Inter-ministerial Policy Coordination for Digital Content Technology Development: Korean and Japanese Cases⁺

Wonkyung Rhee*

Abstract

This study identifies and evaluates inter-ministerial coordination for developing digital content technology in Korea and Japan. It is conducted through a comparative analysis between Korean and Japanese governmental organizations and their decision making process. Media content had been regulated or promoted by ministries involving culture in both countries. The digitalization of traditional media, however, blurred boundaries between the cultural, technological, and industrial spheres, so ministries involving science and technology, economy and trade, or foreign affairs started to promote digital content technology in the late 1990s. This has been the cause of conflicts among ministries and sometimes led to policy duplication, which in turn weakens policy effectiveness. The competition and coordination of ministries and agencies can be seen through establishing or amending related laws, organizations, and programs. Structural holes are founded in the networks drawn among governmental agencies in charge of digital content, particularly in the field of intellectual property in Korea and online distribution technology in Japan.

Keywords

content industry, national innovation system, inter-ministerial coordination, culture technology, Cool Japan

⁺ This research is supported by the 2014 STEPI fellowship.

^{*} Doctoral Candidate, Global Information and Telecommunication Studies, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan, circlek2@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Japan and Korea developed their economies over a period of fifty years based on the growth of manufacturing sectors. Although their economies made progress, many hurdles remain in maintaining growth and competitive advantage. Profits coming from their respective manufacturing industries continually decrease, and other emerging economies are competitively lowering their prices. Various indicators are signaling that the Japanese and Korean economies are in a transition period.

At the outset of the 21st century, two countries entered into the information era and discovered the importance of digital content as a high value-added industry. Digital content has been driving the rapid market growth of information and communication technology (ICT) hardware, consumer electronics, mobile services, and applications (OECD, 2006). It is assumed as a tool for enhancing a country's soft power as well. For these reasons, both governments became aware of how digital content is an important element for international competitiveness, and put effort into developing proper governance.

Direct economic or technology policies already existed in Japan and Korea from the 1960s, and some industrial technologies including chemicals, steel, shipbuilding, and semiconductors were fostered under governmental initiatives. It is well known that Japan and Korea industrialized under strong interventions of governments, as well as extensive regulation and planning (Woo-Cumings, 1999). Following the phenomenal economic recovery of Japan after the end of the Second World War, newly industrialized countries in East Asia emerged a decade later to represent *the developmental state model* with different kinds of business-government relationships (Johnson, 1982). Private sectors were rigidly guided and restricted by government ministries; subsequently, *the developmental state model* came to suffer with the Asian financial crisis in 1997-1998, which led to the collapse of many economic systems in Asia.

Before digitalization, media content was not treated as a strategic industry under *the developmental state model*. Until the mid-1990s, media content was regulated or promoted by the culture-related ministries of the respective countries: the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) in Korea and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in Japan. But with the digitalization of traditional media blurring boundaries between culture, technology, and industry, and industry; ministries involved in science and technology, economy and trade, or foreign affairs from the late 1990s onwards started developing proposals for promoting digital content industries.

Most policy issues involving digital content required collaboration across government ministries, sometimes causing conflicts among ministries or policy duplication that weakened policy effective-

¹ Soft power is the ability to attract rather than coerce, use force, or give money as a means of persuasion. It is based on intangible or indirect influences such as culture, values, and ideology (Nye, 2005).

ness. The governments faced strong criticism for their inefficiency as overlapped funding or similar projects. Organizations, regulations, and governance within the state created different policy performances, and the regulatory role of nation-states became more important than ever in the digital convergence era.

This study focuses on the late 1990s to 2000s, a critical transition period for the content market in East Asia. Sales of Japanese content progressed in the 1970s and 1980s, taking a leading position globally after the 1990s. In the 2000s, sales of Korean digital content grew rapidly—especially in China—mostly from online games, music, and video content. The evolution of content policy in Korea has seen a continuous increase in terms of government budget and support programs in this period. In this respect, this study first reviews discussion on policy coordination and structural holes in chapter 2. Then it identifies the historical background and specific examples of policy competition and coordination in both countries by analyzing their governmental organizations and major laws in chapter 3 and 4. Chapter 5 seeks to examine policy relevance to the innovation system of digital content technology in which it can be one of the primary objectives of the policy efficiency. With a comparative analysis of Korea and Japan, this chapter introduces examples of structural holes as well as policy competition and coordination occurring at specific stages of technological development.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Literature Review

2.1.1. Policy Competition and Coordination

Because each sub-division of government continually strives to maximize its budget as well as to extend its autonomy, interactions between different bureaucratic agencies or policies have been discussed in the literature under two strains: competition and coordination.

Allison (1971) developed *the bureaucratic politics model* for understanding problems in foreign policy decision making. He assumed a government as a rational actor but competition among its agencies for protecting their own interests being potentially inefficiency. Cohen, March, & Olsen (1972) set up *the garbage can model* under the organizational anarchy, characterized by "problematic preferences," "unclear technology," and "fluid participation." Even if an organization met a problem, its solution largely depended on chance likening the in and out flow of choice opportunities to that of a garbage can. Dror (1989) suggested combining the rational and extra-rational factors linked with decision and situation. Through *the optimal model*, he emphasized communication and feedback channels among governmental agencies.

In the science and technology field, inter-ministerial or inter-agency policy competition arose not only from jurisdiction conflicts but also from perception gaps. In Korea, MCST and the Ministry of Information and Communication up to 2008had competed for standardization of digital content technology. On the one hand, in case of the online game rating system in Korea, philosophical differences between the Ministry of Gender Equity and Family (MIGEF) and MCST were also a reason for policy conflict. In 2011, MIGEF raised a question about prevailing juvenile cybercrime due to exposure of violence on video and computer games, and proposed to attend content regulation through a "shut down system." Conversely, MCST which was responsible for the development content industry including games already introduced a "selective shut down system" that required online games operators to block children for playing during hours that their guardians set.

Governments have struggled against policy conflicts and inefficiencies, and made organizational attempts at implementing integrated innovation policies. Such efforts are described as interministerial coordination, cooperation, collaboration² or integration³. Building communication and feedback channels or inter-agency councils, and even providing financial compensation for best practices were tried for encouraging ministries or agencies' coordination. Lee, Lee, and Kim (2013) reviewed US inter-agency mechanisms for climate change and concluded that a full-cycle monitoring system was the most significantly effective mechanism for collaboration, especially in science and technology innovation. Sunada (2007) discussed the history of Japanese information policy mainly led by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). She divided into five periods from 1954 onwards from the viewpoint of the interaction between METI and other ICT decision makers, and concluded that the main actors adjusted to policy coordination under the leadership of *the IT Strategic Headquarters* and the introduction of a policy evaluation system in 2001.

