

PUBLIC SECTOR CRISIS COMMUNICATION IN KOREA: 2003-2008

By

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This thesis is dedicated to my family

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This study seeks to understand public-sector crisis and crisis communication strategies using Coombs's crisis typology and crisis communication strategies as a theoretical framework. The study investigated 619 crisis cases in the Korean government during the Moo-Hyun Roh administration, covering February 2003 through February 2008. It identified frequently occurring crisis types and crisis response strategies used in the Korean public sector and, specifically, the relationship between crisis typologies and crisis communication strategies. A secondary focus of this study was testing whether the crisis history of organizations was related to their choices of crisis communication strategies.

The study found that the Korean government most often confronted organizational misdeeds, malevolence, and rumors. The Korean government employed different crisis communication strategies based on a cluster of crisis types. The government used the attack-the-accuser strategy most often in the victim cluster, the justification strategy most often in the accidental cluster, and the apology strategy most often in the preventable cluster. The research confirmed that the Korean government did not frequently employ bolstering strategies and, when they were used, they were used to supplement other strategies. Whereas the Korean government used more rebuilding strategies in crises that had a history, it used the denial strategy most

frequently in nonrecurring crises. The study determined that the different levels of an administrative system relate to the crisis communication strategy choices made by the Korean government. Compensation was used most frequently when crises occurred within the control of local administrative systems. The denial strategy was used on national-level crises while the attacking the accuser strategy was used on international-level crises. The study also found that some categories of Coombs' crisis types and crisis communication strategies should be modified, and suggested "citizen or other actor's faults" as a new category for crisis types and "corrective" as a new category for crisis communication strategies.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Crises are prevalent in modern society. Every day people witness diverse crisis events; some are large, and some are small. There are many different kinds of crises in daily lives, including natural disasters, economic recession, soaring oil prices, corporation bailouts, and bribery and unethical behavior. Actually, it seems that crises are a more frequent phenomenon in modern society than ever, and seem to cause more and more devastating effects (Lerbinger, 1997). In this regard, crises are no longer “an aberrant, rare, random, or peripheral feature of today’s society. They are built into the very fabric and fiber of modern societies” (Mitroff & Anagnos, 2001, p.4).

Furthermore, it seems like that the nature of crises is becoming more and more complex. Sometimes crises are interwoven and connect with each other. Boin and Lagadec (2000) explain that these trends originated with “globalization, increased mass communication (‘inter-wiredness’), social fragmentation and the hotly disputed dissipation of state authority” (p.185). Globalization and increased mass communication allows stakeholders to obtain information about crises of other regions and nations. Thus, crises easily diffuse through national borders.

Whatever the cause of a crisis, one can negatively affect an organization if the crisis is not managed properly. The outcomes of crises can be financial, physical, and even emotional (Coombs, 2007b; Pearson & Mitroff, 1993). Crises can decrease an organization’s reputation and legitimacy (Coombs, 1998) and affect stock market prices (Kim, Cha, & Kim, 2008), provoke lawsuits, and causes distrust of organizations. As a consequence of crises, some corporations perish in the market, while other corporations receive a chance to strengthen their market position after successfully managing the crisis.

In the public sector, crises are also prevalent in various forms: natural disasters, epidemics, economic fluctuations, international disputes, terrorism, labor disputes, and major accidents. Every local, regional, and national authority must deal with these kinds of crises. However, the outcomes of public sector crises are greater than those of private sector crises because public sector crises can affect not only public organizations, but also the fundamental social and political system of that society ('t Hart, Rosenthal, & Kouzmin, 1993).

In the government setting, stakeholders do not view crises simply as crisis events that stand alone. The stakeholders connect a crisis with the larger and more profound overall picture. They see crises as a failure of their government system or a failure of leadership. Kouzmin, Alexander, Jarman, and Alan (1989) emphasize that crises in the public sector raise questions about government ineffectiveness. Lee (2008) states that stakeholders see such a crisis as “the product of the government and its leadership rather than in relation to a specific episode” (pp. 1-2).

Today, crises are inevitable, but they are manageable. Crisis management is an effort to reestablish the image and legitimacy of an organization (Lee, 2004), and many scholars, including Coombs, Bradford, Garnett, Rosenthal and Kouzmin, from different disciplines in politics, public administration, communication, and public relations, have developed crisis theories to help crisis managers manage crises. Communication and public relations research especially focus on crisis communication among diverse crisis management areas (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 2001; Marra, 1998).

Coombs (1998, 2006, 2007) proposes that crisis communication strategies be used for different types of crisis situations. He classifies ten crisis types according to the level of responsibility attributed to organizations. He defines ten crisis-communication strategies on a continuum of defensive and accommodative responses based on the level of responsibility that

organizations show. His crisis typology and crisis communication strategies have been tested with actual crisis cases (Englehardt, Sallot, & Springston, 2004; Vlad et al., 2006).

Research has been conducting on finding the most effective crisis communication response for various private sector cases. Even though the public sector suffers from frequent crises, research on public sector crises is rare. A few scholars, such Lee and Liu, have researched government crisis communication. Lee examined the 2003 SARS and the Hong Kong government's crisis management. He (2008) found that the Government Information Service (GIS), which is in charge of public relations was apart from the SARS crisis scene, and no single designated spokesperson existed to respond to inquiries about SARS. Liu (2007) also studied President Bush's speeches for Katrina and found that Bush use six main themes in his speech: "compassionate president, major devastation, optimism, commander-in-chief, locals-know-best, and religious invocation" (p. 42).

Most of the studies, including the above, use case studies with a focus on how one organization responds to one crisis case when studying crisis management (Coombs & Holladay, 2008). However, it is also useful to investigate how an organization responds to various crises over a certain period of time. Because such research can help organizations identify frequent crisis types, effective crisis response strategies, and factors which affect the selection of crisis response strategies.

This current study focused on Korean public sector crises using Coombs's crisis typology and crisis communication strategies (2007) as a theoretical framework for investigating public sector crises (See Table 1-1). The study investigated the crises in the Korean Government from February 2003 to February 2008 during the Moo-Hyun Roh's administration. The aim of this study was to identify frequent crisis types and crisis response strategies in the Korean public

sector and especially the relationship between crisis typologies and crisis communication strategies. In particular, the study examined whether the Korean Government had used different crisis communication strategies for crisis situations with different levels of organizational responsibility. Another focus of this study was to test whether the crisis history of organizations was related to the crisis communication strategy choices of individual organizations. The study investigated whether different levels of an administrative system relate to the crisis communication strategy choices of the Korean Government during the period under study.

Table 1-1. Coombs' crisis typology and crisis communication strategies

Crisis Types		Crisis Communication Strategies	
Victim Cluster	Natural Disasters	Denial Posture	Attacking the accuser
	Workplace Violence		Denial strategy
	Rumors		Scapegoating
	Malevolence		Excusing
Accidental Cluster	Challenges	Diminishment Posture	Justification
	Technical-error accidents		Compensation
	Technical-error product harm		
Preventable Cluster	Human-error accidents	Bolstering Posture	Apology
	Human-error product harm accidents		Reminding
	Organizational misdeeds		Ingratiation

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Crisis

The term crisis is used in day-to-day conversation and in news media reporting. However, a consistent definition of “crisis” is lacking. Scholars who study crisis present various definitions for the term.

Seeger et al. (2001) define crisis as “the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders and can seriously impact an organization’s performance and generate negative outcomes” (pp. 2-3). They (1998) see crisis “as a specific, unexpected, and nonroutine event or series of events” that has a negative impact on an organization (p.233). This view is similar to Coombs’s (2007b) definition of crisis as “a sudden and unexpected event that threatens to disrupt an organization’s operation and poses both a financial and reputational threat” (p.164). Pearson and Clair (1998) also suggest that “an organizational crisis is a low-probability, high-impact event that threatens the viability of the organization and is characterized by ambiguity of cause, effect, and means of resolution, as well as by a belief that decisions must be made swiftly” (p. 60). Thus, crisis can be defines as an unexpected event that has serious impact on the organization.

Several characteristics of crisis can be inferred from the definitions of crisis as: suddenness, uncertainty, time compression, and severe threat (Lerbinger, 1997; Rosenthal, ’t Hart & Charles, 1989). First, a crisis is an event having low probability and unexpectedness (Crandall & Mensah, 2008). A crisis is not a daily event that an organization expects to encounter. Crisis managers in organizations do not deal with crises every day. Crises also occur suddenly even though there is a sign or antecedent event that precedes a crisis (Lerbinger, 1997). According to Fishman (1999), modern society’s very technological innovation increases the

unpredictability of modern society, particularly, because of high-risk and complexity of that technology (Perrow, 1984). Nuclear power plants or DNA facilities that employ high-risk and complex technologies need complicated safety devices. However, when communications and interactions among related employees regarding such safety devices fail, crises can happen.

Second, when a crisis occurs, the organization falls into an uncertain situation.

A crisis is literally an “unstable time or state of affairs” (Fink, 1986, p. 15) or a “state of uncertainty” (Ho & Hallhan, 2004, p. 367). Rosenthal, Boin, and Comfort (2001) argue that the uncertainty of a crisis may “pertain to the specific nature of the threat, to people’s initial and emergent responses, to the dynamics of the situation and to the future consequences of the crisis” (p. 7). Decision makers and public relations practitioners find it difficult to recognize accurate causes and effects of a crisis, and information about the crisis environment, such as stakeholders’ perceptions and news media attitudes during a crisis. Continually changing environments that include new technology, government regulations, competition, consumer attitudes, and social movements make it difficult for organizations to recognize and collect accurate information.

