In terms of framing effects, the study found that the two groups tried to affect public opinion by using hashtags containing purposeful or symbolic depictions. The journalists used certain hashtags to set issues or to act as gatekeepers. The politicians adopted journalists' hashtags to increase the salience of their messages in order to affect public opinion.

Enli and Simonsen's (2017) study showed the reciprocity between traditional media and new media. The study observed that debates on social media and hashtags describing the debates by politicians, journalists, and the general public was significantly affected by traditional news media. The result suggested that trends and messages in both new and traditional media may affect the salience of an issue (e.g., a country's image) and public opinion, and issues, trends, and public opinion may also increase the salience of the issue, which may create a virtuous circle relationship between the two types of media. However, trends in social media (i.e., YouTube) may affect traditional media's trends or issues. For instance, the Korean singer PSY's song 'Gangnam Style' went viral in 2012 and drew attention from news media across the world. The traditional media's attention to the YouTube video facilitated the attraction of public attention to the video (Jung & Shim, 2014).

Kiousis et al. (2015) also addressed that social media messages can affect traditional media's coverage or public opinion offline. The study analyzed 2,655 political public relations campaigns and 345 national news media stories during the 2012 U.S. Presidential Election pre-convention period. The study discovered that campaign blog posts, press releases, and issue platforms were the most influential in setting issues.

Similar to Enli's (2017) study, Kiouisis et al. linked framing effects to second-level agenda building and suggested that frames of social media messages can increase the salience of messages or issues and thereby affect people's perceptions.

Cultivation Effects of Social Media Messages

Cultivation theory examines the influence of repeated television watching on viewers' perceptions of the real world when the viewers' worldviews match television representations (Gerbner, 1969; Gerbner & Gross, 1976). Gerbner revealed that watching violent television programs can cause cumulative effects and lead viewers to think the world is violent and dangerous (i.e., the mean world syndrome). Cultivation theory may also apply to social media contexts because the cultivation processes of social media have similar conditions as the original cultivation theory study.

For instance, cultivation theory explains that television's visual and auditory format plays a critical role in the cultivation process due to its realistic depictions of the real world. This assumption implies that realistic descriptions of the world have a strong influence on message viewers' constructions of their realities. In this context, social media may also have a significant influence on users because social media messages reflect, rather than depict, realities by using visual and auditory message formats and users' actual experiences.

Social media can also adopt implications from prior studies that examined the influence of the reputation of information sources on their persuasion considering the extensive influence of social media. Some prior studies addressed the importance of the reputation of media or other information sources in persuading message viewers (Davison, 1983; Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Kim, Kiouisis, & Molleda, 2015). The studies suggested that people can infer the credibility of

information from the credibility of its source. People also think information prevails because it has been publicly exposed to people through media (e.g., television, radio). The inference of credibility of information from the reputation of its source implies that the reputations of so-called ‘power bloggers’ on social media may have a strong influence on other users’ perceptions. Social media users who consume messages from famous social media users (i.e., power bloggers), readily trust the famous users’ opinions and assimilate those opinions into their own (Jiang et al., 2016).

Social media users tend to have strong bonds and intimacy with people in their own social networks because they frequently interact with each other based on the same or similar self-interests, characteristics, or personal relationships from the real world (Joinson, 2008; Yoo et al., 2014). That is, relationships on social media may also be built on strong bonds and shared interests similar to interpersonal relationships. Thus, the characteristics of social media relationships address the importance of social media communication since the messages from “friends” may have a significant influence on individuals’ opinions or attitudes.

In addition, social media users are likely to receive interesting information that fits their own self-interests due to shared or similar interests with other users in their networks, which may cause cumulative effects and heuristics (Joinson, 2008; Tversky & Kahneman, 1973; Zhao & Rosson, 2009). Researchers who studied cultivation theory also observed that repeated exposures to certain messages from television programs can cause heuristics which develop cognitive shortcuts to the messages that make them easily recall violent events, increasing viewers’ anxiety levels (Shrum & Guinn, 1993; Shrum, Wyer, & Guinn, 1998). The similarities between prior studies about traditional media and current studies of new media imply that social media

messages may have a significant influence on users' constructions of reality through cultivation effects, which may be applied to the construction of national images.

Prior studies (Moore, Moore, & Capella, 2005) found that strong bonds and shared interests could significantly affect people's attention to messages, and personal involvement also increases attention to messages regardless of bonding levels. The study found that people have more interest in topics in which they have higher involvement (familiarity or concern) regardless of the reputation or credibility of the information source. Social media communication can adopt and expand the same explanations of individuals' message attention and involvement. Social media users' networks consist of both strong and weak ties which may provide different information depending on their self-interests. Various social media posts of people in one's social network have different impacts depending on an individual's involvement with their topics. Thus, interesting user-generated content can repeatedly be shared across social media platforms through users' weak and strong ties, randomly affecting users with different impacts. Since the concept of involvement has both physical and psychological relevance, social media communication has strong impacts on people's attention gathering and perceptions, not only because social media users get tailored messages, but also because they are highly likely to find interesting posts shared by friends.

One interesting implication of prior research that examined cultivation effects of television programs was the influence of the means of delivering messages, which can be connected to framing, on people's perceptions of the world. Prior studies examined different cultivation effects based not only on the consumption levels of television viewers but also on the ways of delivering messages (Callanan, 2012; Chung, 2014). For instance, Callanan's (2012) study found that

television viewers showed different anxiety levels depending on the types of television programs (e.g., news, reality show, crime drama) and their relation to crime. People showed the highest anxiety level after watching reality shows because crime-related reality programs feature dramatic presentations of actual crimes. The study suggested that messages with emotional and rational stimuli can have strong effects on human perception. Similarly, prior studies of cultivation effects on social media showed that social media users' sharing of their personal experiences and opinions about a crime or disaster affect other users' perceptions of the event (Cheng et al., 2016; Intravia et al., 2017).

Social media consists of people and their interactions based on their self-interests. Thus, opinions on social media can be highly subjective, especially as social media users consider social media as private places to share their personal experiences. In addition, subjective opinions can serve as message frames on social media because social media users compose their messages based on their subjective ideas. Therefore, opinion leaders on social media may have a significant influence on other users and public opinion, which also can be related to national images (Jiang et al., 2016).

Current studies that applied cultivation theory to social media communication examined similarities and differences from prior studies that studied cultivation effects of television, which might suggest implications of building positive national images through social media communication.

For instance, Cheng et al. (2016) examined social media users' perceptions and behavioral intentions in post-disaster recovery after the 2011 Tōhoku Earthquake. Based on theoretical frameworks of cultivation theory, the study compared television and social media messages'

effects on people's anxiety levels and altruistic behavioral intentions. The study suggested different roles of the two media, addressing the applications of social media to facilitate users' identification processes and altruistic behavioral intentions. The study found television was still the most effective medium to disseminate information and identify the viewers with the victims of the disaster. Television was especially effective in increasing the anxiety level of viewers who had not experienced the disaster. However, social media was more effective for users who directly experienced the disaster (or had a similar experience) by sharing their experiences, helping to reduce victims' anxiety and increasing other users' altruistic behavioral intentions.

Cheng's (2016) study showed that social media had different cultivation effects on users' perceptions of reality. While television increased viewers' anxiety levels, social media helped to decrease the victims' anxiety levels by sharing experiences to overcome their experiences of disasters. The study suggested that social media can increase empathy levels, especially among victims, which may cause collateral effects on other message viewers' altruistic behaviors. The results of the study implied that the focus on social interaction and communication, one of the core components of social media, can significantly affect users' perceptions and intentions.

Another study regarding cultivation effects on social media, specifically Facebook and Twitter, focused on different impacts of social media on users' fear of crime (Intravia et al., 2017). The study measured social media users' levels of fear of crime based on their social media use patterns and levels (e.g., overall use of social media and consumption of general and crime-related news). The study observed that those who use social media for general purposes (e.g., social interaction, watching the news or reading interesting posts) had the highest levels of fear of crime, whereas those who use social media to get news or crime-related news showed lower

levels of fear of crime. Intravia et al.'s study showed that general use of social media had stronger impacts on users' fear of crime compared to the use of social media to get general and crime-related news. The results of the study corroborated prior studies in cultivation theory which addressed the stronger impacts of higher levels of media use (Gerbner, 1969), showing social media also have cultivation effects.

An ironic finding was that users of social media to get general or crime-related news had lower levels of fear than overall social media users. The study attributed the differences users' media consumption levels and out-focused measurements. For instance, respondents who used social media to get news had lower use levels than those of social media users overall. Also, the study focused on assessing respondents' general fear of crime and did not examine specific characteristics of social media interactions such as users' engagement in crime stories, which may give rise to a higher level of fear. The results of the study also addressed the importance of social media users' interactions on users' perceptions of reality.

Research Questions

Prior studies of cultivation effects on social media addressed the importance of social media users' interactions in constructing users' perceptions of reality, which is one of the core components of this study. The focus on messages and communications that affect social media users' perceptions, which consequently connect to persuasion, is applicable to the examination of people's opinions and attitudes toward national images. Therefore, it is important to examine the content of social media to see how national images are portrayed, which can in turn affect perceptions about the countries. Based on the discussion of prior studies, this study asks the following research questions:

RQ1: Which dimension(s) of the image of South Korea is (are) emphasized the most through the depictions of the country in the videos?

