

THE ‘MY’ IN OHMYNEWS:

**A USES AND GRATIFICATIONS INVESTIGATION INTO THE
MOTIVATIONS OF CITIZEN JOURNALISTS IN SOUTH KOREA.**

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides an academic view into the rise of citizen journalism in Korea, and introduces the Korean OhmyNews website as the world’s most significant example of citizen journalism. An empirical investigation explores its immense popularity, by attempting to identify the motivations of its citizen contributors. A new uses and gratifications typology is proposed by the author where ‘self gain’, ‘personal development’, ‘community interaction’, ‘information dispersal’, and ‘social reform’ form the five key gratifications of citizen journalists. The typology is then tested on 192 citizen journalists in Korea, and finds that their most sought after gratification is information dispersal. The paper goes on to argue that their motivations stem from a combination of technology and a new democracy.

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'I had confidence that citizen participation in journalism was something that [Korean] citizens currently desired. But I could not imagine that the fire would spring into a blaze in such a short time'

OhmyNews founder Oh Yeon-Ho, 2003.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Citizen journalism is the act of citizens ‘playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and [distributing] news and information’ according to the American Press Institute’s influential thinking paper on the topic (Bowman & Willis, 2003: 9). The definition goes on to explain ‘the intent of this participation is to provide independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy requires’ (ibid). While the concept of citizen journalism is no new idea¹, Bowman and Willis specifically refer to a twenty-first century style of citizen journalism that has emerged with new internet technologies. Dan Gillmor, former technology columnist for the *San Jose Mercury News* and now one of the world’s foremost proponents of citizen journalism, explains this twenty-first century transition: ‘It is a story, first, of evolutionary change. Humans have always told each other stories, and each new era of progress has led to an expansion of storytelling. [It] is also a story of a modern *revolution*, however, because [new] technology has given us a communications toolkit that allows anyone to become a journalist at little cost and, in theory, with global reach. Nothing like this has ever been remotely possible before’ (Gillmor, 2004: xii). This revolution presents an alternative to the traditional mass media structure of journalism. The citizen journalist model views news distribution, for example, as a conversation or a seminar between media organisations and their audiences, rather than as an elitist lecture. The model’s basic assumption asserts that the collective knowledge of the general public is more powerful than that of an individual professional journalist, and so traditional news consumers can themselves become news producers. The current paper is interested in the growth of this kind of citizen journalism in particular, and will empirically investigate the behaviour of a sample group of citizen journalists.

Citizen journalism ‘by the people for the people’ began to flourish as new networking technologies became readily available soon after the inception of the modern internet

¹ Eighteenth century American pamphleteers, like Thomas Paine, inspired many with powerful writings about government, liberty and rebellion. Also, samizdat-style publications common during the mid-twentieth century were written and printed by anonymous citizens dedicated to the defense of Soviet human rights. More recently, radio talk shows have also given ordinary citizens the opportunity to be broadcast.

(world-wide-web) in the 1990s. Discussion forums, emailing lists, weblogs and chat rooms provided a disordered but widely-used facility for internet users to publish their own material at virtually no financial cost. At the turn of the century, *user-generated news websites* began to emerge as both combinations and extensions of early online participatory mechanisms. User-generated news websites ‘provide a vehicle—through web-based forms or email—designed to collect content from the audience and redistribute it...After submission, the content appears online with or without editorial review, depending on the nature of content and the host policy’ (Bowman & Willis, 2003: 23). The first of these websites to emerge was the South Korea- (Republic of Korea, hereafter Korea) based OhmyNews, founded in early 2000. It has since grown remarkably, and now boasts over 41,000 ordinary citizen contributors who collectively submit around two hundred written articles, photographs and videos every day. Rather than a collection of bloggers who pursue journalistic passion at their own peril, OhmyNews is a hybrid between professionalism and amateurism. Jean K. Min, director of the international division at OhmyNews explains that ‘we believe bloggers can work better with professional assistance from trained journalists’ (Min, 2005: 19). Hence the employment of 65 permanent editorial staff that carefully screen all citizen contributions² and write additional content. OhmyNews has made such an impact in Korea that *The Guardian* argues it is the world’s most domestically powerful news site, which has built up as fearsome a reputation for moving public opinion as *The Sun* in the United Kingdom (Watts, 2003). Reflecting firstly on such global interest in the increasing phenomenon of citizen journalism, and secondly on the specific, unique and unmatched success of OhmyNews in Korea, the research question for this paper has been identified as:

What are the motivations of citizen journalists in South Korea?

To justify the research question, we can firstly argue that citizen journalism as a broad topic is of interest to academics because it is becoming a social revolution. Journalism is undergoing a transformation from a twentieth century mass media structure to a concept

² OhmyNews addresses the inevitable questions of content credibility by firstly requiring all citizen journalists to use their real identities (photograph identification is required to be registered with OhmyNews), and secondly by staff fact- and sense-checking articles.

that is far more grassroots and democratic (Gillmor, 2004: xii). It is also an emerging field and hence relatively little academic material is available. Indeed, the first major report on citizen journalism and the internet was only published in 2003 (Bowman & Willis), highlighting a need for further academic investigation. Secondly, motivations are important because while technological advancement has made social evolution and revolution possible, it has not necessarily determined it. It is individuals and communities that are *using* the internet to seek certain gratifications. By researching their motivations, we can learn more about the participatory system, the forces behind the popularity of citizen journalism, and the conditions that may influence its future. Thirdly, Korea was chosen as a focal point of the research question because, as we will see, this nation is the world's leader of citizen journalism, with OhmyNews at the forefront. The study aims to address the research question by:

- Reviewing Korea's political, social and media environments under which OhmyNews was conceived, grew, and thrived.
- Hypothesising some motivations for Korean citizen journalists.
- Exploring existing uses and gratifications theory that attempts to explain the gratifications sought by media users.
- Devising a new theoretical structure for measuring the motivations of citizen journalists.
- Gathering and analysing empirical data from a sample of at least one hundred OhmyNews citizen journalists.

The paper will be organised as follows. The first part of chapter two reviews relevant literature on the rise of citizen journalism in Korea and the special significance of OhmyNews. The author will focus here on three key factors under which OhmyNews has grown: the democratic transition in Korea; the evolution of the Korean mainstream press; and the internet society in Korea. The second part of chapter two reviews existing uses and gratifications theory. The author will also propose his own theoretical framework to be empirically tested, and put forward some hypotheses. Chapter three will explain the methodology used in the current paper, detailing survey and sampling methods, followed

by the questionnaire design. The results section will present and discuss the empirical analysis, beginning with self-reported motivation statistics, followed by a summary of the characteristics of OhmyNews citizen journalists, and a selection of noteworthy open responses. The final chapter will summarise the study in relation to the hypotheses, and formulate some conclusions about the research question. Implications for mainstream media and traditional journalism will be suggested, followed by some recommendations for future research directions.

CHAPTER 2.1: LITERATURE REVIEW

THE RISE OF CITIZEN JOURNALISM IN KOREA

Before embarking on a review of the conditions under which OhmyNews was created and has grown, let us examine the special significance of OhmyNews focussing on its world-first prominence, its intense growth in Korea, and its commercial success as a business model. Firstly, OhmyNews was the world's first website to completely embrace the concept of citizen news journalism (Bowman & Willis, 2003: 7). Launched as an experiment on 22 February 2000 by former *Mahl*³ journalist Oh Yeon-Ho, OhmyNews promised Korean citizens the first truly interactive 'internet newspaper' in the world (Oh, 2006: 214). During his time at *Mahl*, Oh had pondered how he could change journalism so that not only professionals but citizens too could participate in the news process. In fact, ten years earlier in 1989, Korea's Citizens' Coalition for a Democratic Media⁴ was already sponsoring Oh to give lectures to university students about how to write the news. They were entitled 'Every citizen is a reporter' (OhmyNews, 2004: 26). Oh later used this motto to found OhmyNews with an initial 727 citizen journalists gathered from an earlier testing phase. Oh explains the launch: 'Because the magazine *Mahl* was not mainstream media but alternative media, I had to have that kind of determination or attitude. Only when I was armoured with the philosophy of 'Every citizen is a reporter' could I equally compete with the reporters of mainstream media...However, because there was no internet at that time, because there was no such concept as the internet, it seemed it would cost too much if I made it with paper. Then the internet came out and I thought, "Ah, I could do it through this space!"' (Oh, 2003; cited in Yu, 2003).

Secondly, OhmyNews is universally agreed to be the world's most popular and powerful example of citizen journalism (*The Economist*, 2006: 7, McIntosh, 2006: 5). OhmyNews has been ranked in the top ten of the 'Korea's Most Influential Media' surveys of journalists performed by *Sisa Journal* between 2000 and 2005, and in 2005 was ranked sixth (*Sisa Journal*, 2005). It is the only internet newspaper to appear in the top ten,

³ A reformist monthly magazine.

⁴ The civic group that publishes *Mahl*, 민주언론시민연합.

flanked by long-running broadcast giants and daily newspapers. Its average daily readership is an estimated two million people, highly significant in a country with a population of 47.8 million. A key milestone that bolstered OhmyNews' image internationally was its coverage of the 2002 Korean presidential election (Han, 2002: 14-6). To set the scene, in the summer of that year two Korean schoolgirls were crushed to death in an accident involving a United States army vehicle⁵. Both soldiers involved were acquitted of all charges. While the mainstream media downplayed the incident, citizen journalists, or news guerrillas as they are called at OhmyNews, participated in an online campaign that evolved into 'offline' protest demonstrations drawing hundreds of thousands to central Seoul⁶. Wide anger toward the United States was displayed and a profound enthusiasm encouraged many Koreans, mostly in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, to support reformist politics. The enthusiasm culminated in a close presidential campaign race between the conservative candidate Lee Hoi-Chang, and reformist candidate Roh Moo-Hyun. Voting was to start on 19 December, however at 10pm on election eve Roh's campaign partner Chung Mong-Joon suddenly revoked his support. At once, OhmyNews citizen journalists responded and throughout the entire night the website was an epicentre of reform-minded citizens with 6.23 million visitors and 19.1 million page views logged on this day alone (OhmyNews, 2004: 19). The OhmyNews front page was filled with reports and action plans from citizen journalists urging readers to vote. In a surprise and narrow victory Roh was subsequently elected the following day, and acknowledged the contribution of citizen journalists to his victory by granting his first post-election interview to OhmyNews, shunning the dominant conservative press. Other milestones that OhmyNews accomplished included the breaking down of Korea's exclusive *gijadan* or press club system that denies news sources to non-member journalists, a fourteen-hour standoff with former president Kim Young-Sam, and the breaking news of illegal government funds being sent to North Korea. (OhmyNews, 2004: 20-21).

Thirdly, the special significance of OhmyNews can be found in its commercial success as a business model. While in the early months founder Oh struggled to find investors and

⁵ Following the Korean War, and as a deterrent to the volatile North Korea, United States forces have had a large presence in South Korea where around 29,000 troops are still based there today.