Third, organizations have only a limited period of time to respond to a crisis (Barton 1993; Pearson & Clair, 1998; Crandall & Mensah, 2008; Rosenthal et al., 1989). Crises demand “urgent decision-making and immediate response” by the organizations (Rosenthal et al., 1989, p. 14). During a crisis, some decisions regarding life and death of stakeholders and the organizations must be made within a split moment or short period of time, even hours or minutes (Rosenthal et al., 2001). This urgency occurs not only in reacting to an actual crisis, but also in explaining the crisis situation to stakeholders, such as media, stakeholders, and stockholders (Fishman, 1999). Suddenness and uncertainty hinders the decision making process that already

suffers from urgency. Lack of quick and proper decision making can lead organizations toward an even more aggravating situation (Lerbinger, 1997).

Fourth, crises threaten critical values of organizations (Rosenthal et al., 1989). Incidents and crises can be differentiated by this criterion. Crises can be differentiated from incidents in terms of the magnitude and severity of their impact on organizational resources and reputation. For example, incidents do not impact more than a local operation and do not interrupt normal organizational operations (Coombs, 2007).

A crisis, which has four characteristics of suddenness, uncertainty, time compression, and severe threat, produces negative consequences on an organization. Lerbinger (1997) notes that crisis “brings, or has the potential for bringing, an organization into disrepute and imperils its future profitability, growth, and, possibly, its very survival” (p. 4).

Among negative outcomes, financial damage is the most obvious one (Lerbinger, 1997). Reputation is also in danger during a crisis (Coombs, 2007b; Coombs & Holladay, 2005). According to Tucker and Melewar (2005), reputation is “the perception of an organization based on its stakeholders’ interpretation of that organization’s past, present and future activities and the way in which these are communicated” (p. 379). To the organization, reputation is a critical factor that determines competitiveness and most important assets (Stubbs, 2002). However, reputation, normally seen as an invisible factor, also has a perishable aspect, and crisis is often the event that endangers a perishable reputation. Crises can ruin the relationship between an organization and its stakeholders (Heath & Millar, 2004; Coombs & Holladay, 2001). A crisis can damage organization’s relationship with employees, family members, stockholders, suppliers, community members, and customers (Coombs, 2007b).

In conclusion, crisis can be defined as those unpredictable and sudden events that place an organization into uncertain and time compressing situations, resulting in serious and negative impact to that organization.

Crisis Typology

Crises do appear in diverse shapes and sizes, and it is impossible to make response plans for every crisis case. In both crisis management and crisis communication, diagnosis of the type of crisis is important. When one can classify crises into several categories, crisis managers or crisis communication practitioners can apply the best applicable response. Gundel (2005) points out that the first step in managing a crisis is the classification of the crisis. As a matter of fact, crisis typology is related to the eventual interpretation of the crisis (Coombs, 2007).

Typology of crisis not only affects the interpretation of a crisis, but also the adoption of precise crisis communication strategies. That is, the criteria used to classify crisis types can affect how to view the crisis types and how to respond to them. Coombs and Holladay (1996) found that one constant argument from crisis communication research is that different situations influence the choice of communication strategies.

Mitroff and Anagnos (2001) divide crises into seven types: economic, e.g., labor strikes, labor shortage, and fluctuation of stock price; informational, e.g., loss of confidential information, and false information; physical, e.g., loss of key equipment and plants; human resource, e.g., loss of CEO, and workplace violence; reputational crisis, e.g., rumors and slander; psychopathic act, e.g., product tampering and kidnapping; and natural disaster, e.g., earthquake and hurricanes.

This study uses Coombs's crisis typology which uses responsibility of the organization for classification. Coombs (1998) declares that crisis responsibility is a "natural link" between a crisis situation and crisis communication strategy (p. 180). Since crisis responsibility means "the

degree to which stakeholders blame the organization for the crisis event” (Coombs, 1998, p. 180), an organization’s crisis communication strategy should be chosen based the degree of responsibility accepted for the crisis.

Responsibility is closely related to the “control” of events: attribution of events to internal or external forces. Weiner (1995) states that control means responsibility. According to McAuley, Duncan, and Russel (1992), the term “control” should be divided into two meanings: “(a) controllable or uncontrollable by the person and (b) controllable or uncontrollable by other people.” They label the former as “personal control” and the latter as “external control” (p. 567).

Coombs (1998) incorporates McAuley et al.’s theory into the responsibility of organization for the crisis. He states that

stronger perceptions of external control should lessen crisis responsibility and image damage because the organization could do little or nothing to prevent the crisis. Stronger perceptions of personal control/locus of causality should increase crisis responsibility and image damage because the organization could have acted to prevent the crisis (p. 182).

Benoit (1997) also pays attention to the responsibility issue in a crisis, saying that the reason that stakeholders attack an organization under crisis is related to two components. First “the accused is held responsible for an action,” and second, “that act is considered offensive” (p. 178). Mitroff and Anagnos (2001) also emphasized the importance of assuming responsibility in a crisis.

Coombs (2007) clusters crises into three groups, based on the levels of an organization’s crisis responsibility: the victim cluster (natural disasters, rumors, workplace violence, and malevolence), the accidental crisis cluster (challenges, technical-error accidents, and technical-error product harm), and the preventable crisis cluster (human-error accidents, human-error product harm, and organizational misdeeds).

In the victim cluster, stakeholders view the organization as the victim of the crisis because external forces caused the crisis, and it was beyond the organization's managerial control (Coombs, Hazleton, Holladay, & Chandler, 1995). Therefore, the crisis produces "very little attribution of crisis responsibility" (Coombs, 2007, p 141). Natural disasters are crises resulting from "acts of God," for example, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, floods, mud slides, and blizzards (Seeger et al., 2001; Coombs, 2007). Usually, preparing for and managing natural disasters are the responsibility of governments (Seeger et al., 2001).

Workplace violence is violence committed by an employee or a former employee of an organization to other employees, for example, shooting coworkers (Coombs & Holladay, 2002; Coombs, 2007). Rumors are false information intentionally distributed about an organization and its products to damage the organization (Coombs, 2007). Malevolence is an opponent or a third party's attack on the organization, such as "tampering, kidnapping, terrorism, or computer hacking" (Coombs, 2007, p. 65).

In the accidental crisis cluster, stakeholders perceive the organization as having only limited control of a crisis. Therefore, it produces a "low attribution of crisis responsibility" (Coombs, 2007, p 141). Challenges are caused by confrontations with discontented stakeholders who claim that the organization operate inappropriately. An example is the picketing by the American Family Association's (AFA) to Waldenbook because of pornography peddling (Coombs & Holladay, 2002; Coombs, 2007). Technical-error accidents are industrial accidents caused by the failure of technology or equipment utilized or supplied by the organization (Coombs, 2007, p. 65). Power plant blackouts caused by worn-out components is an example. Technical-error product harm is "when the technology utilized or supplied by the organization

fails and results in a defect of a potentially harmful product (Coombs, 2007, p. 65). Television recalls due to a defective connector is an example (Coombs & Holladay, 2002).

In the preventable crisis cluster, stakeholders view organizations as intentionally violating laws and regulations (Coombs & Holladay, 2002) and, therefore, producing “strong attributions of crisis responsibility” (Coombs, 2007, p. 141). Human-error accidents are caused by human errors, such as “failed judgment, negligence, blunders, or sabotage” (p. 8). Research has revealed that a human error is “inevitable” and “occurs in every conceivable setting” (Rosenthal et al., 2001, p. 8). Workers accidentally eradicating a line supplying phosphoric acid to a container holding sodium nitrate are an example of human error (Coombs & Holladay, 2002).

Human-error product harm is a product defect or harm to consumers caused by human error (Coombs, 2007). An example is the recent E. coli tainted hamburger recall, caused by workers placing contaminated beef into the grinding process by mistake (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). Organizational misdeeds occur “when management takes actions it knows may place stakeholders at risk or knowingly violates the law” (Coombs, 2007, p. 65) like when top managers are accused of inappropriate sexual harassment of female employees. (Coombs & Holladay, 2002).

Crisis Management and Crisis Communication

Crisis is unexpected and unpredictable, but that does not mean that it cannot be managed. Crisis must be “managed and contained” (Kersten, 2005, p. 245). More and more organizations set up a crisis management plan in order to reduce damages caused by the current crisis and avoid crisis recurrence.

According to Pearson and Clair (1998), crisis management is an organized effort by an organization with its stakeholders to avoid crises or to control crises effectively. Recent crisis management research shows that crisis management includes such diverse areas as “the

development of crises over stages,” “crisis planning,” “crisis decision-making,” and “communication strategies available to organizations in the aftermath of a crisis” (Ulmer, 2001, pp. 591-592).

When a crisis is controlled and managed by an organization, it is no longer an abnormal situation; it becomes a normal process in organizational operation (Kersten, 2005). Well-managed crises can produce financial and reputational benefits to an organization, and an organization can have the opportunity to grow through crisis.

Then, what is successful crisis management? Pearson and Clair (1998) stress that the effectiveness of crisis management occurs when potential crises are avoided or when key stakeholders appreciate that the positive outcomes from managing a crisis in the short- and long-terms outweigh any negative outcomes. For example, Johnson & Johnson suffered from a Tylenol incident in 1982, which caused seven deaths by cyanide poisoning. Yet the company fully recovered its previous market share in just one year (Banks, 2005). *The Washington Post* (October 11, 1982) praised the company and how “Johnson & Johnson has effectively demonstrated how a major business ought to handle a disaster.” (p.1). Successful crisis management not only recovers physical and financial damages, but also restores the organization’s reputation and legitimacy.

Crisis communication can play a critical role in successful crisis management. As seen in the Exxon Valdez oil spill, organizations that have poor and inadequate communication with their stakeholders have crises situations deteriorated. Through crisis communication, however, organizations can diminish the uncertainty of a crisis to the public and recover control of the crisis situation.