RQ2: How is the overall image of South Korea framed (i.e., negatively, neutrally or positively) in the videos?

RQ3: To what extent does the dominant tone (e.g., negative, neutral or positive) of the videos correspond with the reactions of viewers reflected by likes and dislikes of the video?

CHAPTER THREE METHODS

This study uses content analysis to examine YouTube videos, using procedures outlines by Kassirjian (1977), which offered detailed and systematic explanations of the content analysis methods. Since the purpose of this study is to examine a country's image from YouTube videos, Kassirjian's content analysis method is a good fit for this study. The methodologies examine communication content and explain the results in a "scientific, objective, systematic, quantitative, and generalizable description" (Kassirjian, 1977, p.10).

This study explores YouTube videos' depictions related to South Korea focusing on English-speaking users. More specifically, this study adopts Kassirjian's unit of analysis disciplines to examine YouTube videos. Kassirjian's unit of analysis may provide guidelines for this study to what extent should the study focus on communication stimuli. Kassirjian divided the ranges of analysis units into five: Word, theme, character, item, and space-and-time measures. This study focuses on the word analysis, which meets the purpose of the study. The word is the smallest unit of analysis and is beneficial to examine (hidden) perceptions in messages by reading between the lines. The frequent use of value-laden or symbolic words may reflect a message sender's intentions. Likewise, a YouTube video's depictions (e.g., words or compounds of words) may reflect intentions of a video creator and show the video's (or the creator's) perceptions of a country. The intentional depictions may affect the judgments and perceptions of viewers, which can suggest clues to infer the presence of cultivation or framing effects in YouTube videos.

This study chose South Korea as the subject country not only because of the country's unique historical and cultural characteristics, but also the country's unclear presence in global

society. Although there is an increasing interest in Korean products and popular cultures, many people are still unaware of the country's different aspects. Recent political change and a global event, the 2018 Winter Olympic Games, in South Korea are another reason to choose the country as the sample. South Korea recently has changed leaders, which may temporarily increase the public's attention on politics and public diplomacy and can be an opportunity for South Korea to develop a positive national image. In addition, the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympic Games may draw global attention and be a good chance to develop the positive image of South Korea.

In this context, this study examines YouTube videos related to South Korea, which may affect the development of the country's image. Thus, this study focuses on videos for English-speaking users due to its abundant data and influence. Also, English-speaking users may represent people whose cultural backgrounds are in Western culture. The considerations of people's various perceptions and opinions derived from different cultural backgrounds may provide valuable information for the construction of the positive national image.

YouTube is also a good fit to examine potential cultivation and framing effects of user-generated content on public opinions. YouTube users can freely and repeatedly watch videos with specific topics that meet their self-interests. YouTube, as a social media platform, allows its users to share videos and opinions of the videos, thus helping to disseminate videos and to develop public opinions or sentiments. Prior studies have examined that social media messages can act as message frames affecting the message viewers (N. Chen, 2012; Jiang et al., 2016; Kioussis et al., 2015; Sayre et al., 2010). YouTube videos are edited and created based on the creators' subjectivities, which may affect the message viewers' perceptions. The creators can exaggerate or dramatize messages in videos by adding or deleting scenes depending on the

creators' intentions. The intentional editing and depiction of issues or subjects on YouTube videos may affect the viewers' rational or emotional judgments of the issues or subjects. Also, famous YouTube videos can repeatedly be shared by users, thus strengthening the effects of both framed messages and cultivation effects, which affect the construction of the viewers' realities.

This study adopted the 4D model from Buhmann and Ingenhoff's (2015) study to categorize the potential influence of videos on national image. The 4D model addressed four dimensions of national image that reflect the country's political or economic performances (functional dimension), norms and values (normative dimension), or cultures and lifestyles (aesthetic dimension). The three dimensions can affect general sentiments about, sympathy for, or fascination with a country (sympathetic dimension) (p.14). Based on the 4D model, this study examines which images in the dimensions are famous or frequently being discussed. However, this study excluded the sympathetic dimension as a coding category since the dimension is closer to a consequence of the other three dimensions than a cause. Also, this study did not examine users' perceptions (e.g., comments) due to the time constraints. Only the three dimensions (i.e., functional, normative, and aesthetic) were examined considering the possibility of quantification.

Samples

The main purpose of this study is to examine national images of South Korea reflected in YouTube's user-generated content (i.e., video). To do so, this study searched videos by using four search terms "Korea," "South Korea," "foreigners in Korea," and "living in South Korea" on YouTube. To maintain objectivity and examine trends in topics related to South Korea, this study avoided using biased and detailed search terms like "images of South Korea," which produced a greater number of neutral results. In addition, this study chose videos from each search term

based on their views and relevance to sort out “influential” videos. The process of organizing data was done by using a “filter” function on YouTube. Search results (i.e., videos) were firstly organized by “view count,” and videos were selected only when they contained content related to South Korea (see Appendix A for the list of the samples).

Based on the sampling principles, this study selected the top 50 videos from 200 aggregated results (the sum of top 50 videos from each search term). The sample selection process was conducted twice, on February 28 and March 1, due to the amount of data. This study examined three minutes of the beginning of each video because “interesting videos” succeed to draw the attention of people from the introductory part. Also, it may be similar to ordinary viewers’ viewing behaviors that skim through videos. For those videos that are under three minutes, the study examined the videos from the beginning to the end. When videos’ introductory parts were not relevant to South Korea, this study stopped counting the time and started the counting when the videos showed images relevant to South Korea.

Coding Categories

To examine which topics related to South Korea are being discussed and famous, this study examined the selected videos’ visual and verbal descriptions of the country based on coding categories that were partly adopted from the prior studies mentioned above (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015; Entman, 1993; Kassarian, 1977; Matthes & Kohring, 2008). Since there has been no research to investigate the relationship between national portrayals in YouTube videos and their national image, this study chose an inductive approach to define topics and frames of the depictions based on the prior studies’ frame analysis and content analysis frameworks.

Dimensions of National Image

Dimensions of South Korea's national image were measured by using the theoretical framework of the Buhmann and Ingenhoff's (2015) 4D model of the country image. Based on the framework, this study explored whether the videos contained images and depictions of South Korea's economic, political, and military power (i.e., functional dimension); customs and values (i.e., normative dimension); or cultural and scenic place (aesthetic dimension). This study excluded the sympathetic dimension as a coding category since this study did not examine affective components (e.g., feelings and sentiments) because of the difficulty in quantification.

This study examined visual and verbal depictions of an issue in the videos. The purposeful depictions may affect people's interpretations of certain issues and also affect the interpretations of incoming information (Entman, 1993; Weaver, 2007). By using Kassarian's (1977) standard content analysis, this study reviewed word uses and valences (e.g., negative, neutral, and positive) of dimensions (i.e., functional, normative, and aesthetic) to verify the influence of depictions on national image.

Operationalizing Dimensions of National Image

This study operationalized each dimension of national image and relevant coding categories based on prior studies (Anholt, 2009; Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015; Kassarian, 1977). Some basic definitions of the dimensions were adjusted to examine tones of descriptions based on the results of a pilot test. Operational definitions for the three dimensions and subsequent categories of each dimension are like below:

The functional dimension includes and reflects a country's economic wealth, military force, modernized status (i.e., modern metropolitan cities), and cutting-edge technology

(Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015). Direct and indirect descriptions of a country's economic, military, social, and political systems—such as showing modern city views or the country's gross domestic product (GDP) rank in the world—can be sources of the interpretation of the country.

The normative dimension refers to the customs, values, culture, and social forms manifested in a nation and its society (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015). Characterized cultures of a nation reflect customs and values, which were formed by social learning and interaction. According to the Oxford dictionary's definition, custom refers to characterized or traditional ways of doing something or behaviors that are widely accepted in a certain society. Values can be defined as the source of behavior or judgment of doing something. A society or culture has their value standards, which have been established and transferred through social learning. Country leader, government systems, and organizations also reflect a society's normative aspects. In addition, elements related to popular culture are also in the normative dimension because they reflect cultural characteristics of a society.

The aesthetic dimension denotes traditional or unique lifestyles of a country. The traditional and unique lifestyles include foods, tourist places, natural environments, and architectural styles which can be seen only in the country (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015). This study examined verbal and visual descriptions of each dimension and the components of the dimensions explained above from YouTube videos.

This study examined tones of the three dimensions' 12 categories and also investigated overall tones (e.g., negative, neutral, and positive) of each video about Korea/Koreans. The pilot test of this study clarified that videos might contain images of more than one dimension and have different tones for images and for Korea/Koreans. The results of the pilot test led this study to

consider multiple dimensions in a video and discrepancy between image tones and overall tones. Overall tone refers to general tones of depictions about Korea/Koreans for each video. Each video had one aggregated tone about Korea/Koreans, while image tones could be many.

YouTube videos may describe positive or negative aspects of the three dimensions based on the video creators' subjectivities and self-interests. Positive descriptions refer to intentional descriptions of a country's dimension(s) in order to highlight the merits of the country. Beautification of a video is a way to accentuate the merits of the dimensions, and editing and filming methods take majority parts of the beautification. Editing techniques like visualization effects or purposeful selections of scenes in videos can significantly affect viewers' interpretations (Jeong, 2008).