⁶ Korea's capital city; has a population of 10.3 million people.

advertisers, as popularity of the website increased the company began to turn over profits in 2003. Income now originates largely from both advertising and syndication revenues from other websites. Citizen journalists themselves can also get paid, based on article popularity and a ‘tip-jar’ system that invites readers to reward good work with small donations. One particularly popular article in 2004 paid out 22.6 million Korean won (approximately £12,500) in just five days⁷. While all OhmyNews articles are free to browse, readers can also contribute by paying a voluntary ‘subscription’ fee by clicking a link to have their mobile telephone or credit card account deducted. Convinced of the potential worldwide success of the Korean OhmyNews model, the English website OhmyNews International⁸ was launched in May 2004, followed by the inaugural International Citizen Reporters’ Forum held in Seoul in June 2005. A second forum of the same title was held in July 2006, and is possibly the only international event to focus only on citizen journalism. Furthermore, in a financial partnership with Japanese media giant Softbank, OhmyNews Japan was launched in August 2006. OhmyTV broadcasting has also recently commenced in Korea, where citizens themselves have to opportunity to anchor internet news bulletins.

Let us now turn to the conditions under which OhmyNews was created and has grown, in order to identify factors that may have propelled a participatory internet culture in Korea. Academic literature has broadly identified some unique Korean characteristics that may have stimulated citizen journalism. Prolonged democratic consolidation, a dominant conservative press, and a ubiquitous internet society are three key areas that will be reviewed in an attempt to hypothesise any motivating factors.

Prolonged democratic consolidation and a reformist drive

Before transition to democracy in 1987, Korea was ruled by a succession of authoritarian regimes ranging from traditional monarchy to Japanese colonial rule, concluding with a

⁷ In November 2004, Professor Kim Young-Ok wrote that the Constitutional Court’s decision against a government attempt to relocate Korea’s capital away from Seoul was undemocratic because the Court itself was unelected. The article won over some 6,000 readers who contributed amounts of up to 10,000 Korean won (approximately £5) each.

⁸ <http://english.ohmynews.com>

particularly repressive quarter century of military dictatorship led by Generals Park Chung-Hee and Chun Doo-Hwan. During this time, an alliance of military and family big-business⁹ dominated Korean society as industrialisation progressed at a speed not matched by any other nation (Fukuyama, 1999: 313), while democracy was ‘postponed’ (Chang, 2005b: 927). Any opposition to the regime was ruthlessly oppressed, for example the so-called Gwangju massacre of May 1980 saw over two hundred mostly students killed by armed forces as they led a popular uprising calling for democratisation. The challenge to military rule reached its peak in June 1987 as students, the opposition party, and a strong civil society were successful in their demands for direct presidential voting.

Although authoritarian rule had broken down, attempts at social and institutional reform were still met with resistance from conservative interest groups that had managed to transform themselves and survive after 1987. In their volume on democratic consolidation in Korea, Diamond and Shin argue that although Korea had successfully completed democratic transition, democratic *consolidation* was something yet to be grasped: ‘The successful establishment of electoral democracy...cannot be equated with the consolidation of Korean democracy...Democratic consolidation involves more than a structure of governance featuring the periodic participation of the mass public in free and competitive elections’ (Diamond & Shin, 1999: 18). In an article on online civic participation and political empowerment, Chang echoes the thoughts of Diamond and Shin describing a ‘prolonged democratic consolidation’ (Chang, 2005b: 927) that only achieved its first transfer of power between ruling and opposition parties with the election of Kim Dae-Jung in 1997. Even after the transfer of power, though, there was little ‘change in political hegemony’ (Chang, 2005b: 928) and the author would argue that it was only after Roh’s election as President in 2002 and the subsequent National Assembly elections in 2004 that a reformist force successfully emerged as a majority for the first time in Korea’s history. Explaining the public exclusion from democracy since 1987, Kang writes ‘the general public have been excluded from a chance to participate in

⁹ Huge conglomerates, or *jaebeol*, composed of large groups of family or relatives that exclusively possess and inherit corporations. Examples include Samsung, Hyundai and LG.

socially important decision-making processes except elections, and the arena for the expression of their collective opinion has continued to be distorted' (Kang, 2005: 84). It is this 'prolonged democratic consolidation' that may explain a desire among Koreans to support reformist politics during a troubled decade that also featured an Asian financial crisis, electoral corruption and secret dawn railroading of controversial laws (Kim, 1999: 292-3). In an article on democratisation and civil society, Choi concludes that Koreans' dissatisfaction with the process of democratic development, combined with strong aspirations for complete democratisation, fuelled this demand for reform (Choi, 2000: 40). Diamond and Shin argue that 'the values and judgements of the Korean public, while strongly sympathetic to democracy in some respects, [were] too conflicted, ambiguous, and unstable to signal the consolidation of democracy' (Diamond & Shin, 1999: 24).

In terms of the research question, therefore, it could be argued that Korea's prolonged democratic consolidation created a desire among citizens for *democracy in action*. Overcoming the bottlenecks in a delayed democratisation required a renewed participation by citizens (Chang, 2005b: 928), which is offered by citizen journalism. Explaining the unique nature of Korean people in an article on Asian values and democratic consolidation, Fukuyama empirically identifies that Koreans are indeed 'more willing to engage in social and political struggle than other Asians' (Fukuyama, 1999: 320). Based on this finding, it could be concluded then that the harshness of various forms of authoritarian rule lasting until 1987 produced strong opposition forces to a conservative establishment. For example, Korea houses Asia's best-organised and most powerful trade union movement¹⁰ and Asia's most vocal and most radical student union movement¹¹. OhmyNews too is viewed by many as a strong opposition force to a conservative establishment (Chang, 2005a: 400-1). It could also be argued, therefore, that citizen journalism is a reform-driven process, perhaps not only political in nature, but one that calls for institutional, social, economic or even cultural reform. Chang summarises that reformist Koreans, frustrated by uncertain and incomplete democratic consolidation, found a 'promising possibility' to act upon their frustration using online media (Chang,

¹⁰ Federation of Korean Trade Unions, 한국노동조합총연맹.

¹¹ Korean Federation of University Student Councils, 한국대학총학생회연합.

2005b: 928). It would be hypothesised, then, that social reform is a gratification sought by citizen journalists in Korea.

Conservative press dominance and a hunger for freedom of expression

A second factor identified in the literature that may have propelled a participatory internet culture in Korea is a continued dominance of the conservative press. During the Park regime from 1961, all news stories critical of his government were banned and intelligence agents were stationed in newsrooms while the press functioned as the ‘mouthpiece of modernisation’ (Kang, 2005: 78). When General Chun rose to power in 1980 the Basic Press Act¹² was immediately enacted, effectively overhauling the media industry by institutionalising the subordination of the press to political power. Under a ‘purification campaign’ 172 periodicals were banned and around 870 journalists were dismissed from print and broadcast positions for mostly displaying antigovernment sentiment (Yang, 1999: 152). Other journalists who yielded to regime policy were well compensated with remarkably high pay, tax concessions and even scholarships for their children (Park, 1993: 10). According to Kim (2003: 354), the Korean press under authoritarian regimes accepted its role as a ‘voluntary servant’ rather than insisting on freedom. Democratic transition in 1987 marked a turning point as the Basic Press Act was repealed in favour of the new Periodicals Act¹³. Censorship was abolished and newspapers were no longer required to be licensed by the government. The International Press Institute reported in 1988 that ‘visible and invisible restrictions imposed on the [Korean] press have been abolished in favour of a greater freedom of information and the right of the people to know has been guaranteed’ (Galliner, 1988: 26; cited in Yang, 1999: 155).

On reflection of the some fifteen years to follow, however, many scholars suggest that a true free press has never been completely realised in Korea. In a recent article on media power, Kang argues that ‘since the 1990s, the South Korean press has changed from the handmaiden of power to a power in its own right, something that may be called

¹² 언론기본법.

¹³ 정기간행물의등록등에관한법률.

“unelected power”...A conservative alliance consisting of political power, the bureaucracy, and the conservative press has played a crucial role in suppressing democratisation’ (Kang, 2005: 82/76). This conservative dominance of the Korean press is reflected especially by the ‘big three’ daily newspapers, *Chosun Ilbo*, *Donga Ilbo* and *Joongang Ilbo*, that together have accounted for around 75 percent of newspaper circulation (Lee, 2006). These dailies, which ‘resist media reform’, have continued to align themselves with conservative forces and so hegemony in the media remains (Chang, 2005b: 928). In a Freedom Forum report, Heuvel and Dennis write that the ‘Korean media have not undergone a revolution. Whereas the media in Eastern Europe changed radically—the old press system was destroyed and a new one built to replace it—the changes in Korea have been more moderate. The old press system was liberalised, but not overthrown...the legacies of the pre-1987 era have hung on, a primary one being that the mainstream press, though free to criticise, still sees itself as part of the establishment’ (Heuvel & Dennis, 1993: 11/13). In an analysis on political democratisation and news media, Yang (1999: 169) describes the corrupt journalistic practices that still lingered post-1987, including *chonji* or monetary bribes from news sources and the *gijadan* press club system that OhmyNews helped to break down. In a survey conducted by the Korea Press Foundation in 2004, 60.3 percent of journalists questioned reported that ‘political power’ had been a freedom-limiting factor on the press (Korea Press Foundation, 2004; cited in Journalists Association of Korea, 2004).

In terms of the research question, therefore, it could be argued that a dominant conservative press created a desire among Koreans for free expression of information. Founder Oh explains the immediate popularity of OhmyNews after its launch: ‘Dissatisfaction and distrust with the conventional press had considerably increased. Citizens’ desires to express themselves [also] greatly increased’ (Oh, 2003; cited in Yu, 2003). Chang (2005a: 399) echoes Oh’s claim by arguing that citizen journalism in Korea is a movement that rejects mainstream media, in favour of free expression, by taking advantage of relatively loose internet communication restrictions. In another 2004 survey it was found that 32.2 percent of 1200 Korean respondents did not trust the mainstream media, while only 19.5 percent said they did (Korea Press Foundation, 2004; cited in