2.1.2. Structural Holes and National Innovation System

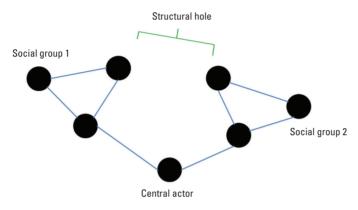
Due to global economic liberalization, the Japanese and Korean governments have generally avoided *the developmental state model* based on state-initiated economic or technology planning, and sector-specific promotion. Instead of direct supports, both governments in the late 1990s and 2000s began to pay closer attention to the concept of national innovation systems (NIS). NIS emphasizes that a country's innovative performance largely depends on how research producers relate to each other as elements of a collective system. Under this view, the organization of government and its decision making processes play a pivotal role in the development of digital content technology.

It has been adopted that vertical structure for the telecommunication regulation, but policymakers in charge of digital content development have been forced to rethink it because horizontal regulatory structure can be more efficient within the convergent environment wherein digital content can be easily stored and distributed through the Internet. The total volume of digital content market has grown in the past several years, primarily as a result of a rapid increase in the availability of faster and cheaper broadband access, leading policymakers to reconsider the regulatory framework.

² Collaboration is a process in which autonomous actors interact through formal and informal negotiation, jointly creating rules and structures governing their relationships and ways to act or decide on the issues that brought them together (Thomson, Perry, & Miller, 2009).

³ Policy integration refers to the aligning of individual policies with overarching objectives by harmonizing policies or developing complimentary policies that still maintain the autonomy and independence of the sub-policies that happen to be the components of a system (Seong & Song, 2013).

A growing number of NIS studies investigating policy interactions and collaborative mechanisms find that governance across diverse technologies creates gaps as well as overlaps. Burt (1992) used the term "structural holes" where connections have failed to form. Because social capital exists where people have an advantage through their location in a network, structural holes can provide opportunities for actors linking disparate groups who are not interacting with each other. Information within networks tends not to be homogeneous, so a structural hole takes place where two separate clusters possess non-redundant information.





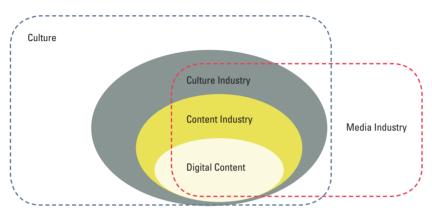
Source: Burt (1992), adapted from Kung (2012).

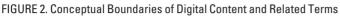
In Figure 1, a structural hole intervenes as an information insulator between separate social groups. Once a new player bridges this structural hole, the player can mobilize social capital by acting as a "broker" of information between separate clusters that would not otherwise have been in contact. Thus, bridging structural holes can be beneficial to the whole organization by providing new ideas and opportunities. It frequently occurs in organizational changes among content technologies, so an important criterion of NIS should be to evaluate whether governmental agencies notice structural holes and which roles can be played among them.

2.2. Research Questions and Methodologies

This study identifies and evaluates inter-ministerial competition and coordination for developing digital content technology in Korea and Japan. The following questions are addressed: which ministries or governmental agencies in Korea and Japan carried out digital content policies? What kinds of policy competition and coordination occurred at each stage of technological development? And how did government officers perceive inter-ministries coordination issues involving digital content?

In order to answer these questions, the major terms used in this study must be defined. Firstly, digital content refers to any information that is published or distributed in digital form, including text data, sound recordings, photographs and images, motion pictures, and software (OECD, 2006). Companies providing digital content are usually classified as the content industry in Korea and Japan, but it may variously be referred to as the cultural industry, creative industry, or entertainment industry. Figure 2 reveals related concepts of digital content and their boundaries. These designations themselves have sometimes been a contested issue and even reflected the ministries' perception gap.





Secondly, this study adopts the concept of inter-ministerial coordination for explaining activities that attempt to resolve policy conflicts or overlaps through negotiation or compromise. Under Seong and Song (2013) typology, policy coordination or cooperation indicate one-time event with no guarantee that the relevant policies are developed in the same direction in the future, but in this study it is used in a broader sense that includes all cooperative interactions among ministries.

Thirdly, digital content technology generally refers to specific visual or auditory skills for content creation and distribution. In exploring the questions of technology policy, this study will not be limited from considering technologies for strengthening intellectual property rights (IPR) management, cyber security and privacy, payment systems, electronic signatures, or even marketing skills especially promoting overseas sales.

Ministries and agencies' competition and coordination can be seen through establishing or amending related laws, organizations and programs. This study examines whether structural holes existed by drawing networks among digital content promotion laws and affiliated governmental agencies using comparative research methods to the decision making process for digital content technology development in Korea and Japan. This argument is supported by documentation from the 1990s, official government publications, newspapers/periodicals, and journals that mainly come from Korea

⁴ Interviewees included government officials from MOTIE, KOCCA, MOFA of Korea, METI, MIC, Institute for Information and Communications Policy under MIC and MOFA of Japan.

and Japan. At the same time, interviews with relevant policymakers⁴ and experts from private sectors⁵ provide a crosscheck on internal validity when examining of government publications.

3. KOREA'S GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR DIGITAL CONTENT TECH-NOLOGIES

3.1. Historical Background

There were two important factors for emerging Korean digital content in the late 1990s. First, the Ministry of Information and Communication inaugurated in 1994 according to revised *Government Organization Act* for the information society. It contributed to establish ICT infrastructure and provided access to faster and cheaper broadband that led to various opportunities for creating, storing, and distributing digital content for individuals or small-size firms.

Second, the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997 triggered a rapid decline in economic conditions in Korea. In order to recover from the crisis, the Korean government promptly responded to call for change in its foreign policies that had previously regulated imports in order to protect the domestic market. The new open door policy started as a part of monetary or trade policy, but spread to cultural exchange with Japan. Until the late 1990s, the Korean government officially prohibited direct import of Japanese media products⁶ from a fear of being dominated in its own domestic content market. However, Korean content after the open door policy to Japan remarkably improved its artistic technique and diversity, allowing for continued production of globally competitive content. This success of Korean content—particularly TV drama, games, and music—came to be dubbed the "Korean wave," with the digitalized content industry enjoying international success in the 2000s. Stimulated by this success, the Ministry of Information and Communication, MCST, and even the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) joined to build strategies for promoting the Korean content industry for the overseas market.