Crisis communication has four functions during a crisis: “environmental scanning,” “crisis response,” “crisis resolution,” and “organizational learning” (Seeger et al., 2003, p. 66).

“Environmental scanning” is where organizations monitor and maintain relationships with external environment. “Crisis response” is planning a communication and action plan for crisis. “Crisis resolution” is restructuring relationships with stakeholders after the crisis, and it includes offering apologies and plausible accounts, etc. “Organizational learning” is the acquisition of new knowledge and skills that emerge from the crisis.

Seeger et al.’s four crisis communication functions imply that crisis communication plays a critical role in every stage of a crisis – before, during, and after the crisis stage. In every stage, crisis communication make an organizations more alert to environmental changes, facilitates the maintenance of a positive relationship with stakeholders, such as employees, customers, suppliers, and shareholders, and responds appropriately to the evolution of the crisis.

Crisis Communication Strategy

Crisis communication strategies are an essential part of effective crisis management. Simply delivering an apology in every crisis event is not recommended (Coombs, 1999). Apology sometimes becomes the cause of lawsuits from stakeholders and sometimes sounds clichéd to stakeholders, sometimes hindering the organization from winning back public confidence. An inappropriate communication strategy can even evoke severe public anger. If an organization delivers a justification strategy despite stakeholders’ anticipation of an apology, the justification strategy will provoke distrust and even rage from stakeholders. Therefore, a manageable crisis can become a fatal event that threatens the actual survival of the organization.

When a crisis occurs, an organization should take the right action to defend and recover its image. While restoring and defending its image is the most important goal of an organization confronted with crisis (Benoit, 1995; Fishman, 1999), selection of proper crisis communication

strategies is the key to restoring the organization's damaged image and reputation (Benoit, 1997; Coombs 1998; Seeger et al., 2001). Benoit (1997) offers comprehensive image restoration crisis strategies, presenting five categories and ten sub-strategies: denial (simple denial, and shift the blame), evasion of responsibility (provocation, defeasibility, accident, and good intentions), reducing offensiveness of the event (bolstering, minimization, differentiation, transcendence, attack accuser, and compensation), corrective action and finally, mortification.

“Denial” and “evasion of responsibility” mean that an organization attempts to reject or reduce their accused responsibility of crisis (Benoit, p. 179). Whereas “denial” is denying any responsibility for the crisis, “evasion of responsibility” is trying to diminish the responsibility for the crisis. “Reducing offensiveness of the event” and “corrective action” refer to an organization's attempt to decrease the degree of perceived offense among accusers (Benoit, p. 179). While the “reducing offensiveness of the event” strategy emphasizes that the crisis is not serious, the “corrective action” strategy proposes a plan to solve the problem. The last category of “mortification” is an attempt to repair the organization's image through a plea for forgiveness.

This study utilizes Coombs's crisis communication strategies. In line with Benoit's strategy, Coombs (2007) categorized ten types of crisis communication strategies and clustered them into four groups: denial posture (attacking the accuser, denial, and scapegoating), diminishment posture (excusing and justification), rebuilding posture (compensation and apology), and bolstering posture (reminding, ingratiation, and victimage).

A denial posture eliminates any association between the organization and the crisis. (pp. 139-141). With a strategy of “attacking the accuser,” an organization confronts the person or organizations arguing for the existence of a crisis. The organization can threaten the accuser to use force, such as a lawsuit. With the “denial” strategy, the organization denies the existence of

the crisis. The organization states that there is no crisis and sometimes discusses the rationale why the crisis does not exist. With “scapegoating,” the organization tries to shift the blame from the organization to other person or organizations (Coombs 2007; Benoit, 1997).

The diminishment posture tries to lessen the “attribution of organizational control over the crisis” (Coombs, 2007, p. 139). “Excusing” is where the organization tries to diminish its responsibility for the crisis. This strategy denies that the organization had any intention to do harm or has not the power to control the crisis. Excusing is related to Benoit’s (1997) concept of “defeasibility” where organizations claim that they are short of information about the situation or do not have control over the crisis. “Justification” is similar to Benoit’s minimization strategy as well (Seeger et al., 2001). Justification is where “the crisis manager tries to minimize the perceived damage associated with the crisis” (Coombs, 2007, p. 140). The response can include stating that there was no severe damage or injuries or stating that the people affected by the crisis deserved what they received. However, justification can provoke the perception that the organization is only “trivializing victim concerns” (Coombs, 2007, p. 141).

The rebuilding posture is where organizations attempt to improve their reputations. In this posture, organizations offer words and actions for the benefit of stakeholders and compensate for the negative outcomes from crisis. The “compensation” strategy means that the accused organization provides various benefits, such as money, gifts, or services, to reduce or assuage the negative emotions of the victims toward the organization. With the “apology strategy,” the organization admits full responsibility for the crisis and requests forgiveness publicly.

The bolstering posture complements the other three postures. The bolstering posture has an organization-centered characteristic which does not consider the interest of stakeholders, particularly when this strategy is used alone (Coombs, 2007). Among the bolstering cluster, the

“reminding” strategy lets a crisis manager remind stakeholders about the organization’s good deeds in the past, while the “ingratiation” strategy praises the stakeholders as the most important asset to the organization. With the “victimage” strategy, the organization insists that they are also a victim of the crisis.

Scholars (Coombs, 1999; Marcus & Goodman, 1991; Siomkos & Shrivastava, 1993) emphasize the utility of using the continuum concept in organizational crisis response strategy. Considering that there are so many crisis communication strategies, introducing the concept of a continuum to crisis management strategy typology is useful. It allows scholars to organize extensively used crisis communication strategies and categorize those strategies (Coombs, 1999). Coombs (1998) suggests that the concept of continuum is a useful connection to use in order to match a crisis situation and crisis communication strategies.

Marcus and Goodman (1991) use a defensive-accommodative continuum when investigating shareholder responses to crises. They found that there is a significant difference in the responses of shareholders to accommodative and defensive policies from an organization in crisis: while shareholders show a positive response to an accommodative strategy in the case of scandal, they show a positive response to use of a defensive strategy in the case of an accident. In cases of product safety and health incidents shareholders show no significant differences between accommodative and defensive policies. Siomkos and Shrivastava (1993) propose a defensive-accommodative continuum in a corporation’s response strategy when confronted with a product liability crisis. They suggest four levels of organizational response continuum, ranging from low to high levels of response, namely, “denial, involuntary recall, voluntary recall, and super effort” (p. 74).

Coombs adopts the continuum concept in crisis communication strategy. He proposes that crisis communication strategies be arranged along a defensive-accommodative continuum. Defensive strategies put an organization's interests first and accommodative strategies puts the victims' interest first (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). Accommodative strategies imply that an organization admits that the strong perceptions of stakeholders are an organization's responsibility in a crisis situation (Coombs, 1998). Susskind and Field (1996) recommend that the responses of avoiding organizational responsibility, i.e., defensive strategies, have often led to lessened confidence in public organizations.

Crisis History

Evaluation of past crises is a considerably important factor in the interpretation of recent crises (Coombs, 2004). The news of oil spills or lead contamination of toys by certain companies instantly reminds the public of past oil spills or toy contamination cases.

McAuley, Duncan, and Russell (1992)'s stability concept explains why the history of events so often reminds people of past events. The term "stability" refers to whether the perceived causality of a crisis changes or does not change over time (McAuley et al., 1992). If the same mistake happens frequently, it can be called stable; but if the mistake is unique, it can be called unstable (Coombs, 2004).

Coombs (2007) suggests that crisis type and crisis history can be applied in a two-step evaluation of reputational threats: 1) decide the crisis type with the viewpoint of crisis responsibility, and 2) adjust the initial evaluation of the crisis according to the performance history of the organization – crisis history is the one of the performance history.

Coombs (1998, 2004) found that the history of crisis affects the public's perception regarding the responsibility of an organization and its negative impact on image, and lowers the

organization's reputation because a history of crisis tells the public that the organization has had and will continue to have similar and ongoing crises.

Prior crisis history can worsen public evaluation of the crisis type. Coombs and Holladay (1996, 2001, 2002, 2004) argue that if an organization has a prior crisis history, stakeholders will see a victim crisis as an accidental crisis, and an accidental crisis will be treated as an preventable or intentional crisis because people would put more organizational responsibility for repeated crises. They recommend that public relations practitioners should choose an accommodative strategy with repeated crises and assume strong responsibility even if the organization has just weak responsibility for those crises.

Crisis Communication in the Public Sector

Most crisis types are not different between the private sector and the public sector. Crises, such as terrorism, management-staff conflict, and communication breakdown, can happen in either sector. Rosenthal and Kouzmin (1993) insist that crises in the private sector occur in the public sector as well, and the separation of private and public sector crises is not absolute. Still, some crises are more apt to occur in the sphere of the public sector, such as environmental crises, epidemics, nuclear crises, ethnic tensions, population and migration flows, riots and socio-political turmoil, and dramatic institutional change and conflict (Rosenthal & Kouzmin, 1993, pp. 1-2).

According to Liu and Horsley (2007), previous public relations literature did not separate public sector relations from private sector relations. Many public relations theories – excellence theory, relationship theory, and crisis communication theory – are applicable to both private and public sectors. As such, crisis communication for the private sector can be recommended for the public sector.