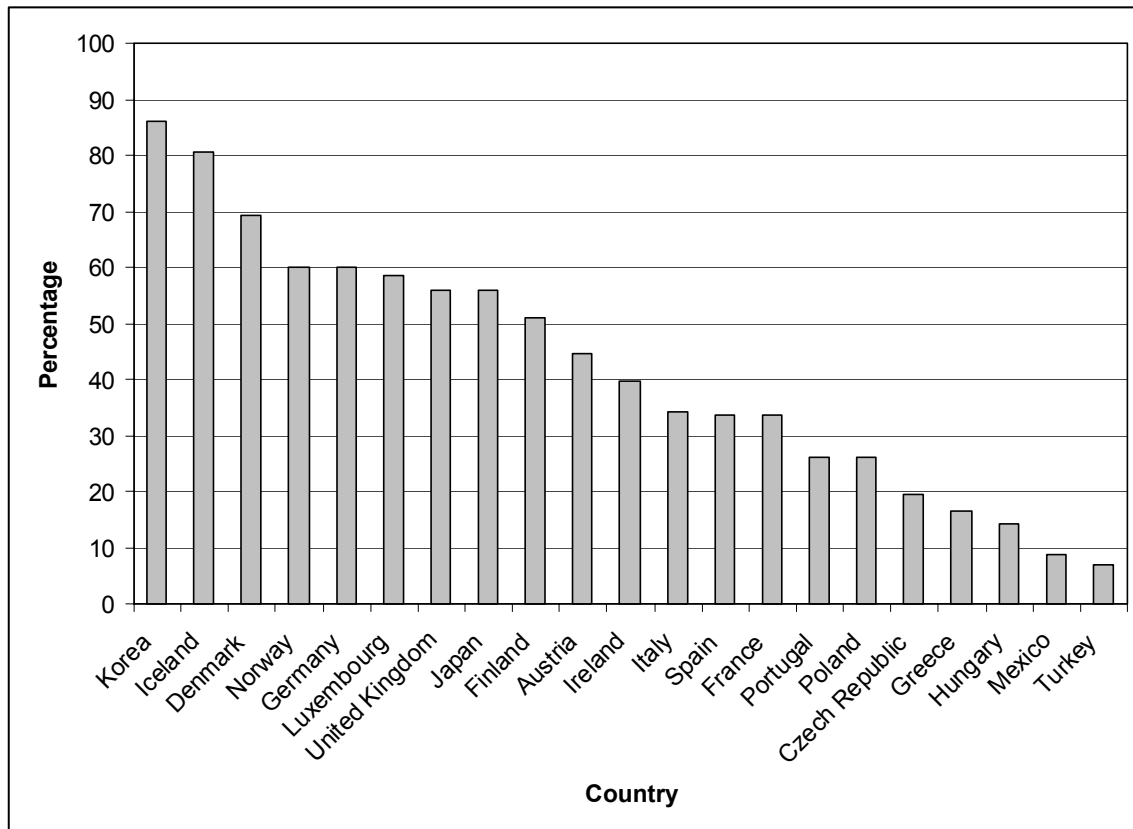
Journalists Association of Korea, 2004). A recent global survey on media trust carried out for the BBC (GlobeScan, 2006) actually suggests that not only are Koreans by far the most trustworthy of *internet* news sources, but also that Koreans regard the *internet* most as their main news source compared with people from other countries. This coupling of high levels of trust in internet news with high levels of consumption of internet news clearly reflects a desire among Koreans for a truly free press. Citizens are evolving from muted consumers of the conservative establishment to more diversified and assertive individuals who want a voice (Kim, 2003: 361). Izumi explains how citizen journalism benefited from this renewed desire: ‘Korean people became very active and aggressive in exercising their freedom online...Now netizen is the common word for Korean people...ordinary citizens who want to speak up and communicate’ (Izumi, 2002: 11-2; cited in R. Hauben, 2006). It would be hypothesised, then, that free expression of information is a gratification sought by citizen journalists in Korea.

Ubiquitous internet and connected Koreans

A third factor identified in the literature that may have propelled a participatory internet culture in Korea is this nation’s world-leading adoption of the internet, and especially broadband. A plan to build a Korean National Information Infrastructure was created in 1983 (R. Hauben, 2006), and as early as from July 1998 broadband internet services became available to Koreans (Chon, 2005: 4; cited in R. Hauben, 2006). Because of this early adoption, Korea has consistently led the world in broadband penetration statistics, with its nearest rivals in Europe not even coming close until after 2004 (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2005). This high uptake has also enabled Korea to boast another world-leading and almost saturating 86 percent of households having access to the internet (figure 2.1). In addition, there are an estimated 20,000 *PC bang* or internet cafés, making Korea the world’s most internet-connected society (Joung, 2005: 77). Michael Hauben, who coined the term netizen, describes the early development of online participation as a period when a number of people began to find new identities and develop a consciousness of themselves as online citizens (Hauben & Hauben, 1997). During this time, Korea especially saw a surge in dynamic use of

message boards, a distinctive feature of Korea's internet culture (Baek, 2003: 8) and forerunner to OhmyNews-style citizen journalism.

Figure 2.1: Percentage of total households with access to the Internet in 2004; selected OECD countries (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2006).



On the one hand, Korea's internet success has been made possible by the introduction of aggressive government policies supporting the information technology industry (Young, 2004: 234), the dense residential clusters in Korea enabling cost-effective broadband installation (Chang, 2005b: 928), and the relatively low cost of internet subscriptions (R. Hauben, 2006). On the other hand, Young argues in an article on diffusion and usage patterns of the internet that a 'collectivist culture' has played an important role in motivating Koreans to be constantly connected to each other (Young, 2004: 229). Chang further argues that the proliferation of message board-based websites reflects 'Korea's community culture and the age-old tendency of Koreans to gladly form partisan groups' (Chang, 2005a: 395). In an article on the cultural independence of younger Koreans,

Joung writes that the internet has grown together with an 'eagerness of Korean society, and Korean youth in particular, to constantly remain in touch with each other' (Joung, 2005: 77). In a paper on the internet and social capital in Korea, Han details how the internet has cultivated a new kind of social capital, citing the activities during the 2002 Soccer World Cup co-hosted by Korea (Han, 2002: 13). Citizen journalists, together with the official fan club for the Korean team, mobilised millions of 'Red Devils' in 'smartmobs' (Rheingold, 2002) to gather during match times for 'street cheering', a Korean phenomenon that astounded soccer-crazed Europe and many other Asian countries (Han, 2002: 13; Kim, 2006).

In terms of the research question, therefore, it could be argued that ubiquitous internet availability provides a base of networking and communication that encourages Koreans to be part of online (and offline) communities. Indeed, in an empirical survey, Young found that Koreans are more inclined to use the internet as a communicative medium, as opposed to seeking information and entertainment. In Korean society 'new technology such as the internet serves as a means of integrating individuals into a new kind of community...Internet is a functional node to connect the individuals into a group network' (Young, 2004: 238). Citizen journalism offers this online platform of expression and interaction, where hierarchical norms rooted in Korea's traditional Confucian culture are absent. Citizen journalism facilitates opinion exchange, whether confirmatory or argumentative, and offers connections to online communities. It would be hypothesised, then, that online community participation is a gratification sought by citizen journalists in Korea. To now conclude the first part of the literature review, we could summarise that citizen journalists in Korea have three things in common. They have firstly experienced a prolonged democratisation and are not yet satisfied, they secondly do not trust the mainstream media, and they thirdly are familiar with and willing to use an interactive internet. Let us now turn to a review of the uses and gratifications theory that will form the theoretical framework for the empirical project.

CHAPTER 2.2: LITERATURE REVIEW USES AND GRATIFICATIONS THEORY

Following the introduction of uses and gratifications thought into communication research in the 1940s, all types of media have been examined through this lens. Uses and gratifications theory attempts to understand the functions provided by media to users, hence gaining a more complete knowledge of media effects. New media have prompted renewed attention from communications scholars, and internet-based technologies have been the focus of a large number of uses and gratifications studies. This paper is possibly the first to specifically address citizen journalism through the lens of uses and gratifications theory. In this second section of the literature review, the foundations of uses and gratifications will firstly be summarised, followed by an assessment of its application to internet technologies, and thirdly a proposition of a new framework for citizen journalists.

Uses and gratifications perspective

In a theoretical breakthrough overcoming the long-standing misconception that media acted as ‘magic bullets’ toward a passive audience, exploratory uses and gratifications studies appeared as early as the 1940s (Berelson, 1949; Herzog, 1942; Lazarsfeld & Stanton collections, 1942, 1944, 1949; Suchman, 1942; Wolfe & Fiske, 1949; all cited in Katz et. al, 1974: 20). Due to mainly methodological restrictions, these studies ‘did not result in a cumulatively more detailed picture of media gratifications conducive to the eventual formation of theoretical statements’ (Katz et. al, 1974: 20). In response to this lack of clear direction for a research paradigm, Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch summarised some basic uses and gratifications tenets in their influential 1974 volume. Shifting the questioning emphasis from ‘what do the media do to people?’ to ‘what do people do with the media?’, Katz and his associates outlined the principal objectives of uses and gratifications inquiry as: ‘(1) the social and psychological origins of (2) needs, which generate (3) expectations of (4) the mass media or other sources, which lead to (5) differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), resulting in (6)

need gratifications and (7) other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones’ (Katz et. al, 1974: 20). In light of these objectives, Rubin (2002: 527-8) and McQuail (2005: 424) summarised the assumptions grounded in the uses and gratifications framework that will be adopted for this paper’s empirical project:

- Media use is rational and directed towards certain goals and satisfactions.
- Users are conscious of their media-related choices that arise in personal and social circumstances, and can voice these in terms of motivations.
- A range of social and psychological factors guide and mediate communication behaviour.
- The relevant factors for user participation (motivations, perceived or obtained satisfactions, media choices, background variables) can, in principle, be measured.

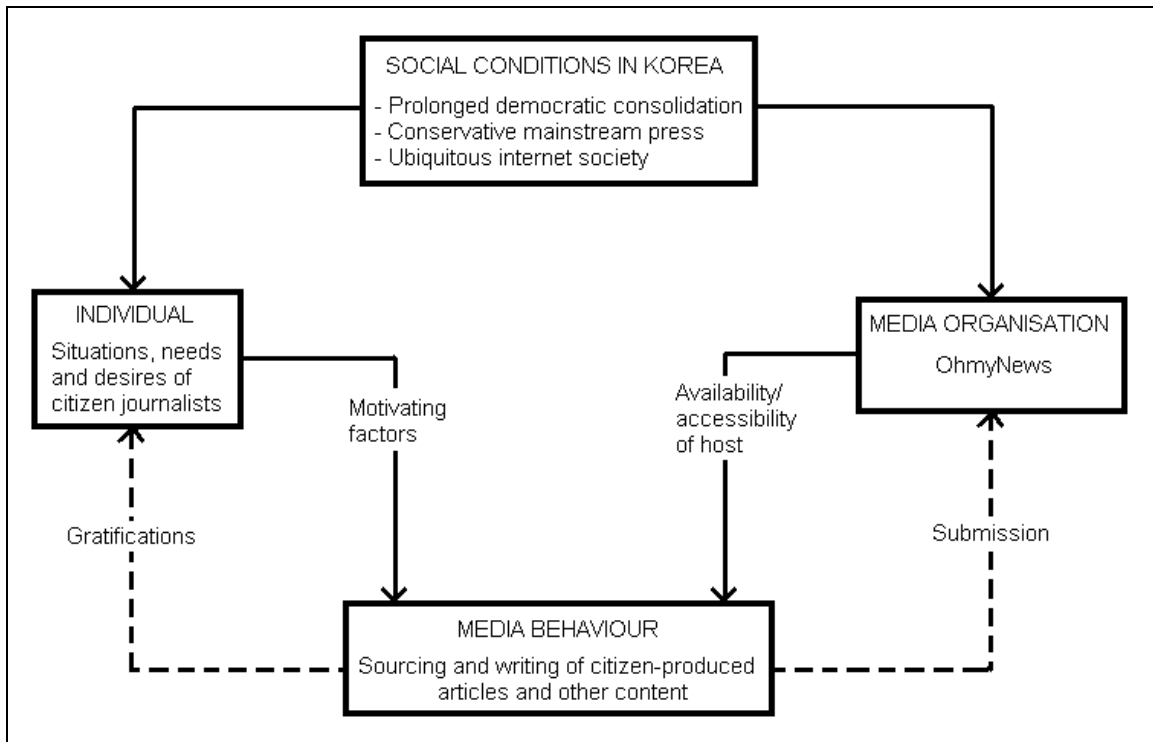
In landmark work undertaken at the University of Leeds in 1969, McQuail, Blumler, and Brown proposed a mass media uses and gratifications typology or ‘a conceptual framework within which findings about the audience experience and interpretations of it can be more adequately accommodated’ (McQuail et. al, 1972: 143). In short, the study reduced dozens of motivations for media use to four key gratification measures that form the typology (table 2.2). The ‘diversion’ gratification encompasses factors such as escape from routine or problems, and emotional release; ‘personal identity’ denotes self-reference, reality exploration, and value reinforcement; ‘personal relationships’ indicates companionship and social utility; and ‘surveillance’ encompasses all forms of information seeking. This typology was the first to adequately reflect the full range of media functions (Katz et. al, 1974: 23) and, although compartmentalising gratifications, provides a logically structured framework to measure the relative strength of motivations for media use.

