



## The Press and Democracy in South Korea - A Survey of Print Journalists' Opinions -

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### Abstract

The media are highly involved in the development or limitation of democracy. In South Korea (hereafter Korea) the history of the media companies has been about allying themselves with political power through partnerships under authoritarian rule. Some of these companies are still strong and influential groups as cultural producers in Korean society. Press freedom without social responsibility by major conservative newspapers has led to a conflicted society and a threat to grassroots democracy in Korea today. This paper explores journalists' responses to four main issues regarding the press environment and democracy in Korea. There are some differences in ideas about the press environment and democracy between actual practice and the journalists' perspectives. These differences may come from the lack of media practitioners' views regarding ethics of journalism, discrepancies in Korean democracy such as the strong influence of clientelism, the limitation of traditional media as a mechanism of two-way communication, and the idealistic thinking of journalists.

**Keywords:** Press freedom, Democracy, Cultural producers, Media roles, Clientelism, Media credibility, Partisanship, Rights to press freedom

### Introduction

Justice and ethics are often overlooked and the truth can easily be distorted if the media collude with political power groups and big business. Herman and Chomsky (1988) argue, "The democratic postulate is that the media are independent and committed to discovering and reporting the truth and that they do not merely reflect the world as powerful groups wish it to be perceived." In this conception the ideal purpose of the media should be to encourage equal opportunity and a harmonious democratic society. However, some Korean media capitalists have aggravated differences and conflict and not only have let powerful people dominate the socially weaker but also have forced the weaker people to be dominated (Kim, S-S. 2005). Moreover, some media, especially privately owned media, have played political power makers for their own benefit rather than develop Korean grassroots democracy. The 2007 presidential election was no exception. The major conservative newspapers colluded with the conservative political group and big business and criticized the previous government in one voice, as a result Myung-Bak Lee became the president of Korea. These three groups tend to form a 'power bloc' in Gramsci's term. The process of discussing media roles and press environment in Korean grassroots democracy may help stimulate and improve media practitioners' responsibility to the Korean society.

According to sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1993), cultural producers dominate economically and symbolically in a society. Korean culture has been based on long colonial and authoritarian rule, which have led to a "habitus" of clientelism. This has been a powerful factor shaping media culture. Dominant "cultural producers" have been based on pro-Japanese colonial rule and have supported dictatorial rule. Interestingly, this phenomenon can be experienced even after colonialism and authoritarian rule formally disappeared. The dominant cultural producers have also controlled information and culture, and dominated the economic and cultural base in Korean society. Korean society is an unbalanced democracy because there is more trust in clientelism than in public systems. Dennis Hart (2001) argues, "The supporters and planners of Korea's capitalist industrialization versus the average Korean person, the conflict has been decidedly uneven." Externally, Korea has adopted Western democracy but the society has been controlled by

clientelism. Korean clientelism is based on region, education and blood ties, which are also core factors in social conflict. Many politicians use social conflicts especially regional conflict. Media academic Seung-Soo Kim (2005) writes, like a dormant volcano this classical conflict can explode anytime.

The history of the Korean media companies has been about allying themselves with political power through partnerships under authoritarian rule. This is one of the reasons why dictators or conservative groups in Korea could maintain power over such a long period, for more than several decades including Japanese colonial era. Authoritarian rule did not allow for diverse editorial opinion in the media (Sa, 2009b). It gave existing media companies an oligopoly in the media market. As a result of their collusion the media companies have gained more social power (Park, Kim & Sohn, 2000). These conservative elements have more power than liberal elements in many areas of Korea because of long authoritarian rule. However, their cartel was threatened for a while during the liberal rule of the two presidents Dae-Jung Kim and Moo-Hyun Roh.

This paper will explore how the media influence society and democracy in Korea. It will set out the findings on journalists' perception of the press environment in Korean society and show the differences between their perception and practice. It discusses four issues: the important roles of the media; the importance of press freedom; factors determining subscriptions to particular newspapers; and lastly, rights to press freedom.

## Methods

The key empirical data comprises the survey data collected from practicing print media exponents, current news from online services, and my own experiences at provincial and specialist media outlets for several years in Korea. The survey focused on Korean news journalists working in print media and not those who worked in electronic media, such as broadcasting and online news. Therefore, the result can be seen to be representative of the national newspaper environment. The survey was based on an in-depth structured survey and made up of a mix of closed and open-ended questions. The survey used both qualitative and quantitative methods, and took about three and half months from 3rd October 2006 to 20th January 2007.

The survey questionnaires based on the Korea Press Foundation survey method (Oh, 2005), are designed to glean editors, journalists and sub-editors' opinions on press freedom within contemporary circumstances. The study involves print journalists answering a set of questions through an email survey. Eighty four journalists from thirty eight different companies in Seoul, and also from provincial newspapers, completed the survey questionnaires and returned them to the researcher. The number of respondents based in Seoul (48 journalists) is higher than the provincial journalists (36 journalists). However, the number of provincial companies (20 newspapers) is slightly higher than Seoul based companies (18 newspapers).

### 1. The important roles of the media

In the survey journalists were asked "What is the most important role of the media in a democratic society? Please select three of the following in order of preference." Many journalists selected as their first choice that the most important roles of the media in a democratic society are 'the people's right to know,' 'as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker,' and 'for the public good.' These responses show that journalists link the media role with democracy (see Table 1).

#### 1.1 First preference results

About forty percent of the journalists selected 'for the public good' as the most important role of the media (see Table 2). In each of the ten categories, journalists were asked to provide information on gender, job type etc. There are some differences in the percentage ratios of the respondents in terms of their status and education. Firstly, when comparing the responses to the sections of news in which journalists worked, a higher percentage of the journalists, who work in the sub-editorial and the political sections selected 'for the public good.' However, as there was a higher percentage of the journalists who responded to the survey in the general reporting section, this indicates that the journalists in the sub-editorial and the political sections were more strongly inclined to select 'for the public good' than were the journalists in the general reporting section. Next, it appeared that the same percentage of journalists with qualifications between a 4 year Bachelor degree and a Masters degree selected 'for the public good.' However, there was a much higher percentage of journalists with a 4 year Bachelor degree who responded to the survey, suggesting that the journalists with a Masters degree were more strongly inclined to select 'for the public good' than were the journalists with a Bachelors degree.

#### 1.2 Second and third preference results

Journalists' second choice was that the most important role of the media in a democratic society was 'for the people's right to know,' next was 'as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker,' and then 'for the public good.' As the journalists' third preference, about thirty one percent of the journalists chose 'as a watchdog of power and

for the protection of the socially weaker.’ This figure was almost double the percentage of the next choice, ‘for the people’s right to know.’ Some journalists selected ‘for the public good.’

### 1.3 Others

Interestingly about twenty percent of the respondents chose a fourth preference (even though I did not ask for a fourth preference). They selected ‘for the public good’ and ‘for balance between social stability and change’ (each 4.8%), ‘as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker’ (3.6%), and ‘for the nation’s good’ (2.4%). The lowest percentages chose ‘for the discovery of truth,’ ‘for readers or viewers,’ ‘for a mass-education,’ and ‘for individual self-fulfilment’ (each 1.2%) as their fourth preference. One journalist made his own list about the most important role of the media in a democratic society as follows: “check and watchdog power” as his first preference, “information delivery and for the people’s right to know” as his second preference, and “harmony and cooperation of people and solution of trouble” as his third preference.