In line with a political regime change by President Lee Myung-bak in 2008,⁷ the *Government Organization Act* was revised and the function of the Ministry of Information and Communication was dispersed among the Korea Communication Commission (KCC), the Ministry of Knowledge Economy (MKE), and MCST. There have been criticisms of there being an absence of a control

⁵ Interviewees included researchers or managers from SM entertainment, NEXON, Korea Telecom, NHK, Fuji TV, NTV, Yahoo Japan, and Kadokawa.

⁶ Before 1998, the Korean government prohibited the performance or exhibition of Japanese culture and arts in Korea. Since the liberation of 1945, the recovery of cultural identity by removing the legacy of Japanese colonialism has been an essential part of Korean cultural policy. Also, there was a fear that the Japanese cultural industries, with their substantial capital and technology, could threaten the domestic market share of Korean cultural industries (Yim, 2002).

⁷ The largest government reorganization since the founding of the Republic of Korea occurred when the conservatives came back into power with the election of Lee Myung-bak in 2008 (Oh & Park, 2013). The government shrank to fifteen ministries from the eighteen under the previous President Roh Moo-hyun's liberal government.

tower since the Ministry of Information and Communication was dissolved. Two practical alternatives were attempted: the restructuring of the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) in 2009 and the establishment of the Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning (MSIP) in 2013.

3.2. Legal Framework

During the period of the Korean military government (1962-1992), the authoritarian regime used media to project its aims and goals onto the public as a part of keeping Korean society in line with its vision. Media were monitored and controlled, and sometimes the government imposed temporary extralegal regulations (Kim, 2011). In the 1990s, the regulatory paradigm shifted with political democratization towards supportive ways, but protective regulation still existed until the late 1990s. As Table 1 shows, more than twenty acts in Korea are currently involved in media or digital content. Half of those acts were established or amended within a period of ten years. Even if it was not listed below, around ten acts including the Import and Distribution of Foreign Publications Act were rescinded in early 2000s. It reflects how the purpose of the major acts shifted emphasis from regulation to promotion.

As Table 1 shows, more than twenty acts in Korea are currently involved in media or digital content. Half of those acts were established or amended within a period of ten years. Even if it was not listed below, around ten acts including the *Import and Distribution of Foreign Publications Act* were rescinded in early 2000s. It reflects how the purpose of the major acts shifted emphasis from regulation to promotion.

Title Copyright Act	Enforcement Date	Competent Authorities		Purpose
	1957	MCST	Copyright Policy Division	Regulation
Framework Act on	2011	MSIP	Creative Economy Foundation Division	Promotion
Intellectual Property				
Public Performance Act	1961	MCST	Performing Arts & Traditional Arts Division	Regulation
Publishing Industry Promotion Act	2008	MCST	Publication & Printing Division	Promotion
Framework Act on	1995	MCST	Film & Video Content Industry Division	Promotion
Video Industry Promotion				
Motion Pictures and Video	2006	MCST	Film & Video Content Industry Division	Promotion
Products Promotion Act				
Music Industry Promotion Act	2006	MCST	Film & Video Content Industry Division	Regulation/
				Promotion
Game Industry Promotion Act	2006	MCST	Game Content Industry Division	Regulation/
				Promotion
Content Industry Promotion Act	2010	MCST	Digital Content Division	Promotion
Software Industry Promotion Act	2000	MSIP	Software Policy Division	Promotion
Framework Act on Cultural	1999	MCST	Cultural Industry Policy Division	Promotion
Industry Promotion				
Framework Act on Culture	2014	MCST	Regulation Reform & Legal Affairs Officer	Promotion

TABLE 1. Korean Laws Relating to Content

Popular Culture Industry	2014	MCST	Popular Culture Industry Division	Promotion
Development Act				
Broadcasting Act	1987	KCC	Broadcasting Policy Planning Division	Regulation
Internet Multimedia	2008	MSIP	New Media Policy Division	Promotion
Broadcasting Business Act				
Framework Act on Broadcasting and	2010	MSIP	Policy Coordination Division	Regulation/
Telecommunication Development				Promotion
Framework Act on	2010	MSIP	IT Strategy Planning Division	Promotion
National Informatization				
Framework Act on	1984	MSIP	Policy Coordination Division	Regulation
Telecommunications				
Telecommunications Business Act	1991	MSIP	Telecommunications Policy Planning Division	Regulation

Source: modified by the author using data from Korea Ministry of Government Legislation (http://www.law.go.kr)

Some of them—the *Copyright Act/Framework Act on Intellectual Property*, or the *Game Industry Promotion Act/*the *Content Industry Promotion Act/* the *Software Industry Promotion Act*—did not have clear boundaries and sometimes caused overlaps in jurisdiction. This phenomenon might have been inevitable in the era of digital convergence, but a clear need emerged for monitoring and adjustment following technological development.

For one thing, overlaps would occur from frequent changes of governmental organization. In particular, the dissolution of the Ministry of Information and Communication transferred content policies to MCST and the *Online Digital Contents Industry Development Act* in 2008. MCST was fully revised along with changing its name to *Content Industry Promotion Act* in 2010. The revision made unclear that the role of subordinating specific laws including the *Game Industry Promotion Act*, the *Music Industry Promotion Act* and *Motion Pictures*, and the *Video Products Promotion Act*. Moreover, MSIP succeeded the Ministry of Information and Communication in 2013, and currently takes on the management of software content business mainly distributed through Internet under the *Software Industry Promotion Act*. It decreed that multimedia or game content excluding cultural traits should be under the control of MSIP. On the other hand, MCST points out that the trend of "one-source multi-use" makes it hard to split content industry regulation.

Another trait of the legal system related to digital content is the existence of the framework acts⁸ that are embodied in specific laws. Among these framework acts, the *Framework Act for Development of Broadcast and Communication and the Framework Act on Cultural Industry Promotion* contain articles mentioning content industry. The *Framework Act on Intellectual Property* emphasizes the relations between IPR and digital content industry, and clarifies roles of the Presidential Council on Intellectual Property.