Table 2.2: McQuail and associates’ typology of mass media audience gratifications (1972)

Diversion
Personal identity
Personal relationships
Surveillance

This paper seeks to design a new typology to explain the behaviour of citizen journalists, and then to empirically test the typology on citizen journalists in Korea. The employment of uses and gratifications is justified for this project because the theory focuses strictly on the *why* of media behaviour. Furthermore, not only does it view media organisations like OhmyNews as serving various needs and wants of society, it in turn presupposes that individuals too use the media to obtain gratifications and hence satisfy their motivations. A structural overview of uses and gratifications theory as employed in this paper can be found in figure 2.3. The social conditions in Korea form the umbrella for the approach, as these influence all aspects of the relationship between media and user. The media organisation, in this case OhmyNews, becomes a host for citizen contributions, and in return receives content from individual citizen journalists. In response to certain motivating factors, these individuals produce material that then satisfies their desires through gratifications.

Figure 2.3: Structural overview of uses and gratifications theory for citizen journalists in Korea (based on Weibull, 1985: 128).



New typology for citizen journalists

Having served traditional mass media well during the 1970s and 1980s, uses and gratifications theory always held promise for the study of new media (Williams et. al, 1985: 241). However, because new media technologies affect the entire structure of the ‘one-to-many’ communication format common in print and broadcast media, uses and gratifications theory had to be expanded. For example, an interactive feedback mechanism between user and media is inherent of internet technologies, but lacking in traditional media. Citizen journalism takes this feedback mechanism a level further, as the main flow of information is not from media to user, but from user to media, and then audience. In contrast to traditional media use, citizen journalism requires an active effort that renders the communication process as instrumental rather than ritualised (Rubin, 2002: 535). In other words, citizen journalism is purposive and planned as citizen journalists must organise their thoughts, words, and other content. This suggests a higher cognitive awareness of motivating factors and expected gratifications. A participatory model of media use presents users with more options than ever, thus potential gratifications too are expanded. Some of these gratifications have been extracted from previous new media studies, and their respective typologies appear in table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Selected new media uses and gratifications typologies 1998-2005

Author(s)	Medium	Gratification Typology
Bowman & Willis (2003: 38-41)	Participatory internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building reputation in a community - Creating connections with others - Sense-making and understanding - Informing and being informed - Entertaining and being entertained - Creating
Ebersole (2000)	World-wide-web	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research and learning - Easy access to entertainment - Communication and social interaction - Something to do when bored - Access to material otherwise unavailable - Product information and technical support - Games and sexually explicit websites - Consumer transactions
Kim (2000: 9)	Online communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in a web community - The sense of having a ‘level playing field’ - Belonging to a community and its subgroups - Contributing to a community; recognition - Taking on a community role

Table 2.4 (continued): Selected new media uses and gratifications typologies 1998-2005

Korgaonkar & Wolin (1999: 57-9)	World-wide-web	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social escapism - Transaction-based security/privacy concerns - Information - Interactive control - Socialisation - Non-transactional privacy concerns - Economic motivation
Leung (2001: 491-2)	ICQ chat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affection - Entertainment - Relaxation - Fashion - Inclusion - Sociability - Escape
Nardi et. al (2004: 43)	Weblogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documentation of lives - Providing commentary - Expressing deeply felt emotions - Articulating ideas - Community maintenance
Noh (1998)	Personal homepages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication - Contribution - Escape - Family - Pleasure - Promotion
Parker & Plank (2000: 47)	Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Companionship and social relationships - Surveillance and excitement - Relaxation and escape
Sangwan (2005: 8)	Virtual communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information needs - Social interaction - Personal use - Self expression uses - Entertainment
Stafford & Gonier (2004: 109)	Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Searching - Information - Communication - Socialisation
Stafford & Stafford (2001: 26)	Commercial websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Searching - Cognition - New and unique factor - Socialisation - Entertainment

On review of the selected typologies of participatory users, we can take note of various elements that would assist in producing a gratifications typology for citizen journalists. Firstly, it is clear that any kind of internet use requires a user predisposition of outward-reaching activity, as can be observed in such gratifications as ‘contribution’, ‘creating’, and ‘searching’. It is also important to acknowledge, however, that the inward-focused gratifications characteristic of traditional media still remain in these new typologies. For

example, gratifications such as ‘escape’, ‘entertainment’, and ‘personal use’ can also be relevant functions provided by the internet. Furthermore, we have already hypothesised that motivations for citizen journalists in Korea include participation in a community, free expression of information, and social reform. These too demand due consideration as citizen journalism has flourished the most in Korea. Drawing on these previous studies, and structurally based on the earlier work of McQuail and associates, the author of this paper proposes his own typology of citizen journalist gratifications. Acknowledging the uniqueness of citizen journalism practice as compared with other forms of media use, the new typology is an extension of the four traditional mass media audience gratifications, plus an important addition. In total, therefore, five levels of user engagement represent the gratification categories to be empirically tested (table 2.5).

Table 2.5: A comparison of two uses and gratifications typologies.

McQuail and associates’ typology of mass media audience gratifications (1972)	Sutton’s typology of citizen journalist gratifications
Diversion →	Self gain
Personal identity →	Personal development
Personal relationships →	Community interaction
Surveillance →	Information dispersal
	Social reform

Firstly, diversion, which provides release and the relatively self-centred gratifications for mass media audiences, has given birth to the ‘self gain’ gratification of citizen journalists. Specific motivations here include the enjoyment of writing, passing time, and simply the receipt of article payment. Self gain gratifications form a starting point to satisfy citizen journalists in a way that does not necessarily require any interactive capacity or direct involvement with other actors. Secondly, personal identity, which is concerned with the reference and exploration of oneself in relation to others, has been adapted into the ‘personal development’ gratification for citizen journalists. Motivations include the building of reputation and responsibility, and the refinement and articulation of opinion and passionate thought. The personal development category shapes a second layer of engagement that requires at least the observing of other citizen journalists, and an effort to develop one’s online identity. Thirdly, personal relationships, which refers to the branching out of the audience and the social utility of relationship building, has

developed into the ‘community interaction’ gratification for citizen journalists. Specific motivations here include connecting with other people and taking on a role in a community. Community interaction forms a more advanced third level of engagement where satisfaction is gained most from people-to-people connections. Fourthly, surveillance, which is concerned with the obtaining of information, has given birth to the ‘information dispersal’ gratification for citizen journalists. Motivations here include the creation and sharing of new knowledge with others, and the exercising of free expression. The information dispersal gratification shapes a fourth level of engagement where satisfaction is gained by the successful transfer of user-generated content to a given audience. Fifthly, an additional gratification for citizen journalists that was identified when examining the environment in Korea is ‘social reform’. Motivations here include challenging the mainstream media, rejecting the status quo, and offering alternatives to society. Due to its far-reaching and relatively radical nature, it was decided that this gratification could not be included in any of the four previous categories and thus forms an additional and ultimate level of engagement. A visual representation of the five levels of engagement can be found in figure 2.6, while a comprehensive list of secondary motivating factors can be found in table 2.7.

Figure 2.6: Visual representation of a new uses and gratifications typology for citizen journalists.

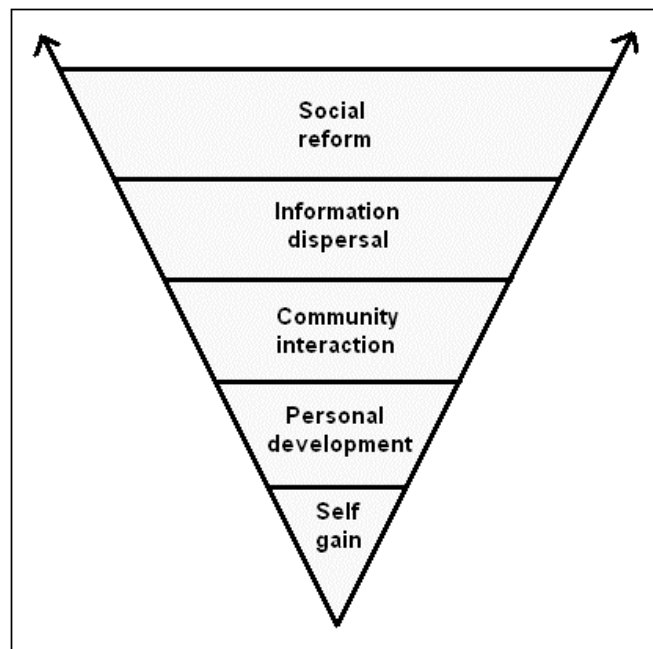


Table 2.7: List of motivating factors for a new uses and gratifications typology for citizen journalists.

Gratification	Motivating Factor
Self gain	To have fun and enjoy as I love writing. To pass time when I am bored. To watch the reaction to my articles. To see my articles published online. To receive money.
Personal development	To gain status and build my reputation. To develop a sense of responsibility and ethics. To develop an internet identity. To display my passion. To articulate my own ideas and opinions.
Community interaction	To develop connections with other people. To debate with other people. To take part in an interactive conversation. To take on a role in an online community. To gain mutual understanding among opinionated people.
Information dispersal	To inform others about my first-hand accounts of news and events. To inform others about me and my life. To create and share new knowledge with others. To inform others about the happenings of the world. To exercise my right to 'freedom of expression'.
Social reform	To set an agenda about a particular issue. To support or protest against a particular individual, group or idea. To mobilise citizens for support or protest. To challenge the mainstream media (newspapers, broadcasters etc). To reject the status quo and offer alternative ideas to society.