### 1.4 Clientalism and the role of the media as a president maker

Despite the survey result, it is argued here that there are some gaps between the journalists’ choice about the most important role of the media in a democratic society and actual media practice in Korea. For example, some media exist to foster their own power interest rather than ‘for the people’s right to know,’ or ‘as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker’ or ‘for the public good.’ Yet, these were the options most commonly selected by the majority of the journalists as the most important role of the media.

Korean culture has been based on long colonial and authoritarian rules, which have led to a “habitus” of clientelism. This has been a powerful factor shaping media culture. Dominant “cultural producers” have been based on pro-Japanese colonial rule and have supported dictatorial rule. They have also controlled information and culture, and dominated the economic and cultural base in Korean society. Korean society is an unbalanced democracy because there is more trust in clientelism than in public systems (Rhee & Choi, 2005). Korean clientelism informally and significantly influences the Korean society. Park, Kim and Sohn explain clientelism:

In the background to this relationship is the regional antagonism, which has been a major source of social conflict and a central characteristic of the power structure in Korea. In Korean society, blood ties have long been regarded as of great importance. This informal relationship has been expanded to the relations based on the same educational or regional backgrounds. The phenomenon might be related to the long authoritarian rule in Korea. People often lose mutual confidence in each other when they live through long periods of authoritarian rule. Informal networks might have been formed as a way to compensate for the insecurity. Private ties also make up for the limits official social relations have. Regionalism, in particular, was openly promoted during the presidential election campaign of 1971 and has since then been a major factor in defining political practices (Park, Kim & Sohn, 2000).

The strong influence of clientelism can probably cause Western democratic systems, principles or theories to not properly work, affecting the development of grassroots democracy in Korea. It also is perhaps a core reason for the corruption in Korean society. The media are no exception. Clientelism has extended its power to media companies in Korea (Park, Kim & Sohn, 2000). The media has connections to political power through journalists becoming politicians or bureaucrats, which has a great impact during presidential and parliamentary elections (Park, Kim & Sohn, 2000). The 2007 presidential election in Korea was no exception.

Though such practices are not only Korean, because John F. Kennedy for example appointed his own brother and friends to his cabinet, Korea has been quite distinctive in its implementation of such practices. One good example of clientelism based on education, church and region is the current Myung-Bak Lee government inaugurated in February 2008. It is called by a new Korean language term ‘KoSoYoung’ administration. ‘KoSoYoung’ means administrators based in **K**orea University, **S**omang protestant church and **Y**oungnam region, and refers to the personal background of President Myung-Bak Lee. The Youngnam region is the south-eastern North and South Kyongsang Provinces, which is the hometown of President Myung-Bak Lee. Since 1961 all dictators in Korea have been based in this area. Furthermore, many administrators have been based in Youngnam region beginning with the dictator Chung-Hee Park and lasting until the liberal leader Dae-Jung Kim took office in 1998.

According to Hallin and Mancini (2004), “Ties between journalists and political actors are close, the state intervenes actively in the media sector, and newspapers emphasize sophisticated commentary directed at a readership of political activists.” Also, De Burgh points out the role of the media in a democratic society, especially one that has recently become free from external political pressures:

All sides have struggled to understand the roles and the potential of the media in democratic society. In countries where journalists are free from external political pressures for the first time, they have run into internal constraints, when media proprietors are still reluctant to exert independence after so many years of being muzzled (De Burgh, 2005).

Their views are demonstrated in Korea. Some media companies often struggle with their roles and continue to function as they did under the dictators. Baker (2007) argues, "Media partisanship combined with media concentration can lead to authoritarian results." In Korea, according to Rhee and Choi (2005), the crisis in Korean newspapers cannot be overcome, if partial reporting is not stopped. As a result of their partisanship the newspapers have diminished credibility and decreasing readership (Rhee & Choi, 2005). Since 1992 some Korean media especially privately owned media often function as president makers extending their power to the next administration (Kang, 26/11/2004). Many journalists have admitted this. The 2007 presidential election in Korea was no exception. Bourdieu argues,

The cultural producers are able to use the power conferred on them, especially in periods of crisis, by their capacity to put forward a critical definition of the social world, to mobilize the potential strength of the dominated classes and subvert the order prevailing in the field of power (Bourdieu, 1993).

Bourdieu's view is confirmed in Korea when Myung-Bak Lee one of candidates during the presidential election in 2007 suffered a financial scandal, 'BBK.' Major conservative newspapers distorted the truth, and during the election denied the relation between the BBK and Myung-Bak Lee. One old conservative right wing publisher Kab-Jae Cho (Naver, 10/04/2008) argued, "During the presidential election, major conservative newspapers supported Myung-Bak Lee with one voice and they did not properly report the truth. They distorted and covered up the fact that Myung-Bak Lee was associated with the BBK." Moreover, Cho strongly criticized journalists who had worked in the major conservative newspapers by saying, "The journalists who supported Myung-Bak Lee were a co-criminal group against the Korean people and also they made wrong choices as journalists." Cho said journalists who had not reported the truth, are not good enough to be journalists and these kind of ethically "dead" journalists cannot help develop grassroots Korean democracy (Naver, 10/04/2008).

The Citizen's Coalition for Democratic Media (CCDM), a group media social movement monitored the news at six daily newspapers (*Kyunghyang, Dong-A, Seoul, Chosun, JoongAng* and *Hankyoreh*) from June 11 to September 30 2007. It found that *Chosun, JoongAng* and *Dong-A* (ChoJoongDong) did not report critically as watchdogs but protected Myung-Bak Lee from the BBK scandal (*Ohmynews*, 28/12/2007). After the election the CCDM held a discussion, titled "The media review of the presidential election in 2007." According to the discussion, many media reported for one side. One academic panellist Kyoung-Jae Song commented many Korean media did not present a balanced view because they are involved in too many complex relationships from which they stood to benefit. As a result bad reporting is increasing (*Ohmynews*, 28/12/2007). Most Korean newspapers are privately owned by family groups or complex business groups, which control the media indirectly and directly (Kim, S-S. 2002). These newspapers tend not take on the social responsibilities such as impartiality or the role of public service but seek profits for the interest of their media companies.

A former-ambassador, Jang-Choon Lee, criticized conservative newspapers in an interview for the online news service the *Pressian*: "Regarding the reporting of the BBK and Myung-Bak Lee's 'scandal,' the ChoJoongDong were terrible newspapers" (*Pressian*, 07/12/2007). Furthermore, one former parliamentary law maker Chul-Yong Lee argued in an interview at the daily *Hankyoreh*: "The presidential election in 2007 was won by ChoJoongDong rather than by Myung-Bak Lee" (*Hankyoreh*, 14/04/2008).

Why did ChoJoongDong support Myung-Bak Lee? These major conservative newspapers in Korea seek benefits by cooperating with big capitalists and the conservative political party (Kim, S-S. 2005). These three groups have tried to keep their power and their property permanently. Attempts to minimize this power through change, has led to a backlash and the three groups have promoted theories against such attempts and influenced the people to give up these attempts (Kim, S-S. 2005). There are many apologists for these three groups. The Moo-Hyun Roh government tried to re-distribute traditional power by moving the capital city (*Ohmynews*, 01/11/2004), raising the real estate tax (Sa, 2007), reforming the law of private institutes, and reforming the law of the media. These were main issues under the Roh government, however, they were not implemented because the three groups strongly resisted such reforms.