⁸ Framework acts also can be translated as "basic acts" and is usually called the latter in Japan.

Legal environments need to be improved consistently in a way that connects structural holes, but conflict is unavoidable among ministries. Optimized jurisdiction of each act is essential in order to provide actual benefits to the participants of content industry.

3.3. Major Actors of Digital Content Policies

3.3.1. Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

Launched after 1990,⁹ the Ministry of Culture has been responsible for the areas of culture that can improve quality of life for the general public. In 1993 and 1998, tourism and sports were folded into the ministry as part of government reorganization, but the overall policy system of MCST did not change over the last decade. In connection with digital content, current MCST is the most actively

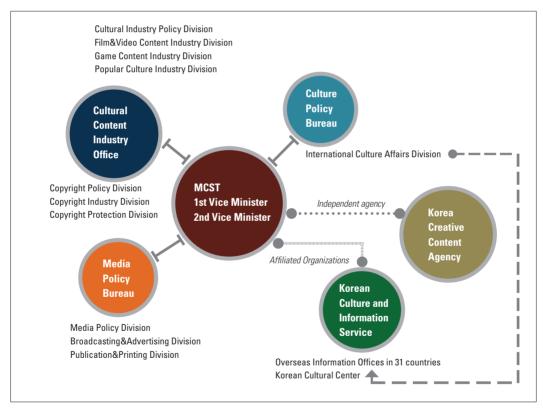


FIGURE 3. Sub-organizations of the MCST Involving Digital Content

Source: modified by the author using data from MCST official website. (http://www.mcst.go.kr/english/ministry/ organization/orgChart.jsp)

⁹ When the First Republic was established in 1948, the governmental organization in charge of culture was originally a sub-organization of the Ministry of Education. Although the Ministry of Culture and Information existed from 1968, the primary goals of the ministry were regulating media and promoting traditional culture. 70% of the total expenditure on the cultural sector during 1974–1978 was distributed into folk arts and traditional culture (Yim, 2002).

working ministry with a relatively large budget and significant human resources. After the *Cultural Industry Division* was established in 1994, it expanded and reorganized into the Culture Content Bureau in 2001. In addition, the *Culture Media Bureau* was launched in 2004, and *the New Media Industry Team* was organized under its umbrella in 2007. To enlarge its jurisdiction and to absorb the Ministry of Information and Communication's functions for digital content policy, *the Culture Media Bureau* and *the Cultural Industry Bureau* merged into *the Cultural Content Industry Office* in 2008.

As Figure 3 shows, previously separate functions of digital content policy are now operating under the single umbrella of MCST's authority. One of the affiliated organizations, the *Korean Culture and Information Service*, contributes in operating the *Korean Cultural Centers*¹⁰ and monitors new global trends in digital content. The *Korean Overseas Information Service* launched as a sub-division of *the Government Information Agency* in 1999. It became a part of MCST while being given its current name in 2008. Among its thirty-seven overseas offices in twenty-one countries, twelve branches are located in East Asia including Tokyo, Osaka, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Singapore. This shows the importance of the East Asian market to the Korean content business as well as its soft power policy.

From the late 1990s to early 2000s, MCST competed with the Ministry of Information and Communication through their sub-organizations, projects, and related laws. With the dismantling of the Ministry of Information and Communication, however, most of the works involving content-related policies were transferred to MCST, which started to take on a profound role in digital content governance.

3.3.2. Korea Creative Content Agency

KOCCA is dedicated to promoting the content industry and has particularly close ties with MCST. It was established as a comprehensive support system to enhance the efficiency of content policies that were separately pushed forward with the *Korea Broadcasting Institute, the Korea Culture and Content Agency, the Korea Game Industry Agency*, the *Cultural Contents Center*, and the Digital Contents Business Group of the Korea IT Industry Promotion Agency until 2009.

Differing from other divisions in the governmental ministries, KOCCA provides practical counsel angled towards small-size firms. Interviewees mentioned that experts in KOCCA had higher degree of understanding for the content industry, and were supportive in developing specialized content technologies. Furthermore, KOCCA encourages digital broadcasting projects, promotes online game distribution, and carries out digitalization projects aimed at strengthening content competitiveness in the worldwide market. Those activities have been conducive to the improvement of the

¹⁰ The Korean Cultural Centers originally aimed to provide opportunities for experiencing Korean traditions and history through specialized programs for the general public. Coping with the increasing demand for Korean content, the centers sponsor many pop-culture events and language learning resources. It is run by the Korean Culture and Information Service under the supervision of International Culture Affairs Division of MCST.

factor conditions in the field of the content industry (Kim, 2011). Among KOCCA's major goalsdeveloping content technology, commercializing content, promoting overseas sales—interviewees noted that the information about overseas market was the most helpful service for their projects, and requested for service for legal advice in the foreign market. The survey conducted in 2005 resulted that over seventy percent of content productions in Korea expected to the *Korea Culture and Content Agency* would invest in ICT infrastructure and digital distribution technologies, but this changed considerably under technological development.

KOCCA set up a unified dialog channel and played an important role of adjusting and connecting the private and public sectors. This collaborative network might be said to be a bottom-up process in terms of the organizational aspect within the government. On the contrary, it has not been established in a systematic way, and has limitations in managing conflicts among governmental agencies. This demonstrates that the activities of KOCCA have contributed to the initial formation of the infrastructure of the content industry rather than the innovation system as a whole.

3.3.3. Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning

The creation of MSIP was one of the current Korean President Park Geun-hye's core pledges during her presidential election campaign in 2012. In 2013, MSIP was launched under a reorganization plan initiated by President Park to generate new growth engines for the Korean economy. All of the tasks related to science and technology, especially ICTs, previously distributed among various de-

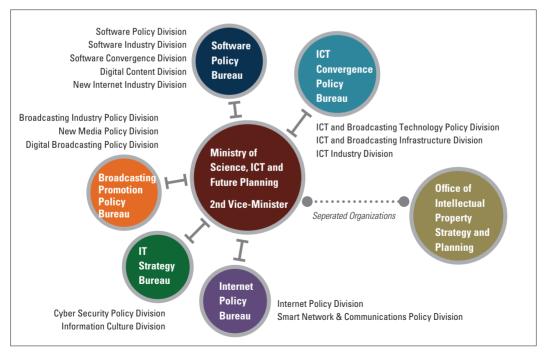


FIGURE 4. Sub-organizations of the MSIP Involving Digital Content

Source: modified by the author using data from MSIP official website. (http://english.msip.go.kr/english/wpge/m 70/eng0505.do)

partments were combined into one ministry. Yet this move was criticized for its unclear defining of jurisdictions, despite it being the most striking and central feature of the government restructuring.