Horsley and Barker (2002) argue that their crisis model of communication derived from corporate crisis communication is “potentially applicable to the public sector” (p. 416). They created five interconnected stages in their model. The first stage is the “ongoing public relations effort,” which means most successful communication plans should begin before a crisis actually occurs. The second stage is “identification of and preparation for potential crisis,” in which efficient public relations practitioners detect potential problems and prepare for crisis. The next stage is “internal training and rehearsal,” where the crisis team prepares for crisis through training and practicing the skills necessary for good crisis management. The fourth stage is “the crisis event.” In this stage, speedy communication response is used to stop spreading rumors. Finally, the last stage is “evaluation and revision of public relations efforts” which means that after the crisis passes, public relations practitioners should evaluate the crisis plan and provide feedback to improve it (p. 416).

Baker (1997) advises public relations practitioners in the public sector regarding what to do or what not to do in crisis.

The “do” list is

1. Do protect the legal investigative process.
2. Do protect the privacy rights of individuals and their families.
3. Do have a crisis response and coordination team. This team must contain all the important players, such as lawyers, legislative affairs, public affairs, and investigative and technical experts.
4. Do have a media training team ready to prepare leaders for each major media event with a full dress rehearsal before the crisis. A tip here is to use news desk officers to play the role of reporters: since they handle hot inquiries, and know the issues and questions to ask.
5. Do stay cool under fire from the media and critics.
6. Do show respect for people who become critics.
7. Do be prepared for the unexpected (p. 469).

The “don’t” list is

1. Don’t be a party to speculation in the media.
2. Don’t deal with hypothetical questions.
3. Don’t get emotionally involved in a story (p. 469).

Research (Horsely & Baker, 2002) shows that the public sector is not well prepared for crises, considering the actual frequent occurrences of crises in that sector. According to Horsley and Baker's survey (2002) of senior-level public officials in charge of communication activities of one mid-Atlantic state, half of respondents experienced a crisis within the past two years. However, only 28% of government agencies hire full-time public relations practitioners who can produce crisis communication plans. These agencies have no budget to employ public relation consultants for crisis communication. Additionally, 37% of the agencies never rehearse their crisis responses. Their major types of crisis were disasters, such as bomb threats, weather, fire, health, and safety. These findings indicate that the public sector needs to pay more attention to both crisis management and crisis communication.

Different Levels of Administrative System

Even though private sector crisis communication models or strategies can apply to public sector crises indiscriminately, this research considers the unique environment of the public sector. Rosenthal and Kouzmin (1997) argue that different levels of an administrative system should be examined to understand the dynamics of governmental crisis responses. An administrative system is the government system at local, regional, and national levels and even at the transnational administrative level.

In a democratic society, governmental power is divided into "central" and "noncentral" governmental elements (Lijphart, 1999, p. 185). The criteria dividing governments into central and noncentral governments are territory (Wollmann, 2003). The central government governs the entire territory of a nation, and noncentral governments, such as regional or local governments, govern limited parts of a nation, usually under the supervision of the central government

In a crisis, the power and activities are concentrated on the central government rather than other territorial administrative entities ('t Hart, Rosenthal & Kouzmin, 1993). A central

government has the power to mandate evacuation or implement crisis-related law and authorize specific overriding activities, such as helping refugees or checking facilities. For example, the United States has a formal system of central government that intervenes in a local crisis area. Once the local area is declared a disaster area, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) actively coordinates rescue and relief activities and crisis communication (Petak, 1985; 't Hart et al, 1993).

Frieseema et al. (1979) explain why a central government should be involved in the case of natural disasters. The financial cost of natural disasters is too large to be handled by local governments alone; most of the costs are then burdened to the larger entity, the central government. In some countries, "...the need for concerted and hierarchically coordinated administrative action forms an integral part of the official legal-administrative definition of disaster" ('t Hart et al., 1993, p. 16).

The level of intervention can be different in different countries. According to Rosenthal and Kouzmin (1997), certain factors affect the intervention of central government: discrepancies between central and local governments in terms of capability and resources; structure and culture of a nation that stresses centralization or decentralization; political risk appreciation by central and local governments; prior experience.

The centralization of crisis responses results in both positive and negative outcomes. Centralization of crisis can mobilize appropriate resources and responses to a crisis and produce positive and effective results. However, sometimes those interventions provoke tensions between central and local governments (Horsley & Barker, 2002). For local governments, intervention of a central government implies an encroachment on their power and supervision by central government officers.

The administrative system of the Korean government has three layers: 1) a central government; 2) higher-level local governments, such as a Metropolitan City, a Province (Do) followed in the hierarchy by a Small City (Si), County (Gun), and District (Gu), which serve as mediators between the central and lower-level local governments; and 3) lower-level local governments, such as eup, myeon, and dong. The Korean government operates a Central Safety Management Committee, which supervises overall disaster and safety policies and promotes coordination among relevant departments. The Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, who is in charge of domestic and international government public relations is a member of this committee providing public relations advice. Under the Central Safety Management Committee, the Central Disaster Safety Measures Headquarters is devoted to ensuring both quick and efficient reaction to large-scale disasters (National Emergency Management Agency, 2008).

These days, more and more crises tend to transcend the boundaries of one nation. Crises that occur in one nation can be another nation's crisis at any time. The global society is witnessing an economic recession that started in the U.S. in 2008 and has spread worldwide, and a war in the Arab region can affect the rest of the world. Rosenthal and Kouzmin (1993) argue that environmental and technological crises can easily spill over on to the entire global society. They found that large-scale crises, such as the "Sahej draughts and famine in Somalia; Bhopal; Chernobyl; Sandoz and Lockerbie" are likely to become transnational (p. 2). Reflecting on these trends, Rosenthal et al. (2001) argue that transnationalization of crises is irreversible.

Transnational crises require transnational cooperation and help. Especially, environmental problems such as global warming, protection of rain forest, and ozone layer depletion demand international cooperation. The tsunami in Southeast Asia in 2005 is a typical example of

international cooperation to cope with large-scale crises. As crises become more transnational, the problem solving of crises should become more transnational too.

Research Hypotheses and Questions

In crisis communication theory, crisis typology has great value (Gundel, 2005). Gundel (2005) claims that “classifying crises is the first step to keep them under control since they can be named and analyzed” (p. 106). This research examined what types of crises frequently occurred in Korea during the period under study based on Coombs’s three clusters and the ten types of crisis.

RQ1: What types of crisis did the Korean government face most during this period?

Coombs (1998, 2006, 2007) suggests that different crisis communication strategies should be used on crisis typology. If a crisis is attributed to an organization, the organization should choose an accommodating strategy. Coombs and Holladay (1996) found that matching crisis communication strategies to a crisis type based on organizational responsibility brings about a more positive image of an organization than no response at all or mismatching the communication strategies with the crisis type. For example, if a crisis is perceived as preventable, the organization should use rebuilding strategies, such as apology and compensation, for more effective crisis response and outcomes. Accommodative strategies suggest that an organization admit its crisis responsibility and then take action to repair crisis damage. This study identified what crisis communication strategies the Korean government frequently used and whether the Korean government responded to crises based on the level of governmental responsibility.

RQ2: What types of crisis communication strategies were used in the victim cluster, accidental crisis cluster, and preventable crisis cluster respectively by the Korean government?

H1: The Korean government was expected to use rebuilding strategy for crises in the preventable crisis cluster.

Coombs (2007) suggests that bolstering strategies should not be used alone and be used with other crisis communication strategies. This study will identify whether the Korean government has frequently used bolstering strategies, the kinds of bolstering strategies that were used most often, and how they were used as a supplement to the other three types of postures. Thus the following research question can be asked:

RQ3: Did the Korean government use bolstering strategies and what kinds of bolstering strategies were used most often?

RQ4: Did the Korean government use bolstering strategies as a supplement to the other three postures?

Coombs (2008) suggests that crisis managers utilize a two-step decision-making process when selecting crisis communication strategies. The first step is deciding the proper crisis communication strategy in conformity with the crisis typology. The second step is modifying the initial assessment of the appropriate crisis communication strategy, considering the crisis history and the prior reputation of the organization. If the organization has a history of crisis, stakeholders will put more responsibility on the organization. Therefore, organizations should use more accommodative strategies for repeated crises.

H2: The Korean government was expected to use more accommodative strategies for recurring crises compared to non-recurring crises.

Government crises research should consider different levels of an administrative system. Whereas the central government of Korea is in charge of policy for foreign relations, defense, and the overall economic and education policy, Korean local governments are in charge of

citizen service, administration, and industrial development promotion, etc., within certain territory of administration (Ministry of Government Affairs and Home Affairs, 2008a; Ministry of Government Affairs and Home Affairs, 2008b). The concentration of power in a central government in times of crisis makes that central government lead a crisis response, regardless of the geographic origin of the crisis. This study identified whether a central government uses different crisis communication strategies in crises which were originated at different levels of the administrative system.

H3: The Korean government was expected to use different communication strategies in crises that originated within the control of local, national, or transnational administrative systems.

CHAPTER 3 METHODS

Content analysis was employed in this study to address the research questions. According to Krippendorff (2004), "...content analysis is not only a research method that takes meaning seriously, but also a method that is both powerful and unobtrusive" (p. xiii). He says that "it makes sense of what is mediated between people-textual matter, symbols, messages, information, mass-media content, and technology-supported social interactions—without perturbing or affecting those who handle that textual matter" (p. xiii).

Data Collection

The study analyzed various crisis press releases of the Korean government. The press release is raw material that contains information about how the government interprets and reacts to a crisis. To determine clearly the overall features of government crisis response, this study collected data from one administration, that of Moo-Hyun Roh. The research period ran from February 25, 2003, to February 24, 2008. Roh's administration was selected as the subject for this research because it was the most recent administration to have completed a full term in office.

This study examined press releases issued by agencies that represent the Korean central government. The data were collected from Korean policy information news release archives on the official Korean government website (<http://www.Korea.kr>), which stores press releases dating from 2003. The Web site is operated by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, which manages domestic and overseas public relations for the Korean government.