As seen above, major conservative newspapers in Korea do not play roles 'for the people's right to know,' 'as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker' and 'for the public good,' even though they were selected by the majority of the journalists as the most important role of the media in a democratic society. They engage in political power games rather than serving to develop Korean grassroots democracy. Since 2008 political power has returned to the conservative group, according to Sa (2009b), the Korean grassroots democracy and press freedom that developed during the liberal rule Kim and Roh have been threatened by the dictatorial style of leading groups such as the president, the Grand National Party and major conservative newspapers. These leading groups do not look out for the majority of Korean people and socially weaker groups but look out for the small percentage of dominant groups (ongoing).

## 2. The importance of press freedom

When asked why press freedom was important the majority of the journalists nominated 'for the people's right to know,' 'as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker,' and 'for the public good' (see Table 3).

### 2.1 First preference results

About twenty nine percent of the journalists selected 'for the people's right to know' as the most important reason for press freedom (see Table 4). In each of ten categories, journalists were asked to provide information on gender, job type etc. There are some differences in the percentage ratios of these respondents in terms of their status and education. Firstly, regarding their position in the company, a higher percentage of deputy editor or equivalent, and editor or equivalent selected 'for the people's right to know.' However, a greater percentage of reporters responded to the survey. This indicates that the deputy editors and editors were more strongly inclined to select 'for the people's right to know' than were the reporters. Secondly, comparing journalists' length of service, a higher percentage of the journalists with 25-29 years service selected 'for the people's right to know.' However, a higher percentage of journalists who had shorter service records (20-24 years) responded to the survey, indicating that journalists with longer service records (25-29 years) had a stronger inclination towards 'for the people's right to know' than journalists with shorter service. Lastly, journalists who studied Politics/Administration and Planning, or Economics/Business as the major in their highest degree at university, showed the same propensity to choose this option. However, those who studied Economics/Business responded in lower numbers. This indicates that Economics/Business journalists more strongly affirmed 'the people's right to know' than the journalists who studied Politics/Administration and Planning.

### 2.2 Second and third preference results

About thirty seven percent of the journalists selected that the most important reason for press freedom in a democratic society was 'for the people's right to know' as their second preference. This figure was the highest percentage, next followed 'as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker.' A number of journalists chose 'for the public good.' As a third preference, some journalists chose 'for the public good' and 'for balance between social stability and change.' Smaller percentages selected 'as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker,' 'for the people's right to know' and 'for participation in democratic decision-making.'

### 2.3 Others

About eighteen percent of the participants gave a fourth preference (even though I did not ask) for the importance of press freedom. Several journalists chose 'as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker' (6%), 'for the public good' and 'for the discovery of truth' (each 3.6%). Small percentages chose 'for the nation's good,' 'for readers or viewers,' 'for participation in democratic decision-making,' and 'for balance between social stability and change' (each 1.2%).

### 2.4 Free press without social responsibility as a threat to democracy

These findings were the same as the journalists' selections for the important roles of the media in a democratic society. Again in practice some gaps exist between the journalists' survey choices and the actual practices of the media. Some major conservative newspapers abuse freedom of the press for their own benefit rather than protecting it for the reasons many journalists selected. Some media capitalists in Korea have used freedom of the press or the people's right to know in order to protect and enlarge their property (Kim, S-S. 2005). Many journalists have said that the media have not stood up for or given a voice to the socially weaker groups in Korea.

According to De Burgh (2005), often journalists and the media are not ready to use freedom of the press in a democratic society, especially if they have just become free from external political pressures. De Burgh writes, "Journalists are frequently unprepared to use the freedom and commit abuses in their eagerness to denounce malfeasance, sometimes without proper evidence or attention to ethical considerations." Regarding media power in Australia, Julianne Schultz (1998) states an increasingly powerful media industry means that the relation between governments (or equivalents) and the media was becoming too close. In 1993 and 1994, major inquiries by the Commonwealth and Queensland parliaments in Australia found that "close and unaccountable relationships between the executive and the news media could lead to abuses of power and influence, to the cost of the entire community" (Schultz, 1998). This situation developed in the Korean media industry under the authoritarian rule and still exists especially among major conservative newspapers. Y-H. Im (2005) argues freedom of the press will be guaranteed when the media exert self-control and accept their public responsibility. The close relationship ('Kwonunyoochak' in Korean) between the media and political power, illegal activity and corruption was protected under the military regimes (Kim, Y-H. 2004). Some instances of this close relationship still exist especially between the current Lee government and major conservative newspaper companies. However, Y-H. Kim (2004) argues, to eradicate 'Kwonunyoochak' might be impossible because political power groups want propaganda from the media and the media need the protection of political power for their interests. These two elements agree to put up with each other (Kim, O-J. 2004). Therefore, as

discussed before the media play the role of political power makers during the elections especially the presidential election in Korea (Kim, Y-H. 2004).

Park, Kim and Sohn (2000) argue, "Ironically, the Korean media has gained more social power thanks to media control by authoritarian political powers and instability related to the division of South and North Korea." Authoritarian rule did not allow a diverse editorial policy within the media and it produced a media oligopoly. However, this cartel was threatened for a while during the liberal rule from 1998 to 2007. Since democratization in 1987 and the change of hegemony in society, the Korean media have gained great social power and they have tried to use it in the political arena (Kang, 26/11/2004). Professor Myung-Koo Kang argues the Korean media have focused on gaining political influence rather than developing grassroots democracy.

Under liberal rule from 1998 to 2007 (Dae-Jung Kim and Moo-Hyun Roh), there were significant tensions between the political ruling parties and major conservative newspapers. For example, the Dae-Jung Kim government undertook the biggest ever tax investigation of the media companies (Kang, 26/11/2004). Furthermore, the Moo-Hyun Roh government tried to re-distribute media power and encourage media diversity. Also, the Roh government opened pressrooms to more Korean journalists (It needs to be noted that they have now returned to their pre-Roh state). Online news such as portal site is becoming more influential in Korean society. This kind of media policy meant that the major newspaper owners felt their power and property were threatened (Kang, 26/11/2004). As a result major conservative newspapers abused freedom of the press to protect their own power or property. They cooperated with the conservative political party and conglomerates by continually criticizing the liberal presidents (Kim and Roh) and governments (Kang, 26/11/2004). This kind of media behaviour peaked during the Roh government. A former journalist and professor Young-Hui Rhee calls these kind of media 'hyena' newspapers:

Big newspapers easily change their role depending on the political power in Korea. They become weak, if the government rules with strong military control. However, they easily become strong, if the government rules without military control, and continually criticize. Furthermore, these changes can happen under the same government. For example, if the government power is strong, the newspapers support it like lapdogs. However, if the government becomes weak, the newspapers change and overstep their role as watchdogs (Rhee, 1999).

According to one survey conducted in April 2003, seventy percent of the journalists answered that criticism about Roh government was not criticism by the media as watchdogs but for the purpose of finding fault with the Roh government (Lee, 07/11/2003). In another survey by the Journalists Association of Korea in August 2003 again seventy percent of the journalists said some media irrationally criticized the Roh government (Lee, 07/11/2003). One professor Hee-Yeon Cho stated, in an interview with *Ohmynews* (online news) after the presidential election in December 2007, that the two main reasons for the failure of Roh government were firstly, the conservative groups including major dailies, especially ChoJoongDong, manufactured a negative image of the Roh government (*Ohmynews*, 20/12/2007). For example, they created an image of the Roh government as presiding over a 'Lost Decade' (including Dae-Jung Kim government) marked by economic and other failures. However, according to political science Professor Sung-Ho Kim (2008), during the Roh government, the Korean economy was not as bad as voters were led to believe during the 2007 presidential election. Kim argues:

The average growth rate of 4.3 percent and unemployment rate of 3.6 percent were more than respectable figures for an economy of Korea's size and maturity. For another, it is unfair to blame the North Korean nuclear mayhem squarely on the Roh government, especially given Pyongyang's reckless brinkmanship and the inconsistency of Washington's reaction to it. On the contrary, the hitherto rewarding six-party framework, currently in place to cope with North Korea, should be credited in large measure to the Roh government's initiative and perseverance (Kim, S-H. 2008).