Policies and regulations, which had been under the Ministry of Information and Communication until 2007, were transferred to KCC, MKE and MCST in 2008. Policies for promoting media technologies, which had been handled by KCC, were delegated to MSIP, and the second vice-minister put in charge as presented in Figure 4. While KCC still exists, its functions are limited to a regulatory role.

MSIP is designed to flexibly respond to technological changes in digital content. Its expertise under new media policies such as Internet protocol television (IPTV) service operators, satellite channels, and digital media broadcasting is outstanding, but it still has a long way to go before it can provide tangible benefits for content producers. Interviewees indicated that they had already settled into the system for developing content technology set by MCST and KOCCA, so they were less expectant of new projects that MSIP would provide. An interviewee suggested that MSIP would secure its own area by bridging "structural holes" that are not covered yet by other ministries. The *Cyber Security Policy Division* and the *Information Culture Division* under the *IT Strategy Bureau and Software Policy Bureau* have distinct expertise that MCST cannot cover. The lack of technological expertise caused by the job rotation system needs urgent improvement.

4. JAPAN'S GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR DIGITAL CONTENT TECH-NOLOGIES

4.1. Historical Background

In Japan, the development of content technology was left to private sectors until the late 1990s. This shows a sharp contrast with the Japanese "cultural policy" promoting culture, tradition, language or art (Otmazgin, 2012). Pop culture, movies, music, animation, and games—categorized as the entertainment industry—were regarded as being relatively unimportant compared to traditional culture (JETRO, 2004). Instead, the actual initiatives for developing content technology were led by private enterprises (Yoshimoto, 2003). On the other hand, ICT infrastructure was regarded as a key industry at the state level. It was esteemed that the comprehensive usage of ICTs would become extremely important for enhancing future growth.

Moreover, the Japanese government aspired to translate its leading position in the economy into cultural influence, to become so-called "soft power" of East Asia in the late 1990s. The term caught

¹¹ MOFA introduced the concept of soft power in their Diplomatic Bluebook 2005 and noted that Japan has the potential to become a leader for soft power based on the popularity of its pop culture.

¹² The Cool Japan Strategy promoting Japanese soft power launched in 2010 under the regime of the Democratic Party of Japan. In addition, the Liberal Democratic Party (Jiminto) manifesto that was run up to the House of Representatives election in August 2009 can be said to be an example of a policy proposal described as a proactive foreign strategy, featuring plans to strengthen Japan's soft power through intellectual exchanges in science and technology.

the attention of Japanese politicians, media, and scholars when it was first introduced into the global discourse. The Japanese fascination with soft power sprang from the challenges that Japan faced in exploring its international status, and the constitutional limitations placed on its use of hard power (Lee & Melissen, 2011). The appeal of the term was further enhanced by Nye's (2004) description of Japan, a country seen its cultural influence expand since the 1990s even as its economic power declined. The concept of soft power has been frequently and conveniently employed in Japanese ministries, especially at METI, MEXT and MOFA¹¹, with politicians using the term in policy platforms regardless of their political stances¹².

METI officially recognized the importance of the digital content industry to the Japanese economy in 2002. A new category called "the information and telecommunications industry"—a concept that encompasses Internet-based services and businesses that produce video, audio, and text content— was added to its industry classification table for international comparisons. While it did not have a clear definition of digital content industry, policies developing its technology existed in various forms including specialized programs and organizations.

4.2. Legal Framework

According to the legal search system of Japanese e-government, there exist more than ten different laws associated with content technologies or industries. As shown in Table 2, they are fewer in number than similar laws in Korea and half of the Japanese laws have been in place for more than fifty years. This implies that the Japanese legal environment for content is stable and less influenced by political regime changes. Some interviewees pointed out that the rigidity of the Japanese legal system could not catch up to the speed of ICT development. For example, specific types of IPTV are not regarded as broadcasting under Article 126 [1] of *the Broadcast Act* and are treated as "automatic public transmission¹³" under the *Copyright Act*.

The ratio of regulatory verses promotion laws is almost one-to-one. Similarly in Korea, there is overlapped jurisdiction between its Copyright Act and Intellectual Property Basic Act. Compared to the regulatory role of the Copyright Act, the Intellectual Property Basic Act was established for promoting intangible assets, especially technologies, as a core portion of the industrial foundation.

Title	Enforcement Date	Competent Authorities	Purpose
Broadcast Act	1950	MIC	Regulation
Radio Act	1950	MIC	Regulation
Copyright Act	1970	MEXT	Regulation
Act on Prohibition of Unauthorized Computer Access	1999	MIC	Regulation
Basic Act on the Formation of an Advanced Information and Telecommunications Network Society	2000	The Cabinet	Promotion

TABLE 2. Japanese Laws Relating to Content

¹³ This means, it is a form of public transmission occurring automatically in response to a request from the public, excluding public transmissions falling within the term "broadcast" or "wire-broadcast." (Copyright Act, Article 2 [1]).

Basic Act on Promotion of Culture and the Arts	2001	MEXT	Promotion
Act on Promotion of Development of Combined	2001	MIC	Promotion
Telecommunications and Broadcasting Technologies			
Intellectual Property Basic Act	2002	the Cabinet	Promotion
Act on the Protection of Personal Information	2003	Consumer Affairs Agency	Regulation
Act on Promotion of Creation, Protection and	2004	MIC	Promotion
Exploitation of Contents			

Source: modified by the author using data from Japanese Legal data System (http://law.e-gov.go.jp) Ministry of Justice, Japanese Law Translation Database System (http://www. japaneselawtranslation.go.jp)

While the Japanese legal system for digital content development is regarded as leaning towards conservative, there was a breakthrough with the *Act on Promotion of Creation, Protection and Exploitation of Contents* enacted in 2004. Under this act, producers are given ownership of content order by the government in projects with entertainment or educational purposes. It is often referred to as the Japanese version of the Bayh-Dole Act¹⁴, but went further in that it attempted to give ownership to content producers for the first time in the world.