Negative descriptions denote intentional depictions of unfavorable aspects of the dimensions. Ways to express negativity are various in extreme ways such as defamation, degradation, or sarcasm to more neutral ways like explaining individuals' unfavorable experiences related to a country. Editing methods also play a crucial role in the viewers' interpretations. Deliberately putting disturbing images without editing them is also one way to emphasize negative images (Jeong, 2008).

Neutral descriptions indicate maintaining a balanced position in the depictions of objects. To maintain the balance, videos suggest both positive and negative aspects of objects at the same time. Another way to keep the neutral position is to eliminate subjectivity in depictions by only suggesting facts or showing images without containing personal opinions, rumors, or beautification editing.

Other variables were the date of coding, date of the video was uploaded, numbers of views, likes, dislikes, and comments. These variables were created because of their potential influence on and relevance to cultivation or framing effects. The variables were coded based the data included in the videos.

Coding Process

Based on the operationalization definitions, this study coded and analyzed the selected 50 YouTube video samples on March 20. There were two coders—Korean and American, who have been raised in South Korea and the United States for the most of their lives—to distinguish and compare the influence of cultural backgrounds in the interpretations of the videos related to national image. Although the coding results were similar, there were differences between the two coders. For instance, the Korean coder did not consider the video that was taken in a seafood market as a tourist spot, whereas the American coder chose the place as a tourist spot. After discussions about the cultural differences between the two coders, this study was able to reconcile the coding principles in order to draw more meaningful implications. This study put more weight on the American (Western) perspective because the purpose of the study is to examine national image.

The coding categories were made by adopting Buhmann and Ingenhoff's (2015) 4D model. This study coded the samples' verbal and visual descriptions of South Korea and Koreans in regard to the country's functional dimensions (e.g., economic power, military power, cutting-edge technology, and modernized metropolitan city), normative dimensions (e.g., country's leader/government, Korean social trends, values, and customs), and aesthetic dimensions (e.g., traditional tourist spots, Korean style buildings; café, restaurants, natural beauty, and food). Each

category was primarily coded as either “1” (present) or “0” (absent). If a category was coded “1” (present), its tones were subsequently coded as “1” (negative), “2” (neutral), and “3” (positive). After finishing the coding process of each category, this study rated the overall tone of South Korea or Koreans in the 50 samples with “1” (negative), “2” (neutral), and “3” (positive) (see Appendix B for the coding book). This study examined the presence of every dimension and their images, verbal or visual depictions about the images, and overall tones of Korea or Korean.

To achieve integrity and credibility, inter-coder reliability was calculated. For inter-coder reliability calculation, this study used four types of reliability computation methods (e.g., percent agreement, Scott’s Pi, Cohen’s Kappa, and Krippendorff’s Alpha). The inter-coder reliability scores deemed to be acceptable. The Krippendorff’s Alpha score ranged from 0.63 to 1, and other scores showed similar trends.

Disagreements were reconciled between the two coders by coming to an agreement after a brief discussion. The reconciled-coding data was obtained after an additional coding process of the sample videos by the two coders. Prior to the additional coding process, the two coders discussed differences and commonalities in their perceptions to see the videos based on the first coding results. After the two coders came to an agreement and understood each other’s perceptions, the two coders tried to code the categories in a foreigner’s perspective since the purpose of this study is to understand outsiders’ perceptions of a country.

This study conducted quantitative data analyses on the reconciled-results by using SPSS 25. This study also used Spearman test to examine correlations among variables. Descriptive analyses and frequency tests were used to analyze overall tones, reactions, and popularity of the sample videos depending on topics (i.e., dimensions).

Table 1: Inter-coder Reliability.

Variables	Percent Agreement	Scott's Pi	Cohen's Kappa	Krippendorff's Alpha
Presence of modern metropolitan city	0.98	0.96	0.96	0.96
Tone of modern metropolitan city	0.94	0.90	0.90	0.90
Presence of cutting edge technology	0.98	0.95	0.95	0.95
Tone of cutting edge technology	0.96	0.90	0.90	0.90
Presence of military power	0.98	0.88	0.88	0.88
Tone of military power	0.98	0.88	0.88	0.88
Presence of economic wealth	0.94	0.84	0.84	0.84
Tone of economic wealth	0.92	0.80	0.80	0.80
Presence of government/leader	0.98	0.88	0.88	0.88
Tone of government/leader	0.96	0.76	0.76	0.76
Presence of Korean social trends	0.96	0.92	0.92	0.92
Tone of Korean social trends	0.82	0.69	0.69	0.69
Presence of Korean values	0.90	0.79	0.79	0.80
Tone of Korean values	0.82	0.69	0.69	0.70
Presence of Korean customs	0.92	0.84	0.84	0.84
Tone of Korean customs	0.80	0.71	0.71	0.71
Presence of traditional tourist spots	0.94	0.86	0.86	0.86
Tone of traditional tourist spots	0.88	0.74	0.75	0.75
Presence of Korean style buildings	0.88	0.63	0.63	0.63
Tone of Korean style buildings	0.82	0.72	0.72	0.72
Presence of natural beauty	0.94	0.86	0.86	0.87
Tone of natural beauty	0.90	0.80	0.80	0.80
Presence of food	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Tone of food	0.94	0.88	0.88	0.88
Overall tone of South Korea in the video	0.86	0.75	0.76	0.75

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS

Data Overview

This study examined the national image of South Korea reflected in foreign social media users' user-generated content (i.e., videos) on YouTube. A total of 50 videos were analyzed for the study. Data collections were conducted twice—on February 28 and March 1, 2018. This researcher searched videos by using search terms “Korea,” “South Korea,” “foreigners in Korea,” and “living in South Korea” on YouTube. The results showed that the term “Korea” had the most results (n= 57,900,000) followed by “South Korea” (n= 23,800,000). The term “living in South Korea” had the third highest number of results (n=17,600,000) and “foreigners in Korea” had the least results (n= 644,400). The study sorted the videos by the videos' views and extracted 50 videos from each search term (n= 200). Among the selected 200 videos, this study selected the 50 sample videos in descending order of views and relevance to South Korea.

As of the data extracted on March 1, 2018, the samples' average view was 3,941,329. The most-viewed video recorded 44,368,477 views, and the least one had 446,195 views. In terms of viewers' interests or reactions to the samples, the average number of likes was 38,775. The most liked video had 397,168 likes with 4,360,448 views. The least liked video had 1,394 likes with 6,217,602 views. The average number of dislikes was 1,716. The most disliked video had 12,117 dislikes with 27,437,461 views. The least disliked video was the same video that had the least number of likes and had 16 dislikes. The average number of comments was 4,719. The most commented video was the same video that had the highest number of likes and had 29,188 comments. The least commented video was the same video that had the least liked and had 96 comments.

Table 2: Videos Sorted by Views and the Numbers of Likes, Dislikes, and Comments.

Video Title	Views	Likes	Ratio (L/V)*	Dislikes	Ratio (D/V)*	Comments	Ratio (C/V)*
Sorted by Views							
Enjoy your Creative Korea – Official TVC for 2016 Korea Tourism – 60s	44,368,477	3,922	0.0088	659	0.0015	415	0.0009
Trick Eye & Love Museum in Seoul, South Korea	27,437,461	103,468	0.3771	12,117	0.0442	5,777	0.0211
슈퍼주니어 & 소녀시대_SEOUL (서울)_뮤직비디오 (MusicVideo)	7,859,323	70,104	0.8920	1,221	0.0155	9,218	0.1173
My life in North Korea vs South Korea	7,334,139	198,576	2.7076	6,421	0.0875	20,935	0.2854
Conan Learns Korean And Makes It Weird	6,987,571	120,141	1.7194	1,113	0.0159	6,623	0.0948
Sorted by the Number of Likes							
With Seoul by BTS	4,360,448	397,168	9.1084	1,341	0.0308	29,188	0.6694
My life in North Korea vs South Korea	7,334,139	198,576	2.7076	6,421	0.0875	20,935	0.2854
BTS' Life in Seoul	1,290,663	120,746	9.3553	414	0.0321	2,238	0.1734
Conan Learns Korean And Makes It Weird	6,987,571	120,141	1.7194	1,113	0.0159	6,623	0.0948
Trick Eye & Love Museum in Seoul, South Korea	27,437,461	103,468	0.3771	12,117	0.0442	5,777	0.0211
Sorted by the Number of Dislikes							
Trick Eye & Love Museum in Seoul, South Korea	27,437,461	103,468	0.3771	12,117	0.0442	5,777	0.0211
Korean Street Food - GIANT OCTOPUS	2,615,867	10,162	0.3885	9,150	0.3498	4,610	0.1762
Seoul Seafood							
My life in North Korea vs South Korea	7,334,139	198,576	2.7076	6,421	0.0875	20,935	0.2854
Inside The Lives Of The Rich Kids Of South Korea	2,111,691	18,474	0.8748	5,117	0.2423	3,694	0.1749
Eating Live Octopus in Korea	3,977,034	8,931	0.2246	4,613	0.1160	3,647	0.0917
Sorted by the Number of Comments							
With Seoul by BTS	4,360,448	397,168	9.1084	1,341	0.0308	29,188	0.6694
My life in North Korea vs South Korea	7,334,139	198,576	2.7076	6,421	0.0875	20,935	0.2854

Table 2. Continued.