There were 41,233 press releases from February 25, 2003, to February 24, 2008, available on this Web site. A preliminary study was done to determine whether a press release is a crisis-announcing press release. The total data was consisted of a total of 1,375 Web pages –

containing 41,233 press releases, and 1 Web page contains 30 press releases. Systematic random sampling was used for selecting the research population. From every 10th page, 20 press releases from the top of the list were selected; therefore, the total of 27,480 data elements became the population. Ten percent of that population or 2,740 press releases were analyzed during the preliminary test to determine whether a press release was a crisis-announcing press release.

Based on Coombs' crisis typology, Rosenthal and Kouzmin's crisis types (which are more prevalent in the public sector), and others' crisis typology, press releases were designated as crisis releases if they contained any of the following words: crisis, disaster, epidemic, turmoil, crime, tension, conflict, violence, rumors, kidnapping, terrorism, hacking, strike, policy failure, technical failure, product failure, violation of law, special favor, financial damage, death toll, victim, and public distrust.

The author and another coder read the title and first paragraph of the press releases to identify crisis releases out of the 2,740 press release sample, and Holsti's reliability reached 0.943.

Measurement

The unit of analysis for this study is a press release; each press release was examined to determine administrative system, crisis typology, crisis communication strategies, and crisis history. Out of 27,480 data— 20 press releases per Web page multiplied by 1,374 –619 were classified as crisis, and this research analyzed the identified 619 crisis press releases.

The administrative system was analyzed to determine whether the crisis originally occurred within (1) the control of a metropolitan city, province (do), city (si), county (gun), or district (gu) or of a eup, myeon, or dong; (2) the control of the central government; or (3) the control or territory of other nations. The study did not separate local and regional government levels because Korea has a more centralized government system than Western societies. If the

crisis originally occurred in an area under the control of the central government, that crisis was coded as having a presence in the national administration. If the crisis originally occurred within the territory or control of another nation's government, it was coded as having a presence in the transnational administration.

Crisis typology and crisis communication strategies followed Coombs's definition, as explained in the literature review, and a code book provided detailed guidelines for each item. Crisis typology and crisis communication strategies were marked as mutually exclusive and exhaustive. Crisis typology and crisis communication strategies are coded as yes/no questions. To determine the crisis communication strategies employed, the coder checked all strategies that applied to each press release because an organization can use different strategies in a single press release or in several consecutive press releases. Crisis history was determined by two coders through discussion of whether the government experienced similar crises during the five years of the Roh administration.

Coding and Inter-coder Reliability

Two coders who can read Korean, including the researcher, coded the data according to the code book (Appendix B). To increase inter-coder reliability, these coders received thorough training on how to use both the code sheet and the code book.

A pre-test evaluated the coding scheme for reliability in both the coding book and the code sheet. Seventy five crises were pre-tested. Scott's *pi* reliability method was used to compute inter-coder reliability. Although Holsti's reliability formula is easy to apply (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006), it has a deficiency in that it doesn't consider the agreement between coders that can occur by chance. Scott's *pi* reliability method can correct this deficiency. Two coders worked independently, and Scott's *pi* reliability was in an acceptable range of .70 to 1.00, except for two variables. "Technical product harm accident" and "victimage" reached 1.00. Two

variables showed reliability scores lower than .70. The “other” category of crisis types had reliability of .00. However, only one case out of the seventy five pretested releases was marked in this category. The “other” category of crisis communication strategies had reliability of .51. After coding disagreements were resolved between two coders, inter-coder reliability in both categories reached more than 0.78.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 13.0 for Windows was used for statistical computing in the study. The following statistical analyses were applied to the research questions. To test RQ1, RQ3, and RQ4, frequency statistics were used because the research questions primarily address the presence or absence of items. To test RQ2, H1, and H3, the chi-square test was employed. Chi-square analysis can test whether one factor is significantly more important than others. To verify H2, a *t*-test was conducted because the main focus of H2 is to compare two classifications—recurring and nonrecurring crises. RQ2, H1, H2, and H3 used only 559 press releases to exclude overlapping crisis communication strategies; several crisis communication strategies can apply to one crisis.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

The study proposed four research questions and three hypotheses. Content analysis of 619 crises cases was conducted to examine the research questions and hypotheses. This chapter summarizes the results of the content analysis.

Research Question 1

Research question 1 asked what types of crisis the Korean government faced most during the researched period. Challenges (26.5%, $n = 164$) were the most frequent type of crisis, followed by organizational misdeeds (23.4%, $n = 145$), malevolence (12.1%, $n = 75$), rumors (11.0%, $n = 68$), human-error accident (10.7%, $n = 66$), natural disasters (8.7%, $n = 54$), human-error product harm (1.5%, $n = 9$), technical-error product harm (1.3%, $n = 8$), technical accident (1.1%, $n = 7$), workplace violence (1.0%, $n = 6$), and others (2.7%, $n = 17$).

An example of crisis types from the data included: challenge (a general strike by the national labor union protesting Korea's involvement in the USA FTA agreement), organizational misdeed (one ministry funding its employees' trip abroad with public money when the trip was not wholly for business purposes), malevolence (when Koreans were kidnapped in other nations and when Korean army camps in another nation were attacked by terrorists), rumor (suspicion that the government was eavesdropping on people's cell phone calls), human-error accident (when the government neglected the appeal for help by a North Korean who had escaped from North Korea), natural disaster (typhoon, bird flu, red tide, etc.), human-error product harm (error in public scholastic aptitude exams that resulted in fury among testers), technical-error product harm (the collapse of a bridge as the result of faulty design or construction), technical accident (the shutdown of a nuclear power plant caused by the malfunction of a cooling system), and workplace violence (an incidence of one soldier shooting or beating other soldiers). The others

category (2.7%) encompasses events whose cause cannot be attributed to the government, such as arson committed by an individual citizen. If the results of arson affected the nation, the government would become involved in solving the crisis.

When crises were further categorized into victim cluster, accidental cluster, and preventable cluster, most of the crises occurred in the preventable cluster (35.5%, $n = 220$), followed by the victim cluster (32.8%, $n = 203$), accidental cluster (28.9%, $n = 179$), and others (2.7%, $n = 17$). Malevolence (12.1%) was the most frequent cause of crises occurring in the victim cluster, the frequency of challenges (26.5%) were high in the accidental cluster, and organizational misdeeds (23.4%) were high in the preventable cluster.

Research Question 2

Research question 2 examined the relationship between crisis type and crisis communication strategies: What types of crisis communication strategies were used in the victim cluster, accidental crisis cluster, and preventable crisis cluster, respectively, by the Korean government?

Before analyzing research question 2, overall make-up of crisis communication strategies are as follows: the Korean government used denial most often (23.9%, $n = 166$), followed by attacking the accuser (19.6%, $n = 136$), justification (17.1%, $n = 119$), apology (12.0%, $n = 83$), compensation (9.1%, $n = 63$), excusing (6.6%, $n = 46$), others (5.8%, $n = 40$), ingratiation (2.9%, $n = 20$), reminding (1.7%, $n = 12$), victimage (1.2%, $n = 8$), and scapegoating (0.1%, $n = 1$).

The government used denial strategies in a case of secret negotiations between Korea and the USA about the cow meats imports, and it denied the existence of the negotiations. Attacking the accuser was used against various protests blaming the government for wrongdoing. The government usually warned protesters not to breach the law during the protest, and it accused the protesters if they violated the law. Justification was used when the government attempted to

minimize the compensation and claim that there were no damages to civilian despite public request to compensate damages done on civilians. For example, when Korea was handed over a U.S. army base in Korea, the U.S. didn't cure environmental damage, and therefore it will cost several billions to cure and will have very negative effects on the health of citizens. Government used an apology for government officials' bribery, violence in jail, and an accident in a power plant, and compensation was given in case of such disasters. The "Others" category included a case in which the government took corrective action but did not provide an apology.

Scapegoating was used when a government-financed, small-sized banking institution for mutual savings and loans had huge damage from wrongful investment; the government said it was not the government's fault but the inevitable result of a problematic financial market.

The usage of crisis communication strategies was different depending on whether the crisis was a victim cluster crisis or not ($\chi^2 (10) = 130.002, p < .001$). While attacking the accuser, compensation, and ingratiation were significantly more likely to be used in victim cluster compared to other types of crisis clusters, excusing, justification, and apology were significantly less likely to be used in victim cluster. Attacking the accuser (34.6%, $n = 65$) was the most frequently used strategy when crises occurred in victim clusters (see Table 4-1).

The accidental cluster showed different usage of crisis communication strategies from other types of crisis clusters ($\chi^2 (10) = 66.179, p < .001$). While justification was more likely to be used in accidental cluster, compensation and apology were less likely to be used in accidental cluster. Justification (33.3%, $n = 52$) was the most frequently used strategy when crises occurred in accidental clusters, according to cross tabulations (see Table 4-2).

In the preventable cluster, the usage of crisis communication strategies was different from other types of crisis clusters ($\chi^2 (10) = 128.402, p < .001$). Whereas apology was significantly

more likely used in preventable cluster, attacking the accuser and compensation were significantly less likely used in preventable cluster. Apology (29.0%, $n = 58$) was the most frequently used strategy when crises occurred in preventable clusters, according to cross tabulations (see Table 4-3).