To conclude the literature review, the author's hypotheses predict that the information dispersal gratification will be most acknowledged by citizen journalists in Korea, firstly because this is the fundamental action of citizen journalism, and secondly because of the restraints on free expression that Korean society has historically been subject to. It is also predicted that gratifications sought will be lowest for self gain and will increase in strength depending on which gratification category is measured. This accounts for the participatory and interactive nature of citizen journalism in Korea, which reaches above basic self gain gratifications. In summary then, this literature review has firstly identified the conditions in Korea under which OhmyNews has thrived: a prolonged process of democratisation, a dominant conservative mainstream media, and a high proliferation of the internet. The author has also identified how these conditions may have stimulated a growth in citizen journalism. The second section of the literature review explored uses and gratifications theory, with reference to previous studies, and formulated a new

typology of gratifications for citizen journalists. Let us now turn to the empirical section in order to complete our investigation and testing of the hypotheses.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

To recapitulate then, the research question for this paper was identified as: ‘What are the motivations of citizen journalists in South Korea?’. This section describes the methods that were employed to address this question. The author has adopted a positivist approach for the project, which assumes that data collected from the ‘real world’ can be used to test theory. This value-free empirical research, then, attempts to objectively identify regularities and patterns among citizen journalists in Korea. For the reporting of data, the author has selected self-completion questionnaires as the most appropriate method. Self-reporting or introspection has always been highly regarded among uses and gratifications scholars, and has been used extensively in empirical projects (Zillmann, 1985: 225). Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch explain that ‘many of the goals of...media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves...people are sufficiently self-aware to be able to report their interests and motives in particular cases’ (Katz et. al, 1974: 22). Rubin has more recently concurred that self reporting is still typically used for uses and gratifications studies (Rubin, 2002: 528). While the main limitation of self-completion questionnaires is the potential inaccuracy of data, it was concluded that the open nature and general willingness of self-expression that is commonly found in citizen journalists would compensate for this limitation.

In terms of a sample frame for the questionnaire, we have already examined the special significance of OhmyNews citizen journalists. Hence this group of over 41,000, registered with the Korean language version of OhmyNews, form a pool of citizen journalists in Korea from which to draw data from. Access to the sample frame was made possible by the kind assistance from the OhmyNews head office in Seoul. A proposal was initiated by the author in April 2006, detailing the aims and objectives of the project. In response, OhmyNews staff agreed to send a mass email to all registered citizen journalists, inviting them to complete an online questionnaire in partnership with the author. This email¹⁴ was sent out by OhmyNews on 8 May 2006, and in just a few days 192 citizen journalists had chosen to complete the questionnaire. As their responses were

¹⁴ An English translation and copy of the original email can be examined in the appendix.

generated from within the sampling frame, exact representation was not guaranteed. However, as can be observed in table 3.1, the questionnaire did actually capture an accurate snapshot of OhmyNews citizen journalists. From demographic results, we can observe that 81.8 percent of respondents are male, with most in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. While 66.1 percent are working, a significant 21.9 percent classify their main occupation as studying. 86.4 percent of respondents have university level education, and 80.7 percent live in urban areas. If we were to generalise the participant demographic, therefore, we would observe that they are relatively well-educated city workers, predominantly male, and in their 20s, 30s, and 40s.

Table 3.1: Comparison of demographics between questionnaire respondents and total representation of OhmyNews citizen journalists.

		Questionnaire Column % n=192	OhmyNews total* Column % n≈41,000
Gender	Male	81.8% (157)	77%
	Female	18.2% (35)	22.9%
Age	Teens	0	4.3%
	20s	24.5% (47)	30.7%
	30s	30.7% (59)	39.7%
	40s	28.6% (55)	18.8%
	50s	13% (25)	5.1%
	60s and older	3.1% (6)	1.5%
Occupation	Student	21.9% (42)	27.8%
	Working	66.1% (127)	54%
	Unemployed	7.8% (15)	3.2%
	Retired	4.2% (8)	**
Education	High school	8.9% (17)	**
	Short-term college	4.7% (9)	**
	University	58.3% (112)	**
	Graduate school	28.1% (54)	**
Locale	Urban	80.7% (155)	**
	Suburban	10.4% (20)	**
	Rural	8.9% (17)	**

*OhmyNews' 2005 statistics cited in Kim & Hamilton, 2006: 546.

**Statistic unavailable.

The online questionnaire, which was administered in Korean language¹⁵, was carefully formulated to address the research question directly while also accounting for secondary

¹⁵ The author, a speaker of Korean as a foreign language, has written the questionnaire in collaboration with a group of native Korean speakers in order to accurately capture the intended meaning. An English translation, a copy of the original questionnaire, and acknowledgments to the translation assistants can be found in the appendix.

variables. Created by the author using web design program DreamWeaver, only a fully completed questionnaire could be successfully returned to the author by email, thus avoiding any non-response bias. The questionnaire began by introducing respondents to the aim of the project ‘to find out about the motivations of citizen journalists in Korea’. It was confirmed that all responses would remain confidential, and participants were thanked in advance for their time. A small incentive for successful completion of the questionnaire was also made known, giving all respondents a chance to win a gift pack of specialty English goods. Questioning began with three screening items about behavioural patterns on the OhmyNews website. These were included to gain an insight into the actual usage of OhmyNews by citizen journalists. Secondly, respondents were introduced to the 25 possible motivating factors that were detailed in the literature review. Having been already indexed to the new typology’s five major gratifications (self gain, personal development, community interaction, information dispersal, social reform), the 25 statements were randomised and presented without any clues as to what they may represent. In relation to why they write for OhmyNews, respondents were asked to indicate on a four-point Likert scale the degree of importance each factor is to them. For example, in response to the statement ‘I write for OhmyNews to set an agenda about a particular issue’ there were four options: ‘very important to me’; ‘somewhat important to me’; ‘not so important to me’; or ‘not at all important to me’. A four-point scale, as opposed to a five-point scale, was used because if a respondent is to take middle ground in this case, it effectively means that a particular motivating factor is not important to them, and therefore they are able to indicate this using the ‘not at all important to me’ option. Levels of motivation were numerically measured from 0 to 3, 0 indicative of ‘not at all important’ and 3 indicative of ‘very important’. To comparatively gauge levels of the five key gratifications, therefore, a statistical mean of the relevant motivating factors from within each category was calculated. Thirdly, three open-ended questions were offered to participants in an attempt to generate some more qualitative opinion about participants’ motivations, OhmyNews’ popularity, and Korea’s mainstream media. Lastly, a series of questions were designed to identify the psycho-political nature, internet usage patterns, and basic demographics of participants. In summary, therefore, our key dependent variables are the 25 motivating factors that have been indexed to the five

gratification measures outlined in the new typology. Secondary variables involve specific characteristics of citizen journalists in Korea such as demographics, internet usage patterns, and psycho-political factors. All responses from the 17 closed-questions were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), where descriptive statistical analysis was employed. The written open responses were also collated and are used as supporting evidence for the discussion. Let us now turn to the presentation and analysis of the results.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As has already been expressed, this research aims to identify the regularities and patterns of motivations among citizen journalists in Korea. Our key results, therefore, are the aggregate means of the motivating factors that were tested in the questionnaire (table 4.1). As expected, there is a wide range of motivation strength from the lowest at 0.53 to the highest at 2.33 points. This large differential demonstrates that the sample was successfully able to distinguish and indicate the individual motivating factors important to each respondent, thus confirming credibility of the results. Seven out of the 25 factors generated means of over 2 points, and have been highlighted in the table. The highest single motivating factor was ‘to exercise my right to freedom of expression’, which accrued a significant 2.33 points across the sample. This confirms a hunger among respondents for free expression of information. The author would argue that this motivation has been strengthened by Korea’s historical conservative press dominance, paired with the recent accessibility of OhmyNews that perhaps encourages citizens to participate simply ‘because they now can’. In other words, a strong desire to exercise free expression may exist because this capacity has been tightly closed in Korea for many years, and suddenly is made available by internet technologies. The high aggregate totals of two other information dispersal motivations ‘to inform others about the happenings of the world’ and ‘to create and share new knowledge with others’ confirm these desires for free expression. Turning now to the community interaction motivating factor ‘to gain mutual understanding among opinionated people’, a significant 2.05 points indicates a less-confrontational nature of respondents than perhaps is attributed to them by the term ‘news guerrilla’. Certainly during the times immediately after OhmyNews was formed and the subsequent Roh election campaign, an aggressive and hard-line stance was adopted by many citizen journalists. However, according to these results, this position may have died down in recent times, perhaps because the Roh administration was successfully elected and has initiated a drive for social reform. Thirdly, the personal development category generated three motivating factors that accrued over 2 points each. ‘To develop a sense of responsibility and ethics’ indicates that the respondents place importance on the maturity of a responsible moral standpoint. This may be suggestive of

Fukuyama's (1999) 'social struggle' value common in Koreans. Motivating factors 'to display my passion' and 'to articulate my own ideas and opinions' are also equally significant, and further reinforce the high strength identified in the freedom of expression motivation.

Table 4.1: Motivating factors and aggregate means for questionnaire respondents.

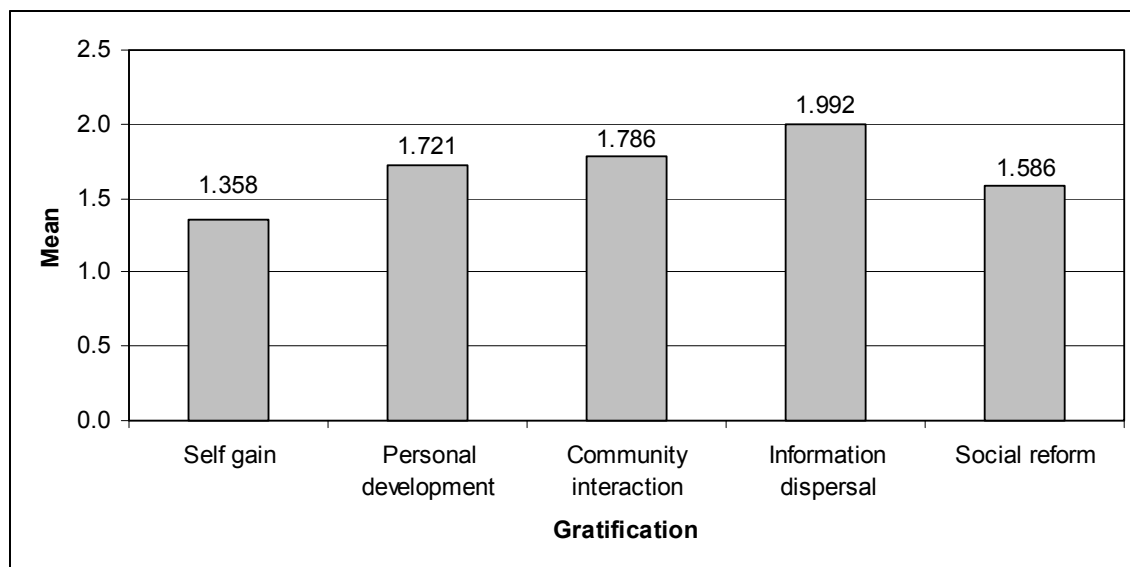
Gratification	Motivating Factor	Mean
Self gain	To have fun and enjoy as I love writing.	1.81
	To pass time when I am bored.	0.53
	To watch the reaction to my articles.	1.91
	To see my articles published online.	1.96
	To receive money.	0.58
Personal development	To gain status and build my reputation.	1.09
	To develop a sense of responsibility and ethics.	2.13
	To develop an internet identity.	1.13
	To display my passion.	2.04
	To articulate my own ideas and opinions.	2.22
Community interaction	To develop connections with other people.	1.68
	To debate with other people.	1.74
	To take part in an interactive conversation.	1.72
	To take on a role in an online community.	1.74
	To gain mutual understanding among opinionated people.	2.05
Information dispersal	To inform others about my first-hand accounts of news and events.	1.98
	To inform others about me and my life.	1.21
	To create and share new knowledge with others.	2.17
	To inform others about the happenings of the world.	2.28
	To exercise my right to 'freedom of expression'.	2.33
Social reform	To set an agenda about a particular issue.	1.76
	To support or protest against a particular individual, group or idea.	1.60
	To mobilise citizens for support or protest.	1.06
	To challenge the mainstream media (newspapers, broadcasters etc).	1.67
	To reject the status quo and offer alternative ideas to society.	1.85

**Key: 0=Not important at all to me; 1=Not so important to me;
2=Somewhat important to me 3=Very important to me.**

As the individual motivating factor means have been determined, we can now combine the results within each category and compare strengths of the more general gratifications (figure 4.2). As predicted in the hypotheses, the self gain gratification was regarded as least important, and the information dispersal gratification was regarded as most important to respondents. Clearly a vision to contribute knowledge to a wider audience is most valued. This fundamental tenet of citizen journalism is embraced by the respondents, arguably as a means to rebuff a historical culture of information suppression. Dispersal of information to an audience is by far valued over goals that are simply centred on the self.