The second reason given by Cho for the failure of Roh government was that its own policy failed (*Ohmynews*, 20/12/2007). For example, the Roh government went against public opinion in sending troops to Iraq and Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with America in April 2007, though it has to be ratified by two countries respective legislatures (Freedom House, 2008). Cho argues the leadership of the Roh government was struggling against this image until the presidential election in December 2007. However, ChoJoongDong made the 2007 election not about voting for a new president but voting for the review of Roh government (*Ohmynews*, 20/12/2007). The role of ChoJoongDong was one of reasons that Myung-Bak Lee won the election by the largest margin ever (Kim, S-H. 2008). One of the media policies of Myung-Bak Lee is to allow cross ownership for newspaper owners. However, cross ownership can limit diversity of the media because the same news or messages can be delivered only in a different format.

Regarding freedom of the press, the current Lee government oppresses the electronic media, such as broadcasting and Internet (Sa, 2009b). Electronic media journalists face harsh treatment including the wanton arrest of television journalists and producers; and the detention of Internet blogger during investigation. Also, the directors of media related organizations and broadcasting companies such as YTN and KBS have been replaced forcefully with Myung-Bak Lee's sympathizers (Sa, 2009b). Moreover, the president, the government and the Grand National Party are trying to privatize

the existing public broadcasting companies. The Grand National Party is trying to pass seven media-related bills that include allowing newspapers and big business to buy major stakes in terrestrial broadcasting stations. These issues are ongoing.

### 3. Factors determining subscriptions to particular newspapers

Journalists were asked why they thought people subscribed to particular newspapers. The majority of the journalists believed 'the credibility of the newspaper,' 'the editorial stance of the newspaper,' 'providing gifts from the newspaper companies,' and 'the size of the newspaper company' were the main reasons (see Table 5).

#### 3.1 The most popular choice of the journalists

About forty percent of the respondents selected 'the credibility of the newspaper' as the largest factor determining subscription to particular newspapers (see Table 6). However, among journalists' positions, working locations and length of services, there were some interesting differences in the percentage ratios. Firstly, a higher percentage of deputy editors or equivalent selected 'the credibility of the newspaper.' However, a higher proportion of reporters responded to the survey. This indicates that the deputy editors were more strongly inclined to select 'the credibility of the newspaper' than were the reporters. Secondly, with regard to journalists working locations, double the percentage of Seoul journalists selected 'the credibility of the newspaper' than the provincial journalists. Though double the number of participants selected this answer, the ratio of the location of respondents to the survey was not as significant a margin. This means that provincial journalists were not so convinced this was a determining factor as Seoul journalists. Thirdly, longer service journalists (over 25 years) more strongly believed in 'the credibility of the newspaper' as a factor than shorter service journalists (0-4 years). All the respondents with longer service chose 'the credibility of the newspaper' but less than half of the respondents with shorter service selected it.

#### 3.2 Others

A small percentage of the respondents gave multiple answers (Two participants gave two answers each, so I grouped them as 'no answer'). One chose 'the credibility of the newspaper,' and 'the newspaper was provided free for few months, including some gift' (No.25). Another chose 'size of the newspaper company,' and 'the editorial stance of the newspaper' (No.65). Moreover, one journalist commented, the people chose particular newspapers because of 'flamboyant editing, amount of information, and practice and structure of distribution' (No.43).

#### 3.3 Unfair trade in the newspaper industry

The largest percentage of the journalists selected that the determining factor for the readers to subscribe to particular newspapers was 'the credibility of the newspaper.' The result is interesting because it shows a difference in attitude between journalists and readers about reasons for subscribing to a paper. A 2008 survey, that included electronic (E) and print (P) media, asked respondents to rate Korean media in terms of credibility, likelihood of subscribing and influence. The results showed that the participants chose the daily *Hankyoreh* (P) as the most credible media; the *Chosun ilbo* (P) as the most popular subscription; and the *Korean Broadcasting System* (E) as the most influential media (*Sisajournal*, 20/08/2008).

This section analyses the option 'the newspaper provided free for few months, including some gift,' which was one of major selections by the journalists, as this has been a serious problem in the newspaper market in Korea. An unresponsive market or market fragmentation are limiting factors for press freedom (LaMay, 2007). Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue, "Where the market is particularly dominant, commercial media are likely to prevail over media tied to political and social organizations." The Korean newspaper industry ostensibly has adopted the model of market liberalism but many newspapers in practice have existed with a non-market base (Im, 2002). The existing newspapers enjoyed oligopoly status under authoritarian rule. This situation did not allow for diverse editorial policy in the media. As a result the media have been strongly linked to government ideas. Major newspapers have been especially powerful because of the oligopoly newspaper market and home-delivery subscription (Park, Kim & Sohn, 2000). Also, provincial newspapers are based on local power groups or personally related to them (Im, 2002).

However, since 1988 the power of this cartel has decreased and a competitive era based on increasing the number of pages published started among newspapers (Park, Kim & Sohn, 2000). Furthermore, major conservative newspapers came under threat as people's belief in the credibility of newspapers decreased as online media developed as an influential media form in Korean society (Lee, 07/11/2003). Since the International Monetary Fund (IMF) intervention Asian economic crisis in 1997, the newspaper market in Korea has had serious problems with unfair competition (Lee, 07/11/2003). According to Myung-Koo Kang (2004), about half of the newspapers are distributed for free in order to try and dominate the market. The increased competition that emerged under the civilian governments failed to produce a diversification in editorial policy. It just increased the competition in seeking advertising revenue (Park, Kim & Sohn, 2000). The newspapers focused too much on quantity issues -such as number of pages- rather than quality issues (Im, 2005). Park, Kim and Sohn (2000) argue, "Media companies started to pay more attention to gaining profits. The competition accordingly showed many aspects of unfair rivalry. Newspaper companies often delivered papers to people

free of charge to increase their circulation.” The Moo-Hyun Roh government tried to improve fair trade and fair competition in the newspaper industry by reforming the related law.

D. Hart argues that the market theory is good for the rich (*Ohmynews*, 11/03/2008). In Korea, the oligopoly newspaper market possibly exists because of the expense of providing the free newspapers and gifts (Kim, S-S. 2002). As a result of spending large amounts of money on low cost or free home-delivery subscription and gifts, the newspaper companies depended heavily on advertising revenue. Therefore, advertisers have become a core influential factor in the media (Sa, 2009a). The oligopoly character of the Korean existing power groups was briefly threatened during the rule of President Kim and Roh. This was one of the reasons conservative groups in the media, the conservative political party and conglomerates cooperated as one voice against the two governments because they wanted to keep their power and private property permanently. Why do the newspapers have powerful influence in Korean society? Park, Kim and Sohn explain the power of newspapers to lead public opinion based on the media system of newspaper industry as follows:

First, the proportion of home-delivery subscription was, and still is, overwhelmingly higher than that of newsstand sales. ... But not many Koreans subscribed to more than two dailies. Another feature of the Korean newspaper market was that national papers published in Seoul dominate the entire national market. ... This oligopolistic feature guaranteed the established papers secure advertising revenue but made it difficult for newcomers to enter the market (Park, Kim & Sohn, 2000).