Video Title	Views	Likes	Ratio (L/V)*	Dislikes	Ratio (D/V)*	Comments	Ratio (C/V)*
10 Differences Between NORTH and South Korea	2,336,863	29,793	1.2749	2,427	0.1039	12,970	0.5550
On Patrol with South Korea's Suicide Rescue Team	3,741,979	79,530	2.1253	886	0.0237	10,623	0.2839
Seoul Fashion Week - K-Pop to Double Eyelid Surgery	2,473,735	18,850	0.7620	4,169	0.1685	9,635	0.3895

* Each L/V, D/V, and C/V stands for likes (L), dislikes (D), or comments (C) divided by views (V).

However, the ratios of view counts to likes, dislikes, and comments showed different trends. This research calculated the samples' ratios by dividing each number of likes, dislikes, and comments by the views. The ratios substituted for percentages. For instance, the most liked video had 120,746 likes with 1,290,663 views, which resulted in 9.35% of the views-to-likes ratio. The average percentage of views-to-likes was 1.52%, views-to-likes was 0.06%, and views-to-comments was 0.2%. Although the calculated figures were low because the denominators (i.e., views) were much bigger than numerators (i.e., likes, dislikes, comments), the results showed meaningful differences among the variables. The least liked video had 3,922 likes with 44,368,477 views, which resulted in 0.01% of the views-to-likes ratio. The most disliked video had 9,150 dislikes with 2,615,687 views, which resulted in 0.35% of the views-to-dislikes ratio. The least disliked video had 16 dislikes with 6,217,602 views, which the views-to-dislikes ratio was below than 0.001 percent. The most commented video had 5,194 comments with 623,925 views, which resulted in 0.83% of views-to-comments ratio. The least commented video had 415 comments with 44,368,477 views, which the views-to-comments ratio was below than 0.001 percent.

Table 3: Videos Sorted by the Ratios of Views to Likes, Dislikes, and Comments.

Video Title	Views	Likes	Ratio (D/V)	Dislikes	Ratio (D/V)	Comments	Ratio (D/V)
Sorted by Ratio (Views to Likes)							
BTS' Life in Seoul	1,290,663	120,746	9.3553	414	0.0321	2,238	0.1734
With Seoul by BTS	4,360,448	397,168	9.1084	1,341	0.0308	29,188	0.6694
Being a Non-Asian Foreigner in Korea	581,633	24,029	4.1313	235	0.0404	1,772	0.3047
My life in North Korea vs South Korea	7,334,139	198,576	2.7076	6,421	0.0875	20,935	0.2854
What Living In Korea Taught Me Abi Abroad	550,099	13,971	2.5397	204	0.0371	1,391	0.2529
Sorted by Ratio (Views to Dislikes)							
Korean Street Food - GIANT OCTOPUS	2,615,867	10,162	0.3885	9,150	0.3498	4,610	0.1762
Seoul Seafood							
11 Things I Hate About Living in South Korea	608,557	5,910	0.9711	1,520	0.2498	1,474	0.2422
Inside The Lives Of The Rich Kids Of South Korea	2,111,691	18,474	0.8748	5,117	0.2423	3,694	0.1749
10 Differences Between NORTH and SOUTH Korea	2,164,237	8,789	0.4061	3,840	0.1774	2,230	0.1030
Seoul Fashion Week - K-Pop to Double Eyelid Surgery	2,473,735	18,850	0.7620	4,169	0.1685	9,635	0.3895
Sorted by Ratio (Views to Comments)							
Do Koreans Think Korea is Living Hell? ASIAN BOSS	623,925	9,578	1.5351	371	0.0595	5,194	0.8325
With Seoul by BTS	4,360,448	397,168	9.1084	1,341	0.0308	29,188	0.6694
10 Differences Between NORTH Korea and South Korea	2,336,863	29,793	1.2749	2,427	0.1039	12,970	0.5550
Seoul Fashion Week - K-Pop to Double Eyelid Surgery	2,473,735	18,850	0.7620	4,169	0.1685	9,635	0.3895
North Korea vs South Korea 2017 - Who Would Win - Army / Military Comparison	1,990,213	28,872	1.4507	1,990	0.1000	7,164	0.3600

This study also examined the videos' upload periods to measure which topics gain attention the fastest. The periods that the videos had been uploaded may affect cultivation processes of viewers (Chung, 2014). In addition, the upload periods can reflect viewers' interests in topics of the videos by examining the videos' increase rates in those views. Chung's (2014) study also suggested that longer upload period may cause cultivation effects because people repeatedly consume same messages. The longest upload period was 98 months (uploaded on December 11, 2009) and had 7,859,323 views, 70,104 likes (0.89% of views-to-likes), 1,221 dislikes (0.02%), and 9,218 comments (0.11%). The shortest upload period was 2 months (uploaded on December 12, 2017) and had 4,360,448 views, 397,168 likes (9.11%), 1,314 dislikes (0.03%), and 29,188 comments (0.66%). A video that showed the fastest growth in views had been uploaded 18 months and averagely increased 2,464,915 views in each month (total views 44,368,477, likes 3,922, dislikes 659, and comments 415). A video that showed the slowest growth in views had been uploaded 66 months and averagely increased 13,221 views in each month (total views 872,572, likes 10,829, dislikes 217, and comments 2,932).

In terms of view increases, there were four videos had recorded over one million view increases per month after they were uploaded. Topics and creators were various from personal daily video log to government tourism promotion videos. The first video that showed the fastest increase was a TV commercial which was made by Korean Tourism Organization. The video had been uploaded for 18 months, and average monthly view increase was 2,464,915. The second popular video was a tourism promotion music video which was made by Seoul Metropolitan Government. The video had been uploaded two months, and average monthly view increase was 2,180,224. The third popular video was a personal daily video log about tourist spots called

“trick eye museum” and “love museum.” The video had been uploaded for 14 months, and average monthly view increase was 1,959,819. The last video was a personal daily log that compared live styles between North and South Korea. The video had been uploaded for six months, and average monthly view increase was 1,222,357.

Table 4: Videos Sorted by the Monthly View Increases.

Video Title	Uploaded Period (Month)	Monthly View Increase	Views	Likes	Dislikes	Comments
Enjoy your Creative Korea – Official TVC for 2016 Korea Tourism – 60s	18	2464915	44,368,477	3,922	659	415
With Seoul by BTS	2	2180224	4,360,448	397,168	1,341	29,188
Trick Eye & Love Museum in Seoul, South Korea	14	1959819	27,437,461	103,468	12,117	5,777
My life in North Korea vs South Korea	6	1222357	7,334,139	198,576	6,421	20,935
Inside The Lives Of The Rich Kids Of South Korea	3	703897	2,111,691	18,474	5,117	3,694

Answering Research Questions

RQ1: Trends in Topics Related to South Korea

The first research question examined trends in topics related to South Korea in YouTube videos. This study categorized topics related to South Korea by using Buhmann and Ingenhoff’s (2015) 4D model. Three dimensions (i.e., functional, normative, and aesthetic) with four sub-categories for each dimension were examined. This research examined and counted how many videos contain the contents related to the dimensions and their sub-categories.

The results showed that the aesthetic dimension (e.g., traditional tourist spots, Korean style buildings, natural beauty, and food) was the dimension most frequently depicted in the videos.

The images related to the aesthetic dimension were described 91 times in the sample videos. In particular, Korean style buildings were described the most. Presentations or mentions of Korean style buildings (e.g., café, apartments, etc.) appeared in 41 videos and took 82 % of the sample. Other than the descriptions of Korean style buildings, sub-categories under the aesthetic dimension showed similar frequencies of depictions. Descriptions of Korean tourist spot and of natural beauty were described in 17 videos for each, and of Korean food were in 16 videos.

The second most frequently described dimension was the normative dimension (e.g., country's leader/government, social trends, values, and customs). The dimension was mentioned 76 times in the videos. Among the images of the normative dimension, the most frequently described image in the normative dimension was South Korea's customs. Depictions related to South Korea's customs appeared in 28 videos. The sub-category was also the second most frequently described category among the categories from all dimensions. Unlike the aesthetic dimension's sub-categories, sub-categories in the normative dimension did not show the balanced distribution of frequencies. The number of videos that contained depictions of South Korea's government or leader was significantly lesser than other sub-categories ($n=5$). South Korea's values were mentioned in 22 videos, and social trends were in 21 videos.

Lastly, the functional dimension (e.g., South Korea's modern metropolitan cities, cutting-edge technology, military power, and economic wealth) was the third most frequently described dimension. The images related to the functional dimension were mentioned or presented 57 times in the videos. The modern metropolitan city was the most frequently described category in the functional dimension and the third most frequently described category among all sub-categories. The images of the modern metropolitan city were included in 25 videos. Similar to the normative

dimension's sub-category trends, the sub-categories of the functional dimensions also had one unpopular category. The images of South Korea's military power were only mentioned in five videos. Fourteen videos of the total sample included the images related to South Korea's economic wealth, and 13 videos depicted the country's cutting-edge technology.

Table 5: Most Frequently Discussed Topics.