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 addressed the Korean government's expected use of a rebuilding strategy for crises in the preventable crisis cluster. To examine the hypothesis 1, the study compared the denial posture, diminishment posture, rebuilding posture, and bolstering posture of crisis communication strategies within the preventable crisis cluster. The usage of crisis communication postures was different depending on whether the crisis was preventable cluster crisis or not ($\chi^2 (4) = 21.919, p < .001$). The relationship between the preventable cluster crisis and rebuilding posture was significant ($\chi^2 (1) = 15.663, p < .001$). The relationship between denial posture and the preventable crisis cluster also were significant ($\chi^2 (1) = 16.250, p < .001$). While rebuilding strategy was significantly more likely to be used in preventable cluster, denial strategy was significantly less likely to be used in preventable cluster (see Table 4-4).

Research Question 3 and Research Question 4

Research question 3 asked whether the Korean government used bolstering strategies and, if so, what kinds of bolstering strategies were used often. Among all crisis communication strategies, the Korean government used bolstering strategies 5.8% ($n = 40$) and other strategies 94.2% ($n = 654$) of the time. Among bolstering strategies, ingratiation was used most (50.0%, $n = 20$), followed by reminding (30%, $n = 12$) and victimage (20%, $n = 8$).

Research question 4 asks whether the Korean government used bolstering strategies as a supplement to other communication postures. According to the frequency test, 85% ($n = 34$) of

bolstering strategies were used to supplement other communication strategies, whereas 15% ($n = 6$) of bolstering strategies were used alone.

The government used the ingratiation strategy mainly in times of disasters or kidnapping cases; it ingratiated itself with the people in an effort to recover from disasters and with the family of those kidnapped in other nations. The government used reminding strategies when it confronted a vote of confidence; the president reminded people of policies he had successfully implemented. Victimage was used in cases where governmental budget spending was delayed because of political conflict in congress and subsequent vote delay.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 assumed that the Korean government was expected to use more accommodative strategies for recurring crises than for non-recurring crises. Independent-samples t -tests and a chi-square test were used to determine whether a difference existed between recurring and nonrecurring crises. The analysis showed significant differences between recurring and non-recurring crises ($t = 4.47, p < .001$). The average number of accommodative strategies used in recurring crises ($M = 2.83, sd = 1.241$) were higher than non-recurring crises ($M = 1.85, sd = 1.082$).

The analysis showed significant differences between recurring and non-recurring crises in denial posture ($t = -2.54, p < .05$). The average number of denial strategies used in non-recurring crises ($M = .50, sd = .501$) were higher than for recurring crises ($M = .36, sd = .484$). The differences between recurring and non-recurring crises in diminishment posture were also significant ($t = -4.17, p < .001$). The average number of diminishment strategies used in non-recurring crises ($M = .27, sd = .446$) were higher than recurring crises ($M = .08, sd = .279$). The analysis showed significant differences between recurring and non-recurring crises in rebuilding

posture ($t = 6.21, p < .001$). The average number of diminishment strategies used in recurring crises ($M = .44, sd = .489$) were higher than non-recurring crises ($M = .17, sd = .376$).

Recurring crises included abuse of human rights in the army and jails, general strikes, typhoons, kidnappings, bribery, errors in exams, and wrongful use of budget, among others.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 examined whether the Korean government was expected to use different communication strategies in crises that originated within the control of local, national, or transnational administrative systems. Among 599 crises, 24 (4.3%) originally occurred within the control of a local administrative system, 486 (87.5%) within the control of a national administrative system, and 46 (8.2%) within the control of a transnational administrative system.

The usage of crisis communication strategies was different depending on whether the crisis originated from a local administrative systems or not ($\chi^2(10) = 82.344, p < 0.001$). Whereas compensation strategy was more likely to be used in a local administrative system, denial strategy was less likely to be used in a local administrative system (see Table 4-5).

Compensation (62.5%, $n=15$) was used the most frequently when crises occurred within the control of local administrative systems, according to cross tabulations.

In the national administrative system, the usage of crisis communication strategies was different compared to a local and transnational administrative systems ($\chi^2(10) = 65.399, p < .001$). While denial strategy was more likely to be used in national administrative system, attacking the accuser, compensation, and ingratiation strategy were less likely to be used in national administrative system (see Table 4-6). Denial (28.8%, $n = 141$) was used the most frequently when crises occurred within the control of the national administrative system, according to cross tabulations.

The usage of crisis communication strategies was different depending on whether the crisis originated from transnational administrative systems or not ($\chi^2 (10) = 46.228, p < .001$). While attacking the accuser and ingratiation strategies were more likely to be used in a transnational administrative system, denial and apology strategies were less likely to be used in a transnational administrative system (see Table 4-7). Attacking the accuser (52.2%, $n = 24$) was used the most frequently when crises occurred within the control of transnational administrative systems, according to cross tabulations. Crises originating in the transnational administrative system were the kidnapping of a Korean, disputes with neighboring nations, and dispatching the army to Iraq, to name a few.

If the crisis originated within a local administrative system, compensation was used most frequently; if the crisis originated within the national administrative system, denial was used most frequently; and if the crisis originated in transnational administrative systems, attacking the accuser was the most commonly used strategy. Thus, hypothesis 3 was confirmed: The government used different strategies according to administrative systems.

Table 4-1. List of cross tabulation of victim cluster crisis and communication strategies

	Victim		Total
	Absence	Presence	
Attacking the accuser***	55 (14.8%)	65 (34.6%)	120 (21.5%)
Denial	94 (25.3%)	50 (26.6%)	144 (25.8%)
Scapegoating	1 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.2%)
Excusing *	29 (7.8%)	5 (2.7%)	34 (6.1%)
Justification***	89 (24.0%)	8 (4.3%)	97 (17.4%)
Compensation***	12 (3.2%)	43 (22.9%)	55 (9.8%)
Apology***	62 (16.7%)	6 (3.2%)	68 (12.2%)
Reminding	1 (.3%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Ingratiation *	1 (.3%)	3 (1.6%)	4 (0.7%)
Victimage	1 (.3%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Others	26 (7.0%)	8 (4.3%)	34 (6.1%)
Total	371 (100.0%)	188 (100.0%)	559 (100.0%)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4-2. List of chi-square test of accidental cluster crisis and communication strategies

	Accidental		Total
	Absence	Presence	
Attacking the accuser	82(20.3%)	38(24.4%)	120(21.5%)
Denial	108(26.8%)	36 (23.1%)	144 (25.8%)
Scapegoating	0 (.0%)	1 (.6%)	1 (.2%)
Excusing	23 (5.7%)	11 (7.1%)	34 (6.1%)
Justification***	45 (11.2%)	52 (33.3%)	97 (17.4%)
Compensation**	50 (12.4%)	5(3.2%)	55 (9.8%)
Apology***	64 (15.9%)	4 (2.6%)	68 (12.2%)
Reminding	1 (.2%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Ingratiation	3 (.7%)	1 (.6%)	4 (.7%)
Victimage	0 (.0%)	1 (.6%)	1 (.2%)
Others	27 (6.7%)	7 (4.5%)	34 (6.1%)
Total	403 (100.0%)	156 (100.0%)	559 (100.0%)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4-3. List of cross tabulation of preventable cluster and communication strategies

	Preventable		Total
	Absence	Presence	
Attacking the accuser***	105 (29.2%)	15 (7.5%)	120 (21.5%)
Denial	87 (24.2%)	57 (28.5%)	144 (25.8%)
Scapegoating	1 (.3%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Excusing	18 (5.0%)	16 (8.0%)	34 (6.1%)
Justification	61 (17.0%)	36 (18.0%)	97 (17.4%)
Compensation***	51 (14.2%)	4 (2.0%)	55 (9.8%)
Apology***	10 (2.8%)	58 (29.0%)	68 (12.2%)
Reminding	0 (.0%)	1 (.5%)	1 (.2%)
Ingratiation	4 (1.1%)	0 (.0%)	4 (.7%)
Victimage	1 (.3%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Others	21 (5.8%)	13 (6.5%)	34 (6.1%)
Total	359 (100.0%)	200 (100.0%)	559 (100.0%)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4-4. List of cross tabulation of preventable cluster and communication strategies

	Preventable		Total
	Absence	Presence	
Denial***	193 (53.8%)	72 (36.0%)	265 (47.4%)
Diminishment	79 (22.0%)	52 (26.0%)	131 (23.4%)
Rebuilding***	61 (17.0%)	62 (31.0%)	123 (22.0%)
Bolstering	5 (1.4%)	1 (0.5%)	6 (1.1%)
Others	21 (5.8%)	13 (6.5%)	34 (6.1%)
Total	359 (100.0%)	200 (100.0%)	559 (100.0%)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4-5. List of cross tabulation of local administrative system crisis and communication strategies

	Local		Total
	Absence	Presence	
Attacking the accuser	118 (22.1%)	2 (8.3%)	120 (21.5%)
Denial**	144 (26.9%)	0 (.0%)	144 (25.8%)
Scapegoating	1 (.2%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Excusing	33 (6.2%)	1 (4.2%)	34 (6.1%)
Justification	96 (17.9%)	1 (4.2%)	97 (17.4%)
Compensation***	40 (7.5%)	15 (62.5%)	55 (9.8%)
Apology	65 (12.1%)	3 (12.5%)	68 (12.2%)
Reminding	1 (.2%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Ingratiation	4 (.7%)	0 (.0%)	4 (.7%)
Victimage	1 (.2%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Others	32 (6.0%)	2 (8.3%)	34 (6.1%)
Total	535 (100.0%)	24 (100.0%)	559 (100.0%)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4-6. List of cross tabulation of national administrative system crisis and communication strategies