Engaging in restrictive practices like the oligopoly means the market can be more easily distorted. Myung-Koo Kang (2004) criticizes both the newspapers and the state for this problem. According to Kang, the major conservative newspapers have unfairly competed in order to dominate the newspaper market for a long time. However, under the liberal governments these major conservative newspapers sued the Korean government in an International organization saying that they were being pressured by the government (Kang, 2004). The liberal governments also failed to control unfair competition in the newspaper market over ten years. As a result the public space of the media in Korea has been threatened.

Under the current conservative Lee government these tactics are still being used. Haeng-Rang Hoh (2002) argues, “Credibility is necessary for media development. A lack of credibility cannot be off set by gifts or free newspapers, which are only temporary methods.” Therefore, Myung-Koo Kang (2004) strongly argues, “The state must apply the current media law strictly to illegal activities of the ChoJoongDong, which are the major dominant newspapers and main distorters in the newspaper market.” Also, Yung-Ho Im (2005) argues, the media law in the market must be applied because any policy will be ineffective without ethical competition. However, Kang and Im’s arguments are almost impossible under the current Lee government. Since 2008 conservative political groups in Korea have regained power after ten years of liberal governments. The conservative political groups have cooperated with ChoJoongDong newspapers.

The system of the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) was adopted to contribute to the development of scientific and rational advertising and media management through the following activities:

Firstly, audit the data about the circulation, distribution, audience and the other matters related to media plans for advertising media such as newspapers, magazines, and electronic media including interactive media by standard procedures; and next conduct research and surveys on the matters of common interest in the advertising and media industry (Korea Audit Bureau of Circulations).

In practice, the ABC system does not properly work (*Yonhapnews*, 07/11/2008). The attempts of the Roh government and citizen groups have not worked properly. The newspaper industry is still distorting the market. The CCDM (01/05/2008) monitored forty newspaper home-delivery offices, which belong to the four dailies: *Hankyoreh*, *Chosun*, *JoongAng*, and *Dong-A*, on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008. It found that many home-delivery offices of the ChoJoongDong newspapers provided with gifts and free papers for over four months. Moreover, three of the home-delivery offices also gave subscribers about \$AUD60 cash and free papers for a few months (CCDM, 01/05/2008). One branch office at *JoongAng Ilbo* provided to subscribers the equivalent of about \$AUD200 (CCDM, 01/05/2008). This amount is almost the same as one year subscription fee. This behaviour, which is against media administration orders, is seen in many places in Korea (Journalists Association of Korea, 23/04/2008a). Furthermore, ChoJoongDong and their home-delivery offices have been fined about two billion dollars from 2004 to 2007 because they have breached the newspaper law (Journalists Association of Korea, 23/04/2008b). The serious problem from their perspective is not to stop their illegal behaviour but to try to abolish the related law under the current Lee government (CCDM, 01/05/2008).

#### 4. Rights to press freedom

When answering the question who should have the right of press freedom, the majority of the journalists first chose ‘general public’ and also their second choice was ‘readers or viewers,’ then thirdly they chose ‘journalists’ (see Table 7). There were eleven options to be given to the journalists but in my analysis, I have grouped these eleven options into six

groups: **the state**, which includes nation, government and politicians; **the media** made up of media owners, media managers, media editors or a group of editors; **journalists**; **citizens**, which includes civil organizations, readers or viewers, and general public; **advertisers**; and **interest groups**.

#### 4.1 First preference results

Seventy five percent of the journalists answered that citizens should be the group to benefit most from press freedom (see Table 8). Some interesting differences occur in the percentage ratios of the respondents. Firstly, the same percentage of deputy editors or equivalent, and reporters selected citizens. However, as there were a higher percentage of reporters who responded to the survey, this indicates that the deputy editors were more strongly inclined to select citizens than were the reporters. Secondly, compared to journalists working for Seoul based newspapers lower numbers of journalists, who work for provincial newspapers, answered the survey. However, a higher percentage of provincial journalists selected citizens than Seoul journalists, indicating the provincial journalists' stronger inclination towards citizens' press freedom rights. Lastly, between journalists, who studied Media and Communication or Politics/Administration and Planning as the major in their highest degree at university, those who studied Media and Communication responded in lower numbers, yet had a much higher percentage affirming that citizens have the right to press freedom. This may be a result of journalists learning more about media in the Media and Communication major than Politics/Administration and Planning major.

#### 4.2 Second and third preference results

Journalists chose as their second preference citizens as the group who should benefit most from press freedom as they did for their first preference. Some journalists selected journalists and the media as their second preference. The results for the choice of third preference are interesting. Journalists chose various players in press freedom as their third preference. The highest numbers of respondents chose journalists. Next, citizens were chosen by some journalists as third preference. Thirdly, some journalists selected as the group with the right to press freedom the media, the nation/government/politicians, advertisers, and interest groups. However, about five percent of the respondents did not give a third preference.

#### 4.3 The main players in press freedom are the media in practice

A basic right in a democratic society is that each member of society enjoys freedom through the free expression of their ideas or their thoughts. However, freedom for all members of the society is only a theoretical state in the current media system. There are three main players in the Korean media: the state, media organizations and citizens (Kim, K-T. 1998). Actually the key players in identifying press freedom are the media and citizens because the state holds power (Sartori, 1987). The meanings of press freedom differ for each of these groups.

This section by analysing the tension between the theory of a free press and its actual practice looks at the complex ways that freedom of the press has been perceived by the state, the media, and the general public in Korea. It also analyses the current state of rights to press freedom in Korea and explores the Korean journalists' perceptions of rights to press freedom. The results from the study undertaken for this research indicate that the Korean journalists in the print media believed that the group whose right to press freedom should be most carefully protected was the citizens in a democratic society. This is an interesting finding that shows a gap between media practice and the journalists' perspectives about rights to press freedom.

In Korea, the main group to assert a right to press freedom is the media, which include all members of media organizations or the media themselves (Lyu, 2004), including media companies, media owners, media managers, media editors and journalists. The traditional approach in examining press freedom has been to assess the relationship between the state and the media. More recent approaches, however, have included the citizens in the relationship but citizens are still not considered a key player in discussions about press freedom. As McQuail (2003) argues, "The main candidates for claiming the right to press freedom, aside from any individual author, are media owners plus outside sources and voices." McQuail's point is easily illustrated in the print media industry in Korea. For example, those who make claims for a right to press freedom are mainly the media rather than individuals. Daily newspapers such as the *Dong-A Ilbo*, the *Chosun Ilbo*, and the *Hwankyungkunsul Ilbo* claimed their rights of press freedom in the Constitutional Court in January 2006 (Constitutional Court, 2006). Under the Moo-Hyun Roh government two new media reform laws were passed in January 2005 and came into effect in July 2005. These are the *Law Governing the Guarantee of Freedom and Functions of Newspapers* (also known as the *Newspaper Law*), and the *Law Governing Press Arbitration and Damage Relief* (also known as the *Press Arbitration Law*). The Constitutional Court (2006) overturned parts of the newspaper laws in June 2006 but most of the new laws are in accordance with the *Constitution*.