The final trait of Japanese legal framework for content technologies and industries is that it is less dependent on written laws. In spite of progressing METI's roles in digital content policies, it is not responsible for the major acts listed above. According to the interview, METI intends to pursue content policies as its own projects rather than through institutions because it can be operated more flexibly.

4.3. Major Actors of Digital Content Policies

4.3.1. Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

Since the late 1990s, METI has targeted the content industry as a leading industry for future economic growth. METI drafted its own policy document contributing to the acceleration of content development, specifying as the main goal the promotion of Japanese media content overseas, dubbing this push the *Japan revived Strategy*. This document is significant in that it is the first to offer a concrete action plan for pursuing the government's ambitious digital growth agenda.

In 2003, METI raised an important question concerning the structural and technological problems in the Japanese content industry: the distributors' oligopoly and immature broadband infrastructure. The oligopoly among content distributors could worsen content producers' dependency. The relations between content and broadband were much more reciprocal, so lack of content would threaten broadband development. As a solution to the two problems, METI ensured fair competition by revising anti-monopoly guidelines and establishing model contracts, creating an environment that

¹⁴ The Bayh-Dole Act or Patent and Trademark Law Act Amendments of 1980 is US legislation dealing with intellectual property among federal agencies that fund research, enabling small businesses and non-profit organizations, including universities, to retain title to "inventions" made under federally-funded research programs.

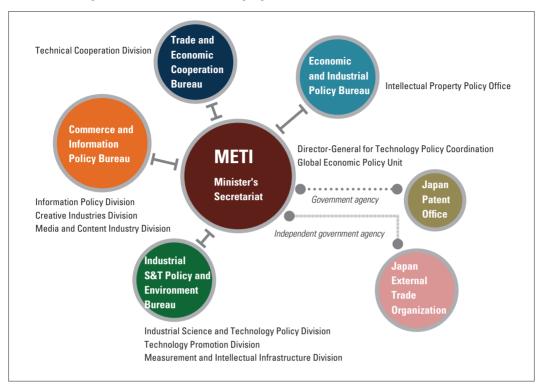


FIGURE 5. Sub-organizations of the METI Involving Digital Content

facilitated financing, and developing human resources. It showed that METI held a higher priority for improving industrial conditions than for promoting content technology itself.

The organization of METI in Figure 5 also shows an incline towards industrial aspects. The *Commerce and Information Policy Bureau* and its *Creative Industries Division and Media and Content Industry Division* are authorized to push ahead digital content development. The *Creative Industries Division* was originally established as the *Creative Industries Promotion Office*, so-called Cool Japan office, under the *Manufacturing Industries Bureau* in June 2010. The upper tier authorities' change from "manufacturing" to "commerce" can be read Japanese government's intention of promoting sales of content rather than intervene in its production technology.

From the interviews, it was indicated that a support scheme for content technology was hardly founded in METI. The Industrial Science and Technology Policy and Environment Bureau partly intervenes the standardization process of content technology, but does not have the initiative for technological development of digital content. Instead, METI planned to eradicate piracy for expanding overseas sales through establishing copyright protection technology.

Source: modified by the author using data from the METI Official website (http://www.meti.go.jplenglish/ aboutmeti/profiles/aMETIlist01e.html)

4.3.2. Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication

MIC was established in 2001 that combined the administrative management sector, the pension sector, as well as the ICTs sector. Compared to how in the converged network of METI, the *Commerce and Information Policy Bureau* is located in the center and the *Global ICT Strategy Bureau*, the *Information and Communications Bureau* and the *Telecommunications Bureau* of MIC are in balance and share policy linkage with digital content issues.

As in Figure 6, the *Information and Communications Bureau* encourages the development of content technology, but interviewees pointed out that the bureau mainly focused on terrestrial broadcasting and less involved in the online distribution. In the aspect of IPR, it keenly monitors copyright violation by conventional media rather than cyber piracy, even though the secondary usage of existing content has become a common phenomenon in East Asia.

In response to technological changes, MIC (2009) announced that it would create systems for the efficient handling of IPR by enabling centralized management of information relating to copyright holders and the scope of licenses concerned, as well as access by businesses to distribute content overseas. It prevents through drastic measures the unauthorized distribution of content, including the development of systems that monitor unauthorized distribution or provide warnings (MIC,

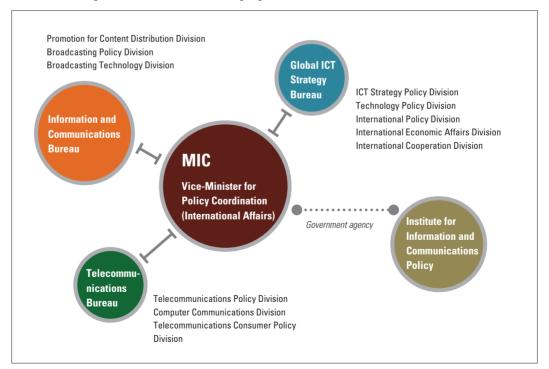


FIGURE 6. Sub-organizations of the MIC Involving Digital Content

Source: modified by the author using data from the MIC Official website (http://www.soumu.go.jp/english/ soumu/io.html)

2012). In addition, MIC has been holding a *Study Group on Measures for Promotion of Circulation of Broadcast Content* for the purpose of deliberating on assurance of opportunities for transmitting content in other countries, improvement in efficiency of IPR processing, and other specific measures toward the development of new markets since November 2012 (MIC, 2013b). These efforts are closer to the regulatory role than promotion, but recently the *Promotion for Content Distribution Division* has concerned itself with broadcasters actively making efforts for creating new content markets such as overseas expansion through international broadcasting and sales of programs and distribution of content.

4.3.3. Prime Minister and His Cabinet¹⁵

One of important trends in the digital content policy of Japan is coordination by a higher-level agency. The Cabinet of Japan, the executive branch of the government, consisting of the Prime Minister and fourteen ministers, is interested in promoting the digital content industry and puts particular effort into strengthening a proper IPR management system since the late 1990s. When the Prime Minister Koizumi started IPR reform in the early 2000s and the Cabinet accelerated the speed of these reforms, the IPR system managed to cross political party lines. *The IT Strategic Headquarters* and *the Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters*¹⁶ were established under the Prime Minister's office in 2000 and 2003, and all of the former Prime Ministers have held meetings for discussing the formulation of the Strategic Program for a decade. In 2012, the Minister in charge of the Cool Japan Strategy¹⁷ was newly appointed, and it can be called one of the most prominent instances of Japan setting up a top-down process within the government for content development.