It appears, therefore, that respondents aim to make an impact on others through their writing. The next most valued gratifications are community interaction and personal development, producing means of 1.786 and 1.721 points respectively. Connecting with other individuals, and developing an identity within this context, appears to interest respondents to a lesser but still significant extent than information dispersal. The author would argue that these desires originate in a willingness by Koreans to actively use the internet as a communicative resource, rather than for mere information seeking. Lastly, the social reform gratification, representing the highest level of user engagement in the typology, generated a mean just above the midpoint at 1.586 points. Respondents are remarkably neutral toward this gratification, but importantly do not disregard it completely. The author would suggest two possible explanations for this lower than expected result. Firstly, it could be argued that the social reform gratification is highly likely to fluctuate, depending on the social and political events occurring at a given time. Secondly, it could be argued that while originally very politically driven, OhmyNews has broadened its coverage to a more general stance in recent times. It is also important to recognise here that it is perfectly feasible for citizen journalists to be motivated by multiple factors (Bruns, 2005: 280). Indeed, no respondent indicated that they were solely seeking a single gratification.

Figure 4.2: Gratifications and aggregate means for questionnaire respondents.



Key: 0=Not important at all to me; 1=Not so important to me; 2=Somewhat important to me 3=Very important to me.

Turning now to the relevance of the secondary variables measured in the questionnaire, we have already established that the demographic of the respondents can be generalised as well-educated city workers, predominantly male, and in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. Most notable here is that 81.8 percent of respondents are male. The author suggests that this high representation is largely due to the two-year compulsory military service for all Korean men. Often separated from the general public and required to be submissive to all authority during this time, many Korean men arguably have a renewed outlook on life and a keen participatory drive upon completion of their service. Hence motivations to express new ideas and to participate in an online community, perhaps leading to social reform. Secondly, the variables measured to gauge the psycho-political nature of respondents display a strong dissatisfaction with Korean society (table 4.3). 74 percent of respondents expressed that they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with society, potentially suggesting social reform motivations. At the same time, 68.8 percent of respondents were optimistic about the future of Korean society, indicating buoyancy and general optimism among respondents. Political party support was heavily dominated by left-wing reformist politics, with 59.5 percent supporting either President Roh's Uri Party¹⁶ or the smaller Democratic Labour and Democratic Parties. Right-wing conservative forces only produced 9.4 percent support among respondents, confirming a strong reformist political orientation or 'social movement' that is agreed to be strong among citizen journalists in Korea (Chang, 2005a: 400). Thirdly, respondents' OhmyNews usage patterns reflect a strong focus on society and daily life article genre (table 4.4). While the website boasts a wide range of articles, we can conclude that the respondents from this questionnaire are more concerned with general writing and contributions that are targeted at society as a whole, rather than more specific topics that may only appeal to a smaller audience.

¹⁶ Interestingly, the Yeollin Uri Party, or Uri Party as it is commonly referred to, was known as the New Party for Participatory Citizens (국민참여통합신당) until October 2003 when the name was simplified to mean 'Our Open Party'.

Table 4.3: Psycho-political nature of respondents.

		Column % n=192
Society satisfaction	Very satisfied	0
	Satisfied	26% (50)
	Dissatisfied	61.5% (118)
	Very dissatisfied	12.5% (24)
Society five years from now	Much better than now	24.5% (47)
	Better than now	44.3% (85)
	Just the same as now	19.3% (37)
	Worse than now	9.9% (19)
	Much worse than now	2.1% (4)
Talking about articles in day-to-day life	Very enjoyable	26% (50)
	Somewhat enjoyable but hesitant	58.9% (113)
	Not enjoyable at all	15.1% (29)
Political party support	Democratic 민주당 (left)	1.6% (3)
	Democratic Labour 민주노동당 (left)	31.3% (60)
	Grand National 한나라당 (right)	8.9% (17)
	People First 국민중심당 (right)	0.5% (1)
	Uri 열린우리당 (left, Presidential)	26.6% (51)
	None	26.6% (51)
	Other	4.7% (9)

Table 4.4: OhmyNews and internet usage patterns of respondents.

		Column % n=192
Article submission	Daily	2.1% (4)
	Weekly	10.9% (21)
	Monthly	17.7% (34)
	Few times in a year	69.3% (133)
Main genre of contribution	Politics	4.2% (8)
	Economy	4.7% (9)
	Society	31.8% (61)
	Culture	9.4% (18)
	International	2.6% (5)
	Education	7.3% (14)
	Sports	4.7% (9)
	Films	0.5% (1)
	Media	2.1% (4)
	Travel	5.2% (10)
	Books	3.6% (7)
	Columns	3.6% (7)
	Daily life	20.3% (39)
Daily internet usage	Less than 1 hour	0.5% (1)
	1 hour	9.9% (19)
	2 hours	26.6% (51)
	3 hours	25% (48)
	4 hours	11.5% (22)
	5 hours	2.6% (5)
	More than 5 hours	24% (46)
Broadband access	Yes	90.6% (174)
	No	9.4% (18)

Finally, the three open questions in the survey generated an overwhelming response from citizen journalists, explaining their motivations, the popular aspects of OhmyNews, and comparing OhmyNews and Korea's mainstream media. Many of their ideas confirm the results above, and the author has selected four notable responses. The following excerpts also draw from the 'Citizen reporters in their own words' articles on the OhmyNews website. A male citizen journalist compares OhmyNews and Korea's mainstream media: 'News guerrillas are journalists who write stories which they find in their daily lives and which they know well, from their own perspective. While full-time journalists in the existing media write articles because that is what they are supposed to do, news guerrillas write news articles to correct wrongs in the society that they belong to. That is why there is an energy and urgency you can find in articles written by news guerrillas that cannot be found in those by full-time journalists'. He goes on to explain why he writes for OhmyNews: 'OhmyNews...satisfies my desire to voice my opinions. An ordinary person like me would have no opportunity to talk to the world in the existing media environment. Even when given such an opportunity, few would listen to me...I can now express my thoughts directly to readers'.

A female contributor explains her experiences as a citizen journalist: 'I am a common citizen reporter who has laughed and cried with OhmyNews for the last three years. I am escaping from my narrow framework as a housewife and communicating with the wider world as one citizen. It is an honour and very moving...One day, I—who had been just a reader—found something to write. Worried because my adolescent son was fighting with his father, I thought it might be good to listen to the advice of readers who have had similar experiences. So I wrote my first story, "Daddy's Depressed, Son's Taking Tests, And I'm Worried". I still cannot forget my first article with [my name] attached to it. As soon as I saw it published on OhmyNews, my heart fluttered. A housewife, who for the last eighteen years has been caught up in housework and raising her children, had now become a reporter. This was possible because of the OhmyNews spirit of "Every citizen is a reporter"...It was not easy to cover stories on my own or ask for interviews. The problem was that I could not confidently introduce myself as a journalist. However, this could also be a strength. This is because I worked toward the most sincere interviews

possible with a little more humility and more courtesy than a professional reporter. Rather than saying “I am a reporter”, I prefer to just listen to the concerns of friends as if I were talking with neighbours. In doing so, I sometimes forget that I am conducting an interview and get lost in the conversation, crying, getting off topic, and exchanging jokes. That is possible because I am a citizen, not a reporter’.

Another male writer explains his motivations for contributing to OhmyNews: ‘Prior to my experience with OhmyNews, I participated in a civil organisation for educational reform and was in charge of providing news sources for the media there. While working on media relations, I realised that many important news sources of critical social problems were frequently ignored, or the content and the points of the news were often incorrectly reported. Disappointed with the mainstream media, I learned about a new news source which advocated the causes of citizen journalism. This was OhmyNews. I was very pleased and immediately joined as a citizen reporter because I wanted to write news articles myself...If we can call professional reporters—those who dress in suits, are well equipped with appropriate equipment and educational backgrounds, and guided by editors—regular soldiers, our news guerrillas are irregular soldiers who dress casually, hold a digital camera in one hand and a reporter’s notebook in the other, gather reporting information alone, sneak into an internet cafe to send their news articles and disappear silently after the completion of their work...I report news on the spot, such as at a strike of workers who have not been paid for months. I rush to the scene where there is desperation of farmers suffering from the free trade agreement, and because of children struggling with their exams under an unreasonable educational system. While professional reporters visit scenes in order to write news articles, we news guerrillas rush to the spot in order to report the suffering of our neighbours and to make progress in the world and in history’.

Another male contributor explains how he became involved with OhmyNews: ‘There was no dramatic moment that first tied me to OhmyNews. I felt no sublime duty to try to change society through my writing, and had no desire to make my name known as an OhmyNews reporter. My sole motivation was just to let off steam...My first piece was a

refutation of another OhmyNews piece. I started not to write “for” OhmyNews, but to protest “against” OhmyNews. I wrote the piece, but I did not expect my refutation to be adopted by the paper. But a few hours later, my piece was placed side by side with the original article, given the same pride of place. I still cannot forget the shock I felt at the time’. Explaining how citizen journalism in Korea has changed the media landscape he writes ‘the relationship between media and consumers is no longer a one-way, producer-consumer relationship. That I went from being a reader to writer, and that my pieces have become the topic of discussion while at the same time creating countless other writers, is a testament to this. Not only is there no boundary in OhmyNews between writer and reader, but I think that as a news producer, it is dethroning the false authority formerly possessed by the mass media’.