Category	Present	
	Count	Percentage
Functional Dimension		
Military Power	5	10.00%
Cutting-edge Technology	13	26.00%
Economic Wealth	14	28.00%
Modern Metropolitan City	25	50.00%
N	57	
Normative Dimension		
Government / Leader	5	10.00%
Social Trends	21	42.00%
Korean Values	22	44.00%
Korean Customs	28	56.00%
N	76	
Aesthetic Dimension		
Food	16	32.00%
Tourist Spot	17	34.00%
Natural Beauty	17	34.00%
Korean Style Buildings	41	82.00%
N	91	

RQ2: Tones of Depictions Related to South Korea

The second research question asked how the YouTube videos framed (e.g., negative, neutral, or positive) South Korea. The results showed that 32 videos (64% of the sample) described South Korea/Korean positively, 12 videos were neutral, and 6 videos depicted the country negatively. However, tones of dimensions (and sub-categories) were different from the overall tones of the videos to describe South Korea.

The results showed that images related to Korea's aesthetic dimension recorded the highest frequency of positive depictions ($n=49$). The functional dimension was the second ($n=35$), and the normative dimension was the third ($n=27$). However, this study calculated the ratios of total depiction frequencies to each dimension's tones due to the different sizes of the total number of descriptions among each dimension. The images related to the aesthetic dimension were depicted 91 times in total, normative images were 76 times, and the functional dimension's ones were 57 times. The results showed that 61.4% of videos contained the functional images of South Korea depicted the country positively the most. The second most positive dimension was the aesthetic dimension (53.8%), and the last was the normative dimension (35.5%).

The normative dimension was the dimension that recorded the highest ratio of total videos to negative image tones (22%). Among the 76 videos that contained the normative images described the dimension in negative ways 17 times. Among the 57 videos, only one video described the functional images of the country in negative ways, and the same trend was observed in the aesthetic dimension.

This study showed that the overall tones of the videos showed different trends from the tones of each dimension. For instance, the results showed that overall tones of videos were positive, although a significant number of videos that contained the normative images of South Korea depicted the country in neutral or negative ways. Thirty-two videos among the 50 samples had the overall positive tone. The overall neutral tone took the second place ($n=12$), and the negative tone was the last ($n=6$).

The results showed that images related to Korea's customs (mean= 1.95, SD= .722, 1= negative, 2= neutral, and 3= positive) and values (mean= 1.96, SD= .793) were described in

neutral ways among the videos that contained the two images. Among the 22 videos that contained images of Korean values, six videos negatively described the country's values (27.3%). Likewise, there were 24 videos depicted the images of Korean customs, and nine videos neutrally depicted the country's customs (32.1%).

Images related to South Korea's cutting-edge technology were described positively the most (mean= 2.77, SD= .439). Among the 13 videos, Korea's cutting-edge technologies were positively described in 10 videos (76.9%).

Korean natural beauty (mean= 2.65, SD= .493) and foods (mean= 2.63, SD= .619) were positively described in most cases. Among 17 videos that contained the images of Korean natural beauty, 11 videos positively described the images (64.7%). There were 16 videos that had depictions related to Korean foods, and 11 of the 16 described Korean foods positively (68.8%).

Another finding was that the tones of the images related to the Korean building. Although the results showed that the images of Korean buildings were the most frequently depicted (n= 41) and recorded the highest number of positive reactions (n= 17), the results showed that the images of Korean building are rather neutral (mean= 2.20, SD= .447). Among the 41 videos that contained the images of Korean buildings, 17 videos (41.5%) positively described, and 24 videos (58.5%) described in neutral ways.

To summarize, the results showed that images related to Korean values and customs were described neutrally but slightly negative in most cases, whereas the images concerning the country's cutting-edge technology, natural beauty, and foods were usually described in positive ways. Videos that contained images of Korean government/leader, modern metropolitan city, tourist spots, and economic wealth described the images in slightly positive ways. Images of

Korean buildings and military power were described in neutral ways, although the Korean building images were the most frequent images. This study clarified that regardless of the tones (e.g., negative, neutral, or positive), the 50 sample videos generally depicted South Korea positively. Among the 50 samples, the tones of 32 videos were positive, 12 were neutral, and six were negative. This paradoxical results derived from different description methods and video types. For instance, there were types of videos that compared North and South Korea or interviewed people. The comparisons videos purposefully put negative or positive depictions related to South Korea's economic wealth or other dimensions. In the similar context, some interview videos intentionally asked questions that reflect negative aspects of South Korea such as stereotypes or rumors. Nevertheless, most interview videos positively described South Korea at the end by showing truthful opinions of interviewees and, thus, fixing the misconceptions.

Table 6: Topic Tones and Descriptive Statistics.

Category	Negative		Neutral		Positive		Mean*	SD
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage		
Korean Values	6	27.30%	11	50.00%	5	22.70%	1.95	.722
Korean Customs	9	32.10%	11	39.30%	8	28.60%	1.96	.793
Military Power	0	0.00%	4	80.00%	1	20.00%	2.20	.447
Korean Style Buildings	0	0.00%	24	58.50%	17	41.50%	2.41	.499
Social Trends	1	4.80%	10	47.60%	10	47.60%	2.43	.598
Economic Wealth	1	7.10%	4	28.60%	9	64.30%	2.57	.646
Tourist Spot	0	0.00%	7	41.20%	10	58.80%	2.59	.507
Modern Metropolitan City	0	0.00%	10	40.00%	15	60.00%	2.60	.500
Government / Leader	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	4	80.00%	2.60	.894
Food	1	6.30%	4	25.00%	11	68.80%	2.63	.619
Natural Beauty	0	0.00%	6	35.30%	11	64.70%	2.65	.493
Cutting-edge Technology	0	0.00%	3	23.10%	10	76.90%	2.77	.439

* 1= Negative, 2= Neutral, 3= Positive

RQ3: Correspondence between the Overall Tones and Viewers' Reactions (e.g., likes, dislikes, and comment numbers)

The third research question asked how the viewers' reactions (e.g., likes, dislikes, and comments) corresponded with the overall tones. The results showed that there were significant correlations only between overall tones and dislikes. This study used Spearman test to examine the correlations among the overall tones (e.g., negative, neutral, and positive) and viewers' reactions. The results clarified two significant correlations among variables. Results of Spearman correlation showed that there was a negative relationship between the overall tone and the ratios of views-to-dislikes ($r_s(50) = -.321, p = .023$). The results showed that videos with more negative tones had higher views-to-dislikes ratios. The results also partly corroborated the findings of prior studies in cultivation and framing effects (Entman, 1993; Gerbner, 1976). The prior studies suggested that repeated exposures to negative depictions of an issue or object construct negative opinions in message receivers' minds, thus affecting future interpretations. Some of the 50 YouTube videos with negative depictions (and negative overall tones) of South Korea were exposed to many viewers. Viewers of the YouTube videos (i.e., messages receivers) also showed negative sentiments or reactions through dislikes. The results might imply that the viewers affected by the videos' negative depictions, thus constructing negative opinions of South Korea.

However, one problem with the results is that dislikes on the videos did not always reflect negative opinions of South Korea. For instance, the video "Korean Street Food - GIANT OCTOPUS Seoul Seafood" had a negative overall tone and recorded the high number of dislikes. This study was able to examine negative comments about the culture of eating a live octopus in Korea and, thus, to infer that the dislikes may reflect the negative opinions of the country.

However, this study also found a significant amount of comments that expressed disgust feelings about octopus itself, thus inferring that some of the dislikes might imply the disgust of octopus, not South Korea. There were also some videos with the high number of dislikes because the videos had luring, deceitful titles, and false information. In these cases, viewers pushed dislikes to show their discomfort feelings to the videos, not South Korea. Other relationships between the overall tones and the ratios of views to likes or comments did not show significant correlations.

Another finding from the Spearman test was that there was a positive relationship between the ratios of views-to-likes and the ones of views-to-comments ($r_s(50)=.454$, $p=.001$). The results indicated that videos with the high number of likes also had the high number of comments.

Table 7: Spearman Test Results.

			Overall Tone	Ratio (L/V)	Ratio (D/V)	Ratio (C/V)
Spearman's rho	Overall Tone	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.218	-.321*	-0.214
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.129	0.023	0.135
		N	50	50	50	50
	Ratio (L/V)	Correlation Coefficient	0.218	1.000	-0.230	.454**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.129		0.108	0.001
		N	50	50	50	50
	Ratio (D/V)	Correlation Coefficient	-.321*	-0.230	1.000	0.126
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.023	0.108		0.384
		N	50	50	50	50
	Ratio (C/V)	Correlation Coefficient	-0.214	.454**	0.126	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.135	0.001	0.384	
		N	50	50	50	50

*, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION

Understanding the Results

This study examined the images of South Korea and Koreans through YouTube videos. The results showed that every YouTube video contained more than one dimension and used various ways to describe South Korea. The majority of the videos described South Korea in positive terms, and viewers' reactions were consistent with the overall tone of the videos. In addition, the results indicated that multiple variables might affect the popularity of a video, considering that some videos with short upload periods showed drastic increases in their views.

The most frequently-appearing dimension was the aesthetic dimension (i.e., traditional tourist spots, Korean style buildings, natural beauty and food), and the most positive dimension was the functional dimension as measured by views-to-likes ratios. More specifically, the images and descriptions of Korean style buildings appeared most often. Since the definition of description contains both verbal and visual depictions, the results seemed obvious. Except for two info-graphic videos, most videos were taken in or depicted South Korea, thus inevitably featuring images of Korean buildings. Depictions of cutting-edge technologies (e.g., electronic devices and medical technology) and modern metropolitan city were the most positively described images. In contrast, descriptions of Korean leadership, government, and military power appeared the least, and Korean foods and customs were frequently described in negative tones. Videos rarely contained content related to Korean leadership or government. There was only one video, a documentary, about the Seoul Fire Department's suicide rescue team.