The parliament passed the two media reform laws because citizen groups had urged the government and the media organizations to improve public accountability in the newspaper industry. They claimed that some newspaper companies have distorted the market and news stories. As mentioned in the previous section many major newspaper companies provide their newspapers free to subscribers for a few months with gifts such as gift certificates. Also, media

owners have abused their power by interfering with the editorial section and controlling journalists' position. So the citizen's groups had asked for fair trade and fair competition from the media companies. However, the media organizations ignored the citizens' claims. Media academic H-S. Chang (2004) says that the media companies in Korea have been entrusted by the people to produce truthful, fair and reliable news. They have had greater privileges than any other industry. However, the media owners have abused this privilege and for a long time have failed as trustees. Y-H Im (2002) points out that freedom of the press has been changed to freedom for big capitalists. So citizen groups and the Roh government tried to limit media ownership and protect the independence of editorials by reforming the law. Freedom House a US-based press freedom monitoring organization, described the Roh government laws:

The *Law Governing the Guarantee of Freedom and Functions of Newspapers* Etc. requires all newspapers, including those with internet sites, to register with the government and designates newspapers with a market share of more than 30 percent, or a combined total of 60 percent for three dailies, as "dominant market players." In the event that a dominant player engages in unfair trade practices, it may be subject to a cease-and-desist order or suffer financial penalties (Freedom House, 2006).

These laws are intended to encourage the diversity of the media and the autonomy of journalists. These also include clauses to enhance the rights of citizens. During the Roh government, citizen groups and the government tried to shift freedom of the press from the media owners to the citizens. However, the media owners and the opposition (the conservative Grand National Party, which now hold power) strongly resisted the laws. Furthermore, the *Dong-A Ilbo*, the *Chosun Ilbo*, and the *Hwankyungkunsul Ilbo* challenged their constitutionality through the court system in January 2006. They argued that they wanted freedom of the press from their point of view. They claimed that the press freedom of the media owners is based on their capital and their power.

Equating the freedom of media owners with freedom of the press has caused a distortion in concepts of press freedom in Korea. As suggested earlier the main players in developing or defining press freedom in Korea are the media but the point of view of the citizens should be considered. There are some differences in who is understood as needing press freedom in practice and from the journalists' perspectives. Korean journalists believe that citizens should be first to have the right of press freedom followed by journalists.

##### **5. Why do gaps exist between journalists' perspectives and their practice?**

Despite the survey results, it is argued here that there are some gaps between media practice and the journalists' perspectives about four issues regarding the press and democracy in Korea. These gaps emerge around: what they understood as the most important roles of the media; the importance of press freedom; factors determining subscriptions to particular newspapers; and rights to press freedom. Why do these gaps between practice and the journalists' ideals exist? There are many reasons but key causes to explain the differences are identified below.

A main reason might be from the lack of media practitioners' views regarding ethics of journalism. According to media academic M-K. Kang (2004), the core value of journalists' ethics is to seek the truth and try to be independent from all pressures. A credible media needs good media owners and good journalists who correctly deliver the truth through ethical behaviour. Also, one more basic condition for a credible media is good political leaders, who can guarantee freedom of the press. The aim of ethical behavior of journalists is to achieve free and independent journalism. Then the media can play a watchdog role in a society. However, in Korea many media owners and journalists have ethical problems. H-S. Chang (2001) argues, many Korean media owners are lacking in ethical and professional credibility. According to Chang, if their behaviour in controlling media content is ethically compromised it can threaten not only individuals but also national development. Chang's point has been practiced in many cases in current Korea. Moreover, J-W. Kim (2004) points out many journalists' lack of awareness of media ethics in Korea. The survey underpinning my doctoral study (Note 1) demonstrated that many journalists lack awareness of media ethics in theory and practice. The survey of journalists was structured around three ethical issues: firstly, how frequently journalists follow the journalists' code of ethics; secondly, how frequently journalists receive gifts from news sources; thirdly, how frequently journalists accept job offers in government or political circles. In practice the journalists have been enticed by many things including bribes (envelope money or Chonji in Korean). Because of the long period of authoritarian rule many aspects of Korean society are based on corrupt cultures (Kim, O-J. 2004). LaMay (2007) points out 'unsupportive culture or lack of public support is a limiting factor for press freedom.' This point is confirmed in Korean media practice and is also the cause of this existing gap between practice and journalists' perspectives.

The second possible reason explaining the gap is the strong influence of clientelism. Ostensively, Korea is a Western democratic country but the society has been controlled by clientelism because of long colonial and authoritarian rules. As discussed earlier Korean clientelism is based on region, education and blood ties, which are also core factors in social conflict. As Park, Kim and Sohn (2000) point out the Korean media structure was adopted from Western models and theories but journalistic practice and content are far from Western rationalism. Therefore, the Western theories and models do not work properly in the Korean media industry. Clientelistic networking exists inside and outside media organizations. Authoritarian style and conservative ideologies are still a strong controller in Korean society and the media. The media, both officially and unofficially, have been controlled by the state. Informal mechanisms such as clientelism have had a stronger influence through collusive relations between the state power and the media (Park, Kim

& Sohn, 2000). The gaps between practice and journalists' perspectives reflect these discrepancies in Korean democracy.

The third reason perhaps comes from the limitation of traditional media as a mechanism of two-way communication. It is very difficult to activate any individual right of press freedom in practice without working through the media. Traditional media such as newspaper and television are mainly based on one direction of communication, delivering messages from the media to readers or audience. They also have worked for the interests of power groups based on capital and political power, and media content is mainly produced by journalists who are employed by the media companies. In this system it is difficult for journalists to be independent of their companies therefore, they serve their media owners rather than citizens. The media should serve the public good and act for citizens in democratic societies. However, most print media are owned by individual private capitalists, who seek their own benefits sometimes in ways that have negative impact on the public good of citizens in Korea.

The final reason might be that journalists based their selection on their ideals, not the Korean situation specifically. Therefore, journalists perhaps offered an answer based on the ideal of the press environment and democracy in their general choice. However, most media especially privately owned media put commercial interests ahead of the public interests in Korea. Also, the gaps connote that journalists felt conflicted because their ideals are not reflected in reality. However, they should not change their ideals as they give hope for the future in Korea.

### Conclusion

This paper explored journalists' responses to four main issues regarding the press environment and democracy in Korea: firstly, what they understood as the most important roles of the media; secondly, the importance of press freedom; thirdly, factors determining subscriptions to particular newspapers; and lastly, rights to press freedom. There are gaps between the practice of media and the journalists' perceptions about the press environment and democracy in Korea.

Firstly, in relation to the important roles of the media, there is a gap between the practice of media and the journalists' perception. The majority of the journalists believed the most important roles the media played were 'for the people's right to know,' 'as a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker' and 'for the public good.' However, in practice major conservative newspaper companies sought to look after their own interests such as supporting a president who will look after and favour them.

Secondly, regarding the importance of press freedom, these findings were the same as the journalists' selections about the important role of the media. Again in practice some gaps exist between the journalists' choices and the practice of the media in Korea. In practice major conservative newspapers abuse their power and use freedom of the press for the protection of their own interests more than many journalists thought.

Thirdly, in relation to the reasons why readers subscribed to particular newspapers, the largest percentage of the journalists selected 'the credibility of the newspaper.' However, the Korean people have different preferences, when evaluating media credibility, subscription choice and influence. In practice, unfair trade in the newspaper market has become a serious problem because of major newspaper companies illegally and silently engaging in unfair practices around pricing their papers and enticing subscribers.