We can derive at least two assumptions based on these interesting insights into citizen journalists in Korea. Firstly, desires for the free dispersal of information are widely found in all of the above four excerpts and in almost all of the remaining responses from the questionnaire. At the same time, but to a lesser extent, we can observe community interaction gratifications (‘to just listen to the concerns of friends’), personal development gratifications (‘my pieces have become the topic of discussion while at the same time creating countless other writers’), and social reform gratifications (‘to make progress in the world and in history’). Secondly, a strong dissatisfaction with Korea’s mainstream media is voiced, which is arguably a valid explanation behind the growth of citizen journalism in Korea. Let us now conclude the paper with further discussion and a look into the future possibilities of citizen journalism.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

As an investigation into the motivations of citizen journalists in Korea, this paper began by introducing Korea's OhmyNews as the most significant example of citizen journalism the world has seen. Not only was OhmyNews the first user-generated news website to emerge, but it has also grown to be the most powerful and commercially successful example of citizen journalism. The author then identified three factors unique to Korea that may have propelled a participatory internet culture in this nation. A dissatisfaction with prolonged democratic consolidation, a frustration with the conservative dominance of mainstream press, and a willingness to use the internet as a communicative medium served as springboards for the rapid growth of citizen journalism in Korea. Reflecting firstly on these important conditions, and secondly on previous studies into motivations of internet use, the author then proposed his own theoretical framework for measuring the motivations specifically of citizen journalists. A new uses and gratifications typology suggested 'self gain', 'personal development', 'community interaction', 'information dispersal', and 'social reform' as the five key gratifications of citizen journalists. A comprehensive selection of motivating factors was also suggested for each gratification. The typology was then empirically tested on 192 OhmyNews citizen journalists, and in support of the hypotheses found that their strongest single motivating factor was to exercise freedom of expression, and their most sought after general gratification was information dispersal. Based on the theoretical assumptions and the empirical evidence that we have identified, therefore, the author would conclude that the motivations of citizen journalists in Korea stem from a combination of technology and a new democracy. In other words, the growth of citizen journalism can be attributed to the evolution of communication technologies tightly combined with the willingness of individuals to utilise these new possibilities. While not technologically deterministic, Korea's outstanding information infrastructure has enabled easy access to enthusiastic individuals who desire the development of democracy through free expression of information. The experience of internet-based participation in Korea, therefore, illuminates the powerful combination of citizens and cyberspace, potentially forming an information age public

sphere. Citizen journalism in Korea is therefore a new form of participatory mechanism, helping to defend, foster and nurture the continuing development of democracy.

While offering some interesting answers to the research question, this paper also poses some equally interesting questions about the future of citizen journalism. Does Korea, a nation of early adopters in many ways, foreshadow the future of journalism everywhere? What are the implications of citizen journalism for traditional media organisations? Is the OhmyNews model sustainable? The answers to these questions remain to be seen, however by examining developments since the inception of OhmyNews, we can make some assumptions. Indeed, while a number of websites based on the OhmyNews model have been created over the past six years¹⁷, none has yet matched its full success (Gillmor, 2006; cited in *The Economist*, 2006: 7). Perhaps this is indicative of unique social conditions in Korea that are not found elsewhere, and so the worldwide proliferation of citizen journalism is doomed to fail. Or perhaps it is just a matter of time before other modern audiences seek similar gratifications to Koreans. Jean K. Min, director of the international division at OhmyNews, made some suggestions to the author at an informal interview in Seoul in August 2006. Min firstly concurred that the motivations of citizen journalists in Korea are likely to be different from those in other societies and cultures, which must be taken into consideration when exploring these markets. Indeed, as this paper goes to print, OhmyNews staff are waiting eagerly to see in what direction the OhmyNews export model develops in Japan. It will surely be quite different to the experience in Korea, and indeed OhmyNews' English website. Min secondly rebuffed any fears among traditional journalists that the increase in citizen journalism is signalling the end of 'journalism as a serious profession'. On the contrary, Min explains, the OhmyNews model in Korea demonstrates that trained journalists will actually be in greater demand as an increasing number of citizens begin to produce large amounts of news themselves. Min laments 'if only journalists would understand how to reinvent themselves in this age of citizen journalism!' (Min, 2005: 19). In extension of Min's statement, the author argues that if traditional media organisations are to accept this fundamental journalistic change, they must firstly embrace the audience as a valued

¹⁷ A selection of notable examples can be found in the appendix.

partner and innovator, and secondly aim to share rather than own the story. BBC Director-General Mark Thompson summarised similar goals in an April 2006 speech: ‘We need a new relationship with our audiences. They won’t just be audiences anymore, but participants and partners. We need to get to know them as individuals and communities and let them configure our services in ways that work best for them’ (Thompson, 2006). Thirdly, the author argues it is vital for citizen journalists to continue on their quest for accuracy and high standards of reporting.

In the meantime, it certainly appears that the OhmyNews model is sustainable in Korea, and media organisations and academics alike will continue to monitor OhmyNews and similar websites around the world with interest. Future research directions would ideally include investigations into the forces behind citizen journalism in other societies, paired with analyses detailing how both traditional and new media organisations can best address the fresh desires of audiences. Further testing of the new gratifications typology for citizen journalists would also be welcomed. To close on a light note, the author would like to retell a wonderful true story that was recounted by Davis and Botkin as an explanation of why many incumbent media organisations are anxious about new interactive media (Davis & Botkin, 1995; cited in Doull, 1997: 277). The story portrays a five-year-old girl who was afraid of a monster beneath her bed. So, like any normal girl of her age, she decided to write a story about the monster moving from beneath her bed to beneath her brother’s bed. She turned on her computer, opened up her word processor, and typed the tale. Then, just for fun, she opened up her graphics application and painted some pictures of the monster. Next she took some digital video of herself, her brother and the respective beds, and inserted it into the story. Now a complete media piece, the girl uploaded it to the internet where people from all over the world began to come across it. At the age of five she was the creator, the writer, the director, the camera operator, the editor, and the distributor of her own movie. Doull explains the moral of the story is that media organisations must figure out how to serve her media needs when she is twenty, otherwise they are toast! Keen citizen journalists, like the little girl in the story and like those in Korea, are surely going to play an important role in the world’s future media landscape.

CHAPTER 6: REFERENCES

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APPENDIX

Mass Email Invitation – English Translation

Date: 8 May 2006
To: OhmyNews citizen journalists
Subject: OhmyNews and the University of Leeds conduct a research project on ‘Citizen participatory journalism’

OhmyNews and the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom are together conducting a research project on citizen journalists.

For the last six years, OhmyNews citizen journalists have been attracting the attention of world leaders, media organisations, and interested academics and citizens alike. Many countries around the world are fascinated at the popularity of OhmyNews in Korea and want to find out more information.

At the University of Leeds, a study is being conducted to research the motivations of citizen journalists. The purpose of the research is to find out why citizen journalists write articles for OhmyNews.

As would be expected, OhmyNews is devising a plan for the development of ‘citizen participatory journalism’, and therefore this study can also be used as reference information.

The form of the project is a short online questionnaire and should not take long to complete. All participant identities and information will remain absolutely confidential.

By completing the questionnaire, citizen journalists are entitled to a free copy of the full results to be published in September this year. Participants are also eligible to go into the draw to win one of five gift packs of specialty English goods delivered to their door in Korea.

All OhmyNews citizen journalists who have 3-4 minutes to spare are kindly requested to follow the link below and complete the questionnaire.

(Link to the questionnaire)

If citizen journalists have any questions or would like to find out more information, they may email the researcher directly by using the link at the start of the questionnaire.

Thank you very much.

Mass Email Invitation – Original Korean Text

일자: 2006년 5월 8일
받는 사람: 오마이뉴스 시민기자 분들
제목: 오마이뉴스와 리즈대학이 ‘시민참여저널리즘’ 설문조사를 합니다

오마이뉴스와 영국 리즈대학 (University of Leeds) 이 함께 오마이뉴스 시민기자들을 대상으로 설문조사를 실시합니다.

지난 6년간, 오마이뉴스 시민기자들은 전세계의 정치계, 언론계, 학계와 시민들로부터 주목을 받아 왔습니다. 세계의 많은 나라들은 한국의 오마이뉴스의 인기에 놀라고 있으며 더 많은 정보를 얻고 싶어합니다.

영국 리즈대학에선 오마이뉴스 시민기자들의 활동 동기에 대해 리서치를 하고 있습니다. 이 리서치의 목적은 시민기자들이 왜 오마이뉴스에 기사를 쓰는지 알아보기 위한 것이라고 합니다.

오마이뉴스 역시 ‘시민참여저널리즘’을 더욱 발전시킬 수 있는 방안을 마련하는 데 조사 내용을 참고자료로 활용할 계획입니다.

본 리서치의 형태는 짧은 인터넷 상의 설문으로, 길지 않은 시간에 설문을 작성할 수 있을 것입니다. 설문에 참여한 시민기자들의 신원에 대해선 철저히 비밀이 보장됩니다.

설문에 참여한 시민기자들은 자신이 원할 경우 올해 9월에 발간될 보고서를 무료로 받아볼 수도 있습니다. 또한 감사의 뜻으로 추첨을 실시하여 다섯 분께 소정의 영국기념품을 보내드릴 예정입니다.

3~4분 정도의 시간을 내실 수 있는 모든 오마이뉴스 시민기자분들은 아래 버튼을 클릭, 설문에 참가해 주시면 감사하겠습니다.

(Link: 설문조사 참여)

질문사항이 있거나 더 많은 정보를 필요로 하시는 시민기자 분들은 설문지에 있는 이메일 주소로 연구원에게 직접 문의하시면 답변 드리도록 하겠습니다.

감사합니다.

OhmyNews Questionnaire – English Translation

Thank you for your participation in the OhmyNews questionnaire at the University of Leeds (United Kingdom). Please select Korean language encoding on your browser to view this webpage correctly.

This questionnaire aims to find out about the motivations of citizen journalists (news guerrillas) in Korea. Your participation in this research project is much appreciated.

The questionnaire is limited to OhmyNews citizen journalists. Please answer carefully and truthfully. All questions are compulsory. It should take around five minutes to finish. Your responses are completely anonymous.

Participants are eligible to go into the draw to win a gift pack of English specialty goods delivered to their door in Korea. If you would like to go into the draw, please enter your email address in the box below. The researcher will contact the winner by the end of May 2006.

Email _____ (optional)

Also, if you would like the results of the research project sent to your email address, please enter the competition above and check the box below. The results will be sent in September 2006.

Please send me the results []

If you have any questions or problems, please email the researcher directly. Email link: Shaun Sutton.

Once again, thank you very much for your time.

Q1. When did you register as an OhmyNews citizen journalist? (2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006)

Q2. How often do you write articles for OhmyNews? (daily, weekly, monthly, a few times in a year)

Q3. What type of articles do you mainly write for OhmyNews? (politics, economy, society, culture, international, education, sports, films, media, travel, books, columns, daily life)

Q4. Below are some possible reasons that citizen journalists may use to explain why they write for OhmyNews. Please indicate how important each reason is to **you**, by choosing one of the following four examples.

- Very important to me.
- Somewhat important to me.
- Not so important to me.
- Not at all important to me.

I write for OhmyNews...

- a. To see my articles published online.
- b. To inform others about the happenings of the world.
- c. To pass time when I am bored.
- d. To develop connections with other people.
- e. To display my passion.
- f. To watch the reaction to my articles.
- g. To develop a sense of responsibility and ethics.
- h. To articulate my own ideas and opinions.
- i. To support or protest against a particular individual, group or idea.
- j. To have fun and enjoy as I love writing.
- k. To debate with other people.
- l. To challenge the mainstream media (newspapers, broadcasters etc).
- m. To create and share new knowledge with others.
- n. To take on a role in an online community.
- o. To set an agenda about a particular issue.
- p. To take part in an interactive conversation.
- q. To inform others about me and my life.
- r. To receive money.
- s. To gain mutual understanding among opinionated people.
- t. To mobilise citizens for support or protest.
- u. To inform others about my first-hand accounts of news and events.
- v. To exercise my right to 'freedom of expression'.
- w. To gain status and build my reputation.
- x. To reject the status quo and offer alternative ideas to society.
- y. To develop an internet identity.