Characteristics of Popular YouTube Videos

Topics that Meet Social Trends and Viewers' Interests

The results showed that the 50 videos studied had topics that attracted viewers and met their interests. One frequently discussed topic was comparisons of North and South Korea. Of the 50 samples, nine videos dealt with economic, lifestyle, military, and language differences between South and North Korea. The high interest in the topic was attributed to traditional media news coverage since the division of South and North Korea is well known and frequently covered by traditional media (e.g., television, radio, newspapers). Previous studies that have examined the influence of cultivation and framing theories on traditional and new media have shown that descriptions of traditional media have a significant influence on viewers' perception and interpretation (Jung & Shim, 2014).

Topics related to the aesthetic dimension of South Korea were also popular. Fifteen videos (45%) among the sample specifically focused on introducing or depicting traditional Korean tourist spots, lifestyle, and foods. The results implied that viewers think of South Korea as a potential travel destination and are interested in cultural characteristics of the country.

The results showed that videos about eating live octopus and South Korean seafood markets were frequently uploaded. Five videos (10%) were filmed in traditional Korean markets and covered Korean cuisine culture, especially seafood. Of the five videos, three videos particularly focused on eating live octopus. This topic seemed to be derived from cultural differences between Eastern and Western countries. Unlike Asians, most Westerners are afraid of and disgusted by cephalopods, and the spectacle of eating raw octopus is shocking and attracts attention. The problem was that the videos made many viewers uncomfortable by showing the

preparation and consumption of seafood without discretion. The videos purposefully showed shocking and grotesque images in an effort to attract viewers and prompted a high number of dislikes. This study examined user comments of the video, although did not include them as a variable. Most liked comments and many comments described eating live octopus as a practice of a savage culture, reinforcing the negative perception of Korea and Koreans.

Interview or social experiment videos that explain stereotypes of South Korea or Koreans were also popular. These videos were mostly made by individual users or content creation teams. The videos asked Koreans and foreigners residing in South Korea about stereotypes through interviews and social experiments. The frequent appearance of the topic reflected foreign viewers' interests in South Korea and Koreans. The positive depictions of Koreans not only helped to improve their image but also increased viewers' intentions to visit South Korea.

Videos showing individuals' daily lives also attracted attention. Viewers seemed to identify with the video creators since the videos showed scenes from the first-person view. The creators constantly communicated with viewers, talking to the lens as if the viewers were standing alongside the creators. In addition, viewers' self-interests had a high probability of matching creators' content since viewers selected which video to watch. This study observed viewers' interests and positive reactions as indicated by a video's high number of likes. Content creators put effort into editing videos using various effects and music since their videos reflect their identities. For the same reason people use social media, YouTube creators try to entice other users with high-quality content. The efforts of video creators to improve their content helped viewers immerse themselves in the videos.

The results showed that videos succeeded in attracting attention without direct depictions of South Korea or Koreans. Three videos showed the inside of Korean apartments or aviation services. Two videos from one YouTube user received more than a million and 700,000 views respectively by merely depicting cheap and clean Korean style apartments. Viewers showed positive reactions through likes and comments to videos about Korean style apartments. One video was about one of Korea's most popular airlines, Asiana Airlines. The video showed the airline's business class service with positive descriptions of the service and airport. Prior studies of the inverse country-of-origin effect showed that quality products and services can help to strengthen a country's positive image (Bilkey & Nes, 1982). The videos contributed to the development of a positive national image through favorable depictions of quality Korean products and services.

Utilization of The Korean Wave (Hallyu)

The Korean Wave (Hallyu) played a crucial role in increasing the popularity of videos related to South Korea. Of the 50 videos, four were promotional videos produced by the Korean government and cast famous contemporary boy bands or actors. The four videos went viral very quickly and drew the attention of many viewers. Particularly, a Korean Tourist Organization's YouTube video titled "Enjoy your Creative Korea - Official TVC for 2016 Korea Tourism - 60s," which received the most views (44,368,477) among the samples, featured a famous Korean actor. The video succeeded in drawing the attention of Hallyu fans by using a cropped image of an actor from the video in its thumbnail. The most popular comment on the video received great support from other viewers with the same opinion.

Another video, "With Seoul by BTS," which featured a famous K-pop band, recorded the fastest monthly increase in views. This study also confirmed the positive evaluation of Korea from the high number of likes and comments in its sample videos. Considering that viewers of the video had presumably already known about South Korea from Hallyu, the viewers might judge the images of South Korea based on their pre-existing judgments about the country along with their affinity for featured actors or musicians.

Viewers' selective and repetitive exposures can also be beneficial in developing a positive national image, especially on YouTube. YouTube is a global social media platform with 1.5 billion monthly active users. A video going viral on YouTube not only helps to increase social awareness but also enables measurement of viewer responses, although it is difficult to win message competition. Since YouTube's algorithm highlights videos with rapidly increasing views, likes, and comments, a video must attract viewer attention to go viral. This study verified that videos featuring Korean celebrities had dramatic increases in views, likes, and comments. For example, the abovementioned video "With Seoul by BTS" had been uploaded for only two months, but the number of views increased by two million per month to 4,360,448 views with 397,168 likes. This was well above the average increase in likes (38,775) and views (311,615) of sampled videos. The results implied that a country's popular culture can affect the development of a positive national image in this mediated new media era.

Videos sponsored by the government may easily draw attention from general viewers by featuring celebrities. Government videos also may cause cultivation effects since the government-sponsored videos have higher chance to be shared and seen by many people repeatedly.

Titles and Descriptions

Many of the sample videos used stimulating and deceptive expressions or descriptions along with interesting topics. In particular, videos about Korean seafood and comparisons between North and South Korea contained grotesque or sexual images in their thumbnail images. Sometimes videos' thumbnail images depicted Korean celebrities irrelevant to the videos. Among the samples, 45% of videos intentionally put irrelevant images (e.g., celebrities, grotesque or sexual images) in title pages as thumbnail images trying to attract viewers. There were also occasions when the title intentionally included sexual words. For example, a video that introduced a Korean social trend called "Mukbang," a term that combines the Korean words for eating and broadcasting, attempted to attract viewers by putting an image of female video jockey with costume with a sexual expression in the title: "The Food Porn Superstars of South Korea: Mukbang." The results showed that using alluring titles or expressions may help to gain exposure on YouTube but should be used with discretion.

Paradoxical Relationships between Image Tones and Overall Tones

The results showed that there were inconsistencies between the tone typically used to describe South Korea or Koreans and the overall tone of the videos. For instance, some videos were interviews with foreigners residing in South Korea. The videos asked foreigners about their personal experiences in facing negative Korean customs or stereotypes. Although the descriptions of Korean customs and stereotypes were negative, the overall tone was positive because the foreigners tried to explain misconceptions about the stereotypes in positive terms. This study categorized two types of description methods from the 50 sample videos: explicit description and nuanced description.

Explicit Description

Explicit description refers to the purposeful and clear inclusion of negative or positive portrayals of South Korea or Koreans in order to show dramatic reversal or maintain neutrality. For instance, interview or comparison videos mainly used explicit descriptions. The editors of the interview videos purposefully put scenes with negative opinions first and positive ones later to give their videos happy endings. The North and South Korea comparison videos intentionally used negative or positive descriptions in the comparisons because the two countries have strong political, economic and social contrasts. The tone used to describe dimensions and images related to South Korea in interview videos was mainly negative or neutral, but the overall tone was positive because the videos attempted to dispel misunderstandings about Korea or Koreans.

Nuanced Description

Nuanced descriptions present only images or neutral opinions without value judgments but with positive or negative intentions. For example, the video "Korean Street Food - GIANT OCTOPUS Seoul Seafood" only showed the process of cooking octopus in a Korean seafood market without any descriptions. The video could be interpreted as neutral, but since the video targeted Western viewers, viewers expressed disgust and negative opinions (i.e., a high number of dislikes) about cooking live octopus. Similarly, the video "Seoul Fashion Week - K-Pop to Double Eyelid Surgery" described Korean beauty and fashion trends in a documentary style. However, the video purposefully edited the scenes in a negative way by using bizarre effects, gloomy music, and explicit scenes of plastic surgery procedures. This study recognized the uncomfortable reactions of viewers to the video from its relatively high number of dislikes.

The two videos using nuanced descriptions seemed to try to plant negative images of South Korea by using visual framing techniques. Prior studies showed that non-verbal descriptions, which have hidden intentions to give certain images about objects in videos by using music or purposeful editing, could significantly affect viewers' interpretations (Coleman & Banning, 2006; De Vreese, 2005; Rodriguez & Dimitrova, 2011).

An implication of the results was that viewers interpreted nuanced messages differently depending on the message type and their own self-interests. For instance, rational comments took up the majority of the comments on the video "Seoul Fashion Week - K-Pop to Double Eyelid Surgery" since the video tried to deliver its subjective opinions as facts in a documentary format. Many viewers were able to maintain their objectivity and blamed the video because it failed to appeal to viewers with rational content. The video's number of dislikes reflected viewers' negative reactions.