Lastly, regarding rights to press freedom, there are some differences in who is understood as the key player or claimant of press freedom from the journalists' perspectives. In practice, the main player in press freedom is the media. However, the Korean journalists believe that citizens should be the main group benefiting from press freedom followed by journalists. Freedom of the press focused on citizens tends to encourage democracy.

There are some gaps in ideas about the press environment and democracy between actual practice and the journalists' perspectives. The gaps perhaps come from the lack of media practitioners' views regarding ethics of journalism, discrepancies in Korean democracy such as the strong influence of clientelism, the limitation of traditional media as mechanisms of two-way communication, and the idealistic thinking of journalists.

In order to guarantee their wealth and power, an alliance was formed by major conservative newspapers, conservative political power groups and big business. This trio collaborated to criticize and manufacture a negative image of the Roh government but supported Myung-Bak Lee to distort the truth, which led to the 2007 presidential election victory by Myung-Bak Lee. Since 2008 political power has returned to the conservative group, the Korean grassroots democracy and press freedom that developed during the liberal rule Kim and Roh have been threatened by the dictatorial style of leading groups such as the president, the Grand National Party and major conservative newspapers. These leading groups do not look out for the majority of Korean people and socially weaker groups but look out for the small percentage of dominant groups (ongoing).

Freedom of the press greatly influences, for better or worse, democracy. Press freedom without social responsibility by major conservative newspapers has led to a conflicted society and a threat to grassroots democracy in Korea today. The media should try to reduce social gaps and social conflict among classes in a society. It should produce reliable media, which are based on truth and fairness and also promote a healthy democratic society. It should not produce unreliable news, which distort articles and cover up the important news and so reinforce inequality.

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### Note

Note 1. My doctoral project at the University of Sydney is entitled *Freedom of the press in South Korea: Perception and Practice – A survey of print journalists' opinions*. This paper also flows from my doctoral study.

### Tables

Table 1. Journalists' three choices of the important media roles in order of preference

Options	1 <sup>st</sup> (%)	2 <sup>nd</sup> (%)	3 <sup>rd</sup> (%)	Total (%)
For the public good	39.3	16.7	13.1	69.1
For the benefit of company		1.2	2.4	3.6
For the state's good		7.1	3.6	10.7
For the discovery of truth	1.2	3.6	8.3	13.1
For the people's right to know	32.1	31	16.7	79.8
As a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker	13.1	28.6	31	72.7
For readers or viewers	6	2.4	2.4	10.8
For mass-education	1.2		2.4	3.6
For individual self fulfilment				
For participation in democratic decision-making		3.6	7.1	10.7
For balance between social stability and change	3.6	2.4	9.5	15.5
Others	1.2	1.2	1.2	3.6
No answer	2.4	2.4	2.4	7.1
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>300</b>

\*1<sup>st</sup>: first preference, 2<sup>nd</sup>: second preference, 3<sup>rd</sup>: third preference

Table 2. Journalists who selected 'for the public good' as the most important media role (39.3%)

Categories	Details of categories	Total respondents to the survey (100%)	Journalists who selected 'for the public good' (39.3%)
Sections of news in which they worked	Political	7.1	4.8
	Social	27.4	10.7
	Business	20.2	8.3
	International/North Korean	4.8	1.2
	Sports/life	1.2	
	Culture	3.6	1.2
	Sub-editorial	9.5	3.6

	Photo journalism	1.2	1.2
	General reporting	14.3	1.2
	Editorial writer	4.8	2.4
	Managing editors or equivalent	3.6	2.4
	Others	1.2	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Positions held	Managing editors or equivalent	10.7	4.8
	Editors or equivalent	22.6	7.1
	Deputy editors or equivalent	29.8	11.9
	Reporters	35.7	14.3
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Types of newspapers	Seoul newspapers	32.1	9.5
	Provincial newspapers	41.7	19
	News agencies	3.6	1.2
	Business newspapers	15.5	7.1
	English newspapers	3.6	1.2
	Special newspapers	2.4	1.2
	Others	1.2	
Location of the company where they worked	Seoul newspapers	57.1	20.2
	Provincial newspapers	42.9	19
Gender	Male	94	34.5
	Female	4.8	3.6
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Age group	From 20 to 29 years old	1.2	
	From 30 to 39 years old	35.7	13.1
	From 40 to 49 years old	56	22.6
	From 50 to 59 years old	4.8	1.2
	From 60 to 69 years old	1.2	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
First or subsequent job	First job	64.3	23.8
	Subsequent job	34.5	14.3
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Length of service	From 0 to 4 years	6	1.2
	From 5 to 9 years	17.9	8.3
	From 10 to 14 years	16.7	6
	From 15 to 19 years	44	19
	From 20 to 24 years	10.7	2.4
	From 25 to 29 years	2.4	
	More than 30 years	1.2	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Qualifications	Diploma 2 years	1.2	
	Bachelor 4 years	51.2	17.9
	Master degrees	41.7	17.9

	Doctoral degrees	4.8	2.4
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Major of highest degree	Media and Communication	22.6	9.5
	Economics/Business	19	6
	Sociology/Philosophy/Psychology/History	10.7	2.4
	Law	2.4	1.2
	Politics/Administration & Planning	23.8	10.7
	Language & Literature	15.5	6
	Science	1.2	
	Others	3.6	2.4
	No answer	1.2	1.2

Table 3. Journalists' three choices of the importance of press freedom in order of preference

Options	1 <sup>st</sup> (%)	2 <sup>nd</sup> (%)	3 <sup>rd</sup> (%)	Total (%)
For the public good	26.2	14.3	20.2	60.7
For the benefit of company		2.4		2.4
For the state's good	3.6	3.6	3.6	10.7
For the discovery of truth	4.8	1.2	6	12
For the people's right to know	28.6	36.9	14.3	79.8
As a watchdog of power and for the protection of the socially weaker	26.2	27.4	17.9	71.5
For readers or viewers	2.4		3.6	6
For mass-education				
For individual self fulfilment			2.4	2.4
For participation in democratic decision-making	2.4	7.1	10.7	20.2
For balance between social stability and change	4.8	6	20.2	31
Others				
No answer	1.2	1.2	1.2	3.6
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>300</b>

\*1<sup>st</sup>: first preference, 2<sup>nd</sup>: second preference, 3<sup>rd</sup>: third preference

Table 4. Journalists who chose 'for the people's right to know' as the most important reason for press freedom (28.6%)

Categories	Details of categories	Total respondents to the survey (100%)	Journalists who chose 'for the people's right to know' (28.6%)
Sections of news in which they worked	Political	7.1	2.4
	Social	27.4	8.3
	Business	20.2	4.8
	International/North Korean	4.8	2.4
	Sports/life	1.2	1.2
	Culture	3.6	
	Sub-editorial	9.5	1.2
	Photo journalism	1.2	