Their interests are weighted towards the protection of content producers' IPR. In July 2003, a plan was formulated to promote the creation, protection, and use of intellectual property. The plan contained policies aiming to drastically expand the content business by enhancing the creative environment and intellectual property protection system. The report, published by a special panel for supporting the content industry in 2004, contained proposals to create a task force subtitled "National Strategy for an Age of Soft Power." In a package of 270 policy measures, it cited expansion of the content industry as a policy priority for turning Japan into an intellectual property superpower. Even after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, digital content was selected as a strategic industry to help the Japanese economy recover and rebuild the national image. Prime Minister Noda asked the Cabinet Office and related ministries to work to regain their vitality through the utilization of intellectual properties (Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters, 2012).

¹⁵ This part includes explanations of the Prime Minister's office (Kantei), the Cabinet Office and the Cabinet Secretariat headed by the Chief Cabinet Secretary. They organize the Cabinet's public relations, coordinate ministries and agencies, collect intelligence for the government, and deal with other miscellaneous tasks.

¹⁶ It was officially translated as the Strategic Council on Intellectual Property until 2004. http://japan.kantei.go.jp/policy/titeki/index_e.html

¹⁷ The role for the Minister in charge of the "Cool Japan" Strategy is a concurrent position that of the Minister of State for Regulatory Reform. Under the second Abe administration, Inada Tomomi holds the position with the Minister in charge of Administrative Reform, the Minister in charge of Civil Service Reform and the Minister in charge of "Challenge Again" Initiative.

5. FINDING AND IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. Location of Structural Holes in Organizations

5.1.1. Korea

The Korean government has continuously increased the budget for support programs of content technologies and industries since the 1990s. The global market shares of Korean content industries were identified as having increased over time especially between 2002 and 2007. Nevertheless, it is not certain that the policies have affected the competitiveness of the content industry in practice.

Figure 7 shows the network among governmental ministries and agencies involving digital content. First, the area of broadcasting policy shows duplicative efforts between MSIP, KCC, and MCST. In 2010, a case of policy competition was exposed through their jurisdiction conflicts between MCST and KCC, with Article 4 of the *Content Industry Promotion Act* requiring revision in order to secure the *Framework Act on Broadcasting and Telecommunication Development*. There is also an example of policy coordination that devolved into competition, surrounding the content identification

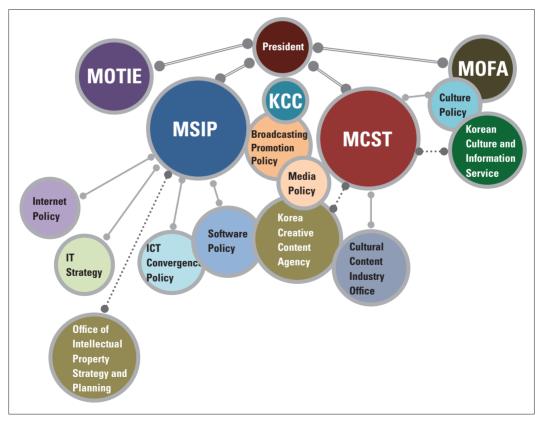


FIGURE 7. Inter-ministerial Network for Developing Digital Content in Korea

system between MCST and the Ministry of Information and Communication that lasted from 2005 to 2008. Faced with increasing demand for managing the code system of content, MCST developed a "Content Object Identifier (COI)" but the Ministry of Information and Communication invested in a "Universal Content Identifier (UCI)." They had a similar purpose of managing the content distribution process with transparency, but competed for budget and recognition as the primary standardization process (Son, 2007). After the Ministry of Information and Communication was dissolved, as well as the system for promoting content technologies, UCI merged with COI and coordinated together under the governance of MCST.

Some interviewees indicated that most competitions, including the previous case, were intentionally designed for promoting the competitiveness of each ministry in the early stages of digital content development. Because the Korean content market was immature, policymakers decided both approaches needed to be similar to *the developmental state model* and fostered competition among ministries. In the early 2000s, they evaluated that such strategies could maximize policy efficiency.

Secondly, the results of the analysis revealed that there are structural holes in the intellectual property and the Internet policy area. There is the *Office of Intellectual Property Strategy and Planning* under MSIP, but it is isolated from other agencies. For sustainable development of the content market, a life-cycle management system of IPR should be introduced under the understanding of digital distribution, as well as investigation undertaken concerning the present conditions of the IPR system.

Finally, the inter-ministerial network faces organizational changes every five years when a new president is inaugurated. Despite that the president's role in digital content policy is more limited than in Japan, the president's influence is still too crucial to be neglected. In 2012, the restructuring of the government by President Park looked to set up so-called "control towers" that were to take charge of integration and communication in content policy. MSIP took shape as one of these control towers for ICTs at the second vice-minister level, but the function of promoting digital content is still dispersed. For policy coordination, the entire government needs to get involved, with communication between corporate and civil society stakeholders being coordinated by the control tower.

5.1.2. Japan

The Japanese government has been trying to reform its economic environment in response to rapidly progressing technologies and globalization since the 1990s. It has identified the culture industry as one of five potential areas of growth, but some criticize that the Japanese government did not advance the country's business interests in digital sphere, allowing Korea to emerge as a competitor.

In the face of a declining domestic market, the government under the concept of "Cool Japan" encourages foreign demand for Japanese content as well as consumer goods and services to help total economic growth (Thomson, 2013). As Figure 8 shows, METI announced that the Japanese content industry was one of the key elements for Cool Japan, with the MOFA extending a cultural exchange program and JETRO supporting global promotion for Japanese content since the late 2000s. In the overseas markets, rather than media content alone, products and services as a whole tend to be de-

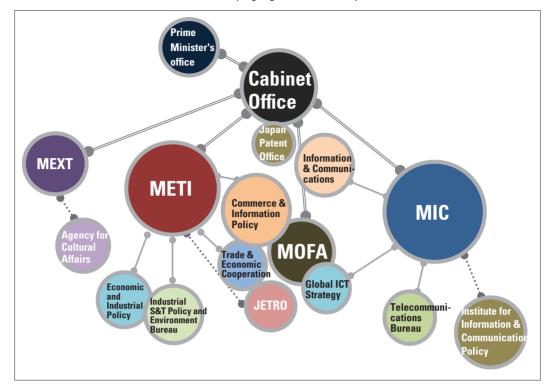


FIGURE 8. Inter-Ministerial Network for Developing Digital Content in Japan

ployed at the same time. In 2011, the budget of Cool Japan was initially allocated at 19 billion yen, with the Abe administration since 2013 continuing to support the Cool Japan policy. In the Cabinet, the minister in charge of the Cool Japan Strategy coordinates different government functions, and cooperates with the private sector as well.