- Q5. What do you want to gain by writing for OhmyNews?
- Q6. What aspects of OhmyNews make it popular among citizen journalists?
- Q7. What are the differences between OhmyNews and Korea's mainstream media (newspapers, broadcasters etc)?
- Q8. How satisfied are you with the social situation in Korea? (very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied)
- Q9. In five years from now, what do you think the social situation in Korea will be like? (much better than now, better than now, just the same as now, worse than now, much worse than now)
- Q10. In your day-to-day life, how enjoyable is it to talk about your OhmyNews articles and ideas? (very enjoyable, somewhat enjoyable but I am hesitant, not enjoyable at all)
- Q11. How many years have you been using the internet? (less than 1 year, 1-2 years, 3-4 years, 5-6 years, 7-8 years, 9-10 years, 11-12 years, 13-14 years, more than 14 years)
- Q12. How many hours per day do you normally spend on the internet? (less than 1 hour, 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, more than 5 hours)
- Q13. Do you usually use a high speed internet connection (broadband)? (yes, no)
- Q14. Where do you live? (urban area, suburban area, rural area)
- Q15. Which political party do you support? (Democratic, Democratic Labour, Grand National, People First, Uri, none, other) *Political parties listed in alphabetical order.
- Q16. What is your main occupation? (student, working, unemployed, retired)
- Q17. What is the highest education qualification you hold? (high school, short-term college, university, graduate school)
- Q18. What is your gender? (male, female)
- Q19. How old are you? (10-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, older than 64)
- Q20. How did you hear about this questionnaire? (OhmyNews website, OhmyNews mass email, personal invitation, other source)

Thank you very much for your time. Please make sure you have answered all the questions and click the submit button once only. If you have entered the competition, good luck!

OhmyNews Questionnaire – Original Korean Text

리즈 대학 (University of Leeds, 영국)의 오마이뉴스 관련 설문에 참여해 주셔서 감사합니다. 이 웹페이지가 보이지 않으시는 분은 화면상단 보기메뉴의 인코딩을 한국어로 선택해 주시기 바랍니다.

이 설문지는 한국 시민기자들 (뉴스게릴라) 의 동기에 대해 알아보고자 만들어졌습니다. 이 연구프로젝트에 참여해주신 것에 진심으로 감사드립니다.

설문지는 오마이뉴스 시민기자들에 한합니다. 솔직하고 신중하게 질문에 답해주시기 바랍니다. 모든 질문에 답해주셔야 합니다. 예상시간은 5분정도 입니다. 여러분의 답변은 모두 익명 처리될 것이며 비밀 보장이 될 것입니다.

또한, 설문에 참가해주시는 분들께 감사드리는 의미로 응모하시는 분에 한해 추첨을 실시하여 당첨되시는 분께 소정의 영국기념품을 보내 드릴 예정입니다. 추첨에 응모를 원하시는 분은 아래의 빈칸에 이메일을 적어주시기 바랍니다. 당첨되시는 분께는 연구원이 2006년 5월말까지 연락드릴 예정입니다.

이메일 _____ (선택사항)

그리고 또한, 이 연구의 결과를 받아보고자 하시는 분께서도 위의 빈칸에 이메일 주소를 적어주시기 바라며, 아래의 박스에도 체크 표시를 해주시기 바랍니다. 연구결과는 2006년 9월에 보내 드릴 예정입니다.

연구결과를 받기 원한다. []

질문이나 문제가 있으시면 연구원에게 직접 이메일을 보내주시기 바랍니다. Email link: 연구원: 손사톤 (Shaun Sutton).

소중한 시간을 내주셔서 진심으로 다시 한번 감사 드립니다.

설문지

Q1. 당신은 오마이뉴스 시민기자로 언제 등록하셨습니까? (2000 년, 2001 년, 2002 년, 2003 년, 2004 년, 2005 년, 2006 년)

Q2. 오마이뉴스에 얼마나 자주 기사를 쓰십니까? (매일, 매주, 매달, 일년에 몇번 등)

Q3. 오마이뉴스에 어떤 종류의 기사들을 주로 쓰십니까? (정치, 경제, 사회, 문화, 국제, 교육, 스포츠, 영화, 미디어, 여행, 책, 칼럼, 일상생활)

Q4. 아래는 시민기자들이 왜 그들이 오마이뉴스 기사를 쓰는지 설명 하기 위해 사용될 수 있는 가능한 이유들입니다. 모든 이유가 당신에게 얼마나 중요한 지 아래 네 가지 예중에서 하나를 선택하여 나타내 주십시오.

- 나에게 매우 중요함
- 나에게 어느 정도 중요함
- 나에게 특별히 중요하지 않음
- 나에게 전혀 중요하지 않음

오마이뉴스에 기사를 쓰는 이유들...

- a. 나의 기사가 온라인상에 올라가는 것을 보기 위해
- b. 다른 사람들에게 세계에서 일어나는 일들을 알리기 위해
- c. 지루한 시간을 달래기 위해
- d. 다른 사람들과의 관계를 발전시키기 위해
- e. 나의 열정 (passion) 을 나타내기 위해
- f. 내가 쓴 기사의 반응을 보기 위해
- g. 책임감과 도덕성을 높이기 위해
- h. 나의 아이디어나 의견을 명백히 하기 위해
- i. 특정 집단이나 인물 또는 아이디어를 지지 / 반대 하기 위해
- j. 기사를 쓰는 것이 재미있으니까 즐기기 위해
- k. 다른 사람들과 토론 하기 위해
- l. 주류 미디어 (신문사, 방송국 등) 에 도전하기 위해
- m. 다른 사람들에게 새로운 지식을 찾아 공유하기 위해
- n. 온라인 커뮤니티에서의 나의 역할을 수행하기 위해
- o. 특정 이슈의 아젠다를 만들기 위해
- p. 쌍방향 대화 (interactive conversation) 에 참여하기 위해
- q. 다른 사람들에게 나와 나의 생활을 알리기 위해
- r. 돈을 벌기 위해
- s. 다른 사람들의 의견교환을 통하여 서로 이해하기 위해
- t. 지지 / 반대 시위를 위한 시민선동을 위해
- u. 다른 사람들에게 내가 직접 보거나 들은 뉴스나 이벤트를 알리기 위해
- v. 나의 표현의 자유 (freedom of expression) 의 권리를 실행하기 위해
- w. 나의 평판이나 인지도를 얻기 위해
- x. 현재상황을 거부하고 사회에 다른 아이디어를 제시하기 위해
- y. 인터넷 상의 존재감을 높이기 위해

- Q5. 오마이뉴스 기사를 쓰는 것으로 당신은 무엇을 얻기를 원하십니까?
- Q6. 오마이뉴스의 어떤 점이 시민기자들의 참여를 활발하게 한다고 생각하십니까?
- Q7. 오마이뉴스와 한국의 주류 미디어 (신문사, 방송국 등) 의 차이점은 무엇입니까?
- Q8. 한국의 사회 상황에 대해서 얼마나 만족하고 계십니까? (아주만족, 만족, 불만족, 아주 불만족)
- Q9. 지금으로부터 5년 후에 한국 사회의 상황이 어떻게 되리라 예상하십니까? (지금보다 많이 나아질 것이다, 지금보다는 조금 좋아질 것이다, 지금과 비슷할 것이다, 지금보다 안좋을 것이다, 지금보다 많이 나빠질 것이다)
- Q10. 보통 평소에 생활하시면서 당신이 작성한 오마이뉴스의 의견들과 기사들에 대해 얘기 하는 것을 즐기시는 편입니까? (아주 즐긴다, 망설이지만 즐기는 편이다, 전혀 즐기지 않는다)
- Q11. 인터넷 사용 년수는 얼마나 되셨습니까? (1년간이하, 1-2년간, 3-4년간, 5-6년간, 7-8년간, 9-10년간, 11-12년간, 13-14년간, 14년간이상)
- Q12. 하루에 평균 인터넷 사용시간은 어느 정도입니까? (1시간이하, 1시간, 2시간, 3시간, 4시간, 5시간, 5시간이상)
- Q13. 주로 사용하시는 인터넷은 고속인터넷 (브로드밴드) 입니까? (고속인터넷 사용한다, 고속인터넷 사용하지 않는다)
- Q14. 어디에 사십니까? (도시, 도시주변, 시골)
- Q15. 어떤 정당을 지지하십니까? (국민중심당, 민주노동당, 민주당, 열린우리당, 한나라당, 기타, 없다) *당이름은 가나다 순
- Q16. 당신의 주 직업은 무엇입니까? (학생, 직장인, 무직, 은퇴)
- Q17. 당신의 최종 학력은 무엇입니까? (고등학교, 전문대학, 대학교, 대학원)
- Q18. 당신의 성별은 무엇입니까? (남자, 여자)
- Q19. 나이가 어떻게 되십니까? (10-14세, 15-19세, 20-24세, 25-29세, 30-34세, 35-39세, 40-44세, 45-49세, 50-54세, 55-59세, 60-64세, 64세이상)
- Q20. 이 설문에 대해서 어떻게 알게 되셨습니까? (오마이뉴스 웹사이트, 오마이뉴스 회사가 보낸 이메일, 개인 초청 쪽지, 기타)

시간 내주셔서 감사드립니다. 모든 질문에 답하셨는지 다시 한번 점검하시고 '보내기' 버튼을 한번만 눌러주십시오. 만약 추천에 응모하신 분이라면 좋은 결과가 있으시길 바랍니다!

Selection of other notable citizen journalism websites

Backfence.com	An American-based website founded in 2004. Hyper-local versions of the website publish citizen contributions from various localities.
Current.tv	Cable television channel founded in 2005 by former United States Vice-President Al Gore. Citizen-made videos of between five seconds and fifteen minutes are broadcast by the network.
Digg.com	An American news website founded in 2004 with an emphasis on technology and science articles. Contributions are submitted by users, and then promoted to the front page through a user-based ranking system.
Flix.dx	Danish website founded in 2003. Content is written by citizens who are coached and receive editorial support by a staff of trained writers and journalists.
Janjan.jp	Japanese citizen news website founded in 2003. Janjan stands for 'Japan Alternative News for Justice and New Culture'.
Newsvine.com	American website founded in 2005, consisting of community-driven news stories and opinions. Users can write articles, vote, comment and chat about pages created by both users and journalists from the Associated Press.
Nowpublic.com	Canada-based participatory news network founded in 2005 that boasts over 15,000 reporters in 130 countries.
Scoop.co.il	Israeli website founded in 2005 and directly inspired by the OhmyNews model.
Scoopt.com	United Kingdom-based website founded in 2005 that sells user-submitted photos to news agencies on behalf of the user.
Wikinews.org	Launched in 2004 by the American organisation behind Wikipedia, users can edit news articles on a collaborative basis even after publication.

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