	General reporting	14.3	6
	Editorial writer	4.8	1.2
	Managing editors or equivalent	3.6	1.2
	Others	1.2	
	No answer	1.2	
Positions held	Managing editors or equivalent	10.7	3.6
	Editors or equivalent	22.6	8.3
	Deputy editors or equivalent	29.8	10.7
	Reporters	35.7	6
	No answer	1.2	
Types of newspapers	Seoul newspapers	32.1	8.3
	Provincial newspapers	41.7	13.1
	News agencies	3.6	2.4
	Business newspapers	15.5	3.6
	English newspapers	3.6	1.2
	Special newspapers	2.4	
	Others	1.2	
Location of the company where they worked	Seoul newspapers	57.1	15.5
	Provincial newspapers	42.9	13.1
Gender	Male	94	28.6
	Female	4.8	
	No answer	1.2	
Age group	From 20 to 29 years old	1.2	
	From 30 to 39 years old	35.7	8.3
	From 40 to 49 years old	56	17.9
	From 50 to 59 years old	4.8	2.4
	From 60 to 69 years old	1.2	
	No answer	1.2	
First or subsequent job	First job	64.3	22.6
	Subsequent job	34.5	6
	No answer	1.2	
Length of service	From 0 to 4 years	6	
	From 5 to 9 years	17.9	3.6
	From 10 to 14 years	16.7	4.8
	From 15 to 19 years	44	16.7
	From 20 to 24 years	10.7	1.2
	From 25 to 29 years	2.4	2.4
	More than 30 years	1.2	
	No answer	1.2	
Qualifications	Diploma 2 years	1.2	
	Bachelor 4 years	51.2	15.5
	Master degrees	41.7	13.1
	Doctoral degrees	4.8	

	No answer	1.2	
Major of highest degree	Media and Communication	22.6	8.3
	Economics/Business	19	6
	Sociology/Philosophy/Psychology/History	10.7	3.6
	Law	2.4	
	Politics/Administration & Planning	23.8	6
	Language & Literature	15.5	3.6
	Science	1.2	
	Others	3.6	1.2
	No answer	1.2	

Table 5. Journalists' choices about determining factors to subscribe particular newspapers

Options	Selection (%)
Credibility of the newspaper	39.3
Size of the newspaper company	17.9
The newspaper was provided free for few months, including some gift	19
The editorial stance of the newspaper	20.2
Others	1.2
No answer	2.4
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6. Journalists who chose 'the credibility of the newspaper' as the main factor determining subscription to particular newspapers (39.3%)

Categories	Details of categories	Total respondents to the survey (100%)	Journalists who chose 'the credibility of the newspaper' (39.3%)
Sections of news in which they worked	Political	7.1	2.4
	Social	27.4	7.1
	Business	20.2	9.5
	International/North Korean	4.8	2.4
	Sports/life	1.2	
	Culture	3.6	
	Sub-editorial	9.5	6
	Photo journalism	1.2	
	General reporting	14.3	4.8
	Editorial writer	4.8	2.4
	Managing editors or equivalent	3.6	3.6
	Others	1.2	
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Positions held	Managing editors or equivalent	10.7	6
	Editors or equivalent	22.6	9.5
	Deputy editors or equivalent	29.8	11.9
	Reporters	35.7	10.7
	No answer	1.2	1.2

Types of newspapers	Seoul newspapers	32.1	11.9
	Provincial newspapers	41.7	13.1
	News agencies	3.6	2.4
	Business newspapers	15.5	8.3
	English newspapers	3.6	2.4
	Special newspapers	2.4	1.2
	Others	1.2	
Location of the company where they worked	Seoul newspapers	57.1	26.2
	Provincial newspapers	42.9	13.1
Gender	Male	94	35.7
	Female	4.8	2.4
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Age group	From 20 to 29 years old	1.2	
	From 30 to 39 years old	35.7	11.9
	From 40 to 49 years old	56	22.6
	From 50 to 59 years old	4.8	2.4
	From 60 to 69 years old	1.2	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
First or subsequent job	First job	64.3	25
	Subsequent job	34.5	13.1
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Length of service	From 0 to 4 years	6	2.4
	From 5 to 9 years	17.9	6
	From 10 to 14 years	16.7	6
	From 15 to 19 years	44	16.7
	From 20 to 24 years	10.7	3.6
	From 25 to 29 years	2.4	2.4
	More than 30 years	1.2	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Qualifications	Diploma 2 years	1.2	
	Bachelor 4 years	51.2	14.3
	Master degrees	41.7	22.6
	Doctoral degrees	4.8	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Major of highest degree	Media and Communication	22.6	8.3
	Economics/Business	19	9.5
	Sociology/Philosophy/Psychology/History	10.7	4.8
	Law	2.4	
	Politics/Administration & Planning	23.8	9.5
	Language & Literature	15.5	4.8
	Science	1.2	
	Others	3.6	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2

Table 7. Journalists' three choices of who has right to press freedom in order of preference

Options	1 <sup>st</sup> (%)	2 <sup>nd</sup> (%)	3 <sup>rd</sup> (%)	Total (%)
State, government, politicians			2.4	2.4
Media owners	1.2	2.4		3.6
Media managers	1.2	1.2	2.4	4.8
Media editors or a group of editors	4.8	8.3	17.9	31
Journalists	17.9	14.3	35.7	67.9
Advertisers			1.2	1.2
Interest groups			1.2	1.2
Civil organizations		2.4	14.3	16.7
Readers or viewers	15.5	57.1	10.7	83.3
General public	59.5	14.3	8.3	82.1
Others			1.2	1.2
No answer			4.8	4.8
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>300</b>

\*1<sup>st</sup>: first preference, 2<sup>nd</sup>: second preference, 3<sup>rd</sup>: third preference

Table 8. Journalists who selected 'citizens' as having the most right to press freedom (75%)

Categories	Details of categories	Total respondents to the survey (100%)	Journalists who selected 'citizens' (75%)
Sections of news in which they worked	Political	7.1	4.8
	Social	27.4	23.8
	Business	20.2	11.9
	International/North Korean	4.8	4.8
	Sports/life	1.2	1.2
	Culture	3.6	2.4
	Sub-editorial	9.5	8.3
	Photo journalism	1.2	
	General reporting	14.3	9.5
	Editorial writer	4.8	3.6
	Managing editors or equivalent	3.6	2.4
	Others	1.2	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Positions held	Managing editors or equivalent	10.7	8.3
	Editors or equivalent	22.6	17.9
	Deputy editors or equivalent	29.8	23.8
	Reporters	35.7	23.8
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Types of newspapers	Seoul newspapers	32.1	22.6
	Provincial newspapers	41.7	39.3
	News agencies	3.6	2.4
	Business newspapers	15.5	6

	English newspapers	3.6	2.4
	Special newspapers	2.4	1.2
	Others	1.2	1.2
Location of the company where they worked	Seoul newspapers	57.1	34.5
	Provincial newspapers	42.9	40.5
Gender	Male	94	70.2
	Female	4.8	3.6
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Age group	From 20 to 29 years old	1.2	1.2
	From 30 to 39 years old	35.7	22.6
	From 40 to 49 years old	56	45.2
	From 50 to 59 years old	4.8	3.6
	From 60 to 69 years old	1.2	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
First or subsequent job	First job	64.3	46.4
	Subsequent job	34.5	27.4
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Length of service	From 0 to 4 years	6	2.4
	From 5 to 9 years	17.9	14.3
	From 10 to 14 years	16.7	13.1
	From 15 to 19 years	44	34.5
	From 20 to 24 years	10.7	8.3
	From 25 to 29 years	2.4	
	More than 30 years	1.2	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Qualifications	Diploma 2 years	1.2	
	Bachelor 4 years	51.2	40.5
	Master degrees	41.7	32.1
	Doctoral degrees	4.8	1.2
	No answer	1.2	1.2
Major of highest degree	Media and Communication	22.6	21.4
	Economics/Business	19	13.1
	Sociology/Philosophy/Psychology/History	10.7	8.3
	Law	2.4	1.2
	Politics/Administration & Planning	23.8	14.3
	Language & Literature	15.5	11.9
	Science	1.2	1.2
	Others	3.6	2.4
	No answer	1.2	1.2