The Cool Japan strategy is based on the idea that Japanese small and medium-sized enterprises often make attractive and high-quality content but do not have the capacity to invest in overseas distribution. Cool Japan funds are used to help them expand abroad in return for a small equity stake in the participating businesses (Thomson, 2013). It means that policymakers find structural holes in the weak marketing and planning of the content production side. At the same time, as Figure 8 shows, this strong initiative has caused policy conflicts in the field of content trade and sales since 2011. Even though overlapped policies were indicated in the early stages of Cool Japan, the policy in recent years became more balanced and found natural coordination among ministries. For example, the Japan Foundation under MOFA tried providing e-learning content as a part of their ODA programs, and the *Agency for Cultural Affairs* under MEXT supported overseas market expansion by providing subtitles or captioning assistance. Moreover, while it looks as though enough connections have been made in the aspect of IPR, in reality they are limited to conventional media. Even while secondary usage of existing content through the Internet became widespread, cyber security and privacy, payment systems, and electronic signatures for online distribution still remain as structural holes.

Secondly, Japan is the consistent challenge in its attempts to set up a control tower for policy coordination. As mentioned above, the problem of policy coordination by the Cabinet is too weighted towards the traditional concept of IPR and its protection. Intellectual property is intimately connected to the content industry because it consists of both industrial property and copyrighted property (Yoshimoto, 2003). Institutions such as the Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers (JASRAC) built by music publishers and management companies as a non-profit organization in 1939. In addition, Japan Patent Office can take the leading position among the ministries in reviewing and revising the intellectual property of digital content as well. Changes for improving the efficiency of public R&D investment will be needed in any control tower for IPR.

Finally, even if it is not reflected in Figure 8, the public-private partnership is one of strong points of the Japanese policy network for digital content development. Major firms in the content industry have enough scale to negotiate in a parallel position with the government. There are organized associations that could represent themselves such as the *Japan Association for the International Promotion of Moving Images (UNIJAPAN)*, the *Council for Promotion of Digital Content, the Digital Content Trading Promotion Committee*, and the *Digital Content Association of Japan* (DCAJ).

In 1991, entertainment companies established the *Multimedia Association of Japan* among stakeholders in the content industry, which merged and changed names in 1996 and 2011 to DCAJ. DCAJ's role is similar to that of KOCCA, publishing the *Digital Content White Paper*, promoting technological developments including computer graphics or other visual effects, researching overseas trends in the CG and VFX industry, and business-matching with Asian countries. In particular, DCAJ implemented a comparative survey of the markets in the three countries of Japan, China, and Korea in cooperation with public sectors in China and Korea, collated information on the content market in other overseas countries, and investigated and examined the situations for sales and development of Japanese content into overseas markets. The Japanese government, especially MIC, has a cooperative relation with those associations and holds public debates and re-examines proposals with them.

5.2. Emerging Content Technologies and Their Governance

As the ICTs develop, traditional types of media distribution—paper publication, packaging or local broadcasting—have been less preferable to consumers due to their price and inconvenience. On the other hand, the Internet has particular interactive features that other conventional media do not have, and new media content has already begun to develop. However, a large portion of the digital distribution or network delivery still is not regulated effectively among the competent authorities. Moreover, network transaction via the Internet, are considered illegal in Korea and Japan; although the content industry has fought against illegal downloads, it has been unsuccessful because the fast pace of change in technology. In Japan, fear of illegal copying meant that content could not be distributed for overseas residents through the Internet. Japanese content producers have been troubled with copyright protection in the East Asian market since 1990s. Even in the domestic market, major TV stations sued *Nagano Shoten* and *Nippon Digital Kaden*, companies that had offered remote video services in early 2000s. In order to address these challenges, the corresponding facilitation of IPR and secondary use in the overseas market began being discussed under the collaboration of the parties concerned such as broadcasters, rights-holders, and the government. Without the leadership of the IT Strategic Head-quarters, it would not be possible to bridge structural holes that would be beneficial to the whole organization and finally aiming policy coordination.

In this respect, it is necessary that the policy paradigm should be transformed from the fragmented support system to the integrated support system. There needs to be acollaborative network for policy innovation and a performance-oriented support system for the technological development of digital content (Yoo, 2005).

Finally, one more policy implication that must be considered is that creativity is the core competence of digital content. A point that relates to the NIS is divided into key innovators and the innovation environment. The key innovators cover the government and public organizations. Yoshimoto (2003) suggested building an infrastructure for non-profit creative activity and related incubators for the content industry. Furthermore, the government should make an effort to manage policy uncertainty through the promotion of the creation and application of knowledge.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Media content in Korea and Japan has dramatically changed since the late 1990s due to technological innovations. The development of ICTs forced the content industry to utilize digital technologies for its production and distribution, and this led to the current boom in the digital content in East Asia. However, this state of affairs was unforeseen by many policymakers and scholars, or such policies involving digital content technology were criticized as state-interventionism or developmentalism unsuitable under the current global economy.

This study identifies that inter-ministerial competition existed especially in the developing stages of digital content in Korea and Japan. Such competition was sometimes intentionally designed for promoting policy competitiveness, but no more effective when technological development reached a certain plateau. Ministries and agencies' coordination were also attempted through reorganizations and program management, but despite this drawing of networks among governmental agencies, structural holes are still found in the field of intellectual property in Korea and content distribution technologies including online streaming in Japan.

Moreover, it should be recognized that the establishment of an innovative system is a prerequisite for the development of the content industry. This study suggests constructing an integrated support

system for digital content policy coordination. Digital content is an example of digital convergence and of policy conflicts that should be considered when new technology makes an appearance in the future. Communication and feedback channels among governmental agencies are important in building an integrated support system, but the monitoring system between public and private expertise that can fully understand technological implication can is essential in sustaining a horizontal regulatory structure in the entire digital content technology innovation ecosystem.

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