In contrast, the video "Korean Street Food - GIANT OCTOPUS Seoul Seafood" succeeded in communicating negative images about eating a live octopus in South Korea. Although the video intentionally showed the whole process of cooking live octopus without filtering, the viewers failed to notice the hidden intention. The high number of dislikes more reflected the viewers' negative opinions of the culinary culture than of the video. The viewers seemed to overlook intentional descriptions because most viewers focused on shocking images. In addition, the video only showed irritating images that focused on emotional appeal without verbal descriptions, which also might lead the viewers to focus on the images and be intended to elicit emotional reactions.

Some videos used nuanced descriptions that succeeded in building positive images of South Korea and Koreans. For instance, the documentary video “On Patrol with South Korea's Suicide Rescue Team” showed a typical day for the Korean Suicide Rescue Team. Although the video only showed the team’s daily tasks and disclosed facts like the high suicide rates in Korea, viewers of the video showed positive reactions. The video received high numbers of likes and comments, indicating viewers’ support for and interest in the rescue team. This study attributed this positive reaction to the focus on positive content that depicted humanitarian spirit.

One finding was that viewers might actively and rationally interpret messages regardless of video creators’ purposeful depictions. In other words, viewers are able to recognize message senders’ intentions when they are very interested in the messages, or the messages require rational judgment to interpret. The results may also imply that the framing effect can be diluted on YouTube since framing includes purposeful depictions. However, the results also showed that if messages contain non-verbal descriptions or are irrelevant to viewers, viewers might interpret messages passively, thus being misled by the messages (Maheswaran & Meyers-Levy, 1990; Petty & Cacioppo, 1979).

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The exponential growth of social media has prompted public relations scholars and practitioners to examine its influence and potential utilization. Prior studies in social media communication revealed that user-generated content and communication on social media can affect people's perception and construction of reality (Enli & Simonsen, 2017; Kiouisis et al., 2015).

This study tried to examine the influence of YouTube videos on developing a positive national image. Based on the theoretical frameworks of cultivation and framing theory, fifty YouTube videos were sorted by view counts and relevance and examined. The results showed that the videos most frequently contained images of South Korean food, natural beauty, traditional tourist spots, and Korean style buildings. The results also showed that YouTube videos usually described South Korea in positive tones, although some videos purposefully described the country negatively. Topics related to the comparison between North and South Korea appeared the most ($n=9$), thus indicating high interest in this topic in other countries.

Although this study was unable to determine the direct influence of cultivation or framing effects since it did not examine the perceptions of viewers of the videos, some meaningful results were found. Since the repetition of messages plays a critical role in creating cultivation effects, this study examined the relationship between videos' durations on YouTube (time since upload) and the increases in their views. The results showed that topics, not durations, significantly affected increases in views. Although the videos were uploaded over the past five years, some still failed to reach one million views and received below average numbers of reactions (i.e., likes, dislikes, and comments). In contrast, videos that featured famous Korean celebrities

showed drastic increases in their views, likes, and dislikes, which helped to increase their exposure. This study inferred that videos which go viral have a high probability of being repeatedly shared, and thus having cultivation effects. Thus, intriguing videos that contain positive images of a country may be significantly beneficial to its national image.

In terms of framing effects, this study was able to examine the active and rational interpretations of social media users' comments, which may deteriorate the effects of negative framings. Viewers seemed to rationally interpret messages when the messages had rational tones or shared common interests with the viewers. The videos without verbal depictions and containing shocking images caused negative reactions in viewers, demonstrating the effects of visual framing (Coleman & Banning, 2006; De Vreese, 2005; Rodriguez & Dimitrova, 2011).

This study summarized the results and determined that utilization of celebrities in promotional videos or affiliation with a foreign television entertainment show would be beneficial in developing the positive national image. Videos that feature celebrities and describe a country's unique culture, nature, or cuisine with positive depictions may be beneficial in increasing global awareness of the country and in developing a positive national image.

Suggestions for Improving National Image

Utilization of Popular Culture

Popular culture as a source of soft power can affect the construction of a positive national image (Anholt, 2009; Nye, 2008). This study clarified that celebrity-based videos were beneficial in developing a positive national image. With the high interest in celebrities, videos featuring famous Korean celebrities recorded rapid increases in their views, likes, and comments, prerequisites to achieving high exposure on YouTube. High exposure videos are likely to go viral

and be repeatedly shared. Repeatedly and extensively shared videos can not only help to increase the awareness of a country but can also help to form a positive national image (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015).

Emphasis on Unique National Culture and Aesthetic Dimensions

This study found that most videos contained images of the aesthetic dimension and received positive reactions from viewers. Unique images related to a country's culture, cuisine, natural beauty, lifestyles, and tourist spots can be beneficial not only in increasing the understanding of a country but also in developing a positive national image by presenting diverse and compelling images. However, most YouTube videos provide content based on individual users' subjectivity, which may negatively affect a country's image by containing defamatory content such as shocking images or rumors. This study suggested a potential solution to this problem from the types of descriptions in the videos. There were five videos about Korean seafood markets and eating seafood. Two videos received a relatively high number of dislikes because they showed unfiltered and grotesque images. However, the other three videos received few dislikes since they avoided images that might discomfort viewers and positively described Korean cuisine and its culture. The results showed that promotional videos made by the Korean government may dispel negative national images and create positive ones through positive depictions of cuisine culture.

Utilization of Various Appeals

As mentioned in the prior section, this study examined that methods of depiction could significantly alter a national image by affecting viewers' perceptions. Regarding methods of descriptions, this study found that videos which used humor appeal received positive reactions

and many views. Prior studies have proven that the use of humor appeal can increase the persuasive power of messages (Alden, Hoyer, & Lee, 1993; Sternthal & Craig, 1973). Videos about asking Koreans or foreigners residing in Korea questions about stereotypes of Koreans or Korean culture featured witty and humorous answers and thus succeeded in eliciting positive reactions from viewers. Although this study was unable to examine whether negative stereotypes were reduced by such positive videos, it was able to infer an increased positive image of Korea and Koreans from positive reactions to videos reflected in their comments. Viewers seemed to focus on the humorous answers rather than the negative stereotypes.

One finding was two videos from an American comedy show taken in South Korea to give the tour of the country. Videos titled “Conan Learns Korean And Makes It Weird” and “Conan Stars In North Korea’s First Late Night Talk Show” were made for the American late-night comedy show “Conan.” The two videos depicted famous tourist spots, natural beauty, and South Korean history well and humorously. Although most comments on the videos only referred to the humor, this study was able to infer that because the videos directly and positively described the country’s various dimensions based on facts, it might contribute to a positive national image. Another finding was that a video taken in a seafood market received a significantly low number of dislikes and positive reactions indicated by the numbers of likes and comments. Although the video showed some weird-looking seafood like the sample videos, viewers did not express discomfort or disgust in the comments. This study inferred that humorous descriptions dissipated negative emotions by eliciting pleasant feelings (Alden, Hoyer, & Lee, 1993; Sternthal & Craig, 1973).

This study considered the cooperation with a foreign television program, especially with a comedy show, as a promising method to develop a positive national image. For instance, a comedy show made a series of videos taken in South Korea which covered the country's foods, pop culture, tourist spots, and many other characteristics in humorous ways. The videos were not only interesting but also educational, and viewers' reactions to the video were all very positive. Collaboration with a foreign entertainment television program may help increase international awareness of a country and develop a positive national image. Videos' creators have more capabilities and support than individual users, which result in positive descriptions. In addition, the celebrities and humor appeal are helpful in developing a positive national image.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has limitations in its methodologies and analyses. First, this study did not analyze visualization methods and only partly examined visual effects, music, and editing. Since videos are significantly affected by visualization and other aspects such as music and editing, detailed examinations are required. Future studies include other aspects to devise videos in depictions will be beneficial in examining the influence of user-generated contents on viewers' perceptions and interpretations.

Second, this study did not include user comments to examine the influence of the videos on perceptions and interpretations. To examine cultivation or framing effects, in-depth examinations on users' reactions seem to be required. Balanced examinations of both quantitative and qualitative data would be helpful to have more accurate results.

Third, this study failed to include all relevant samples. Some videos were excluded even though they had high numbers of views and were relevant to this study because of YouTube's

search algorithm, which selects famous and influential videos based on recent increases in their views, likes, and comments. Future study will be able to include videos that were not included in this study with more time and carefully-devised search methods.

Fourth, this study focused solely on the reactions of English-speaking users and images of South Korea. Comparisons of national images based on the reactions of viewers with different cultural backgrounds will be likely to draw more meaningful implications in examining the influence of user-generated content in social media on users' perceptions and interpretations.

Fifth, this study was limited to generalize the results due to the selective exposure. Prior studies (Fitzpatrick, Kendrick, & Fullerton, 2011; White, 2010) that examined national image of the United States clarified the influence of people's selective exposures to information on national image. The two studies suggested that existed opinions or judgments may affect or be affected by the intentional selection of information, thus strengthening the existed attitudes toward a country. Although this study did not exclude or examine the viewers' selective exposure, future research will be able to find implications to draw the attention of people who do not have pre-existed opinions through the considerations of selective exposure problems.