	National		Total
	Absence	Presence	
Attacking the accuser***	26 (37.1%)	94 (19.2%)	120 (21.5%)
Denial***	3 (4.3%)	141 (28.8%)	144 (25.8%)
Scapegoating	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)	1 (.2%)
Excusing	3 (4.3%)	31 (6.3%)	34 (6.1%)
Justification	7 (10.0%)	90 (18.4%)	97 (17.4%)
Compensation***	20 (28.6%)	35 (7.2%)	55 (9.8%)
Apology	3 (4.3%)	65 (13.3%)	68 (12.2%)
Reminding	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)	1 (.2%)
Ingratiation***	2 (2.9%)	2 (.4%)	4 (.7%)
Victimage	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)	1 (.2%)
Others	6 (8.6%)	28 (5.7%)	34 (6.1%)
Total	70 (100.0%)	489 (100.0%)	559 (100.0%)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4-7. List of cross tabulation of transnational administrative system crisis and communication strategies

	Transnational		Total
	Absence	Presence	
Attacking the accuser***	96 (18.7%)	24 (52.2%)	120 (21.5%)
Denial**	141 (27.5%)	3 (6.5%)	144 (25.8%)
Scapegoating	1 (.2%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Excusing	32 (6.2%)	2 (4.3%)	34 (6.1%)
Justification	91 (17.7%)	6 (13.0%)	97 (17.4%)
Compensation	50 (9.7%)	5 (10.9%)	55 (9.8%)
Apology*	68 (13.3%)	0 (.0%)	68 (12.2%)
Reminding	1 (.2%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Ingratiation***	2 (.4%)	2 (4.3%)	4 (.7%)
Victimage	1 (.2%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)
Others	30 (5.8%)	4 (8.7%)	34 (6.1%)
Total	513 (100.0%)	46 (100.0%)	559 (100.0%)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

This research explored the types of crises and the crisis communication strategies used during Roh's administration in Korea. The study also examined the Korean government's response to each crisis according to the level of responsibility associated with the crisis. Hypotheses and research questions assumed that the Korean government would follow Coombs' suggestions as to how best to act during crises.

Research question 1 attempted to determine the type of crises to which the Korean government was vulnerable during the Roh administration (2003-2008). At that time, the Korean government confronted diverse challenges from discontented stakeholders (26.5%). Protesting and criticism from stakeholders, the media, and opposing parties were the main challenges. The next most frequently occurring crisis involved organizational misdeeds (23.4%). Governmental officials' breaking the law, moral hazards, and deceptive behavior were typical of organizational misdeeds. Malevolence (12.1%) was an attack on the government from an opponent or a third party, including kidnapping, terrorism, and invasion by North Korea of the territory of South Korea. Human-error accidents (10.7%) came through blunder or negligence, and natural disasters (8.7%) were the results of typhoons, floods, and bird flu.

Among Coomb's 10 types of crisis typology, natural disasters, rumors, malevolence, challenges, and human-error accidents were the most frequently occurring crises. Therefore, the government should give more attention to these types of crises. In contrast, human-error product harm (1.5%), technical-error product harm (1.3%), technical accident (1.1%), and workplace violence (1.0%) were rare. In the public sector, human-error product harm, technical-error product harm, and technical accident were uncommon because the public sector rarely produces

commodities. Workplace violence committed by an employee or a former employee also was not common in the public sector.

Technical accident and technical-error product harm can be combined into one category, “technical accident,” and human-error accidents and human-error product harm can be combined into one category, “human-error accident.” One category can be added in crisis types and can be named “citizen or other actor’s faults” (2.7%). In the continuum of low to high responsibility for crisis types, it can be located next to natural disasters and included into the victim cluster.

Research question 2 confirmed that the Korean government employed different crisis communication strategies according to the cluster of crisis types. In the victim cluster, attacking the accuser was a commonly used communication strategy. The government resorted to law enforcement for the strike of railroad workers and threatened them with a lawsuit for the spread of rumors about a high-level governmental official’s resignation. The Korean government used justification most frequently in the accidental cluster and apology most frequently in the preventable cluster.

The results showed that the Korean government appropriately used crisis communication strategies according to the level of government responsibility. In the victim cluster, which assumed low government responsibility, the government used the attack-the-accuser strategy most often, a denial strategy that allowed the government to accept the least amount of responsibility for the crises. In the accidental cluster, which assumed medium government responsibility, the government employed the justification strategy, a diminishment strategy that allowed the government to accept medium responsibility for the crises. In the preventable cluster, which assumed high government responsibility, the government used the apology strategy most, a rebuilding strategy that allowed the government to accept high responsibility for the crises.

Among the 10 crisis communication strategies, the Korean government used the scapegoating strategy in only one case. This finding implies that the government seemed to see this strategy as egocentric and possibly damaging to its authority status. Based on these research results, the scapegoating category may be eliminated from the typology of crisis communication strategies used in the public sector.

Among the crisis communication strategies, the “others” category was used in 5.8% of the cases. Most involved the government taking actions in the crises but without apology or compensation, so it was difficult to check the rebuilding strategies. After researching Merck’s Vioxx recall case, Vald et al. (2006) suggested that Merck should use a new mortification strategy “‘rectification without assuming responsibility’—by making rectification through its corrective action of recalling Vioxx but without ever admitting fault, apologizing, or asking forgiveness for causing grave injury and death to Vioxx consumers” (p. 357). The Korean government also often used “rectification without assuming responsibility” by taking action during crises, but not providing an apology or asking for forgiveness. The government used this strategy especially when the causes of the crises were stakeholders.

Therefore, one category can be added into crisis communication strategies and can be named it as “corrective action.” In the continuum of crisis communication strategies from low to high, it can be located in the just before compensation and apology strategies, and can be clustered into rebuilding strategy.

The proposed changes in Coombs’ crisis types and crisis communication types can apply to the public sector crises encountered by any nation. This is because those changes stem mainly from the characteristics of the administration rather than from the individual administration system or culture of an individual nation. The “citizen or other actor’s faults” and “corrective

action” are related with citizen. “Technical-error product harm” and “human-error product harm” were related with production of commodity, and that production is not the main purpose of governments.

As expected for hypothesis 1, the Korean government used the rebuilding strategy for crises in the preventable crisis cluster. The government used apology when crises occurred in the preventable crisis cluster, such as providing an apology for unlawful inquiry for individual information. Therefore, the government’s response strategy conformed to that which Coombs (2007) recommended: Organizations should use rebuilding strategies during any preventable crisis.

Coombs (2007) suggested that bolstering strategies can help build a positive relationship between an organization and its stakeholders. However, he recommended that bolstering should be used as a supplement to the other three postures because of its trait of egocentrism. Research question 3 confirmed that the Korean government did not frequently employ bolstering strategies (5.8%). When they were used, they were used to supplement other strategies (85%). The research results showed that bolstering strategies cannot become a stand-alone crisis communication strategies as Coombs’ suggested; the Korean government used them alone in only 15% of crisis communication situations. When the oil spill and typhoon caused damage to civilians, the government used ingratiation to supplement compensation. Among bolstering strategies, the Korean government employed ingratiation (50.0%) the most frequently during crises. The government displayed ingratiation by appreciating public support and victims’ patience.

The Korean government used different strategies during recurring crises and non-recurring crises. The research results confirmed that the Korean government used more rebuilding strategies in the crises that had a history. The government used the denial strategy most in

nonrecurring crises. However, when the crises had a history, the government used compensation and apology more than the other strategies. The government apologized for recurring crises, such as the abuse of human rights in the army and jails, and used denial strategies in non-recurring crises, such as the acceptance of wartime operational control from the U.S.

According to Coombs' theory, when a crisis has a history, stakeholders attach more responsibility to the organization. The organization should, therefore, adopt more accommodative strategies. From that perspective, the Korean government responded well to recurring crises. From the study, it is difficult to identify whether the Korean government employed the two-step process of Coombs (initial assessment of responsibility and modification of the initial assessment according to the history of the crisis), but this research revealed that the Korean government did use more accommodative strategies in recurring crises.

The Korean government faced crises that mostly (87.5%) originated within the control of the national administrative system. Crises that originated within the control of a local administrative system were not many (4.3%). The government used different strategies according to crises that occurred in different levels of the administration systems. The results showed that the government took moderate responsibility on national-level crises by using denial strategies (28.8%), a lower level of responsibility in international crises by using the strategy of attacking the accuser (52.2%), and a higher level of responsibility during local-level crises by using the strategy of compensation (62.5%). For example, in the case of an outbreak of bird flu in a certain region under the control of local government, the central government provided immunization services and compensation with money, and when the international reporters association criticized the Korean government for oppressing freedom of the press, the government attacked the association for displaying malevolence.

Implications

This study suggests a summary of how Korean government reacts to crises. By analyzing the entire crises and crisis responses for one administration, it helps the understanding of the Korean government's crisis communication. Many researchers focus on the individual crisis and provide detailed information about it. However, case studies cannot describe whole trends of phenomena, and this research gives public sector crisis managers and scholars a glimpse of crises in one country's public sector.

The research can offer public sector crisis managers more time to respond to crises. Because crises are unpredictable and sudden events that put an organization into uncertain and time-sensitive situations, the research can provide several benefits to public sector crisis managers. First, the public sector usually prepares for crises by developing crisis response plans and creating crisis response teams, then performing drills designed to respond to hypothetical crises. However, the public sector cannot prepare for all the crises it is expected to confront. It can just prepare for some of the crises that are assumed to be the most likely to happen. Therefore, most crisis preparation is apt to concentrate on the natural disaster. However, as seen in the study results, natural disaster is part of only 8.7% of all crises; challenges, organizational misdeeds, and malevolence are more common causes for crises in the Korean public sector. The research can present the crises that the government is most likely to face and can help public sector crisis managers cope with crises more effectively.