Sixth, this study did not include which images were dominantly depicted in each video. This study examined the presences of the three dimensions' images and tones not the dominance of images. Since the videos contained multiple dimensions and images, in-depth examinations in dominant dimensions or images may draw meaningful implications.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample List

Video Title	Date	Views	Like	Dislike	Comment	Creator	Duration
<u>Enjoy your Creative Korea – Official TVC for 2016 Korea Tourism – 60s</u>	2016.08.08	44,368,477	3,922	659	415	Government	1:00
<u>Trick Eye & Love Museum in Seoul, South Korea</u>	2016.11.30	27,437,461	103,468	12,117	5,777	Individual	14:56
<u>슈퍼주니어 & 소녀시대_SEOUL (서울)_뮤직비디오 (Music Video)</u>	2009.12.11	7,859,323	70,104	1,221	9,218	Government	4:13
<u>My life in North Korea vs South Korea</u>	2017.08.15	7,334,139	198,576	6,421	20,935	Individual	15:27
<u>Conan Learns Korean And Makes It Weird</u>	2016.04.11	6,987,571	120,141	1,113	6,623	TV Show	7:18
<u>The Jalgachi Fish Market in Busan, South Korea</u>	2014.10.08	6,826,511	6,126	3,142	381	Individual	4:30
<u>Enjoy! Seoul's favorite seoul (with special narration by Kim Woo Bin)</u>	2016.09.28	6,217,602	1,394	16	96	Government	1:31
<u>Conan Stars In North Korea's First Late Night Talk Show</u>	2016.04.09	4,486,451	74,103	648	3,669	TV Show	5:44
<u>With Seoul by BTS</u>	2017.12.12	4,360,448	397,168	1,341	29,188	Government	5:08
<u>Eating Live Octopus in Korea</u>	2013.08.26	3,977,034	8,931	4,613	3,647	Individual	4:13

Video Title	Date	Views	Like	Dislike	Comment	Creator	Duration
The Food Porn Superstars of South Korea: Mukbang	2015.02.16	3,782,041	20,474	2,052	4,219	Individual	26:00
On Patrol with South Korea's Suicide Rescue Team	2016.05.02	3,741,979	79,530	886	10,623	Individual	13.29
South Korean-North Korean translator	2015.04.26	3,765,554	0	0	7,313	NGO	1:59
Average North Korean vs the Average South Korean - People Comparison	2017.08.04	3,572,280	48,042	2,895	7,750	Individual	6:40
Korean Girls Answer Questions/Stereotypes	2016.01.10	3,523,935	46,983	750	5,422	Individual	3:26
The South Korean Love Industry	2015.02.05	3,120,408	19,858	1,289	3,842	Individual	22:38
Being White people in Korea 한국에 사는 백인들	2016.05.09	3,117,518	40,497	1,140	8,277	Individual	9:12
Surprising Things North Koreans Don't Know About The South	2017.09.05	2,907,819	19,225	2,067	2,460	Individual	11:34
JAYKEEOUT : Talking to Koreans as a Foreigner (ft. ThatWaygookin)	2016.12.24	2,681,303	35,157	1,159	3,255	Individual	8:28
Korean Street Food - GIANT OCTOPUS Seoul Seafood	2017.07.27	2,615,867	10,162	9,150	4,610	Individual	15:02

Video Title	Date	Views	Like	Dislike	Comment	Creator	Duration
Seoul Fashion Week - K-Pop to Double Eyelid Surgery	2012.10.23	2,473,735	18,850	4,169	9,635	Individual	34:31
Furious World Tour Seoul, Korea - Kimchi, Taekwondo and More - Abenteuer Leben Furious Pete	2012.02.22	2,470,767	16,396	1,457	5,171	Individual	29:27
KOREAN STREET FOOD - Gwangjang Market Street Food Tour in Seoul South Korea BEST Spicy Korean Food	2017.09.18	2,378,223	19,221	1,130	808	Individual	11:45
10 Differences Between NORTH Korea and SOUTH Korea	2017.05.02	2,377,123	21,813	1,417	3,282	Individual	12:12
Behind the plastic surgery boom in South Korea	2015.09.28	2,369,315	12,065	905	2,353	Individual	5:14
10 Differences Between NORTH Korea and South Korea	2017.08.11	2,336,863	29,793	2,427	12,970	Individual	12:45
10 Differences Between NORTH and SOUTH Korea	2017.07.05	2,164,237	8,789	3,840	2,230	Individual	12:28
Inside The Lives Of The Rich Kids Of South Korea	2017.11.14	2,111,691	18,474	5,117	3,694	Individual	10:27
Flying Asiana Airline BUSINESS CLASS Seoul to New York	2017.06.11	2,044,416	17,831	1,129	3,148	Individual	16:35
North Korea vs South Korea 2017 - Who Would Win - Army / Military Comparison	2017.05.19	1,990,213	28,872	1,990	7,164	Individual	6:35

Video Title	Date	Views	Like	Dislike	Comment	Creator	Duration
25 Best Things To Do in Seoul, South Korea	2012.05.24	1,947,313	18,939	741	2,861	Individual	6:44
A Day in My Life (Seoul) + VLOG #4 Erna Limdaugh	2016.12.24	1,923,446	36,286	992	1,517	Individual	9:04
My Tiny Seoul Apartment (officetel) Tour \$500/month 200sqft	2017.06.20	1,737,049	24,480	945	1,984	Individual	11:14
JAYKEEOUT : Are Koreans Nice to Foreigners? (ft. Te Quiero Corea)	2016.07.01	1,643,725	28,274	367	2,820	Individual	6:41
Korean Guys Answers Questions/Stereotypes	2016.07.29	1,556,292	30,452	277	3,222	Individual	4:07
Eating LIVE octopus in Korea w/ surprise ending	2012.09.11	1,417,092	8,389	1,030	5,046	Individual	2:54
What Koreans Think About Foreigners (interviews) Attractive?Disrespect?Dating?	2014.11.11	1,346,271	24,109	246	3,780	Individual	5:00
BTS' Life in Seoul	2017.09.13	1,290,663	120,746	414	2,238	Government	1:24
What Koreans Think of Foreigners in Korea	2016.09.27	1,226,996	17,863	243	2,163	Individual	11:28
Foreign teachers in Korea	2016.08.02	938,266	22,408	254	3,087	Individual	5:33

Video Title	Date	Views	Like	Dislike	Comment	Creator	Duration
<u>Is it Expensive Living in Korea?</u>	2012.08.09	872,572	10,829	217	2,932	Individual	9:05
<u>Living in South Korea: A Day in the life</u>	2014.05.31	801,474	6,165	396	1,291	Individual	11:30
<u>외국인들이 한국에서 겪는 불편한 점 / Foreigner Problems in Korea</u>	2017.01.09	734,719	12,603	234	2,520	Individual	3:46
<u>\$200 Korean Apartment Tour Jeonju: Teach English in Korea</u>	2016.04.03	703,973	7,372	496	769	Individual	16:46
<u>What Koreans Think of Foreigners who Love Korean culture(interviews)</u>	2015.01.15	695,867	12,088	78	1,315	Individual	6:43
<u>Do Koreans Think Korea is Living Hell? ASIAN BOSS</u>	2016.02.18	623,925	9,578	371	5,194	Individual	6:22
<u>11 Things I Hate About Living in South Korea</u>	2015.11.04	608,557	5,910	1,520	1,474	Individual	16:43
<u>Being a Non-Asian Foreigner in Korea</u>	2015.03.31	581,633	24,029	235	1,772	Individual	8:04
<u>What Living In Korea Taught Me Abi Abroad</u>	2014.12.12	550,099	13,971	204	1,391	Individual	12:55
<u>Let's Go to Seoul! KR Vlog Pt. 1: Myeong-Dong</u>	2017.03.03	466,195	8,278	288	415	Individual	8:29

Appendix B: Coding Book

1. Coder's name:
2. Video URL:
3. Date of coding:
4. Date of the video was uploaded:
5. Number of views:
6. Number of likes:
7. Number of dislikes:
8. Number of comments:
9. Topic Category
- Does the video contain following aspects? (If yes, rate the tone.)

Modern metropolitan city (Functional)					Cutting-edge technology (Functional)				
	Yes		Negative			Yes		Negative	
	No		Neutral			No		Neutral	
			Positive					Positive	
Military power (Functional)					Economic wealth of the country (Functional)				
	Yes		Negative			Yes		Negative	
	No		Neutral			No		Neutral	
			Positive					Positive	
Country's government/leader (Normative)					Korean social trends (Normative)				
	Yes		Negative			Yes		Negative	
	No		Neutral			No		Neutral	
			Positive					Positive	
Korean values (Normative)					Korean customs (Normative)				
	Yes		Negative			Yes		Negative	
	No		Neutral			No		Neutral	
			Positive					Positive	
Traditional tourist spots (Aesthetic)					Korean style buildings (e.g., café, restaurants, etc.) (Aesthetic)				
	Yes		Negative			Yes		Negative	
	No		Neutral			No		Neutral	
			Positive					Positive	
Natural beauty (Aesthetic)					Food (Aesthetic)				
	Yes		Negative			Yes		Negative	
	No		Neutral			No		Neutral	
			Positive					Positive	

10. The overall tone about Korea/Korean in the video:

Negative		Neutral		Positive	
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VITA

Jiyeon Kim was born and raised in South Korea. He earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from Chonnam National University in 2015. His interest and inclination to communication and relationship led him to study public relations. He started his study in public relations at the University of Tennessee in August 2016 and finished his degree in May 2018. He is interested in inter-cultural, organizational communication, and brand equity management. He hopes to accumulate practical experience in his interest areas from various countries.