Second, the research can provide standard criteria to which public crisis managers can refer. Public sector crisis managers can use diverse communication plans, and their choices sometimes depend on the results of previous case studies, their experience, or their instinct. They use diverse communication strategies without knowing whether they are appropriate or not. The research can provide public crisis managers with the ability to easily detect what would be a

good or bad crisis response by comparing Coombs' study with their communication strategies. Crisis managers can use the most appropriate crisis communication strategy based on each crisis situation by considering both the crisis history of an organization and the different levels of responsibility of the specific administrative system.

The study also suggests categories that should be added and categories that should be deleted when applying Coombs' crisis typology and communication strategy to the public sector. In contrast to the private sector, the public sector does not produce commodities, and crisis typology related to production should be diminished. On the contrary, the crises types and crises communication strategies that originated from the private sector—the attribution can be on the stakeholders from the private sector—should be added to the crisis typology. The category “rectification without assuming responsibility” can be added in the crisis communication strategies (Vald et al., 2006, p. 357).

Limitations and Future Research

The study applies Coombs' theory to the Korean government's response to various crises. It analyzed crises that were presented in press releases, but stakeholders' perceptions can differ from the facts presented in the releases. Stakeholders can become more focused on certain aspects of a crisis than on the actual characteristics of the crisis. They also can perceive crisis communication strategies differently when the government admits responsibility. The research did not measure perceptions. Future research should analyze the media's or the public's opinion to learn how stakeholders perceive crises.

Certain methodological limitations constrained this research. When selecting crises, this researcher read only the first paragraph of news releases because of a large number of releases. However, if the entire news releases had been examined thoroughly, the number of crises might have risen to more than 619. The research also excluded overlapping communication strategies

when analyzing some hypotheses and questions because of methodological difficulties. Therefore, some crises were not examined.

Also, the study does not determine why the government used different strategies for different administrative systems. It only concludes that the government responded differently to crises originating within the control of local, national, and transnational administrative systems. The next step in this research should be to determine why the differences were introduced. The research into the relationship between administrative system level and political nature, such as liberal or conservative, and relationship between administrative system level and degree of centralization, such as centralization or decentralization, can serve as topics for future research.

This research only analyzed the written aspect of government crisis responses. However, people receive information not only from what is written but also through the actions of government representatives. The gestures and the way statements are presented can be the cues on which the stakeholders build their perceptions. When combining these aspects of a crisis response, the crisis response can be more accurately analyzed.

The research tested characteristics of crisis types and crisis communication strategies in Roh's regime in Korea. The research results may not apply to other countries because of differences in culture and administrative systems, except for the revision of Coombs' typology. The U.S. has a different culture and administrative system from Korea; thus, the characteristics of the U.S. government crisis and crisis response may differ from those of the Korean government. Likewise, even within Korea, Roh's administration and the current administration might possibly show different results in crisis types and crisis responses. More study should be conducted across culture and across administrations to identify more accurate characteristics and trends of governmental crises. If private sector crises are also analyzed in the long term, research

can compare government crises with private sector crises. This will help to clarify the nature of governmental crises.

Future research can analyze whether public sector crisis managers execute crisis communication strategies according to pre-planned crisis communications guidelines. By analyzing gaps between actually used communication strategies and pre-planned plans, managers can understand what causes the gaps, and more realistic communication plans can be developed.

APPENDIX A
CODING SHEET FOR CONTENT ANALYSIS

Coder Name: _____

Coding Period: _____

1. Administrative System

1-1. Check the presence or absence of government system.

- 1-1-1. Local Administration: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
- 1-1-2. National Administration: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
- 1-1-3. Transnational Administration: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
- 1-1-4. Others (specify) _____ : (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __

2. Crisis Typology

2-1. Check the presence or absence of crisis typology.

- 2-1-1. Victim Cluster
 - 2-1-1-1. Natural disasters: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 2-1-1-2. Workplace violence: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 2-1-1-3. Rumors: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 2-1-1-4. Malevolence: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
- 2-1-2. Accidental Crisis Cluster
 - 2-1-2-1. Challenges: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 2-1-2-2. Technical-error accidents: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 2-1-2-3. Technical-error product harm: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
- 2-1-3. Preventable Crisis Cluster
 - 2-1-3-1. Human-error product harm: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 2-1-3-2. Human-error accidents: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 2-1-3-3. Organizational misdeeds: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
- 2-1-4. Others (specify) _____ : (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __

3. Crisis Communication Strategy

3-1. Check the presence or absence of crisis communication strategy (check all that apply).

- 3-1-1. Denial Posture
 - 3-1-1-1. Attacking the accuser: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 3-1-1-2. Denial: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 3-1-1-3. Scapegoating: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
- 3-1-2. Diminishment Posture
 - 3-1-2-1. Excusing: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
 - 3-1-2-2. Justification: (1) Presence__ (2) Absence __
- 3-1-3. Rebuilding Posture

3-1-3-1. Compensation: (1) Presence __ (2) Absence __

3-1-3-2. Apology: (1) Presence __ (2) Absence __

3-1-4. Bolstering Posture

3-1-4-1. Reminding: (1) Presence __ (2) Absence __

3-1-4-2. Ingratiation: (1) Presence __ (2) Absence __

3-1-4-3. Victimhood: (1) Presence __ (2) Absence __

3-1-5. Others (specify) _____ : (1) Presence __ (2) Absence __

APPENDIX B
THE CODE BOOK FOR CONTENT ANALYSIS

Instructions: After reading each press release, please check the items that are applicable to the press release. If you have any questions regarding the coding process, feel free to contact me.

Date of Press Release: Write the date when the press release was issued.

Coding Period: Indicate the period in the news release that you are coding

1. Administrative System

- 1-1. Local Administration: The crisis originally occurred within the control of a Metropolitan City, Province (Do), City (Si), County (Gun), District (Gu), eup, myeon, or dong.
- 2-1. National Administration: The crisis originally occurred within the control of the central government.
- 3-1. Transnational Administration: The crisis originally occurred outside the territory of Korea or within the control of other nation’s government.

2. Crisis Typology

Read the press release and check either 1 for presence or 2 for absence.

2-1. Victim Cluster

Feature Item	Description
Natural disasters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural disasters are crises resulting from “acts of God,” for example, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, floods, mud slides, and blizzards • e.g., typhoon swamps the East coast of the country.
Workplace violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace violence is violence committed by an employee or a former employee of an organization to other employees. • e.g., a shooting incident occurs among coworkers.
Rumors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rumors are false information intentionally distributed about an organization and its products to damage the organization. • e.g., a rumor about high ranking government officials forced them to resign.
Malevolence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malevolence is an opponent or a third party’s attack on the organization, such as “tampering, kidnapping, terrorism, or computer hacking.” • e.g., commercial ship kidnapped by Somalian pirates.

2-2. Accidental Crisis Cluster

Feature Item	Description
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges are caused by confrontations with discontented stakeholders who claim that the organization operate inappropriately. • e.g., labor union strikes in violation of government labor policy.
Technical-error accidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical-error accidents are industrial accidents caused by the failure of technology or equipment utilized or supplied by the organization. • e.g., air Force fighter plane crashes due to defect in engine.
Technical-error product harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical-error product harm is “when the technology utilized or supplied by the organization fails and results in a defect of a potentially harmful product. • e.g., several government websites crash due technical error.

2-3. Preventable Crisis Cluster

Feature Item	Description
Human-error accidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human-error accidents are caused by human errors, such as “failed judgment, negligence, blunders, or sabotage” • e.g., government officer used wrong prescription for oil spill and thus damage increased.
Human-error product harm accidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human-error product harm is a product defect or harm to consumers caused by human error. • e.g., government electronic passport not operating properly due to government workers accidentally eradicating one element of passport.
Organizational misdeeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational misdeeds occur “when management takes actions it knows may place stakeholders at risk or knowingly violates the law.” • e. g., top government officers accused of inappropriate sexual harassment of female employees.

3. Crisis Communication Strategies

Read the press release and mark either 1 for presence or 2 for absence. Coder can check all that apply.

3-1. Denial Posture

Feature Item	Description
Attacking the accuser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization confronts the person or organizations arguing for the existence of a crisis. The organization can threaten the accuser to use force, such as a lawsuit. e.g., government criticized labor union for violating the law.
Denial strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization denies the existence of the crisis. The organization states that there is no crisis and sometimes discusses the rationale why the crisis does not exist. e.g., denial of any misdeed, or late response to a misdeed.
Scapegoating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization tries to shift the blame from the organization to other person or organizations e.g., blaming the company for causing labor union strike and blocking public transportation.

3-2. Diminishment Posture

Feature Item	Description
Excusing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization tries to diminish its responsibility for the crisis. This strategy denies that the organization had any intention to do harm or has not the power to control the crisis. e.g., making excuses with saying that the government has no intention of revealing private citizen information.
Justification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization “tries to minimize the perceived damage associated with the crisis.” The response can include stating that there was no severe damage or injuries or stating that the people affected by the crisis deserved what they received. e.g., emphasizing benefits of constructing a new road by building a tunnel outweigh any damages.

3-3. Rebuilding Posture

Feature Item	Description
Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization provides various benefits, such as money, gifts, or services, to reduce or assuage the negative emotions of the victims toward the organization. • e.g., governmental support for spending seven billion dollars in a disaster area.
Apology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization admits full responsibility for the crisis and requests forgiveness publicly. • e.g., making an apology for failures with regulation of university entrance examination.

3-4. Bolstering Posture

Feature Item	Description
Reminding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization reminds stakeholders about the organization's good deeds in the past. • e.g., reminding positive accomplishments of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with other nations when confronted with opposition to the FTA agreement with the U.S.
Ingratiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization praises the stakeholders as a most important asset to the organization. • e.g., offering thanks to the family of released hostage.
Victimage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization insists that they are also a victim of the crisis • e.g., argument that the government is also a victim of sudden localized heavy rain.

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